

Summary

When he wrote the first edition of his *Institutes* in 1536, Calvin used a sub-title indicating his serious intention that his work would not only be a purely academic endeavor but was meant also as a significant advocacy of Christians during the perilous times of the first half of the sixteenth-century. For this purpose he added to the main title of the *Institutes* information, explaining that his work was “embracing almost the whole sum of piety ...” (Calvin 1536). The information signifies that Calvin’s work does not only contain theological statements but is also a narrative of religious experience which might be called spirituality today. Calvin’s work, however, is not a manual about spiritual exercises or a set of regulations about a particular kind of spiritual tradition. It is a theological work with a great impact, which stimulates many kinds of spirituality that could be described using several terminologies such as Calvinian or Calvinistic spirituality.

This dissertation is dedicated to studying that kind of spirituality. Since Calvinistic theology is commonly said to be Reformed theology, here Calvinistic spirituality is mentioned under the name of Reformed spirituality. This dissertation is a study about Reformed spirituality as originated in a particular place in Indonesia, namely, in Central Java. It resulted in becoming a modern denomination called the GKJ (*Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa*, the Javanese Christian Churches, or the Christian Churches of Java). In doing so, this dissertation moves in four steps. Firstly, it tries to define the meaning of Reformed spirituality. Secondly, it tries to characterize theological themes representing the idea of Reformed spirituality. Thirdly, it tries to describe the historical background of the GKJ rooted in the nineteenth-century evangelism of Java. Fourthly, it tries to evaluate the qualities of Reformed spirituality in the present GKJ by tracing its struggle to have its own indigenous confession, called the PPAG (*Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja*, the main principles of doctrine), that is meant to be the official ecclesiastical teaching of this church.

The first step is comprised in Chapter One. In this chapter the Reformed spirituality is defined to be what Sandra Schneiders called ‘faith that becomes lived experience’ (Schneiders 1989, 679), or faith being lived in daily life. It is a spirituality which has become the lived experience of the people of Reformation. Substantially, it has its validity within the whole body of the Reformation such as the Lutherans, the Calvinists, the Anglicans, and the Anabaptists (both the radical wing and the moderates). Particularly, however, for the purpose of clarity here, it points to the lived experience of a particular group of people, namely, the Calvinists in the Netherlands embodying what is called *de Gereformeerde Kerk* or the Reformed Church. Here, the idea of Reformed spirituality becomes specific: it is the Reformed faith experienced vividly in daily life both personally and socially. This kind of spirituality has become a part of the Dutch history.

The second step is comprised in Chapter Two. In this chapter the Reformed spirituality is characterized by four theological themes: ecclesiology, sacramentology, theology of ministry, and the idea of piety. These four theological themes are chosen to be the terms representing the theological discourse about how God in human institutions is experienced in the real world (ecclesiology); how the transcendence is experienced in the fragmented realities of human life (sacramentology); how the Holy One is experienced in the finite-historical realm of concrete human acts (ministry); and how the visible human effort to believe is located in the invisible grace of God (piety). My hypothesis is that Reformed spirituality is vividly

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experienced in those four realms of theology. It is experienced in the church, which is both universal and particular simultaneously; it is experienced in the proper administration of the sacraments and it is experienced in the presence of legitimate ministry. Finally, it is experienced in the daily life fueled by authentic piety.

The third step is dealt with in Chapter Three. *In this chapter the Reformed spirituality is described as the inner background of the Dutch mission in Java.* This kind of spirituality is assumed to be the intrinsic motivation of the historical figures of this mission. What stimulates the discussion here is the fact that most of these historical figures—especially the native ones—belonged to a world which differed from the one of the sixteenth-century Reformation. While the sixteenth-century Reformation in Europe was characterized by people making public confessions to defend their consciousness before the state, the nineteenth-century mission in Java was characterized by several native believers who struggled for their Christian authenticity within the realm of their own cultural religiosity. Sometimes this struggle was accompanied with tensions or even conflicts between the native-Javanese Christians—such as Sadrach who, despite not having had a Western education, were proud of their Javanese culture and perceived reality in their traditional way of thinking—and the Dutch agents of mission such as Bieger who saw the native people as the subordinated, lower

part of the colonial society. Nobody was able to resolve this discrepancy but the course of history itself, which eventually granted independence both to Indonesia as a nation and to the native Javanese churches, offered more or less its own solution. The Javanese Church in Central Java became a denominational reality by the name of the GKJ as mentioned above. The fourth step is comprised in Chapter Four. In this chapter *the Reformed spirituality is narrated to be the actual spirituality of the GKJ at the time following Indonesian independence*. In the newly born Indonesian republic, the Reformed Javanese Church which previously was led by Dutch missionaries had to learn to sustain its existence by using its own resources. Likewise, the GKJ has been trying to articulate its Reformed spirituality according to her historical context. Firstly, during the war of independence, the GKJ tried to express a genuine nationalism by which the western Reformed spirituality was transformed into a spirituality fitting Indonesian nationalism. Secondly, during the era of the first Indonesian president Sukarno, the GKJ tried to maintain its relationship both with the sister-churches in the Netherlands and with the Indonesian government. Thirdly, during the era of Soeharto's administration, which was very authoritarian, the GKJ attempted to maintain its prophetic voice without being crushed by the regime. In this period, it formulated a new catechism which is now called the PPAG (Pokok-pokok Ajaran Gereja, the main principles of doctrine). To be specific, this effort has been embodied in one person who can be called the architect of the PPAG: Reverend Brotosemedi Wirjotenojo. This research believes that through his life and work, in which Javanese religiosity and Reformed tradition were melted together, we can see the existence of the Reformed spirituality in Java effectively performed in the history of this denomination.

As a conclusion, *as spirituality is understood to be faith manifested into lived experience, we may say that the existence of Reformed spirituality in Java is always manifested by historical phenomena*. It can be persons, movements, or organizations. In Java, the Reformed spirituality has existed in different kind of figures, movements, and organizations, which were characterized differently from the ones in the Western world. In Java, Reformed spirituality took shape within an assimilated culture produced by the historical encounter between the Eastern and Western world. As this kind of spirituality recognizes the local church as the concrete manifestation of the Kingdom of Christ, the Reformed spirituality in Java will continually struggle to search the face of God in concrete historical figures, movements, and

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church organizations. This situation means a perpetual task of meaningful assimilation, by which the Christian tradition is maintained properly and the process of doing contextual theology is performed significantly. The Reformed spirituality in Java, therefore, is always in the process of an ongoing development of performing the true church of Christ among the Javanese people in Indonesia.