

et al.: Seventh-day Adventist Mission



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Editorial

This issue of the *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* focuses on Seventh-day Adventist Mission. Anyone who thinks that one person or one family cannot have a huge impact on society and help lift an entire population out of poverty and ignorance about God's grace and mercies needs to read the stories of Ana and Ferdinand Stahl, of Henri Monnier, of A. G. Daniells, and W. A Spicer. The sad thing is that many excellent and successful stories about Adventist missionaries, local leaders, and lay people who also did great things for God have never had their stories told. What they learned and how they approached missions are lost, and we are the poorer because of it. If you know of people who have diaries, letters, or unpublished articles about Adventist missions, please encourage them to send in their articles for a future issue, again dealing with Adventist mission.

Chigemezi Wogu's article of three immigrant families to the USA who returned to Europe as Adventist missionaries should give an added push to evangelizing immigrant groups. Immigrants already know the language and culture of their homelands and can more easily interpret Adventist beliefs and lifestyles in winsome ways that are both biblically faithful and culturally relevant. Immigrants are also some of the most receptive people and should be the focus of church planting efforts wherever pockets of immigrants are found.

Jerry Chase writes on Graphic Information Systems—something that is vitally important for meaningful assessment and evaluation of present plans and methods. His article deals with measuring outreach effectiveness for city work, but the principles apply across the board for every type of witnessing. The Seventh-day Adventist Church spends millions of dollars every year on evangelism but hardly anything on assessment and evaluation. The danger of this approach is that the church really does not know what the best practices are for reaching people, especially the most resistant of the unreached.

In 2021, the spring issue will deal with mission and cross-cultural leadership, while the fall issue will have articles about mission to those in the world religions. Join the dialog and submit an article.

Bruce L. Bauer, editor

RUSSELL STAPLES

Henri Monnier and the Establishment of the Adventist Church in Rwanda

God works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform, and the growth of the Adventist Church in the small Central African country of Rwanda has been one of the most remarkable developments in the history of Adventist missions. There are few places on earth where the enthusiasm of the lay people spreading the gospel overflowed all bounds, and growth was so rapid, and concern for care of the new converts so great, that responsible church administrators advised the local leaders to slow down the movement. It seemed as if a flood tide had been loosed and everybody wanted to become a Christian, and yet, there was nothing shallow or superficial about the movement. This is precisely what took place in Rwanda in the 1930s and early 40s. David Barrett reports:

Adventists came in 1919 although they were unable to establish themselves prior to 1921. Nevertheless, progress was rapid thereafter, and the Adventist community is now second in size only to the Catholic Church.

Newer missions have been established, but all remain small. Except for Adventists who are found in all parts of the country, Protestantism is characterized by a regional orientation.

Church statistics 1970: Catholic 1,684,095, Adventist 200,000, Anglican 161,899. Population 3,679,000. (Barrett 1982:589)¹

The major features of the establishment and growth of the Adventist Church in Rwanda are described in this article by relating the remarkable life story of Henri Monnier, who entered Rwanda with D. E. Delhove in 1919. Justification for this approach is found in the fact that by the mid-1930s Adventists in Rwanda were often called *Abanyere*, meaning

the people of Munyeri—the Kinyarwanda pronunciation of Monnier. In addition Monnier was given the name *Rukandirangabo* meaning “The mighty one—the shield bearer.” However, this is certainly not meant to imply that Monnier worked alone. Delhove was the effective leader of the Adventist missionary venture in Rwanda, and in due course, a growing number of very dedicated missionaries joined them.

Henri Monnier, 1896-1944, was born in Pieterlen (Berne, Switzerland), to parents who had become Adventists in 1890. According to an older brother, Vital, his father was “an elder in the church and had a remarkable gift of speech: a trait that Henri inherited.” The family moved to Chaux-de-Fonds a few years after Henri was born and he attended the small Adventist school at Tramelan. His father specialized in manufacturing luminous watch and clock dials. Henri went to England in 1915 to escape the draft, sold watches, established a dial manufacturing business and married an English lady, Winifred Maddams, who had formerly been an officer in the Salvation Army. According to Vital, Henri did not attend Stanborough Missionary College and had no more than eight years of education. He was an enthusiastic Adventist and after he met Delhove, much to the surprise of his family, sold his prosperous business and prepared to accompany Delhove to Africa on missionary service.

David Ellie Delhove 1882-1947, who operated a shoe manufacturing business in Belgium became an Adventist in 1906 under the ministry of Elder J. Curdy. After study at Watford College and Caterham Sanitarium in England, he was called to assist A. A. Carscallen at Kamagambo in Kenya. Leaving his wife and two little daughters behind he left for Africa in 1913. War broke out before his family could join him, and when conscripted for military service in the Belgian army he decided to accept a noncombatant role in Africa rather than returning to Belgium. He served as an intelligence scout for the Belgian command and travelled widely in Rwanda and the Eastern Belgian Congo. He thus became well acquainted with the country of Rwanda and its peoples and with several of the Belgian authorities (Delhove 1984:5-9). He was granted a military furlough to Belgium in 1918, was reunited with his family, and then went to England where he studied pharmacy and established a relationship with the Monniers. The burden of his heart was to return to Africa as a missionary to the people he had come to love. He shared this passion with the Monniers and they decided to accompany him to Africa.

Rwanda: Mission Background

Before describing the Delhove-Monnier experience it is necessary to present a brief political and religious history of the country they were about

to enter. The 1884 “Scramble for Africa Conference” at Berlin dealt with both political and missionary issues. Germany, which exercised colonial authority in neighboring Tanganyika, was accorded responsibility for Rwanda. Recognized Mission Societies were accorded liberty to establish stations and erect buildings, in the African colonies (Neill 1987:359). The White Fathers, who had suffered severe loss during the civil war between the British and French in Uganda over both political and religious fractions entered Rwanda in 1890 with the hope of establishing a state church. However, to their dismay, Dr. Kandt, the German Resident, invited the Lutheran *Bethel bei Bielefeld* Mission to commence service in the country. Under the direction of Ernst Johanssen they entered in 1907 and established several stations. Then the calamity of the First World War struck. Belgian military rule was established in 1916 and the Bethel missionaries were forced to depart. That is when Delhove, a Belgian citizen, entered the service of the Belgian command and travelled widely in Rwanda (Delhove 1984:7-9).

The Delhove and Monnier families embarked for Africa in March 1919. After their sea voyage to the Belgian Congo, a long trip up the Congo River, long journeys on foot, and then up to lakes Tanganyika and Kivu, they landed at Kibuye in Rwanda five months after their departure from England. Rubengera, one of the former Bethel missionary stations was only four miles away. A section of the station was being used as a military post but Delhove, who had established a positive relationship with the Belgian authorities during the war, obtained permission to temporarily occupy several of the buildings. They went there without delay, and none too soon, for Winifred gave birth to a baby girl named Olive on Aug. 24. A month later Clara, the third Delhove daughter, was born.

Getting Established

Delhove and Monnier paid a visit to General Brassel, the Belgian Resident, at Kigali and inasmuch as the German missionaries had been denied permission to return to Rwanda, they were granted permission to occupy the Bethel stations. The Delhoves settled in at Kirinda while the Monniers remained at Rubengera, but also continued working at Remera. Then tragedy struck. Mrs Monnier, who had not been well since the birth of Olive, passed away and was buried at Kirinda. Mama Delhove took care of little Olive and Monnier moved to Remera. He and Delhove, anticipated permanent residence at these stations and set about restoring the buildings and gardens and establishing positive relationships with the Christians in those communities.

After about twenty months of hard work, they experienced a disconcerting blow. They were informed that the Bethel sites had been granted to the Presbyterian *Societe Belge de Missions Protestantes au Congo* (SBMPC) (Twagirayesu 1982:760). However, they were granted permission to search for suitable sites and relocate. All the work of repairing the buildings and planting groves of timber and fruit trees was lost. But they had established very positive relationships with a number of the former Bethel converts. Several of these decided to leave with them and formed their first corps of teachers and workers. This group of workers contributed much to the establishment and development of Adventism in Rwanda. Several of them subsequently returned to visit their families and friends at the now Presbyterian missions and led them to join the Adventist Church. In addition, a couple of them became Monnier's assistants in his translation work.

In 1921 the Delhoves established a mission station at Gitwe, which in due course became the center of Adventist work in Rwanda. A. A. Matter, a former Swiss missionary from Kenya, joined the group and accompanied Monnier to establish a station in the Eastern section of the country. It was at that time that the group suffered a third setback. After serious work in establishing a station at Kabangiri, near Lake Mohasi, they were advised that the Eastern section of the country had been granted to the British for the construction of the Cape to Cairo railway and they had to relocate.

After a prolonged search, they found a suitable site at Rwankeri in the northwest of Rwanda at an elevation of about 7,600 feet, in full sight of Mt. Karisimbi, and moved there with several Rwandese co-workers. Monnier set up residence in a small pole and thatch hut and they commenced erecting the mission buildings. The Matters left on furlough shortly after the transition, but Monnier remained there alone for two full years.

It was doubtless during those early years of solitude, when in grief at his loss of his loving wife, and in devotion to his task, that he identified with the local people and learned to speak Kinyarwanda as if it were his mother tongue. There was much work for him to do. In addition to establishing positive relationships with the community he took the physical duties of establishing a mission seriously. Men who were with him during those early years at Rwankeri speak with respect and awe about the way he made bricks with his own hands and stayed up at night when they were firing the kilns. They also describe the way he taught them to lay the bricks, saw and smooth wood, and make doors and windows. Due to the difficulties of his hard work, and living alone, his health suffered. Delhove, on a visit from Gitwe, strongly advised him to leave on furlough, take a course on tropical medicine, find a wife, and not fail to return.

Monnier left for Switzerland soon after the Matters returned and fulfilled all of these recommendations. He married Olga Pavlov, a nurse and Bible worker who was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, but who had moved to Switzerland. Monnier earned a diploma in tropical medicine, which qualified him to receive free medicine for the mission from the Belgian administration. He returned to Rwanda with his new bride toward the end of 1924. Witnesses describe the joy and happiness with which they were welcomed at the mission. The community organized a grand celebration at which they “sang and sang and danced and danced.” During his absence the Matters had made many improvements at the mission and expanded its work. Miss Marie Matter, a pharmacist who had accompanied her brother on a self-supporting basis, had opened a small clinic that was highly effective in breaking down barriers and in strengthening the bond with the local people.

The team settled down to serious business—erecting more buildings, preparing teachers, opening a school and four out-schools with five African teachers, and commencing evangelistic work. Henri began his serious commitment to translating the Bible. Writing to his brother Vital in November 1924, he described how busy he was during the day and that his nights were spent translating the Book of Acts. He concentrated on Acts because, at Kirinda, they had found a Kinyarwanda translation of the four Gospels made by the Bethel missionaries.

The Gitwe Year, 1925-1928

Delhove was called to establish a new mission in Burundi in mid-1925 and the Monniers were transferred to Gitwe where he directed the work until the Delhoves returned in mid-1928. Several important developments took place during these three years.

First, in 1925 H. E. Guillebaud, a Cambridge educated linguist, arrived at Kabale with a commission from the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) to translate the Bible into Kinyarwanda. Both Delhove and Monnier had established positive relationships with the SBMPC and CMS missionaries and visited them during their travels (Twagirayesu 1982:1080). Guillebaud, upon making contact with the Protestant missionaries and informing them of his mission, invited Monnier to join the translation group because of his mastery of Kinyarwanda.

Second, Monnier was invited to teach the young Tutsi at the court of Musinga, the Tutsi *mwami* (king), at Nyanza. The religio/political situation in Rwanda was extremely complex at that time. The Belgian authorities had established a system of indirect rule and placed pressure on the *mwami* to execute their policies. The White Fathers, who had established

many stations and converted many Hutus, but had failed to reach the Tutsi, were also placing a lot of pressure on the *mwami* to support their work. In reaction to these pressures, the *mwami* turned to the local Protestants. Inasmuch as Gitwe was the station closest to Nyanza, Monnier was invited to teach the essentials of Christianity to the young members at the court. Once a week, for much of his time at Gitwe, Monnier rode to Nyanza on his small motorcycle and conducted classes. At the outset, only the group at the court attended, but in due course the surrounding chiefs and others joined them. The *mwami* often attended, and at times more than two hundred were present. Geoffrey Holmes, of the CMS reported: “We need a worker at Nyanza. Thus far only an Adventist European visits once or twice a week” (1927:22). Later the CMS missionaries were also invited to the court (Linden 1977:167, 185).

Monnier established a positive relationship with the *mwami* and his son, Rudahigwa, who was appointed to replace his father in 1931. We do not know if there were any direct conversions of the court group—group pressure would certainly have prevented individual conversions—but many of the others who attended joined Bible study classes. It is too bad that more is not known about these visits and what Monnier taught. It is well known that he kept a diary, but unfortunately, this too has been lost.

As a result of these visits the Catholics took the Protestants seriously and the stage was set for considerable Catholic/Protestant tension. In order to curb Protestant expansion the Vicar Apostolic ordered the erection of temporary structures within the areas that had been assigned to the Protestant missions (Linden 1977:168). In due course Monnier, as did members of the other Mission Societies, contacted the Belgian administration staunchly protesting these incursions into their designated territory. Linden refers to these incursions as the “defiantly planted flags of the religious scramble” (1977:168).

Monnier gained other benefits from his connection with the *mwami* court. While living alone at Rwankeri he had learned to speak the local dialect, but was now accorded the opportunity of learning the official court Kinyarwanda. This made him of inestimable value to the translation committee. Second, discussion with the young men at the court gave him the opportunity of deepening his understanding of the Banyarwanda culture and religion. One can almost observe his understanding of the traditional culture and religion growing as one reads the articles he wrote for church papers. Writing from Gitwe, he describes some features of the traditional religion.

With these people, everything that happens is supernatural. Therefore, they must do their utmost to gain the favor of the gods that cause “bad luck.” There is a true God they believe, but they do not

care much about Him, for He in His goodness will not do them much harm. There is a world of bad spirits . . . whom we may rightly call their god . . . that can harm them. It is composed of their people who have passed away . . . [and to whom] they must make sacrifices to appease the wrath of any bad spirit. (1926:12)

In response, Monnier worked to create a Christian community which could provide social and moral support for new Christians when they were no longer welcome in the communities of their birth. “A little church has been organized . . . [since] surrendering is not a light matter. It means the sacrifice of old friends, an old association must pass to make room for a new class of people, all striving together for eternal life. No more pagan fears, no more mystical worship. . . . Jesus is all to them” (12). Because of his grasp of the local language, culture and religious beliefs of the people, Monnier was uniquely qualified to communicate the gospel in ways that engaged the local consciousness.

Bible Translation

A conference on the translation of the Scriptures, presided over by the Rev. Roome of the British and Foreign Bible Society, met in Kirinda on April 11-20, 1927. The participants included H. Guillebaud of the CMS, E. Durand, J. Honore, and A. Lestrade of the SBPMC, and H. Monnier. Monnier and Mrs. Guillebaud functioned as joint secretaries. Notice the report of that meeting:

We began with the orthography . . . [as to] how the native sounds should be written. . . . Then we discussed transliteration . . . [of] words for which there is no Kinyarwanda equivalent. . . . Then came a list of religious terms such as words for God, the Holy Spirit, angel, demon. . . .

So far I have simply summarized what we discussed but to give any idea of the wonderful working of God in this conference there is more to be said. . . . A feeling of real mutual regard and friendship sprang up. (Guillebaud 1927:8-21)

It was wonderful that Monnier, with limited formal education and without a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew functioned so well with this highly educated group. Bible translation subsequently became a major part of his missionary service. It is quite incredible that he managed to fulfill his designated translation assignments as well as the missionary responsibilities of erecting buildings, directing the mission and its workers, teaching classes, writing course outlines, and organizing evangelistic bands.

On January 24, 1928 while attending a conference at the Gendia Mission in the Congo, Monnier was ordained. In August of the same year he attended the Missions Council at Marienhohe in Germany attended by leaders from the General Conference, and missionaries from other parts of Africa, the Far East, and Persia. While there he gained a wider view of the outreach and methodology of Adventist Missions in other parts of the world and returned home enriched and encouraged (Bartlett 1928:5, 6).

Return to Rwankeri

The Delhoves returned to Gitwe in 1928 and the Monniers moved back to Rwankeri where he worked for the remainder of his missionary service. The Adventist Church in Rwanda was granted *Personnalite Civile* by a royal proclamation on July 18, 1928. The legal representatives of the mission listed in the document were D. E. Delhove, A. A. Matter, H. Monnier, and M. Duploux (Coronet 2005:255). This was encouraging and gave them a new confidence in dealing with the authorities and other mission bodies.

The work of the church had expanded considerably by 1929. C. W. Bozarth, who had recently been appointed Superintendent of the Rwanda mission, reported on his first visit to Rwanda that there were now six missionary families, sixty-eight local workers, and thirty-one village schools centered around three mission stations with an enrollment of 2,417.

At Rwankeri “every Sabbath about 1,500 attend . . . services and the influence of the mission has gone out many miles in every direction. . . . A spirit of evangelism is getting hold of our European and native workers. The month of July of each year is given over to evangelistic work. . . . We are looking forward to a great harvest of souls” (Bozarth 1929:20, 21).

Soon there was another great setback. In 1928 and 1929 there was a dreadful famine. More than 35,000 died and 70,000 emigrated to Uganda (Linden 1977:168). Apparently, the Tutsi chiefs hoarded their own food supplies and denied the Hutu workers access to those resources. As tension and opposition to the chiefs rose, the Belgians encouraged the *mwami* to visit the provinces and drum up support. The *mwami* crossed the Nyabarongo River in 1929 “in defiance of the tradition of the ‘Yuhi’ kings” and received a warm welcome (170). Monnier was one of those who went to welcome him.

A few years, later after Musinga had been deposed and Rudahigwa had been elected as *mwami*, he also went north and, inasmuch as he had known Monnier well in earlier days, visited Rwankeri. He spent the night at the mission, ate with the mission group there, even though he was a Catholic. Both of these visits added impetus to the strong Adventist

movement and boosted the standing of Rwankeri and its programs of education and evangelism in the community. Monnier described the situation at Rwankeri in 1930 as follows:

We are surrounded by Catholics. . . . In a territory where we have only two European families they have between seventy and eighty priests . . . we have strong opposition and many obstacles.

The Northern section of Ruanda . . . did not show any advance until 1929 . . . but the spiritual life has become brighter and there is ground for sound hopes. . . . Remember this field in your prayers. (1930:5, 6)

More on Bible Translation

At the same time, Monnier was heavily involved with Mose Segatwa in Bible translation and attended several more conferences. Guillebaud reported the following regarding the ongoing translation work:

M. Monnier of the Seventh-day Adventists has been here twice for short visits and has given me a number of criticisms of the translation of the Gospels. Some of these, which affect not only the Gospels but numerous passages in the Acts and Epistles as well, seem to Samsoni and me to be entirely right and I am most anxious to adopt them. But M. Honorez does not agree at present and at his suggestion there is going to be a conference between him and Monnier and myself at Kabale . . . to discuss these matters. (1930:16-19)

A year later, he wrote: “As regards the Gospels, I am delighted to be able to tell you that M. Monnier . . . has just bought 500 more copies and that there is good hope that their station may buy yet another 500. We were led to spend a night at his station, Rwankeri, on our way from Shira to Gahini” (1931:6-9).

In his farewell letter written in April 1932, Guillebaud wrote:

Dear Friends of Ruanda: What great cause there is for thankfulness in the cooperation and friendly attitude of M. Honorez of the Belgian Mission and M. Monnier of the Seventh-day Adventists. As I look back to the atmosphere of opposition and suspicion that prevailed up to the time of the Kirinda Conference in April 1927, and during the first days of the conference itself, I cannot but feel lost in wondering praise when I consider the last few years and the present position. M. Monnier has been and is most appreciative of the translation work and most generous in waiving his objections where we disagree in order that there should be no hindrance to the translation. (1932:35-38)

A. C. Stanley Smith was appointed to carry on Guillebaud's work of translating the Bible. The Old Testament, Joshua to Malachi, with the exception of the Psalms, was still to be translated and he maintained the relationship with Monnier. He spent a weekend at Rwankeri and preached a Sabbath sermon on Hebrews 11. In 1957, when the entire Kinyarwanda Bible was published, the names of both of the Adventists involved in the translation process, H. Monnier and A. L. Hands, were entered in the flyleaf along with the other translators. In addition, a commemorative plaque was presented to Mrs. Monnier, in recognition of the outstanding contributions of her husband by W. J. Bradnock, Secretary for Translations, of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Revival and Growth

From the early 1930s onward, employing a three-phase strategy of health care, education, and community evangelism, the church began to grow rapidly. As education came to be more appreciated, the school system was expanded and each school became a center of evangelism for the surrounding area. Sheets of hand written hymns were distributed and the children learned to sing gospel hymns with great enthusiasm. Vespers were conducted on Friday and Sabbath evenings and the teachers also conducted church services at the schools.

Monnier produced a series of sermon notes and a baptismal manual the teachers could follow. The East African Revival, during which there was a general turning toward Christianity, took place during the mid 1930s, and Adventists maximized the opportunity. Preachers, teachers, and groups of enthusiastic laypeople were organized into groups and went out to assigned areas for a month or longer and engaged the community in inspiring meetings and Bible study.

Monnier was active in organizing and directing these groups. These revival meetings led to a wide expansion of the church, which while more rapid in the Rwankeri area, also took place around Gitwe and in Rwanda generally. Hutu and Tutsi were united in enthusiastic response to the gospel and to an underlying feeling that the Adventists were teaching and practicing the true gospel. The success and enthusiasm of these revival meetings evoked considerable, and sometimes vigorous opposition by Catholic clergy and chiefs.

All of the chiefs if they wish to remain chiefs must become Roman Catholics. One of the chiefs . . . had called for a school. Then when the school was opened . . . the White Father himself came right on to the hill and told the people that if they attended our school a great famine would come on them. The chief then being frightened turned on us . . . and threatened to burn the hut of the natives who took care of our

blackboard and slates unless they also turned on us. He threatened to punish all the scholars who attended our school. (Bozarth 1933:5-7)

Monnier was active in opposing and reporting improper incursions into the schools and revival services. On one occasion, in response to continuous serious conflict at Rambura in the Rwankeri district, the Belgian Resident came in person from Kigali to settle the matter. Lining up Monnier and the priest Vitalox and their supporters before him the Resident said: "I have come to let you know the view of the Belgian government on such matters. We give freedom to every denomination. Each of you is free to choose the faith you belong to." Then he addressed Monnier and Vitalox in turn and commanded each not to intrude on each other's territory (interview with Pastor Nsengiyumva). Both the CMS and SBMPC had similar difficulties with the Catholic Fathers.

Because Monnier was not at all reluctant to interact with the chiefs and White Fathers on the many occasions when they obstructed the functions of both schools and revival meetings, he was given the name *Rukandirangabo*. There were additional reasons for giving this name to Monnier. The general society in Rwanda was organized along the lines of a semi-feudal system, called *Ubughake*, in which the ordinary people provided labor for the chiefs. At times of stress such as that produced by a drought, or when for other reasons the days of labor demanded by the chiefs were increased, life was very difficult for the peasants. Under such circumstances, Monnier became a great protector of the people. He appealed directly to the chiefs, defended the rights of the ordinary people, and if unsuccessful appealed to the Belgian administrators to restore the generally accepted order. Hence, he was called *Rukandirangabo*, "the mighty man, the protector, the shield bearer."

The socio/religious status accorded Monnier added to the appeal and vibrancy of the revival. As the years passed the number of the month-long July revival meetings increased and also the breadth of their outreach. Enthusiastic singing added to the attraction of the revival meetings. The Kinyarwanda hymnbook of popular gospel hymns, many of them translated by Monnier, was published in 1932.

For the remainder of the 1930s, and well into the 1940s, the church continued to expand rapidly. This is revealed in reports published in denominational papers by church leaders who visited the area. Bozarth describes his visit to one of these new districts:

A week ago it was my privilege to visit with Elder Monnier a new interest in a district where our work has never touched before. On Sabbath, there were 1,200 people out to services. Between five and six hundred of these are now members of our Bible classes. Five months

ago, there was not a single Adventist in this district. . . . During our special evangelistic month some teachers with a few Missionary Volunteer members went into this district . . . [where] they met determined opposition. Several times their meetings were entirely broken up and many of the interested ones persecuted.

Never have I seen people so eager to accept and follow the truth. . . . In the Rwankeri district alone, there will be over 600 additions to the Bible classes for the last quarter of the year. (1933:5)

Fifteen months later, A. F. Tarr, secretary of the Africa Division, reported on a visit to the area:

On the Sabbath morning at Rwankeri we found gathered together for Sabbath School and church a vast congregation of 7,157—the largest gathering that has ever assembled on any of our stations in Africa. . . . The missionary volunteers have in a most remarkable way contributed to the up building of the work. So much so that the result of their labors has caused Brother Monnier great perplexity. He said, “The workers are unable to care for the large flock of new believers, and funds are not available to add to the force. . . . We have had great increases in souls with a budget cut year after year.” With an earnestness which cut to the quick, Brother Monnier stated: “I am not here to beg . . . but I cannot carry on the work with our actual budget.” (1934:13-14)

This was during the great financial depression and additional funds were not available, but the work continued unabated. Many of the volunteers were so enthusiastic that they neglected their gardens and concentrated on the ingathering of souls. Monnier feared that if there was another famine thousands would be utterly destitute. J. F. Wright, president of the Africa Division, described the Sabbath morning service at the camp meeting at Rwankeri in August of 1935:

Following breakfast Elder Evans and the writer stood . . . to watch the people as they came from the hills and the valleys. . . . As we used binoculars, we could see them coming from everywhere. They literally came by the hundreds . . . in one company . . . more than a thousand.

There is no question but that Elder Evans spoke to at least 18,000 people that morning. . . . I presume there has never been such a large gathering in the history of our work. . . . We were pleased also to see a number of chiefs present, who, prior to this time had been very bitter in their opposition toward us. Now some of them are becoming very friendly and they are offering to let us open schools in their districts. . . . On Sunday morning 145 were baptized after having been very carefully examined. (Wright 1935:5-6)

Five years later Elder Wright reported:

The next week-end brought us to Rwankeri. Here we found Elder Monnier with his usual smile . . . Strong plans were already formulated for the camp-meeting. Now talk about a very vivid thrill! Well we were given it here when almost 20,000 people came to the services on Sabbath. It is difficult... for anyone to visualize such a mighty con-course of people at a religious service.

A letter just received from Elder Monnier reveals "that during July and August of this year 257 companies composed of our workers, and 1,458 lay-members, or Missionary Volunteers were out in the field. Their goal in soul winning was to win just over 3,500 souls to Christ during this six-to-eight-week period. . . . God is doing great things around the Rwankeri Mission! (1940:2, 3)

The revival continued and the church expanded and grew across Rwanda. This story about the church in Rwankeri area is important for two reasons. First, because there is quite a bit of direct information about membership growth in this area. Second, because of the concentration on the missionary experiences of Monnier, one of the very dedicated and effective missionaries who lived and shared the gospel of our gracious Lord in Rwanda.

Monnier's Final Days in Rwanda

There was a tragic change in the life story of the Monnier family during the next few years. The revival, increase in numbers attending the Bible classes, and growth and spread of the Adventist Church continued unabated. Then the Second World War broke out. In late 1939 his wife and family returned to Switzerland, but he felt that he could not leave his co-workers and the work that was progressing so rapidly, so he remained in Rwanda. In 1941, he obtained a *viza de retour* and joined his family in Switzerland. However, upon submitting papers for his return after a brief homecoming he was advised by the Belgian authorities that he was denied permission to return to Rwanda.

Upon pursuit of the matter, both personally, and by church officials, Governor Ryckmans advised that the administrators would be very happy to have Monnier return but not before the end of the war. When pressed for a reason he mentioned that it was well known that Monnier was a pacifist and that in the event of a German attempt to enter and take control of Rwanda he would effectively oppose conscription into the army. His influence was so great and widespread that the Belgian authorities felt it unwise to admit him while this threat continued. Thus, he was denied permission to return.

These were very sad and discouraging days for Monnier. He was offered a pastoral ministry in Switzerland, but could not settle down, and friends there said he seemed sad and discouraged. He was also offered other missionary positions in Africa but declined—his heart was in Rwanda.

Monnier's love for the Lord, his sense of responsibility to continue God's work, and his burden to give direction and meaning to the lives of the many who had responded to the gospel dominated his thought. How could his commission to fulfill the work of God be put aside so simply by earthly political situations? God's work could not be left half done. After giving the matter much thought and prayer, he decided to return to Rwanda. From one point of view this may be regarded as a rash decision; however, it is more fittingly recognized as an outworking of his overwhelming commitment to the Divine commission, which inspired and gave direction to his life. He travelled through the Congo and arrived at Rwankeri in 1942.

When the local people heard that Monnier was back there was enormous rejoicing. Thousands came to meet him. There were services with joyful singing to welcome and celebrate his return.

Much to his surprise, when Governor Ryckmans heard that Monnier was back at Rwankeri he contacted J. R. Campbell, superintendent of the Congo Mission, and requested that he transfer Monnier to the Gitwe mission, where he might be less influential. Monnier could remain there for a short period while he completed his assigned translation responsibilities; however, he was not to return to Rwankeri nor to preach.

These were very difficult and discouraging days for Monnier. He translated *Steps to Christ*, and some Old Testament books, and despite the restriction did conduct some local services; however, the local people reported he was not the vibrant glowing Monnier of former days.

To relieve the situation, Neal Wilson, then president of the Middle East Union invited Monnier to accept the position of superintendent of the Turkish Mission. Because of the war, Monnier proceeded directly to Lebanon without returning to Europe for his family. He arrived in Beirut in March 1944. Very sadly, he died of Typhoid fever on December 1, 1944 at the age of 48.

This tragic loss of one of Africa's, and of the Adventist Church's, very great missionaries—Rukandirangabo—is troubling to contemplate. However, we rejoice in the wonderful fruitful witness of his life, and believe that all things will be made plain in the Kingdom of grace.

Endnotes

¹ Building upon this solid foundation, the Adventist membership in Rwanda by year-end 2018 reached 920,102.

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MICHELET WILLIAM

Evangelism and Social Action: The Legacy of Ana and Ferdinand Stahl

Introduction

In “Can Mission Stories of an Adventist Past Foster a Shared Adventist Future?” Charles Teel calls for commitments that make profound demand on our life together. Teel presents the story of the Stahls as part of an Adventist collective memory, which he thinks remains unknown, unfortunately. He argues that

the collective story advanced by a religious movement will continue to inform succeeding generation anew only as theological beliefs are demonstrated to have relevance for personal and social ethics. Said experientially, such a community must demonstrate that truth informs lived experience; that a way of believing results in a way of being; and that word becomes flesh. . . . [The] Adventist story may be passed on to our children only as this doing of theology becomes of one piece. (Teel 1989:1)

The story of Ana and Ferdinand Stahl, two Adventist missionaries in Peru, has inspired many and provides a new perspective on the scope and essence of the work that is expected from all who receive the call to be God’s witnesses in a fallen world. Seventh-day Adventists seek the transformation of an individual’s soul, body, and spirit (White 1899). The wholistic nature of Adventist mission is remarkably evident in the story of this extraordinary mission-driven couple.

This article probes into the life and work of Ana and Ferdinand Stahl and seeks to discover how they expressed the relationship between *evangelism and the work of social liberation*. Along the way, it will also assess

how their life and work reflected the tension between *believing and doing*, and how their ministry exemplified the integration of *theology and praxis*.

This article highlights key moments of Ana and Ferdinand's life, their passion for the mission of God, how their faith drove their unique social consciousness, and their approach to strategic advocacy leading to systemic change in Peru.

The Missiological Debate: Evangelism Versus Social Action in Evangelicalism

Evangelism and social action represent two paradigms that have engaged the mind of theologians and missiologists for centuries, particularly during the last few decades. Should Christians maintain an essentially evangelistic approach to mission or should they also be engaged in social action as a significant element of their outreach to the world? In this context, Timothy Tennent defines evangelism as "the proclamation of the good news that through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ sinful people can be forgiven and reconciled to God" (2010:388). The evangelism paradigm insists that "the church's primary mission is to proclaim this good news, calling people to repentance" (388). Tennent defines social action as "the church's cultural mandate to express God's love practically through tangible acts of compassion and justice for the poor, the homeless, the sick, and disenfranchised" (389).

Tennent notes that evangelical, Pentecostal, and independent Christians are sometimes criticized for being committed to only evangelism, while other Christian denominations are portrayed as being committed only to justice and social action (2010:391). However, Tennent believes that "the difference is often one of emphasis and definition of what it means to evangelize, rather than discreet spheres of commitment" (391).

The renown missiologist, David Bosch, gives a comprehensive definition of evangelism:

We may, then, summarize evangelism as that dimension and activity of the church's mission which, by word and deed and in the light of particular conditions and a particular context, offers every person and community, everywhere, a valid opportunity to be directly challenged to a radical reorientation of their lives, a reorientation which involves such things as deliverance from slavery to the world and its powers; embracing Christ as Savior and Lord; becoming a living member of his community, the church; being enlisted into his service of reconciliation, peace, and justice on earth; and being committed to God's purpose of placing all things under the rule of Christ. (2011:1451 iBooks)

Bosch's definition above highlights the inclusive characteristic of evangelism. By stating that evangelism includes "word and deed," and is concerned with issues such as slavery to the world and its powers, reconciliation, peace, and justice on earth, Bosch treats social action as an integral part of evangelism, rather than as a separate entity.

Lesslie Newbigin suggests that it is impossible to set apart evangelism and social ministry. He noticed that missionaries sometimes tried to just "preach the gospel" and remain uninvolved in the business of "social service." But, inevitably, they faced a hungry man begging for food, or a sick child crying for help. Then, in spite of their "pure theology," they found themselves drawn into "the work of education, healing, social service, 'agricultural missions' and a host of similar activities" (1995:158). For this reason, Newbigin believes that "missions have never been able to separate the preaching of the gospel from action for God's justice" (157).

Most evangelicals acknowledge the importance of social action as part of the mission of the church (Tennent 2010:391). Several evangelical statements attest to this assertion. The most preeminent examples include the 1966 Wheaton Declaration, the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin, also in 1966, the Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern in 1973, and the 1974 Lausanne Covenant. The *Lausanne Covenant* has been widely viewed as one of the most significant documents in modern church history, and it has served as a rallying call to the evangelical church around the world. The document defines what it means to be evangelical, challenging Christians to work together to make Jesus Christ known throughout the world. Paragraph 5 of the *Lausanne Covenant* on "Christian Social Responsibility" states that evangelism and social concern must go hand in hand.

Because mankind is made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, colour, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. (Lausanne Movement 1992)

Tennent notes three key features of the Lausanne Covenant, especially in paragraph 5. The first feature highlights how "it properly places social action in a theological context, linking it to the doctrines of God, reconciliation, righteousness, and the fact that all men and women are created

in the image of God” (2010:392). The second feature is the affirmation that “evangelism and social action are not ‘mutually exclusive,’ thereby laying the groundwork for an integrated view of how the person and work of Christ are reflected in the life and witness of the church” (392). The last and third feature is the insertion of “the expression of *metanoia*, or repentance, for the church’s failure to live consistently with the biblical witness to social action and the struggle for justice on behalf of the oppressed” (393).

Tennent also notes that, in spite of such unequivocal acknowledgement that evangelism and social action are part of Christian duty, the nature of that relationship was not spelled out in the document. Consequently, one can observe broad differences in the ways evangelical denominations integrate the two. Some implement relief and development as a *bridge* to evangelism. Others view relief and development as a natural *consequence* of evangelism. A third category approaches them as complementary elements working as *partners*.

John Stott, architect of the Lausanne Covenant, sees social action and evangelism as partners, like “the two blades of a pair of scissors or the two wings of a bird” (Stott and Wright 2015:43). Stott further observes that Jesus “in his ministry, *kerygma* (proclamation) and *diakona* (service) went hand in hand. . . . Both were expressions of his compassion for people, and both should be of ours. . . . Indeed, so close is this link between proclaiming and serving that they actually overlap” (44).

Evangelism and Social Action in Adventism

Adventist missions have often been bashed for being oblivious to social injustices, too absorbed in evangelism, and with an overemphasis on eschatology. Indeed, from the onset, the impulse for Adventist mission has been Revelation 14:6, 7, which plainly teaches that “the everlasting gospel” and “the hour of his judgment is come,” themes would be preached “to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” before Christ’s Second Coming. Adventist understanding of their prophetic calling gave to early Adventists a sense of urgency in the proclamation of the Three Angels’ Message to all the world before the end comes. Georges Knight highlights how critical and urgent that preaching was for Ellen White, who “called for ‘self-sacrificing’ Adventists to ‘give themselves unreservedly’ to the work of presenting the message ‘to those in darkness’” (1999:91). Knight also shows that preaching the third angel’s message was so important for Ellen White that she warned Adventists against anything that could interfere with this proclamation. Even the medical/welfare work should come second. “The medical/welfare work may be ‘good work’ but it was not to take the place of emphasizing the preaching

of Adventist's prophetic message" (Knight 1999:92). Knight concludes by calling Adventists to hold on to their prophetic heritage in their mission enterprise. Regarding Seventh-day Adventism, he states that "to deny its prophetic heritage is a certain way to destroy what might be thought of as its missiological mainspring" (94).

However, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, in its official statements, acknowledges the importance of social action as an integral part of mission. Gordon Doss states that "Adventist mission has been consistently wholistic, even though in various times and places it may not have achieved the ideal coordination between evangelism and social ministry" (2018:6). The Adventist Church has issued a number of statements on specific global social issues. On the issue of global poverty, for example, in a statement approved and voted by the Executive Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on June 23, 2010, it stated that "Seventh-day Adventists believe that actions to reduce poverty and its attendant injustices are an important part of Christian social responsibility" (Seventh-day Adventist Church 2010). According to the statement, the involvement of the church is not limited to just some paternalistic or gratuitous benevolence services here and there. The Executive Committee statement goes on to say that

working to reduce poverty and hunger means more than showing sympathy for the poor. It means advocating for public policy that offers justice and fairness to the poor, for their empowerment and human rights. It means sponsoring and participating in programs that address the causes of poverty and hunger, helping people to build sustainable lives. This commitment to justice is an act of love (Micah 6:8). (Seventh-day Adventist Church 2010)

Seventh-day Adventists are peacemakers, according to another official church statement voted on April 18, 2002. The statement lays out the path to achieving peace: dialogue, justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Notice what the document stated about the issue of justice.

Justice requires respect for human rights, in particular religious liberty, which deals with the profoundest human aspirations and undergirds all human rights. Justice requires nondiscrimination, respect for human dignity and equality, and a more equitable distribution of the necessities of life. Economic and social policies will either produce peace or discontent. Seventh-day Adventist concern for social justice is expressed through the support and promotion of religious liberty, and through organizations and departments of the Church which work to relieve poverty and conditions of marginalization. Such efforts on the part of the Church can, over time, reduce resentment and terrorism.

By this statement, the Adventist Church acknowledges that justice is a prerequisite for sustainable peace. Justice is achieved when human rights, including religious rights, are fulfilled. All this requires that church members be concerned with social issues and fully committed to social ministry and the work of advocacy.

In addition, numerous Adventist scholars advocate an approach to mission that integrates evangelism and social ministry. For Rudi Maier, Jesus was not interested in offering only eternal life and inner freedom to individuals while ignoring their human condition. Maier understands Jesus' mission was to offer "God's merciful love and the kingdom of life and freedom" to the "sheep without a shepherd," and "free them from the hunger they are suffering from" (1999:84). To the question, whether social service and development work are evangelization or not, Maier believes that Jesus' answer would be the following: "Social service and human promotion are not evangelization, since evangelization implies the explicit announcement of His kingdom and the call to faith and conversion. However, human promotion and social service are *integrated* in evangelization. They are part of God's project for total freedom of all people and thereby an important component of mission (1999:84, 85).

For David Trim, director of the Office of Archives and Research at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Adventists in the time of Ellen White (late nineteenth-century) shared the attitudes of other premillennialists of their day, such as Edward Irving and Henry Drummond. The premillennialist eschatology of these men did not lead them to fatalism or lack of concern. Instead, they became more eager to see both souls being saved and social reforms implemented by the government in order to mitigate the effects of the upcoming judgment (2019:15, 16). Trim notes that Adventists shared Irving and Drummond's attitudes on "the need for a wholistic approach to conversion, and some also shared similar perspectives on the legitimacy, even the necessity of acting against societal ills in order to ensure that more people could be holistically converted and thus saved at Christ's soon return" (2019:17).

However, it is worth noting that the Adventist Church's wholistic view of mission has not always been translated into practice on the ground. Instead, there still exists in many contexts a sharp distinction between evangelism and social concerns. Maier observes that "Adventists too often see themselves as ministering in one or the other of these spheres. Preachers often limit their concern to eternal salvation" (1999:85). For David Trim, Ana and Ferdinand Stahl are perfect examples of how "Adventist missionaries were able successfully to combine the conversionary imperative with truly radical social activism" (2019:22).

From Conversion to the Mission Field

Fernando Stahl was born on January 3, 1874, in Pentwater, Michigan. He was only eight months old when he lost his father, who was an officer in the German army before immigrating to the United States. Ana was a Swede who had emigrated to the United States when she was 16. Six years later, in 1892, she married Ferdinand, who was four years her junior (Trim 2019:21). The Stahls became Seventh-day Adventists in 1899 after they bought a book from a Seventh-day Adventist, and after studying the Bible together, were baptized. Following their conversion to the Adventist faith, they decided to “dedicate their lives to service for others” (Wearner 1988:17). That burning passion for service took them to Battle Creek, Michigan, where they enrolled in a nursing course. Upon completion of their studies, they were sent to Cleveland, Ohio, by the sanitarium board to take charge of the Cleveland Treatment rooms. With no support from Battle Creek, they purchased a treatment room in a small sanatorium out in the country 27 miles from Cleveland. They carried on their work there for about four years. “We believed this was right for we had studied the Testimonies,” they wrote later in a letter to Ellen White on February 4, 1909. However, since going to Cleveland they had heard a great deal about private sanatoriums not being the right kind of work, so they tried to pass the sanatorium over to the Adventist Church, but the leaders from the General Conference and the local conference showed no interest. This caused them great concern because they wanted to “be with, and in the organization, and in perfect harmony” (Stahl 1909).

It was in this context that on February 4, 1909, the Stahls wrote to Ellen White for advice. In their letter, they expressed their disappointment with the Church not showing interest in taking up the sanatorium. They expressed their desire to be in “the organized work” and their willingness to give up everything in order to be ready “to go where God calls us, whether home or foreign field” (Stahl 1909, Letter #2). On March 5, 1909, William Clarence White, Ellen White’s son, answered: “Mother wishes me to say to you that the Lord has not given her any revelation regarding yourselves or the work in which you are engaged. . . . Mother advises you to take counsel from brethren in Ohio who have a knowledge of your location and of your capabilities” (White 1909, Letter #3). William White offered the Stahl’s his personal advice saying that from reports coming to him from Ohio, it would be better for the Stahl’s to sell the building because it was too far from the city, too isolated, and settle in a place “where you can reach the people that need the treatments you can give” (W. White 1909). They followed the counsel from Ellen White’s son. They gave up on everything and sought an opportunity to serve wherever God would call them.

Robert G. Wearnner describes the Stahls as missionaries with an exuberant passion for the mission of God. In his account, Wearnner says that when Stahl and his wife Ana felt God's impression on their heart to serve as missionaries overseas, they left Ohio and headed to Washington, DC. There, they attended the 1909 General Conference Session and took the opportunity to meet J. W. Westphal, president of the South American Union. They expressed their desire to help as missionaries in the Andes Highlands, where indigenous tribes were oppressed and living in inhumane conditions. Westphal had a heart for mission and was sensitive to "the plight of the millions of the sons of the Incas, who lived and died without medical attention or educational privileges" (Wearnner 1988:15). He was excited about the idea of sending two "consecrated workers" willing to risk their lives in order to alleviate the sufferings of the descendants of the Incas living in the highlands of Peru and Bolivia. Unfortunately, there were no funds to send another missionary family to South America. Ana and Ferdinand were so eager to respond to God's call that they decided to use their own money to cover their missionary travel expenses. Later, Ana used her inheritance to buy property and build a home in Iquitos in eastern Peru (23).

Ana and Ferdinand in South America

Ana and Ferdinand Stahl's time in South America can be divided into four periods corresponding to four different locations: La Paz, Bolivia (1909-1911), Plateria, around Lake Titicaca, Peru (1911-1920), the Amazon Jungles, Peru (1920-1925), and Iquitos, Peru (1927-1938). They went home to the USA on furlough during 1926. The Stahl's experience in these four locations is told in two books Ferdinand wrote: *In the Land of the Incas* (1920) and *In the Amazon Jungles* (1932).

La Paz, Bolivia (1909-1911). The Stahls arrived at the port of Mollendo in South Peru in mid-1909 after a voyage of twenty days from New York. Soon after, they headed by train to La Paz, the capital of Bolivia. They stayed there for two years, spending most of their time learning the local language and immersing themselves in the life and culture of a population that had been the victim for centuries of exploitation from the white man. The Stahls also sold Bibles and other religious books, which helped them meet many of the expenses of their missionary work.

Plateria, around Lake Titicaca, Peru (1911-1920). Two years later, in mid-1911, the Stahls were asked to move to Plateria on the shores of Lake Titicaca in Southern Peru. There they found an existing Adventist community with 46 baptized members. They encountered and described an oppressed race, "Indians in truly deplorable condition, living in the

most abject squalor and ignorance, knowing nothing whatever of the simplest laws of hygiene, and addicted to the most terrible drunkenness, and to the cocaine habit" (Stahl 1920:105). By the time they were about to leave, nine years later, Titicaca's membership had grown to over 2,000.

The Amazon Jungles, Peru (1920-1925). By 1920, Ferdinand Stahl received authorization from the Inca Union Mission to go up and over the Andes and down into the high jungle on the eastern slope. Having reached a coffee plantation at 2,000 feet elevation, whose owner was generous enough to donate land for a new mission, Ferdinand was stationed there for the next five years, joined later by his wife Ana. They found the Amazon jungle different from the high mountain plateaus. In the highlands among the Quichua and Aymara Indians, the air was always cool and clear, with brilliant sunshine, whereas in the jungle, one could barely see the sunlight, because of the dense vegetation, immense trees, tangled vines, and fast-moving streams running down deep gorges (Stahl 1932:7). Ferdinand relentlessly pursued his task of evangelizing the tribal people. Although he suffered great hazards because of the rapids and whirlpools, insects and snakes, as well as fierce opposition from those who felt threatened by his work, he persevered. The inhabitants of the rain forest received the living Word and treatment for their diseases. The Stahls founded a school, and baptized 184 people.

Iquitos, Peru (1927-1938). In 1925, before going home on furlough, Ferdinand explored Iquitos, the largest city on the upper Amazon with 14,000 inhabitants. There were many government schools, "roads have been cut through, and also a splendid airline has been established by the government" (Stahl 1932:102). Ferdinand quickly cabled the General Conference headquarters, "Iquitos Peru, Great prospects, (signed) Stahl" (Wearner 1988:24). Ana and Ferdinand spent their leave of absence attending the General Conference session in 1926 and visiting many churches in North America. They brought with them a Campa girl, Chave, who served as living evidence and witness of the fascinating stories they were sharing with Adventist congregations in the United States. Church leaders in Europe invited the Stahls to come and share their stories with them as well. Ana took that opportunity to pay a visit to her native Sweden. What a surprise and blessing it was for her to find inheritance money waiting for her in a Swedish bank. She used that money to buy property and build a home in Iquitos in eastern Peru.

Upon returning to Peru in 1927, Ana and Ferdinand settled in Iquitos. They immediately began making known their mission, holding meetings for the people, and soon had an organized church of a fine class of people. They found among groups of white people some who were willing to serve as gospel workers, whom Ferdinand placed in other villages on the

rivers. Not until 1938 did Ana and Ferdinand return permanently to the United States.

The Context of the Stahls' Mission in Peru

By 1909, the year of the arrival of Ana and Ferdinand in Peru, South America was called "the neglected continent" by the *Pacific Press*, publisher of the Stahl's book, *In the Amazon Jungles*. Indeed, the missionary couple found a population plagued with drunkenness, superstition, and spiritual slavery, and in need of the light and liberty of the gospel of Jesus (Stahl 1932:4). Other misfortunes among the people included illiteracy and oppression. Most of the indigenous people could not read, and this made them easy prey for abuse and exploitation. A small group of mestizo and white landowning families kept in total subjection 95 percent of the population. Land expropriations, forced labor, and arbitrary taxation were the chief tools of oppression. Notice how Stahl described the injustices the Indians were subject to in Plateria, Peru.

The Indians were beaten and deceived on every hand by the white people. They were considered as of less value than beasts. The first to mistreat them were the great landowners, who for many years had systematically robbed them of their lands. These were originally taken by the Spanish conquistadores, who in turn contracted with many of the Indians to work in the mines, paying them in land. At that time, the land was regarded as of little worth; but it has proved to be valuable, being excellent grazing land for the alpaca, the llama, and the vicuna, whose natural habitat is on these high plateaus.

Any Indian who was strong and fortunate enough to endure the hard work of the mines for two or three years received a title to a large tract of land. These papers either had been lost, or had become unreadable because of great age; therefore in the suits with the powerful landowners, the Indians could not prove their ownership by written titles, and most of the best lands had been taken from them.

The system of the usurpers was as effective as it was simple. Usually they forcibly removed the boundaries of the Indians' land, and at the same time laid claim to it. If an Indian remonstrated with a landowner, he was beaten by the landowners' servants. Finally, the Indian in desperation would go to one of the larger villages and secure a lawyer to take his case in hand. This would necessitate a suit against the wealthy landowner. The lawyer would take the case, promising faithfully to present the necessary papers before the court, and get the return of the land. Many papers would be prepared, for each of which a charge of from one to four dollars would be made; and the Indian, in order to get money to pay for them and carry on the suit, would be obliged to sell his cattle. . . .

The Indians, not knowing how to keep accounts, could never clear themselves of debt, and were thus kept virtually in slavery. There were hundreds of Indians in this condition. (1920:105-110)

A letter from E. H. Wilcox, the Stahl's successor in the Lake Titicaca Mission, describes an incident that showcases the injustice the Indians suffered from the authorities. The letter explains that nearby the *Mición Del Lago Ticaca*, Indians were selling the products during what seemed to be a fair (*fiesta*). The first day of the *fiesta*, a man called Arturo Dias, the judge of Santiago, erupted and began imposing taxes on all the products the Indians had brought to sell. Apparently, the problem was not the tax itself, but the fact that the judge raised the tax so high that the Indians were not able to pay it. As they could not pay the taxes, the judge would come and seize their belongings, which made the Indians furious and caused them to protest. To retaliate, Judge Arturo Dias used violence against the Indians, beating them with poles. As more Indians were protesting, he began to shoot in the air with his Winchester rifle, and threatened them that he would return and kill every last one of them.

The following day, he returned with two soldiers and his brother, and three more henchmen. Arturo Dias himself started firing on the Indians and killed one of them. When he saw that the man was dead, he returned to the town. The Indians all gathered around the dead body and watched over it during the whole night. The next day, the Indians saw someone on horseback coming from Santiago. Fearing that he was coming to take the dead man from them so they would have no proof that he had been shot, all the Indians surrounded the house where the dead man was lying. All of a sudden, horsemen headed by Arturo Dias came and began firing on the Indians again, wounding two of them. These two wounded Indians were carried to the Adventist Mission's compound, and there Kalbermatter, a member of the Mission's team, treated them. Unfortunately, one passed away and the other survived.

The Mission was then accused of inciting the Indians to subversion. Obviously, this was a lie. To the contrary, Kalbermatter did advise the Indians not to arm themselves but to quietly go back home and not to return to the fair. While on their way home, which was about two kilometers away, thirty horsemen, led again by Judge Dias, arrived from Santiago and began to attack them. They brutalized the Indians, trampled them with their horses, put their gun barrels in the Indians' mouths, shot them, and then shot them again. Some were shot as many as three times. The wounded were then trampled again with seven killed and five wounded. The Indians witnessed that Judge Arturo Dias killed more by his own hand, while many of the others only shot in the air.

Besides exploitation, violence, and injustices the Indians were subject to, there was no religious liberty in Peru. Catholicism was the dominant religion. The Stahls were regarded as lawbreakers for preaching and practicing a message other than that of the Catholic Church. They were insulted on every hand, stones were often thrown at them, and when they went through the villages, often the streets were blocked, their horses were struck with clubs, and they were threatened with death. Indians who accepted the Adventist message were also in some instances beaten almost to death (Stahl 1932:157, 158).

The Stahls' Social and Spiritual Impact

Education

Charles Teel wrote extensively about the Stahls. In one of his articles, published in the *Adventist Journal of Education*, he gave a glimpse of how Ana and Ferdinand fostered “a social transformation that affected social institutions as well as personal transformation that impacted individual minds, hearts, and bodies” (2013:24).

Teel reports that for centuries, Peruvian *Altiplanos* had no access to the legal structure of the national capital due to geographical isolation. An established caste system giving white and mestizo (mixed race) families land-holding privileges, alongside exploitation and abuse from state officials and religious functionaries of the state church had kept the 92 percent (Aymara and Quechua) in a form of “near-feudal” condition (24). The Stahls quickly realized that without education, there was no way out for the illiterate Indians, so education became their top priority.

By 1911, the Stahls launched a vast movement of establishing schools, relegating to second rank any other activities, including magazine peddling. They linked up with an Aymara visionary, Manuel Comacho. For some years Camacho had been clandestinely attempting to teach the Aymaras how to read. Camacho’s work had gotten him into a lot of trouble, even causing his arrest and imprisonment on several occasions. For a number of months, the Stahls joined forces with Camacho, traversing all the villages and hamlets, often in extreme conditions, bringing the bread of instruction, while living in a humble hut with a thatched roof and dirt floor.

The Stahls were able to raise enough funds to purchase a property on the shores of Lake Titicaca in the sleepy village of Platería. In 1913, a “mother school” opened its doors, “providing co-educational offerings in reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as hygiene and religion” (Teel 2013:25). There were bumps and all kinds of obstacles all along the way.

They met fierce opposition, but persevered. The credentialed professors who were imported to administer the new school were not able to cope with the high-altitude conditions (over 12,000 feet). A solution came with Ana accepting to take over the administrative responsibilities, supported by Camacho, and his young protégé Luciano Chambi (Chambi would later run the Broken Stone Mission). Demands for schools throughout the surrounding countryside increased rapidly, leading the Stahls to institute teacher-training courses in Platería and utilizing classrooms on a year-round basis (Teel 2013:25).

This educational program was spreading at a fast pace, boosting the popularity of the Stahls among the indigenous peoples of these highlands, in spite of strong opposition by the privileged overlords. The vast Lake Titicaca became soon the bastion of schools and churches, which were sprouting up like mushrooms. The schools ranged from humble home schools to large institutions. Teel gives a snapshot of the results of the Stahl's labor in the education sector: By 1916, 2,000 students were registered in 19 schools; by 1924, 4,000 in 80 schools; and by 1947, a high of nearly 7,000 in 109 schools. The Stahl's successor, E. H. Wilcox, reported that on one unforgettable day, 12 requests for village schools arrived from various villages (2013:25)

The amazing fact is, as schools were multiplying, congregations also multiplied. "Church congregations followed schools," observed Teel.

The baptized membership in the Lake Titicaca Mission numbered 445 in 1916; 2,255 in 1920; 5,963 in 1924; and 7,340 in 1927. By 1940, membership rolls had been purged of non-attending members and showed a total of 6,579. Yet that year's national census showed that in the Lake Titicaca area alone, there were fully four times that number of self-professed Protestants, virtually all of whom would have been Adventists. (Teel 2013:25)

Advocacy and Religious Liberty

Peru was a Catholic state, and Roman Catholicism was the state religion. Up to November, 1915, the constitution of Peru made it possible to persecute and banish from the country those who held religious services other than Catholic or refused to attend Catholic religious feasts (Stahl 1920:175). But this was about to change through the advocacy work of the Stahls.

On a construction site where the Stahls were erecting necessary mission buildings—a small hospital, a school building, and a house, the bishop of Puno, named Ampuero, showed up with a mob of two hundred men, all on horseback. Because the Stahls were not there, the bishop confiscated

the keys and other materials from the caretaker, while breaking up other supplies. Then the mob tried to compel the Indians living about the mission to kneel before the bishop and kiss his hand, which they refused to do. Six of them were bound arm to arm, and driven, hatless and coatless, to Puno, twenty-one miles away.

The Stahls, upon receiving the news about this affair, embarked on an advocacy enterprise that would be successful. They contacted the most prominent people of the city. They visited the judges, and other officials of the court, bringing evidence that the Indians were falsely accused by the bishop, warning them that someday they would “be called before the great judgment seat of God, and would have to answer for the judgment rendered upon these poor, misused people” (Stahl 1920:163, 164). In the afternoon, the judge released all the Indians from prison.

However, this incident was relayed by the local newspaper, the Puno *La Union*, in its issue of March 10, 1913. They criticized harshly the attitude of the Catholic bishop and the civil authority and called for justice. “What is happening is unheard-of! A proof that the authorities here are a danger and never a protection, is the fact that the Protestant natives, victims of religious persecution, are still imprisoned, locked up by the unconscionable action of the conscienceless authorities” (167). Then, the newspaper went on praising the work of the Stahls, “The evangelized Indian does not drink alcohol, he does not chew coca leaves, he is clean, he is moral; and now he can read, he has acquired habits of order and a desire to work, or he is sociable and exercises charity. They have a large ranch, a school, a hospital, and an inn for lodging” (170).

This *La Union* paper triggered a vast advocacy movement that resulted in a Supreme Court decree issued on September 2, 1914, and an amendment to the constitution of Peru, voted on November 11, 1915, granting religious liberty to all denominations (Stahl 1920:177-179).

Reflection on the Stahls’ Approach to Mission

The Stahl’s missionary approach embodies Ellen White’s statement, “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’” (1905:143). I have identified the following core pillars in the Stahl’s approach to mission: immersion, hospitality, care for the sick, education, training of workers, advocacy, and evangelization.

They invested their first two years to learn the local language and culture, to become familiar with the indigenous customs. In their two books—*In the Land of the Incas* and *In the Amazon Jungles*, Ferdinand

describes with minute details the cultural practices of the Indians and how he was eager to learn from them until he became like one of them and won their confidence.

Hospitality and care for the sick were other landmarks of the Stahls. “The missionary couple took children into their home, some of whom became missionaries to their own and other tribes” (Wearner 1988:23). They were also involved in medical work, which contributed to the success of their mission. Their ability to treat the diseases of the people was an incredible asset to their mission. They also provided the indigenous people with the education they longed for so that their children could enjoy a better life.

Ana and Ferdinand showed how their faith in God and their hope in the Second Coming generated in them a sense of urgency and a passion for mission. They were not content with only knowing the truth. They felt prompted to act. Eschatology did not mean for them fatalism or withdrawal from the world. They believed strongly in the imminent coming of Christ, as attested by how they closed a letter they wrote to Ellen White. “Thanking you kindly, we are you sister and brother in the *closing work*” (Stahl 1909, Letter #2, emphasis mine).

What was the priority of the Stahls? Was it to preach the Adventist message, make new converts, baptize the local people, or was it to help people with no strings attached? It is clear to me that in the Stahl’s approach, evangelism was not in opposition to social action. Was social action an entry point to evangelism, a consequence of evangelism, or were evangelism and social action partners in their approach to mission?

Reading through Ferdinand’s account of his experience in South America, it became clear that evangelism (preaching the gospel, saving souls) was the main drive for his commitment to mission. Yet, it was impossible to remain oblivious to the plight of the indigenous population who were suffering from numerous social evils.

Wearner highlights Ferdinand Stahl’s task of *evangelizing* the tribal people who had been untouched by the gospel (1988:23). He points to how Stahl carefully instructed the native people in the *doctrines of their faith* (23). Teaching correct doctrines to the indigenous people and making sure they followed the instructions they received were taken seriously by the Stahls. For example, “they counted the days by putting notches on a stick so as not to forget the Sabbath” (23).

They considered it important to baptize those who embraced the Adventist faith. But, baptism was not merely a quantitative goal to reach at all cost. Their true motivation was the salvation of souls from eternal death, as expressed in one of Ferdinand’s personal reflections. People, without a knowledge of the saving message, dying to be lost forever, is

an awful thought" (1932:116). Ferdinand wrote this reflection while thinking of a man who slashed off his left foot, cut off his left ear and left hand, and gouged out his left eye, because his conscience was troubling him for having lived a wicked life. Ferdinand was there at the bedside of that man who became delirious and would eventually pass away. "You cannot imagine my feelings as I sat there looking at this poor deluded man. . . . Ah, I thought, just sixteen days too late! If I could only have met him before to tell him of the loving Savior who is so willing to pardon our sins upon our sincere confession. (115)

Conclusion

The missionary experience of the Stahls validates the understanding that both Bosch and Newbigin had of the relationship between evangelism and social action. As seen earlier, both affirm the inseparability of the two. While the Stahls went to Peru to bring people to Jesus Christ for the redemption of their souls, they could not keep from exercising hospitality to the Indians, healing their sick, defending them against their oppressors, and advocating for systemic change. While doing evangelization, they could not escape from addressing the social needs that were so overwhelming. It is significant that the son of one of the Stahl's early converts, later wrote: "The Adventist school system opened the way for the indigenous population of the altiplano to achieve selfhood and self-sufficiency. The Stahl gospel both *converted hearts* and *changed the social fabric* of the highlands" (Teel 1999:279, emphasis mine).

In the framework of the Stahl's ministry to the Indians, there was no gap between *believing* and *doing*, and between *theology* and *praxis*. This may explain why many, including Samuel Escobar, often interpreted the work of the Stahls using a liberation theology lens. Charles Teel describes the Stahls as "missionaries, visionaries and revolutionaries" (1988:3). He cites Samuel Escobar, who in his book *La Fe Evangelica y Las Teologias de la Liberacion*, states that "the gospel which came to Latin America through Protestantism came as a liberating force because it brought with it the power of the biblical message" (quoted in Teel 1988:13). According to Teel, Escobar, at the very outset of his book, points to the "Adventist experience in the Peruvian Highlands as a 'dramatic example' of the social, economic, judicial, and political consequences that can be evoked by biblical, Christian faith" (13).

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BRUCE L. BAUER

The Impact of A. G. Daniells on Adventist Mission, 1901–1926

Adventist missions for the first thirty years of the twentieth century were very closely connected with the activities and lives of two men. A. G. Daniells was president of the General Conference from April 2, 1901 to May 11, 1922, and more than any other person he shaped the direction of missions in his denomination. He was closely supported from April 11, 1903 to May 11, 1922 by W. A. Spicer, who was the Secretary of the General Conference. Then at the 1922 General Conference Session, the two men switched positions. Spicer became president and guided the Adventist Church until May 28, 1930. Daniells was his Secretary until May 27, 1926 (*Yearbook* 1946:317).

Spicer was a prolific writer and did much to promote an awareness and understanding of missions. He wrote at least two books dealing with missions, *Miracles of Modern Missions* and *Our Story of Missions*. In order that he would have a first-hand knowledge of the needs of the foreign fields, he traveled extensively, so extensively in fact that for only four of the years between 1900 and 1940 did he not travel overseas to inspect or supervise some aspect of the expanding work (Neufeld 1976:1410-1411).

The story of this era began in the spring of 1901 when 237 delegates gathered in the Battle Creek Tabernacle for the thirty-fourth General Conference Session. The meetings lasted three weeks, and when they were finished the organizational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church had been radically changed.

Reorganization

As early as the 1899 General Conference Session complaints had been voiced concerning the inadequacies of the existing denominational structure. W. W. Prescott complained that funds designated for specific mission fields had been mismanaged and had often not been sent to the intended fields (Daily Bulletin 1899:60-64). Others criticized the spiritual life and commitment of some leaders, while others saw the problem as an over-centralization of the church that they believed had led to virtual ecclesiastical despotism (Schwarz 1979:274). Thus when the delegates gathered two years later for the 1901 session there was widespread agreement that reorganization of some kind must be a major item of business.

On the very first day of the session A. G. Daniells recommended that a large committee be formed, and that this committee be composed of the current leaders of the General Conference, the General Conference Association, the Australasian and European Union Conferences, the Foreign Mission Board, the Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association, the major publishing houses and colleges. This committee was given the responsibility of bringing about a reorganization of Seventh-day Adventist work (Daily Bulletin 1901:24-27).

Daniells was uniquely qualified to guide and direct in the reorganization of his denomination since he was one of the few delegates present who had experienced an alternate type of organization. Between 1886 and 1901 Daniells had worked in New Zealand and Australia. In 1894, he had been elected vice-president of the newly formed Australasian Union Conference. This was the first union conference in the denomination, and at the 1901 General Conference, it became a pattern for other areas in the world (Neufeld 1976:105-106). Daniells had also been introduced to a new type of organization on the conference level when A. T. Robinson, as president of the Victoria Conference set up departments to oversee the Sabbath School work and the Missionary and Tract work rather than following the existing practice of organizing a Sabbath School Association and a Tract and Missionary Society, each with its own set of officers. Daniells had originally opposed Robinson in this type of organization, feeling that it would lead to anarchy, but experience proved that it allowed for a much more efficient utilization of leader's time and talents (Schwarz 1979:272, 273).

At the 1901 session Daniells was in a position to make recommendations that would move the whole denomination towards an organizational structure, that until then, had existed only in Australia and partially in South Africa (272, 273).

W. C. White brought in the first recommendation from the subcommittee on organization, in which it was suggested that the five districts in

North America reorganize into union conferences, and that these union conferences replace the local conferences as the constituent parts of the General Conference (Jorgensen 1949:31-33). Daniells was instrumental in getting this motion passed since he was able to give a detailed description as to how the Australasian Union Conference was organized and how it functioned (Schwarz 1979:277).

The aspect of reorganization that most affected Adventist missions was the recommendation that the various independent associations, such as the International Sabbath School Association, the International Tract and Missionary Society, the National Religious Liberty Association, and the Foreign Mission Board cease their semi-independent activity and departmentalize under the control of the General Conference Committee.

The International Sabbath School Association became the Sabbath School Department (Neufeld 1976:1258), the Religious Liberty Association became the Religious Liberty Department (Schwarz 1979:278) and the International Tract and Missionary Society was replaced by several agencies: local church missionary societies, the Book and Bible Houses, and two General Conference departments: the Publishing Department and later the Home Missionary Department (Neufeld 1976:1497). The Boards of these associations “immediately took action to wind up their affairs as independent organizations and turn their assets and files over to the secretaries assigned by the General Conference Committee to promote these lines of work. Similar action followed in the local conferences” (Schwarz 1979:278, 279).

It is interesting to note that in the case of the Foreign Mission Board no General Conference department was established to promote and care for the concerns and interest of missions. Instead, the delegates to the General Conference Session agreed to a series of suggestions that resulted in placing all of the work of the Foreign Mission Board in the hands of the Executive Committee of the General Conference (1979:278). This change did not fully take place until the 1903 General Conference Session when “action was taken assigning to the General Conference Committee [GCC] the responsibility of supervising the missionary operations of the denomination” (Neufeld 1976:911).

Day-by-Day Mission Operations and Promotion: 1901-1930

When A. G. Daniells assumed the presidency of the General Conference in April of 1901, and as he helped reorganize the Seventh-day Adventist denominational structure so that the semi-independent associations became departments of the General Conference, he recognized no

weakness in the fact that the functions of the Foreign Mission Board were taken over by the General Conference Committee instead of by a Department of Missions. Rather, this was a primary factor that led to his acceptance of the presidency of the General Conference. “If there was one passion above others that held Daniells in its grasp it was his love for foreign missions” (Robertson 1966:83, 85), and the fact that he could serve as the chief “recruiting officer” for foreign service helped interest Daniells in becoming General Conference president in 1901 (85).

Daniells Converted the General Conference Committee into a Virtual Mission Board

For all practical purposes, Daniells, and then Spicer after him made the General Conference Committee into a virtual mission board. Therefore, even though the structure had been radically changed in 1901, as long as Daniells and Spicer guided and directed the General Conference, the overseas work received top priority and thrived under their leadership.

Daniells Promoted Missions

Many times Daniells would begin a General Conference Committee meeting by bringing before the members of the committee some pressing need in the world, or by reporting on some new breakthrough in an overseas country. Notice his mission focus at the September 18, 1904 committee meeting.

The needs of the mission fields was made the topic of the hour. Elder Daniells reviewed the worldwide fields, showing how the work had extended into nearly every land on every continent. He pointed out that the population of the world was 1,600 millions. We have at least a foothold in fields representing 1,400 millions of those souls.

As evidence of progress in the fields, many items of comparative statistics were cited. For instance, in 1883 the entire Adventist membership was 17,000. Now the membership abroad is of itself 17,000. In 1883, the entire tithe of the denomination was \$96,000. The tithe of the mission fields last year was \$133,000.

The speaker reviewed the movement among the home conferences to share their tithe funds and workers with the needy mission fields, by which all hearts have been inspired—something that has been an inspiration to many. Three conferences this year have voted half of their resources for missions, and the general movement among the conferences betokens a new force in the missionary campaign. (GCC Minutes 6:7)

Another time Daniells began a meeting with a study of a map of the world. He pointed out areas of the world where Adventist work was as yet unorganized and talked about the relationship of the conferences to the unions and of the unions to the General Conference. He also explained the relationship of the mission fields to the unions operating them, and pointed out the responsibility of the General Conference to develop those areas in the world not otherwise cared for (GCC Minutes 7:282).

At the 1905 General Conference Session, Daniells continued to educate the constituency concerning the needs of missions. In his president's message, given on May 11, he asked why the much more affluent members in North America had only given \$1.82 to missions in the previous year when believers in the poorer overseas unions had given \$1.73 and in the mission fields themselves the members had contributed an average of \$1.27. Daniells also called for a more equal distribution of laborers and means between the home and foreign fields. He asked why 720 ministers should be located in North America where only one-twentieth of the world's population resided when only 240 ministers worked where the other nineteen-twentieths of the world's population lived. He asked what good reason could be given for spending annually \$536,300 in tithe funds among the 75 million in North America and only \$155,500 among the 1,400 million in the rest of the world. Then Daniells sounded a theme that he promoted extensively in the years following. He asked the delegates to

indorse the principle that the tithe is the basis of the support of the ministry, whether located in home or mission fields, and call upon well-supplied, self-supporting conferences to share their abundance with the destitute fields, regardless of location. There must surely be brought about a more equal and consistent distribution of laborers and funds. This is one of the steps that will accomplish it. (Daniells 1905a:9, 10)

Later on during the same session, a letter was read from L. A. Hoopes, Secretary of the Central Union Conference.

At a recent meeting of the Central Union Conference Committee, the question of rendering assistance to some of the local work was considered. While the members of the Committee felt to appreciate the needs of these fields, yet they felt that the appeals that come from the many millions in far away lands where there are so few laborers with scarcely no foothold at all, were appealing more loudly for the assistance that our Conf. could render than some of these home fields where there are many laborers and a large constituency.

The Central Union Conf. having some few hundred dollars of tithe funds on hand, voted to appropriate \$500 for the Japan mission field, and \$500 for the Chinese mission. It further voted to support a proper missionary worker in the Philippines.

The support of this worker in the Philippines is one of indefinite duration, realizing as we do that this is an important step and that large amounts will yet be expended before the mission is put on anything like a paying basis. The Committee therefore made the recommendation that they did.

We feel that in taking this step we have linked with the institutional work in our Union Conf.; namely, the College, the intermediate schools, the sanitariums, and the publishing work a new tie, a new inspiration for all connected with these institutions to rally to the support of the work in the needy fields in the regions beyond. (1905:3-4)

Daniells, after listening to this letter that expressed the very sentiments he was promoting, submitted a motion in which he thanked God for this new movement that had begun to channel resources towards the needy overseas fields. He was especially happy to see that the state lines were vanishing and that conferences were coming to see that their tithe was for the larger world field (Daniells 1905b:4).

Anyone who has been able to read the Daniells' Outgoing Letter Books in the General Conference Archives would agree that Daniells' whole life was wrapped up in the promotion of missions. His letters are filled with his dreams for entering new unentered fields, with requests to the conferences for a greater sharing of tithe funds for the overseas areas and with constant references to the current progress of the overseas work. Notice just a few sentences from five different letters he wrote in 1906.

Last year we opened eighteen new mission stations in different parts of the world. Nearly all of these were new fields which had never been entered, such as Burma, the Philippines, Bolivia, Peru, Singapore, Korea, etc. You can remember when it was remarkable for us to enter two or three new lands, but last year we entered eighteen. (Daniells April 2, 1906:276)

The Iowa Conference last week voted \$5,000 of its surplus tithes to the General Conference for missionary purposes, and suggested that if we thought best, that this might be used to help open a mission in Uganda. (Daniells June 14, 1906:939-940)

Now, Brother Reaser, I know you are interested in Uganda. You know the important place that part of Africa holds in all missionary endeavors in the dark continent . . . I wonder if the Southern California Conference will have a surplus any time this year that would enable them

to contribute three or five thousand dollars to this enterprise, so that we might go ahead without delay. I would be glad to see this great and important field entered by our denomination during 1906. (Daniells June 12, 1906b:875-876)

I am glad to tell you that since the Atlantic Union Conference last November the Conferences have sent us \$23,515.47 from their tithe funds for mission fields. (Daniells June 15, 1906:963)

The local conferences do not refuse any request we make that they can possibly or consistently grant. They have cheerfully sent the ministers and laborers we have asked for, to foreign fields, to be supported from their conference tithes. . . . Five years ago, when I began to visit the campmeetings scarcely a conference was sending any of its tithe out of its boundary with the exception of the 10th regularly paid to the General Conference. I think we will probably receive \$75,000 tithe this year. (Daniells June 27, 1906b:163-164)

Four of these letters were written during the last two weeks of June in 1906 indicating in a small way how extensively Daniells used letter writing to promote the cause he loved. He also wrote often for the *Review and Herald* as he strove to educate the Adventist membership regarding its duty in giving to support the needs in the world field.

The GC Committee Did the Same Work as the Foreign Mission Board (FMB)

Not only did Daniells, as General Conference president, do everything he could to promote missions, but he also guided the General Conference Committee so that for all practical purposes it functioned in the same way as the old Foreign Mission Board had. Therefore, as one compares the minutes from the FMB with the minutes from the GC Committee for the early years of the twentieth century one can readily see the same type of items being considered by both boards. The only major difference being that the FMB was totally concerned with missions whereas the GC Committee concerned itself with many other denominational matters.

The GCC appointed and sent workers overseas just like the old FMB did. At the October 17, 1903 meeting the GCC recommended

that we recognize the urgent need of a man to take charge of the educational work in France, and we would suggest the name of John Vuilleumier. That H. F. Ketring take charge of the work in Chile. That the division of the Brazilian field be left with those in charge of that field. That the question of a tent for Bermuda be left to the discretion of the Mission Board. (GCC Minutes 6:67)

The GCC members did not differ from their FMB predecessors since they too were interested in and involved with the other Evangelical missionary associations. At the November 14, 1909 meeting, M. E. Kern was requested to attend the Student Volunteer Convention in Rochester, New York, as a representative of the General Conference Young People's work (GCC Minutes 8:132). Several actions were taken during 1910 concerning the World Missionary Conference to be held in Edinburgh, Scotland. Originally, Daniells, Conradi, and Fitzgerald were appointed official General Conference representatives (GCC Minutes 8:168) but later W. A. Spicer was substituted for Daniells (GCC Minutes 8:217).

The GCC voted on several different occasions to appropriate \$100 a year to the Foreign Missions Conference of North America in order to aid them in the financial burden of publishing the "Missionary Review of the World" (GCC Minutes 11-3:991; 11-3:1261). It seems that this journal, as well as Mission Conference Reports, were widely read and distributed among the missionaries in the field as well as among the General Conference Committee members (GCC Minutes 10-1:141). These activities where Adventists joined with other Evangelical mission groups died out after the Daniells' and Spicer's era, and to a large degree have never been duplicated, even in recent years.

The GCC also continued the FMB practice of setting priorities and deciding plans and policy. Thus, at the July 22, 1910 meeting, the GCC voted that the following number of workers be sent to the various fields in the next two years: China 27, India 18, South Africa 6, Japan 6, West Indies 11, South America 34, Philippines 3, West Africa 7, Straits Settlements 1, Great Britain 6 and Bermuda 2 (GCC Minutes 8:256).

While the GCC usually moved forward and pressed to move into new areas, there were occasions when they held local fields back. When W. H. Branson wrote and asked concerning the advisability of prospecting for new mission stations in the Belgian Congo and Portuguese West Africa the Committee voted the following. "Owing to the present financial situation, we inform our brethren in Africa that we do not look with favor upon creating additional expense at the present time by prospecting for new stations in the Belgian Congo or Portuguese West Africa" (GCC Minutes 11-3:1267).

The GCC did not discuss or articulate a clear policy during this period to guide them in developing a system of priorities as to when institutions should be built and when missionaries should concentrate on preaching the Word. Therefore, as noted in table 1, there was a very rapid development of overseas institutions between 1901 and 1930. In 1901, there were 111 schools and 17 hospitals overseas. By 1930, there were 1,402 schools and 90 hospitals. Between 1920 and 1930, there was a tremendous shift in

overseas priorities. In only ten years the number of overseas schools increased by 451% and the number of overseas hospitals increased by 290%. Such a rapid shift towards institutionalization altered the type of missionary being called from the overseas field. Instead of pioneer missionaries, teachers and doctors were needed.

Table 1. Growth of SDA Institutions, 1901-1930

	1901	1910	Growth %	1920	Growth %	1930	Growth %
American Schools	414	523	26%	771	47%	789	2%
Overseas Schools	111	150	35%	254	64%	1,402	451%
American Hospitals	23	22	-5%	18	-19%	16	-12%
Overseas Hospitals	17	21	23%	23	9%	90	290%

Note: Schools include primary, secondary, and college levels, hospital figures for 1920 and 1930 include clinics. Source: *Seventh-day Adventist Statistical Reports*

One can only imagine the tremendous demands these institutions put on the GCC for staff and personnel and it is not hard to imagine situations arising during times of tight finances when the number of evangelistic workers decreased in order that the institutional work could continue.

In a committee action taken on January 22, 1920, there was a small hint of unease that institutional work was beginning to supplant evangelism. At that time the GCC voted that we *suggest* to the brethren in Europe the possibility of an opening for work through Holland in behalf of the Indians of the interior of Dutch Guiana (GCC Minutes 11-2:555, emphasis mine).

Since 1913 Europe had been organized into a European Division. Therefore, the GCC was placed in a position where it could only suggest that fields within that division were open for new work, but if the European Division had other priorities or plans the General Conference could no longer send missionaries to needed areas as it saw fit. This meant that even during the time of A. G. Daniells and W. A. Spicer when the GCC functioned almost like a mission board a process was begun that seriously undercut the ability of even enthusiastic mission-minded General Conference Committees to meet needs they perceived. Instead whole areas of the world were under the leadership and direction of people who often tended to respond much more to the needs, pressures, and priorities of the already baptized membership than they did to the also pressing needs for workers and means to reach the millions of unbelievers within their territories. Therefore, it was only a matter of time before this seed would come to fruition.

Because the FMB was not replaced by a mission committee at the GC and divisional levels, the time was soon coming when the GC administrative leaders were effectively boxed out from whole areas of the world and would be unable to minister to and reach many of the world's unreached millions.

Such situations were not often encountered before 1930 since there were still many unentered countries where Daniells and Spicer could direct their interest and energy. But the seed for future mission decline was already beginning to sprout.

The GCC also continued the FMB practice of discussing ways to stimulate and strengthen the membership in their interest in and support of missions. At the January 29, 1908 meeting it was voted "that the General Conference office should furnish to the presidents of union conferences in this country such information relating to our general missionary work as may be needed in order to arouse the interest of the people in the extension of this message, and to stimulate the flow of funds for the mission work" (GCC Minutes 7:400). In addition, the little booklet *Outline of Missions* was reprinted several times and missionary maps were provided for the Missionary Volunteer societies (GCC Minutes 10-1:236).

General Conference Committee members continued to travel the world, but it is obvious from comparing the minutes of the GCC with the minutes of the FMB that even from 1910 on, very little of the travel by GC personnel had anything to do with searching out new unentered areas or unreached peoples. Rather those traveling visited the "work" already established. The sad part in all this is that this gradual change led to a situation where no one and no department on any level of the administrative structure had the responsibility to seek out and report on unentered areas or unreached peoples. Therefore, mission stories and promotions tended to completely emphasize what was being done to the exclusion of what still needed to be done. I feel that this helps explain why even in 2021 one can talk to some of the people in the headquarters of our denomination who feel that the day of the missionary is past, that the work is almost finished, and that therefore, Christ can soon return. Such people are victims of slanted and one-sided reporting that has failed to tell them of approximately 6,701 people groups (out of 16,543) that still have no viable Christian witness in their midst, or about the fact that 3.23 billion people in our world live in areas where they can only be reached with the Good News if someone will bring that message to them cross-culturally since there is no viable witness available to them within their own culture (Joshua Project 2021).

In conclusion, the day-by-day operations and promotion of missions from 1901-1930 did not differ all that much from the way the FMB operated.

Yet structural changes and other gradual, creeping differences were laying the groundwork for the eventual decline in Adventist missions. Before taking a more detailed look at the seeds for decline, I will notice the thrilling growth that resulted during this period.

Growth of Missions

It is always difficult to measure growth, especially when the conversion of people is involved; however, in order to arrive at some idea of the change in emphasis that took place within Adventism during the 1901-1930 period and in order to better understand the growing commitment that the North American leaders and members had towards missions in that same period, I will compare that period with the earlier Foreign Mission Board era (1889-1903).

Total Giving to Missions

In 1889, North American Adventists contributed \$64,099 to missions. This was 31.04% of what they paid in tithe for the same year. In 1903, \$132,444 was given for missions, but this was only 24.07% of the tithe figure for that year. Thus, during the FMB period the percentage of mission funds given in comparison to tithe dropped almost 7% from 1889 to 1903. A more accurate picture is gained by looking at the five-year figures as listed in table 2 below.

Table 2. Comparison of North America Tithe & Mission Giving, 1889-1903

Year	Tithe	Missions	% of Tithe
1889	206,441	64,099	31.04%
1890	206,016	57,936	28.12%
1891	235,505	69,657	29.57%
1892	249,599	83,604	33.49%
1893	294,409	100,969	35.50%
5 Years	1,191,970	376,265	31.56%
1894	276,080	117,032	42.39%
1895	279,302	89,541	32.05%
1896	296,884	90,438	30.46%
1897	306,135	76,500	24.98%
1898	366,483	113,945	31.09%

5 Years	1,524,884	487,456	31.96%
1899	406,583	95,455	23.47%
1900	425,809	128,516	30.18%
1901	490,483	163,833	33.40%
1902	524,861	148,683	28.32%
1903	550,154	132,444	24.07%
5 Years	2,397,890	668,931	27.89%

Source: *Seventh-day Adventist Statistical Reports*

When the same categories are compared for the years 1904-1930 it quickly becomes apparent that interest in and support of missions increased dramatically from 1907 onward. Notice the rapid increase in mission giving as a percentage of tithe giving from 1907 onward as listed in table 3 below.

Table 3. Comparison of North America Tithe & Mission Giving, 1904-1930

Year	Tithe	Missions	% of Tithe
1904	536,302	131,168	24.45%
1905	670,520	151,045	22.52%
1906	765,255	163,332	21.34%
1907	818,189	228,156	27.88%
1908	823,004	260,083	31.60%
1909	891,308	319,455	35.84%
1910	966,921	371,031	38.37%
1911	1,042,533	373,741	35.84%
1912	1,136,879	464,526	40.85%
1913	1,201,138	499,713	41.60%
1914	1,269,962	615,565	48.47%
1915	1,337,810	706,293	52.79%
1916	1,632,543	778,693	47.69%
1917	2,167,082	1,013,328	46.76%
1918	2,691,307	1,669,006	62.01%
1919	3,313,307	1,591,691	48.03%

1920	3,918,515	2,310,048	58.95%
1921	3,222,055	1,608,353	49.91%
1922	3,233,510	1,628,115	50.35%
1923	3,706,878	1,774,790	47.87%
1924	3,883,790	1,837,255	47.30%
1925	4,101,031	1,898,641	46.29%
1926	4,120,459	2,076,927	50.40%
1927	4,202,988	1,977,133	47.04%
1928	4,265,669	1,998,727	46.85%
1929	4,463,686	2,032,914	45.54%
1930	4,040,190	1,930,452	47.78%

Source: Seventh-day Adventist Statistical Reports

I feel that these figures indicate the results of the promotion of missions by Daniells and Spicer, as well as by the many others in leadership positions. When Daniells assumed the presidency of the General Conference in 1901 mission giving for the years 1900-1909 averaged 28.12% of the tithe figure for those years. However, from 1910-1919 mission giving had increased to 48.23% of the tithe. During the next ten-year period 1920-1929, mission giving reached its all-time high of 48.93% of the tithe. Since that time mission giving has been in steady decline.

The point I want to make is the fact that during Daniells' and Spicer's leadership years Adventist giving to missions increased very significantly. These two men were able to fire the enthusiasm of the Adventist member and inspire them to support a rapid expansion in the overseas work.

Some might point to the accomplishments of Daniells as proof that missions were better off under the direction and control of the General Conference Committee. Such an assumption overlooks a basic problem. Daniells was a charismatic leader whose primary concern was missions. He made the General Conference Committee into a virtual mission board. He also presided over the reorganization that eliminated the Foreign Mission Board as a semi-autonomous structure. Daniells saw no weakness in this new arrangement, and as long as the General Conference president was a charismatic leader who promoted and championed the cause of missions no weakness was apparent. However, when Daniells and Spicer passed from the scene and no dynamic, mission promoter took their place, the whole Adventist mission program became dependent on the administrative structure to carry it along. With no structured mission board to

promote missions and with no General Conference president to promote missions the overseas work began to decline. However, this is getting ahead of the story, but the seeds for this future decline were inherent in the structural changes instituted in 1903.

Number of Missionaries Sent Overseas

During this same period, 1901-1930, there was also a rapid build-up in the number of workers sent overseas each year. Between 1889 and 1900 the FMB sent out a total of 35 missionaries (GC Missionary Statistical Department). The rapid increase in the number of candidates sent overseas from 1901 onward is listed below in table 4.

Table 4. Missionaries Sent Overseas by 5-Year Periods, 1901-1980

5-Year Period	Missionaries Sent	Average/Year	% Gain
1901-1905	267	53.4	
1905-1910	469	93.8	75.65%
1911-1915	507	101.4	8.11%
1916-1920	702	140.4	38.44%
1921-1925	776	155.2	10.54%
1926-1930	897	179.4	15.59%
1931-1935	445	89.0	-50.40%
1936-1940	630	126.0	41.57%
1941-1945	522	104.4	-17.15%
1946-1950	890	178.0	70.49%
1951-1955	677	135.4	-23.94%
1956-1960	745	149.0	10.04%
1961-1965	754	150.8	1.20%
1966-1970	1,213	242.6	60.87%
1971-1975	1,020	204.0	-15.92%
1976-1980	880	176.0	-13.73%

Source: Yearbook 1946:322; General Conference Missionary Statistical Department

It is interesting to note that each succeeding five year period from 1906 onward until 1930 saw a gain over the previous period in number of missionaries sent out. During this thirty-year period, Adventist missions

experienced sustained growth, something that has never been matched since. In fact, the next longest period of growth, in number of missionaries sent, occurred from 1956 to 1970. These figures in no way capture the dynamic of what was taking place during the first three decades of the twentieth century, but they help us see the trends and the emphasis that were being given to missions.

Countries Entered

In 1888, the year before the FMB was organized, the Seventh-day Adventist Church was working in nineteen countries. During the FMB period from 1889 to 1903 the Board sent missionaries to 53 unentered countries. Therefore, in 1903 when the FMB was taken over by the GCC Adventists had work in progress in 72 countries. From 1904 until 1930, 57 additional countries were entered. Therefore, it seems that the FMB and GCC strategy to establish work within the various political divisions in the world was very successful. Table 5 lists the number of countries entered during each decade from 1840 to 1979.

Table 5. Number of Countries Entered Each Decade, 1840-1979

1840 - 1849	1	1910 - 1919	13
1850 - 1859	0	1920 - 1929	22
1860 - 1869	1	1930 - 1939	10
1870 - 1879	10	1940 - 1949	8
1880 - 1889	9	1950 - 1959	5
1890 - 1899	36	1960 - 1969	5
1900 - 1909	36	1970 - 1979	6

Source: Yost 1975:1-5; General Conference Archives Department

Overseas Membership and Evangelistic Workers

In 1900, just a year before Daniells took over the General Conference Presidency, there were 5.1 Adventist members in North America for every member overseas. By the end of the Daniells and Spicer era in 1930, overseas membership outnumbered the North American membership with 1.6 overseas members for every member in North America. From the very beginning, the overseas decadal growth rates (DGR) averaged more than double the rates for North America. This higher rate of growth in the overseas areas resulted in the membership of North America making up less than 50% by the end of 1921.

Table 6 details the phenomenal growth that took place in the overseas fields during the Daniells and Spicer years. It is also interesting to note the dramatic decline in the DGR after 1930 when the General Conference leaders no longer emphasized the overseas needs in the same way Daniells and Spicer had.

Table 6. North America & Overseas Membership Figures with Decadal Growth Rates, 1870-1980

Year	N. A. Members	DGR	Overseas Members	DGR
1870	5,440		40	
1880	14,984	175%	586	1,365%
1890	27,031	80%	2,680	357%
1900	63,335	134%	12,432	364%
1910	66,294	5%	38,232	208%
1920	95,877	45%	89,573	134%
1930	120,560	26%	193,693	116%
1940	185,788	54%	318,964	65%
1950	250,939	35%	505,773	59%
1960	332,364	32%	912,761	80%
1970	439,726	32%	1,612,138	77%
1980	604,430	37%	2,876,088	78%

Source: Neufeld 1976:917; General Conference Archives

Daniells was always concerned about the fact that such a large percentage of evangelistic workers were located in North America where only one-twentieth of the world’s population lived. His goal was to get more of the evangelistic force out where the larger portion of unreached millions lived. In this he was successful, for during his presidency the number of overseas evangelistic workers far surpassed the number working in North America.

Table 7 shows that by 1910 Daniells had been successful in getting a larger percentage of his work force overseas since there were only 1.15 workers in North America

for every worker overseas whereas the membership ratio was 1.73:1. By 1920, Daniells had accomplished even more in his bid to redistribute the evangelistic workers more equitably since North America in 1920 had

1.07 members for every one member overseas but only .6 workers for every worker overseas.

Table 7. Evangelistic Workers, 1870-1930

Year	N. America	Overseas	Worker Ratio	Member Ratio
1870	72	0		136.00:1
1880	255	5	51.00:1	25.57:1
1890	355	56	6.34:1	10.09:1
1900	1,019	481	2.12:1	5.09:1
1910	2,326	2,020	1.15:1	1.73:1
1920	2,619	4,336	.60:1	1.07:1
1930	2,509	8,479	.30:1	.62:1

Source: *Seventh-day Adventist Statistical Reports*

Once again, it must be said that looking at figures, percentages, and ratios in no way does justice to the dynamic growth that took place during the Daniells and Spicer era. Yet those figures do indicate something of the surge in overseas activity that took place under their leadership.

Mission Finances

When one stops to figure out what must have been involved in order to increase so dramatically the number of missionaries sent each year, and the cost of establishing mission stations, educational, and medical institutions in the many countries that the Adventists entered between 1901 and 1930 one can only imagine the staggering financial demands that the GCC had to deal with. The growth that was realized was largely possible because of the new methods that were developed to finance the rapidly expanding overseas work.

Developments of the Use of Tithe for Foreign Missions

The GCC inherited from the FMB the practice of asking conference employed workers to go overseas and then “inviting” that conference to continue to pay that worker’s salary. At the July 7, 1906 meeting, calls were placed for four men working in the Wyoming, Wisconsin, Western Michigan, and New York Conferences. Each of these conferences was

“invited” to continue to pay the worker’s salary as their former worker went as missionaries to Egypt, Turkey, the Orient, and Ceylon (GCC Minutes 7:155-156).

Almost a year later, on May 22, 1907, during one committee meeting actions were taken calling six men employed by four different conferences. In the action taken, the conferences were not only asked to pay the worker’s salary, but they were also asked to pay all the traveling expenses to the overseas place of labor (GCC Minutes 7:306-307).

This practice of calling a conference’s worker and then asking that conference to continue supporting the family in the mission field was being rapidly phased out during the period 1905-1908. Instead, the GC began encouraging the various conferences to appropriate part of their tithe directly to the General Conference for use in missions.

The Iowa Conference voted five thousand dollars of its surplus tithes to the General Conference to be used in Mission fields. This is the largest cash donation ever made, I think, by one of our conferences from its tithes. The Iowa Conference had already given us one thousand dollars a few months ago, and is supporting quite a number of missionaries in foreign fields.

The Upper Columbia Conference voted three thousand dollars at their camp meeting two or three weeks ago. I suppose we have received not less than twenty-five thousand dollars during the last six months from the conferences. This is helping our mission board finances out wonderfully. (Daniells June 12, 1906a:864-865)

When conferences did not send as much surplus tithe as Daniells thought they were able to, he was quick to mention in letters to them that “we had looked forward with much anticipation to a large remittance from your conference, and that we felt a sense of keen disappointment when it failed to reach us” (Daniells May 27, 1906:725).

Daniells was a great promoter, and once he was convinced of an idea he would push, educate, and badger people until they began to swing around to his side. He had been convinced for a long time that it was wrong for those going overseas to be dependent on contributions for their support in foreign lands, and instead felt that they should be supported by the tithe. Notice what he wrote to W. B. White on June 27, 1906.

I am as confident as can be that the tithe is the true basis of support of all gospel workers for the Lord in both home and foreign fields. It has been some time since I have been able to see why a minister should be placed on the uncertain basis of donations for his support as soon as he decides to leave an organized conference in the home field for a

distant mission field. Everything, it appears to me, argues in favor of placing the missionary who goes abroad among strangers, on the sure and certain basis of support from the tithe. If anyone should be dependent on the charities or the donations of the people for support, it appears to me that it should be those who remain in their native land among friends, where they understand the customs, markets, etc., of the people. But I do not believe that donations alone should be the basis of support of gospel workers anywhere. The tithe is the basis the Lord has established, and a full tithe of all he gives his people is amply sufficient to meet all the ordinary requirements of the gospel ministry. Donations will of course always be needed to provide facilities of various sorts required to carry on the work. But here I am writing as though I were arguing with you to convince you of the soundness of my position; but I am not writing for that purpose, for I know you look at this question as I do; for the course pursued by the Conferences under your influence indicates this. (Daniells June 27, 1906a:144-145)

Just a month later Daniells, in a letter to A. T. Robinson, sounded as if his effort to have missionaries paid from the tithe rather than from contributions was paying off.

A marvelous change is coming over our conferences. A few years ago almost every dollar sent to mission fields had to be raised by contributions. Every minister sent out was removed from the tithe basis of support to the contribution basis. His support depended upon the liberality of the donors. If the offices of the Mission Board forgot to make strong appeals, or were unable to do so, the contributions would fall off very materially. Last year our conferences in this country devoted more than a hundred thousand dollars of their tithes to the support of our missionaries. I believe that the time will come when our ministers and gospel workers in all parts of the world will be supported primarily from the tithes. (Daniells July 27, 1906:371)

I feel that Daniells was able to convince the conferences that they should share large portions of their tithe with the General Conference for use in foreign lands largely because of the promotion and education of the member that took place from all departments of the General Conference. The Treasury Department of the General Conference joined in educating the laity concerning a proper use of tithe funds.

Oftentimes the tithe is diverted from its specific object; namely, the support of the evangelical work of our denomination. Sometimes we find that the churches are tempted to use their tithe in the support of local work, in the payment of church expenses, for janitor service, and such other incidental expenses as really belong to the church to

supply. When the standard of loyalty to God is so lowered, it can be no marvel that conscientious people become discouraged, believing that those who are in charge of the work are not true and faithful, and consequently take their tithe into their own hands, and place it where they believe it will be used for the purpose which the Lord ordains. (Evans 1905:9-10)

But more than education was needed. Daniells and other leaders were able to communicate by word and action the realization that mission needs were great. Leaders and members alike were willing to sacrifice for those larger needs. Members sacrificed their means, conference and union officers gave up their most talented workers, and then paid their salaries in order that the overseas fields would have the needed personnel. This type of demonstrated sacrifice by the organization was an important aspect in mission finances during this period. In 1907, at a General Conference Committee held in Gland, Switzerland this sentiment was beautifully expressed in the committee.

One after another of the brethren representing union conferences and other lines of work expressed the faith that there must be a mighty movement among the older conferences to send workers and means into the mission fields. As one union president expressed it, in his union he desired to see it established that they would spare any man called for from the president of the union down to the last man on the union list. There was a united conviction that the Committee as a body, after the view of the needs as seen in this council, should sound the cry throughout conferences and people to break from the slow pace in manning the mission fields, and pour men and means into all the world abroad. Educational workers pledged their devotion to this plan, and their determination under God to see the schools preparing the workers. (GCC Minutes 7:295)

There were a few leaders who held completely opposite views and who tended to gather financial means into the conference bank accounts in order to put on a good financial show. Ellen White was quick to write to such officers in order to help them realize that there were much greater needs that demanded the use of conference means. Notice how pointed and direct White's letters were in this area. "The matter of increasing the tithe has been one of your special burdens; and this has been treated as though the accumulation of means was one of the great objects to be attained by the conference. But it is a worldly policy that leads men to gather up and save means that they may have a good financial showing" (1908a:173, 174).

It should not be the chief consideration of conference officers to collect and save up money, for then the real work of the conference, the salvation of souls, will become a matter of secondary importance. Our people should never be permitted to lose sight of a world shrouded in darkness, waiting for the light of the gospel message. . . . religious and spiritual interests must not be subordinated to the accumulation of means in the Conference treasury, that the officers may stand high in the estimation of the people as good financiers. . . . It is a sad fact that the importance of the responsibilities laid upon the workers for the salvation of souls has in some cases been lost sight of in the desire to save all the money possible; and, as a result, excellent opportunities have been passed by and some who ought to have entered the field have lost heart. (White 1908b:183, 184)

Such attitudes as addressed above were definitely rare during this period, but the problem and the way it was handled again help to show how thoroughly committed the leaders of the Adventist Church were to supporting missions. One other development in connection with using tithe to support missionary salaries began to be apparent as early as the summer of 1906. Daniells in a letter to W. C. White wrote that he felt that soon the denomination would work out a policy stating how much of each conference's tithe would be used to support overseas work (July 26, 1906:349-350).

No definite suggestions seem to appear in the GC Minutes until November 25, 1910 when E. E. Andress made a recommendation asking all the stronger conferences to send a fifth of their tithe to the General Conference (GCC Minutes 8:296). This was still a very vaguely worded statement and was still only a recommendation.

Less than one week later, on November 29, 1910, the committee voted the following.

That we request all conferences in North America receiving a tithe of less than ten thousand dollars, to pay, beginning January 1, 1911, from five per cent to ten per cent of their tithe, according to their ability, to the General Conference for mission fields; and all conferences receiving ten thousand dollars and more, to pay from ten per cent to twenty-five per cent, according to their ability; and that this plan be regarded as a permanent arrangement, upon which the General Conference may depend for the prosecution of its work. (GCC Minutes 8:310)

Twenty years later this policy had been refined and stated that

In North America the basis for sharing conference tithe with the General Conference for carrying on its mission work is as follows: 1% from all conferences having a tithe of less than \$26,000, this rate to be

increased 1% for each additional \$1,000 up to \$30,000: then increased 1% for each additional \$2,000 up to \$40,000: then increased 1% for each additional \$10,000 up to \$130,000 or more, making the maximum 20%. Such payments to be based on the gross receipts of tithe for the current year from all organizations. (GCC Minutes 14-1:162).

Is it possible that such policies, enacted in order to help place the funding of the overseas work on a firm financial basis, actually helped undermine the widespread support missions had enjoyed from both leaders and members? For it seems that policy began to replace the earlier promotion and educating that had produced such widespread support. Such a decline in promotion led to a decline in interest. Loss of interest led to loss of concern and understanding of the overseas needs. Once that happened the needs of the local field began to look more and more important. Conference officers without a constant reminder of the tremendous overseas needs began to covet the large amounts of funds they were required by policy to pass on to the next higher organization. Without constant promotion of missions, they primarily thought in terms of local needs.

Thus, at the North America Division Committee meeting on October 28, 1914 the chairman presented a request from the North Pacific Conference asking that some adjustment be made in the basis of tithe appropriated from the local conferences (NAD Minutes 1914:145, 146). In the discussion that followed many were in favor of leaving the policy as it was.

Elder Flaiz stated the difficulties which they had encountered in their field in turning over so large a percent of their tithe. Some conferences had been unable to do so without creating a deficit. He said they had been hindered on account of funds in developing a strong force of young men in their field. He felt that there should be some adjustment made. (NAD Minutes 1:146)

The policy has remained basically the same from that day to this, yet policy alone can never substitute for the support and commitment that is possible when laity and leaders alike understand the needs and challenges that still exist. Policy can generate funds, but such funds can be grudgingly given and be viewed as a missions tax rather than as a means of extending the Good News to those who do not know Jesus Christ.

Money from Wills Donated to Missions

Daniells and Spicer also helped develop other sources of funding for missions. In 1906 Daniells wrote to Spicer telling him that the General Conference was very likely to get a large contribution from a will. "A

brother in Nebraska died a few weeks ago, and left a will which carries between \$25,000 and \$30,000 to the Nebraska Conference. Brother Robinson has written me that the Conference does not need this money, and that they propose to pass it on to the General Conference for mission fields" (Daniells July 13, 1906:135-136).

Daniells was excited about this new source of funds and suggested in the same letter that if the money from the will came through that the General Conference should make some big bold move in the mission fields in order to use the incident to show the members what they could do to hasten the work in overseas fields.

Development of Harvest Ingathering

Harvest Ingathering was another major source of funds that developed during this period. In 1903 Jasper Wayne passed out among his neighbors fifty copies of a special issue of *Signs of the Times* dealing with the problem of capital and labor. As he passed them out, Wayne mentioned that any money received would be used for missions. When a second parcel of fifty *Signs* arrived he again passed them out, this time suggesting a 25 cent donation. When he counted the donations he found he had received over thirty dollars for the hundred issues of *Signs*. Wayne was so enthusiastic about this new way of earning mission funds that he was surprised that his enthusiasm was not shared by all church leaders. However, by the spring of 1908 there was growing support for Wayne's method and many of the conferences had already begun to utilize this method for raising additional funds for missions (Schwarz 1979:346, 347).

In April of 1908 the GCC "recommended that Thanksgiving week, November 22-28, be set apart as a time for a special ingathering of funds for foreign missions." Each member was encouraged to visit friends, neighbors and the business firms with which they traded, telling them of the Adventist overseas work and asking them to share in that work. A special paper was prepared to give away to all those contacted that would explain in greater detail the work of Adventists in foreign fields (Evans 1908:6).

That first year \$30,000 was collected enabling the General Conference to send twenty-five new missionaries overseas (Schwarz 1979:347). In the first twenty-five years of Harvest Ingathering \$14,059,192.32 was raised throughout the world with the majority of it raised in North America (Hackman 1933:4). Again, as with the tithe, there were covetous eyes laid upon such vast sums of money going to overseas fields.

Actually it was only during the first several years that the entire Ingathering offering was devoted to overseas missions. The first break in this pattern involved using some of the funds collected to reach

recent immigrants to America. The brief recession following World War I led to assigning additional Ingathering funds to finance work in America, and this trend was greatly increased during the Great Depression of the 1930s. (Schwarz 1979:348)

Thus, once again we see an example that suggests that policy alone can never replace the need for the promotion of overseas needs. Policies can be easily changed and such changes can destroy programs that originally were initiated to meet the financial demands required to tell the unbelieving millions of Jesus Christ.

In the important area of mission finance, the period 1901 to 1930 witnessed some very important developments. Tithe funds became a major source of mission finance thereby permitting the General Conference to pay the salaries of overseas workers from the steady income from tithe funds rather than having to depend on unpredictable contributions. Ingathering started in 1908 and became another major source of funds that especially helped begin new work and fund large projects. As mentioned earlier, the regular mission offerings, which had been averaging 27.89% of the tithe figure for the five years 1899-1903 increased dramatically to 48.93% of the tithe for the ten years 1920-1929. These three major areas of finance became the financial basis for most of what was accomplished during the era of Daniells and Spicer.

Seeds for Future Decline and Implications for Today

It is ironic that during the very period when Adventist missions experienced its greatest growth, vitality, and support that some of the practices, procedures, and administrative restructuring that took place during that dynamic era are the very factors that were responsible for the rapid decline of Adventist missions from the 1970s onward. At a time when other mission agencies were focusing on unreached people groups the Adventist Church continued to only list countries entered as a mission metric.

Reorganization

It seems that there is nothing that has had a larger impact on the present decline in Adventist missions than the reorganization and restructuring that took place 120 years ago at the 1901 General Conference Session. At that time, the Foreign Mission Board and the other independent associations were disbanded. However, the independent associations were reorganized as departments in the General Conference. The Foreign Mission

Board was the only disbanded association that was not departmentalized. Instead, the General Conference Committee acted in behalf of the old FMB until a mission board was finally established in 2010.

Notice several consequences the Seventh-day Adventist Church faced as a result of the reorganization that took place so many years ago. First, because there was no Mission Department or Mission Board the Adventist Church had no recognized or authorized person or department that had the responsibility to survey the world in order to find unreached areas and people. Unlike the travel done by the FMB members and Spicer, most General Conference personnel travel exclusively to visit existing work and to supervise and counsel already established missions or conferences, unions, and divisions.

Until the establishment of Global Mission in 1989 (Global Mission 2014), very few, if any at the GC level traveled the world seeking the lost or unreached peoples. The same can be said for most travel done by division and union personnel. Such administrators are concerned and pressured primarily by the needs of those who are already Adventists. This is not to say that such leaders are not interested in the unreached, but rather to point out that they spend the vast majority of their time, talents, and energy dealing with matters of concern to local Adventist congregations. Even on the local conference or mission level, most activity is directed towards the already baptized members. Local conference and mission workers do reach out and are usually quite effective at reaching people just like themselves—those who speak their language, come from the same educational and economic background, and are of the same ethnic or cultural group. However, when the local leaders live and work among various people groups from various ethnic, religious, linguistic, or economic levels, then all too often those leaders are blind to the needs of such groups who are different from their own.

Thus, through the restructuring and reorganization of 120 years ago and subsequent changes, the Adventist Church has, for all practical purposes, five layers of church administration consisting of the local church, the local mission or conference, the union conference, the division, and the General Conference. In this situation, it is the expectation that the local church will be the evangelizing agent, and therefore the one responsible for searching out the unreached in the local area. But such a plan breaks down in actual practice because the local church is not located where the vast majority of the unreached live, because the local church is often “people blind” towards groups different from their own, and because the local church often lacks both the financial and human resources needed to reach unreached groups.

It was partly in response to this situation that in 2010 the General Conference established a Mission Board (GC Administrative Committee Minutes 2010:298-304). Notice the reasons given for this new board at the GC level.

1. Lack of strategic oversight often results in less than ideal development of plans and distribution of resources.
2. Planning for mission does not always include both the grassroots view and the world Church's perspective of the needs. Specifically: (a) faithfulness to the world Church's prioritization of the 10/40 Window and big cities requires a greater transfer of resources to those areas; and (b) people groups flow easily across our artificial division boundaries while plans, programs, and funding do not.
3. The Church hosts a confusing array of multiple "silos" each soliciting donations and providing funding for mission work—often without coordinated planning or implementation.
4. The current system for processing interdivision employees (IDEs) is antiquated, fragmented, frequently takes months, and is often segregated from the planning, funding, and processing of other types of missionaries and other broad-range plans for mission.
5. The current system of control over IDE points/budgets does not always allow strategic placement of missionaries. (GC Administrative Committee Minutes 2010:298)

It seems that even with a Mission Board at the GC level, some of the weakness will continue unless divisions, unions, and local missions and conferences also set up a Mission Board to champion the evangelization of the unreached peoples in our world.

A second consequence that resulted from the reorganization was that until the establishment of Global Mission in 1989 the church never replaced what Daniells and Spicer did in promoting the needs of the unreached. For many years, some parts of the world had Mission Spotlight that largely told what the church was doing, but not telling where the great mission challenges still remained. At General Conference sessions each division would also highlight what they had accomplished in the previous five years with very little said about the task remaining. The mission stories in the *Youth and Adult Mission Quarterly* also largely present what the church is doing with very little to challenge members concerning all the unreached peoples and where they were located. Each quarter different divisions of the world are allowed to choose "mission projects" but in reality, most of those projects largely benefit those who are already Adventists.

The old FMB was recognized as the organization that could speak in behalf of Adventist missions. After 1901, there was no designated agency that could speak and promote missions in behalf of the needs of the unreached millions. It is strange that the SDA denomination would see the need for a Sabbath School Department, a Lay Activities Department, Youth, Temperance, Publishing, Religious Liberty, and Medical Departments yet would organize no Missions Department. The various departments that do exist are responsible for the concerns, problems, and needs of a particular aspect of the work within the denomination. The various departments promote the needs of their particular areas; however, for many years there was no department caring for or promoting the needs of the unreached.

Until 2010 it was claimed that the General Conference Committee, aided by the Committee on Appointees, functioned as a mission board even though it was not designated as such (Neufeld 1976:911). "Thus the church in its central organization, and not in an agency apart from its central life, accepts the responsibility and carries the concern of bearing its distinctive message to every nation and people of the world (494).

All one has to do in order to disprove this claim is to compare the work of the Foreign Mission Board period with the actual practices and procedures of the General Conference Committee and the Secretariat Department for it to become very clear that much was lost between 1930 and 1989 when Global Mission was launched. However, it was not until 2010 and the establishment of the Mission Board that the General Conference finally recovered the ability to strategically focus on the greatest mission needs. Between 1930 and 2010 the Secretariat Department was largely a conduit for calls and requests from overseas for personnel. It did not initiate action in behalf of the unreached in the world. It did not develop strategies to reach unreached groups or enter new areas. Instead of acting as a mission board, searching out and seeking the unreached peoples, the Secretariat Department spent the vast majority of its time and energy filling calls for experts and highly trained technicians who go overseas to aid, service, and nurture already baptized members. In reality, the Secretariat Department functioned more like a Department of Inter-Church Aid than like a Mission Board. It sent experts from the church in North America, the Philippines, Australia, the United Kingdom, and other nations to aid the church in Japan, or Hong Kong or Kenya. Such inter-church aid is good, is needed, and should continue, but it should never be allowed to replace the also legitimate need to send church planters and pioneer workers to the 6,701 unreached people groups that still exist in our world.

Centralization and the Development of Policies

During the period 1901-1930 the present five-tier level of organization developed. This resulted in both delegation to the lower levels and centralization, especially in the area of policy-making, to the higher levels. It was therefore, the duty and responsibility of the General Conference to set policies, decide procedures, and guide in the larger problems. However, Daniells made the GCC into a virtual Mission Board during the early years of his administration. From 1901 until approximately 1911 Daniells and the other General Conference leaders spent a great portion of their time and energy promoting missions. Daniells was a prolific letter writer and his favorite topic was the needs of the overseas fields. Thus, his letters were often filled with encouraging reports of some mission field, while at other times, he would write letters to badger and press some key conference official to be more generous with the finances the GCC needed for some overseas work. In an earlier section of this article it was noted how effective Daniells was in promoting mission needs and how many conferences responded by giving half of their tithe funds to support missionaries overseas; however, between 1911 and 1920 subtle changes began to creep in. Policies began to be developed by the General Conference (and setting policies was the legitimate work of the GCC) that put down on paper rigid requirements that would enforce the practice of tithe sharing that until then had been achieved by persuasion and promotion.

Once policies were enacted requiring that a set percent of a conference's tithe be sent to the GC for missions it was not long until grumbling began to be heard and requests made for a reduction in the percentage required.

Tithe sharing policies can never replace the promotion and explanation of overseas needs. Only when there is understanding of how tithe percentage funds are used and only when conference officials understand the greater needs where those tithe funds are to be used will there be willing acceptance of policies. Previous to the policies setting forth the requirement to share up to 20% of a local conference's tithe with the mission fields many of the conferences were giving up to 50% of their tithe for missions. They were challenged, they knew and understood the overseas needs, so they gave. Just a few years later, some of the richest and oldest conferences were requesting a reduction of the 20% requirement.

This helps to illustrate the danger of policies without the corresponding effort to inform and persuade. I feel it also helps point out the concept that free will offerings that are received from members or conferences convinced of great need are usually much larger than a required donation. Centralization and policy making go hand in hand but this is another

important reason why the Adventist denomination desperately needed a Mission Board that was only established in 2010 to once again persuade and promote the needs of the 3.23 billion unreached peoples.

In conclusion, the Daniells and Spicer era was an exciting time for Adventist missions. Fifty-seven new countries were entered, overseas membership grew from 12,432 to 193,693 and in the process, the overseas membership surpassed the membership in North America. North American Adventists made great sacrifices as they sent an ever-increasing number of missionaries and an ever-growing amount of money overseas during this period. The same era also witnessed the introduction of procedures that had a devastating effect on Adventist missions for 120 years. Centralization, with its policies and lack of missions' promotions, led to a situation where most North American Adventists are apathetic towards and lacking in a true knowledge of the needs of the hundreds of millions of the world's unreached peoples.

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George James: Pioneer Seventh-day Adventist Missionary to Malawi, 1893–1894

This paper examines the brief but nevertheless important story of George James, the first Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) missionary who set foot in present-day Malawi in 1893, and where a decade later (1902) Malamulo, the church's earliest flagship mission station in all Africa was established (Matemba 2002:1). What is remarkable about James is that not only was he a recent SDA convert who self-sponsored his missionary work to Malawi, but also that he was representing what at that time was a little-known USA-based evangelical denomination with roots to the 1830s apocalyptic Millerite movement (Hoeschele 2004:11). In Malawi, the British colonial government would later unfairly mischaracterize the church as a “non-descript” religious movement bent on unsettling the “native” mind, apparently because of its premillennial teachings, strict adherence to the Seventh-day Sabbath, and eschatological beliefs, including remnant ecclesiology (Shepperson and Price 1987:328-330). Despite James' pioneer missionary status in Africa, his story has received cursory attention in the discourse, and in cases where information about him exist, there are factual discrepancies and often the narrative is presented uncritically. Although James' activities during his short missionary sojourn did not result in the direct establishment of the SDA church in Malawi, his story is significant in two ways. First, it provides an important starting point towards a critical understanding of the earliest SDA missionary attempts to evangelize Africa. Second, while the narrative is set within the narrow confines of a single missionary from a historically “smaller” evangelical church (Fiedler

1995:31, 32), it highlights the difficulties and personal sacrifices pioneer missionaries faced in the early years of Christian evangelization of Africa.

Introduction

On 28 August 1993 the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Malawi gathered at the BAT stadium in Blantyre (a similar event was held in Lilongwe, Malawi's capital city a week earlier) to celebrate a century of the church's work in Malawi (Malawi Union 1993a:1; Folkenberg 1993:1, 2). For the occasion, the church printed a special calico with the words *Zaka 100 M'Malawi: Seventh-day Adventists Serving Malawi, 1893-1993: Physical, Mental and Spiritual*. On the cloth was also depicted an image resembling Christ descending from heaven with the words *adzabweranso* (will come again) written below it. On the front cover of the event booklet was depicted a figure of Christ descending from heaven with the words *tayan-dikira kwathu* (we are heaven bound) written underneath it. A special item on the program was the dramatization of George James' missionary story (Malawi Union 1993b:1, 2).

Many who took prominent roles at the function were *crème de la crème* crop of influential pastors and church leaders of the post-missionary era, which began in the early 1970s and culminated in the appointment of Pastor Frank Botomani in 1980 as the first African president of the entire SDA Church in Malawi. Among the church luminaires—sadly all now deceased—were Pastors D. J. Kika, D. W. Kapitao, E. J. Zintambila, F. A. Botomani, I. J. Nchambalinja, S. M. Samuel and A. J. C. Nazombe (Malawi Union 1993a:1). Reflecting on the event, it was stated that “we are gathered here to celebrate God's acts among His people during the hundred years since the arrival of George James on March 8, 1893 in Blantyre. . . . May we be challenged by those who gave all for God's sake. Ask God to help us finish the work by making use of the talents He has given us” (Malawi Union 1993a:1).

By selecting the period 1893-1993 the church perhaps erred in implying that its work in Malawi started in 1893 as was stated erroneously in the commemoration program that the church had gathered “to celebrate 100 years of Seventh-day Adventist presence in the heart of Africa” (Folkenberg 1993:4). The official beginning of the SDA church in Malawi was in 1902 when Joseph Booth (a Baptist missionary from the UK) and Thomas Branch (the first Black American to set foot in Central Africa and for the SDA church, the first Black American missionary in Africa), established the Malamulo Mission (see Shepperson and Price 1987:135; Langworthy 1996:161-173). The centenary celebration of Malamulo took place on 15 September 2002, attended by Bakili Muluzi, Malawi's President from 1994-2004 (see Matemba 2002:1; Ng'ombe 2002:3).

This paper draws on an array of primary sources (church documents, archival materials and unpublished sources) and secondary materials (published articles and books) collected for a large study, which I am preparing for publication as the first full-length history of the SDA Church in Malawi. As far as available sources could allow, the present paper presents a detailed account of George James, a young British independent and self-sponsored missionary whose brief missionary activity (1893-1894) made him the first SDA in the whole of Central, Eastern, and Western Africa.

Yet until now, James' story has been largely unfamiliar to SDA members particularly in Africa, where church historians are beginning to document the contribution of pioneer missionaries, church leaders, and local pastors, to fill the missing gaps in the teaching of church history in SDA theological seminaries on the continent (see Hoeschele 2007:7-8; Matemba 1997:23-24; Sokupa 2015:171-172). The paper seeks to correct some of the factual errors in extant sources where James' story appears related to who he was, when he arrived in Malawi, and when he died. In some of the sources James is identified as a Black American missionary (erroneously confusing him with Thomas Branch) and other sources saying that he died in 1892 while going back home. Further, that he worked in present-day Malawi for three or five years, and still other sources, which place the date of his arrival in Malawi as 1891, two years before he actually arrived in the country (see Khanje 1972:2; Cripps 1971:5; Folkenberg 1993:4; Doss 1993:18).

Earliest SDA Missionary Outreach in Africa

In this section, I sketch out the earliest SDA missionary outreach in Africa to provide the necessary context to George James' missionary attempts in Malawi from 1893 to 1894. In SDA Church historiography, James' missionary story falls within the wider discourse of the Church's earliest evangelical outreach outside the USA after the Church was founded on 2 May 1863 (Spalding 1962:7; Schwarz 1979:93-97). While aspects of the Church's earliest missionary activities, particularly to Europe from 1874 onwards have received attention (Knight 2000: 140-141; Schwarz 1979: 142-149), the African details have not been fully explored (see Pfeiffer 1985:13; Hoeschele 2007:7-8; Matemba 2004:25-26). It is therefore necessary, as a background to James' pioneer missionary activities in Malawi, to highlight the historical aspects of Seventh-day Adventist's earliest penetration in Africa, from the northernmost parts of the continent in Egypt (1878), to its southernmost parts in South Africa (1885) and relevant movements in between.

Although today Africans comprise the largest SDA membership worldwide (41 percent of 20.7 million worldwide membership in 2017) (General Conference 2018), the evangelization of Africa had a delayed start when the SDA Church began

to expand outside the USA from 1874 onwards. Lack of operational funds and indeed experienced missionaries made it impossible for the church to undertake wholesale missiological expansion. Until the establishment of a Foreign Missions Board in 1889, the church did not have a clear mission strategy for expansion into other continents as Stefan Höschele has observed that “whereas Adventist mission before this period was more like a random exercise that consisted in responding to calls from outside” (Höschele 2004:16). In any case, between 1874 and 1890, the church placed most of its available missionaries in Europe. Apart from John N. Andrews who went to Switzerland in 1874, others like Abram LaRue were in China by 1887 (Schwarz 1979:138-147).

As noted below, around the same time, missionaries like D. A. Robinson and others were in South Africa at the invitation of local believers (Matemba 1997:23). For her part, Ellen White, the church’s spiritual leader, was herself serving as a missionary in Europe (1885-1887), including visits to England, France, Switzerland, Germany, Scandinavia, Italy, and also between 1891 and 1900, with her son William, working as a missionary in Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania (Herndon 1960:12ff). During that time, the church had taken the decision to give preference to countries with strong economies such as England, Germany, and Australia, with the hope that once the church was established in those countries that through them, Africa would be evangelized. Another reason for the delay to enter Africa concerns the fact that by 1890, for example, the church was only twenty-seven years old and as such, the home base itself was in need of heavy spending to establish its institutions (Pfeiffer 1985:12).

The policies of the church during the time when Arthur G. Daniels (1901-1922) and William A. Spicer (1922-1930) were presidents of the worldwide church did much to promote the church’s missiological expansion. During their respective tenures, the two leaders were convinced that the time had come for the expansion of the church into unreached territories. Spicer’s work in India, for example, left such a lasting impression that an Adventist university is named after him. A.G. Daniels also promoted the idea of missionary expansion such that a year after assuming office, sixty new missionaries left the United States and thereafter, on average, ninety followed each year (Schwarz 1979:354-355).

Africa benefited from this emphasis in missiological expansion because by 1900 a number of areas on the continent had been entered with the SDA message. Although Egypt was first entered in 1878 and South Africa in 1885, Adventism did not expand further from those bases into the rest of Africa until much later. The *official* entry into Malawi was not because of the expansion of the work in South Africa or Egypt but rather because of the influence of Joseph Booth. Booth encouraged the Adventist Church to purchase a Seventh-day Baptist mission at Plainfield in Thyolo in southern Malawi, which became known as Malamulo mission under SDA control from 1902 onwards (Langworthy 1996:161-173; Matemba 2002:1, 2).

The northern region of Africa was the first to be entered when SDA missionaries from Europe introduced the message to the Italian European population in Alexandria in 1878. The fact that European SDAs were pioneers in this development indicates the success of the Adventist evangelization in Europe since J. N. Andrews went to Switzerland in 1874. Egyptian society, deep-rooted in the Islamic faith and tradition, proved difficult to penetrate. During the anti-western uprisings under Colonel Arabi Pasha in 1881, leaders of the small mission were massacred and the remaining few members scattered. It was not until 1901 that a second and more successful attempt was made to enter Egypt when Ludwing Richard Conradi (1856-1939) established the SDA Church there in 1901 and a year later, formed the Oriental Union Mission (Pfeiffer 1985:14-19).

After Egypt in the north, the earliest known entry of the SDA Church in Southern Africa was in 1885 in the town of Kimberly, South Africa through William Hunt. Hunt, an American, was a mineral prospector who had lived in Australia for some time before moving to the bustling diamond mine of Kimberley in South Africa (Matemba 1997:23; Schwarz 1979:223, 224). In Kimberly, he began to share the SDA message aided by Adventist literature he always carried. Among the first people interested in the Adventist message were Peter Wessels and G. J. van Drutten (Ogouma, Edmond, Amouzou, and Abib 2017:46-47). Another version of the story suggests that Wessels and van Drutten, both farmers in the area, already knew about the Sabbath and other Adventist beliefs by the time that Hunt arrived in South Africa. According to this version, Wessels, a Christian, noted that the Bible advocated baptism by immersion and that the true Sabbath was Saturday and not Sunday (see Herndon 1960). When he asked his deacon about this, he was told that such things were not important, and although disappointed, he persuaded his family to keep the true Sabbath and later persuaded, van Drutten, his neighbor, regarding this spiritual truth (Ogouma et al. 2017:45-46).

Thus, on the Transvaal in South Africa, a small group of farmers began keeping the seventh day Sabbath, completely unaware that in America a new church was in existence with Sabbath observance as one of its main pillars of belief. When the small group met Hunt, they realized that they had not been alone in this belief (Spalding 1962:9). By the beginning of 1887, SDA believers had grown to forty around the mining town. Hunt, Drutten, Wessels, and others decided to request the General Conference (GC) headquarters of the church based in America for gospel workers and collected a contribution of money amounting to US \$8900 which was sent to the GC (Matemba 1997:23). The GC could hardly believe a request of this nature from a part of the world they had not officially entered. The GC immediately sent a group of missionaries who arrived in Cape Town in July 1887, including D. A. Robinson (leader), C. L. Boyd, their families, and two colporteurs, George Burleigh and R. S. Anthony (Matemba 1997:23; Ogouma et al. 2017:46).

The southern penetration led to the official beginnings of the church in several countries. Led by Fred Sparrow, Zimbabwe was entered in 1894 when the Solusi Mission near Bulawayo was established (Spalding 1962:21). Lesotho was the next field in the south where work was started. There in 1894 a migrant laborer from Lesotho working in South Africa named David Kalaka was converted at a camp meeting held in the mining town of Kimberley that was conducted by Steven N. Haskell (1833-1922), one of the leading figures in the church of his time. Together with Kalaka, Haskell started Adventist work in Lesotho when Emmanuel Mission was established in 1896 (Nteso 1997:3, 4). In 1905, missionary William H. Anderson pioneered the establishment of the church in Zambia when Rusangu Mission was opened among the Bemba people (BNA S 18/6: archive). In 1920, William Anderson opened a mission and a school in the northern part of Namibia in the Caprivi Strip in Chief Chikamatonda's area (BNA S152/5: archive). Two years later, William Anderson began SDA work in Botswana when they built a hospital among BaNgwaketse in Kanye (Matemba 1997:26, 27), while Swaziland was entered in 1920 through the work of Joseph N. Hlubi and missionary Cyrus Rogers (Masuku 1996:64, 65). In 1924, William Anderson also pioneered SDA work in Angola (Matemba 1997:24).

The West Coast of Africa was entered in the mid-1890s. In 1894, E. L. Sanford and R. G. Rudolph entered Ghana but were soon driven back by fever. Another attempt in 1903 by D. U. Hale was again short-lived when Hale left due to ill health (Owusu-Mensa 1993:60, 61). Later in 1906, the work in Ghana was merged with the work in Sierra Leone when D. C. Babcock and other missionaries entered the area. The work in Ghana and Sierra Leone expanded to Liberia in 1927 when a group of African-Americans under G. Nathaniel Banks established a mission there (Nortey 1990:180, 181).

The beginnings of Adventist work in north and east Africa was dominated by European missionaries, while the work in west, south and central Africa received American missionaries. The work started by L. R. Conradi in Egypt finally reached East Africa at the beginning of 1900. The first country to be entered was Tanzania and it was the work of German missionaries that pioneered the work there (Hoeschele 2007:54). The German missionary interest in Tanzania was mainly for the fact that Germany had colonized Tanzania in 1885 and small wonder that more German funds and missionaries (both SDA and other Protestant churches) were available for missionary outreach there. In 1903 Johan Ehlers and an American-German nurse, A. C. Enns, established Pare Mission (Hoeschele 2007:54, 55). In 1906, Peter Nyambo, from Malawi, joined Enns in Tanzania. Together with Enns, Nyambo went to Kenya where they surveyed a place in Gendia near Kisumu as a suitable place for a mission, and when the Canadian missionary Arthur Grandville Carscallen arrived, Nyambo accompanied him and co-established Gendia Mission (Pfeiffer 1985:28; Matemba, 2004:35-42).

Finally, in 1907, Adventist missionaries from Scandinavia, Paul N. Lindgren and J. Persson started the work in Eritrea before it spread to Ethiopia. Work in these countries had a slow start and it was not until 1909 that the Italian governor in Ethiopia allowed SDA missionaries to build a church (Spalding 1962:9). However, the attempts by the church to establish medical work in Ethiopia was unsuccessful, forcing Adventist missionary-physicians to relocate to Tanzania (Pfeiffer 1985:27, 28).

George James: Early Life and Conversion

Little is known about the background of George James due to insufficient sources dealing with his early life. What limited information is available states that he was born in 1860 in the UK and grew up in London. James did not grow up as a Christian and spent much of his youth in the pubs and streets of London entertaining people with his violin (TARSH 1893:518; AHC 1952:4). Little did James know that this “unholy” instrument would be used for the propagation of the Word of God far away from his home and his people in uncharted parts of Africa. Unsatisfied with his life, in the mid-1880s James migrated to America where after attending a Seventh-day Adventist camp meeting he accepted the Three Angels Message and subsequently was baptized into church membership (Cripps 1971:5; Malawi Union 1993b:1).

With a desire to deepen his faith so that he could “give the truth to others” (AHC 1952:3), James enrolled at Battle Creek College in Michigan. Battle Creek was a spiritual watershed for James. In a communication with the Foreign Missions Board, James’ spiritual transformation is seen. “God has been so good to me! Just a short time ago, I was lost in darkness, playing my violin in the bars of London. Somehow, God led me here to America. Then He led me into an evangelistic meeting where I studied the Bible and gave my heart to Christ. My time here at Battle Creek College has deepened my knowledge of the Bible and my love for God” (Malawi Union 1993b:1).

While undertaking his studies, “the burden in his heart . . . was for the great heathen lands” to take the Christian message to Central Africa as a missionary (AHC 1952:3). It was a part of Africa James had heard about because of the missionary work of Dr. David Livingstone, the Scottish medical-missionary whose work in the 1850s and 1860s opened up much of East, Central, and Southern Africa to European Christian work, and later British imperialism (see Ross 2002:14).

James was convinced of his call and had “a great desire to reach the natives of the interior” (MMA 1977:2). Towards the end of 1892, James approached the Foreign Mission Board “that he might be sent to Africa

as a missionary to the heathen . . . [for the Foreign Mission Board] . . . this was something new [and it] was not prepared to open up such work" (AHC 1952:3). In its reply to James the Mission Board encouraged him to "stay here at Battle Creek College for a few years, finish your studies, gain some experience, perhaps get married, and then something could open up for you" (Malawi Union 1993b:1). Although others have noted that "the economy did not permit the brethren to accept his offer [as a missionary to Africa]" (Cripps 1971:5), the fact he was new in the SDA faith—having only been baptized a couple of years previously—might have weakened his case (Malawi Union 1993b:2). The SDA Church, like any denomination, was particular with its image, and therefore could not risk its reputation by sending an unmarried young man, who was recently converted and with no missionary experience, into unentered mission territory.

Another key factor worth considering is that in the early days of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the leaders were generally reluctant to evangelize outside the USA and so tended to ignore even those among its members who wanted to venture on their own for the church (Oliver and Knight n.d.). Part of the problem is that until the church established the Foreign Mission Board in 1889, it did not have a clear missionary policy to evangelize outside the USA. Undeterred by the failure of the church to support him, James left his studies, sold his possessions, packed necessary goods (including his violin), bought a steamship ticket, and sailed for Malawi, Central Africa (AHC 1952:4; Koester 1994:13).

Arrival in Malawi

The trip from the Battle Creek to present-day Malawi, Central Africa took James to Cape Town where he arrived at the beginning of January 1893 and sought the company of the local SDA congregation he had heard about while at Battle Creek (Doss 1993:17; Matemba 1997:24). Members of the Cape Town congregation told James of their chance encounter, in February 1892, with one Joseph Booth who had since gone up north to central Africa and set up a mission in an area "beyond the habitation of white men" and in present-day Malawi (Langworthy 1996:28).

Of significance about Booth was that the Cape Town members introduced him for the first time "to the idea that the true Sabbath is the seventh and not the first day of the week" (Shepperson and Price 1987:119)—a truth that would linger during Booth's missionary career, and subsequently influence his own mission policy.

For James, an interesting coincidence was that the area Livingstone talked about in his writings and where James wanted to go was the same area Booth had set up his mission. Following Booth's missionary trail,

James left Cape Town for present-day Malawi on 21 January 1893. James travelled to Durban on a six-day journey on the ship *SS Hawarden Castele* (TARSH 1893:518). In Durban, he boarded another ship that took him to the mouth of the Zambezi River in Mozambique at Chinde, where an arduous journey taking him to Malawi via the Shire River, began. For £10 he secured passage on a small boat (whaleboat) paddled by ten local men on a journey that took him three weeks up the Zambezi (in Mozambique) and later the Shire (in Malawi) rivers (Doss 1993:18).

On the way, rain fell almost every day and on several occasions, James fell ill with malaria, a disease that would eventually kill him (see Doss 1993:17, 18). On many stops on the way, James played his violin and sang for the villagers who gave him presents of maize or chickens as appreciation of his performances. The final part of the journey, about 18 miles, was made on foot. Weak from fever and fatigued by the long travel, James hired men for ten shillings who carried him on a *machila* (portable hammock) until they reached Katunga near Blantyre on 5 March 1893 (Cripps 1971:5; Langworthy 1996:43). Blantyre was then an emerging town founded in 1876, and named after David Livingstone's birthplace in Blantyre, Scotland. It was surrounded by Christian missions, white settler estates, and a commercial trading post run by the African Lakes Company (ALC) (McCracken 1989: 537-540; Ross, 1996:92-94).

The African porters directed him to the office of the Reverend David Clement Scott, the Presbyterian missionary at Blantyre mission (founded 1876), who had already been in the country for twelve years (Ross 1996:143). Upon inquiring about lodging for the night and for the subsequent days, Scott politely informed him that he had no room to take in strangers and advised him to seek accommodation at Mandala belonging to the African Lakes Company, a firm established in 1878 by two Scottish brothers, John and Frederick Moir (Ross 1996:40). ALC accommodation turned out to be above James' meager means and it was then that he sought out Booth whom he had been told about in Cape Town, and with whom he was interested in meeting to get ideas on how to set up a mission site of his own (Langworthy 1996:43).

By the time James arrived in Malawi, a British administration under Harry Johnston had just been set up in 1891. Already during this time three main Christian groups, all Protestants, had been in the country for over two decades and had set up permanent mission stations. The first Christian mission and most dominant one was the Anglican Church (Tengatenga 2010:63-68). The second was the Free Church of Scotland, which established a mission at Livingstonia in 1875 and had much influence in the Ngoni country bordering west of Lake Malawi (McCracken 1977:47-64). The third was the Church of Scotland, which established a

mission at Blantyre in 1876 and had influence in the area along the Shire River to the south of Lake Malawi (Ross 1996:17-38). Of great significance to the story about James and the SDA Church in Malawi was the presence of Booth's non-sectarian mission, the Zambezi Industrial Mission (ZIM) at Mitsidi and ten kilometers away from the Church of Scotland's Blantyre mission (Langworthy 1996:31-32).

Booth welcomed James warmly and put him up at his ZIM mission, and thus began an important relationship that lasted until James' early demise a year later. For Booth, this was the second time he was interacting with Seventh-day Adventists and since his first meeting with them in Cape Town they had engendered in him "an important awareness of the Seventh day Sabbath" (Langworthy 1996:28). For Booth, the Sabbath question was an issue that lingered for a long time in his mind. After his encounter with the Cape Town congregation Booth later wrote that the SDA church "had so much to teach and I was not able to take it in" (Langworthy 1996:28). James was a typical SDA with a burning desire to share his faith. He had been told by the Cape Town congregation to be aware of Booth's predisposition to "Adventist ideology," so he again impressed upon Booth regarding the Sabbath question and other key SDA theological teachings, including rebaptism. On Rebaptism, Booth began to apply this among his converts to his Zambezi Baptist mission who came from the Blantyre Presbyterian mission (Langworthy 1996:43-56).

Two weeks after his arrival in Malawi, James wrote a lengthy letter to the Foreign Missions Board detailing his travels and immediate impression of the country and its people. He reiterated his appeal for financial support for his proposed missionary activities. In the letter, James also challenged young SDA men and women at Battle Creek College to come to Africa. In an appeal reminiscent of Livingstone's, James wrote: "I know that there are young men and women in Battle Creek College alone who could come and be the means of helping these people. Then why not come, brethren and sisters? What rejoicing there will be in heaven when the angels see . . . sinners in . . . Africa repenting of their sins, and crying to God for mercy and pardon (TARSH cited in Doss 1993:18).

In the same letter, James expressed his conviction that this was God's calling for him but quickly observed the difficulties of preaching the SDA message, especially concerning the Sabbath question not only to the local people but also to Booth as highlighted in the following excerpt. "It looks to me like a splendid opening for the truth to go. I expect there will be quite a stir here as soon as it is fully known what doctrine we are teaching; hence, I want to make friends with them all, so that they will listen to reason. I want to move slowly but surely for the Master (TARSH cited in Doss 1993:18).

The meeting and subsequent association between James and Booth was cordial. In particular, Booth was hospitable and generous to the young and inexperienced James. Booth went out of his way to assist James, even offering any of the seven plots of land he had acquired from local chiefs if James wanted to set up a mission (Matemba 2004:27). In addition, Booth offered James the use of his African interpreters whenever he wanted them, and in fact, on most of his evangelistic meetings Booth accompanied James to render further assistance. James was so impressed with Booth's generosity that at one point he had considered asking him for financial support to start his missionary work in the country (Langworthy 1996:43, 44). A closer understanding of Booth during this time would suggest that he had also developed an interest in establishing an interdenominational mission and therefore having James join him in this venture would begin to put in motion this plan. However, as an Adventist and averse to interdenominationalism or ecumenical arrangements with churches, James politely declined such collaboration (see Langworthy 1996:43).

On 19 or 20 March 1893 two weeks after James' arrival, Booth left briefly for Durban, South Africa, to collect £250 that had been sent to him by his ZIM sponsors. In some ways, Booth's absence gave James the opportunity to interact with the local chiefs and some of the emerging prominent Africans. He also visited other missions to learn about their method of operation. James visited local chiefs in the Blantyre area, many of whom requested him to open schools in their villages. On such visits he also entertained the crowds with his violin (Cripps 1971:5). However, it is worth pointing out that in his interaction with the local people (preaching and playing his violin) James did not "treat the sick" as has been erroneously suggested in some extant sources (e.g., DACB n.d.) because there is no record anywhere that James had medical knowledge to make him also a medical missionary.

In Booth's absence James also visited the Blantyre mission where he interacted formally with D. C. Scott, the missionary in-charge, whom he had briefly met when he first arrived in the country two weeks previously (Langworthy 1996:44). Other than inquiring from Scott about missionary work, James was interested to procure a book on the Mang'anja language (spoken in the area) that Scott had recently published. In the *Review and Herald* of 22 February 1898, the church claimed that James quickly learned the local language although in my view the extent of his fluency in the language is difficult to ascertain. That he could have learned some aspects of the local language and that perhaps had a smattering knowledge of it is not disputable because many local people in the area had received some form of formal education at the Blantyre mission and could have translated for him or taught him the basics of the language. The availability of

Scotts' magisterial book (737 pages), *Cyclopaedic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language* (1892), on the language commonly spoken in British Central Africa (Malawi) might have helped James to grasp not only the fundamentals of the language but the cultural context of the people, which Scott sensitively portrayed (Shepperson and Price 1987:17; Ross 1996:67).

With plans to set up his own mission, James was keen to learn the local language. In a letter to the Foreign Missions Board, he stated in part that, "to continue the work, adding to it all I can, and in the meantime studying the language, so that I can be able to travel better among the [people] (TARSH 1893 cited in Doss 1993:18). Overall, the meeting between Scott and James was affable such that Scott invited the SDA visitor to dinner later that day where afterwards James played his violin while Scott played the piano (Langworthy 1996:43, 44).

The Sabbath Question

Although during his time in Malawi James talked about other core SDA doctrines such as Christ's Second Coming and rebaptism (Malawi Union 1993b:1), the Sabbath doctrine dominated his discussions with Booth and others he came into contact with (Langworthy 1996:56). His interaction with Booth provided James with an opportunity for evangelism regarding the biblical Sabbath. As the two missionaries became more acquainted, James intensified his message on the Sabbath question. Eventually, James' fervent preaching on the subject aroused a genuine interest in Booth (Matemba 2001:1, 2). Although Booth was neither converted nor baptized into the Adventist Church, he nevertheless was convinced of the theological teaching about the Sabbath (Langworthy 1996:161).

It is interesting that on the first Sabbath after James' arrived at Mitsidi, Booth invited all his workers and converts (about 200 of them) to a church service that he jointly conducted with James. Booth was the first to speak. He preached on Exodus 20:1-17 and particularly dwelt on the fourth commandment, telling the congregation that Saturday was the right day of worship (Langworthy 1996:45). For his part, James spoke for more than three hours and reemphasized the appropriateness of the seventh day Sabbath. The impact of James' teaching and preaching concerning the Sabbath on Booth was profound, such that he subsequently made fundamental changes to his mission policy. For example, he "set aside Sabbath worship on his mission and Sunday for witnessing in the surrounding villages . . . [and] a number of students at his mission showed keen interest (Doss 1993:18).

For James, his initial evangelistic meetings were successful because of the interest he aroused in Booth and in the local people who attended the

meetings. Booth's sudden theological "conversion" and changes he made to his mission policy surprised his workers to say the least because until this time they had known him as a Sunday observing Baptist. Furthermore, many of those Booth had converted and baptized into the Baptist fellowship were also equally perplexed by this. On one occasion, one of his Bible students in reference to the Sabbath asked, "why were we not taught this by other missionaries?" (Langworthy 1996:43).

The implication of Booth's new mission policy was that by declaring that two days were to be set aside for religious activities in a week, mission industrial work would suffer. Booth's new mission policy did not sit well with white farmers in the area who depended heavily on cheap African labor. The farmers were infuriated about "this Saturday teaching" for it meant that "their workers who took up the Sabbath position would not want to work on Saturday, which to them was the true Seventh day or the Sabbath" (Shepperson and Price 1987:64). The Blantyre mission, the main Christian Center in the area also weighed in on the issue. In May 1893 Scott added his voice to the concerns and objected to Booth and James "who calls [sic] Saturday Sunday, and tells the boys [local men] so." Scott went further to say that since Booth's mission was so close to his "the presence of the ZIM and Booths' activities tended to introduce schism into the native church" (Langworthy 1996:59).

Later, even Booth himself expressed some doubt that perhaps he had rushed his decision on the Sabbath question for his mission. It would seem that although James had made a huge impression on Booth, in the end Booth had to consider other issues, as has been observed that "he was too busy to see the way clearly to accept the many new ideas, not just the Sabbath but other SDA issues as well. As a result, he rejected the whole approach including the Sabbath although subsequently he felt uncomfortable while reading the passages in the Bible (Langworthy 1996:44).

Even though such opposition must have been disappointing for James, nevertheless he had planted a seed about the SDA message in the hearts of the many people. Although for practical reasons Booth had reconsidered his position on the Sabbath approach for the smooth running of his mission, he remained convinced of its veracity and never completely abandoned it. According to Langworthy, "the James visit was a doctrinal interlude in the short run, as the Sabbath receded as an issue after his departure, but in the long run it was to be a factor in Booth's move to the Sabbath in 1898" (1996:44).

Booth's spiritual convictions are difficult to explain, as are any motives for conversion and causes of belief. Throughout his missionary career, Booth constantly questioned his own beliefs and was not afraid to embrace new light or truth and discard the old that could not stand against

the new. This was especially true of his conversion relating to the two Sabbath keeping churches (Seventh-day Baptists and Seventh-day Adventist) he engaged with after his meeting with James, who had impressed upon him the Sabbath question. This has engendered a debate in mission studies, with one view suggesting that Booth's "leaps of faith" was a convenient way to attract "small but relatively prosperous . . . American churches that could support his new missionary adventures" because of his decision to work for two Sabbath-keeping churches in Malawi as their torchbearer. First, at Plainfield mission under Seventh-day Baptists (1898-1901), and later after it was renamed Malamulo mission (1902-1903) under Seventh-day Adventists (Shepperson and Price 1987:19). A different position maintains that Booth's religious conversions were a genuine search for spiritual truth, particularly in search for the truth about the Sabbath (compare Langworthy 1996:162-163; Shepperson and Price 1997:134; Fielder 1996:33-35). Yet, another view taking a midline position suggests that Booth's "conversion" from Seventh-day Baptists to Seventh-day Adventism within a short period was "a complex combination of sincerity, desperation and self-opportunism" (Langworthy 1996:161).

In my view, although Booth accepted new teachings (i.e., the Adventist position on the Sabbath and rebaptism) he remained a Baptist all his life but only used other denominations to advance his missionary projects (Matemba 2001:3). In any case, Booth's decision to link up with the SDA church, albeit briefly, had positive outcomes for the Adventists in two main ways. First, this demonstrated the efficacy of the Sabbath message that was planted by the Cape Town SDA congregation in 1892, and later, strongly reinforced by James in his interaction with Booth between 1893 and 1894. Second, for the first time the Adventist Church entered Central Africa with its work when a permanent base was established at Malamulo Mission in 1902 through the efforts of Booth.

Travel to Solusi

In June 1894—the same year David Kalaka and Steven Haskell opened SDA work in Lesotho and E. L. Sanford and R. G. Rudolph entered Ghana with the SDA message—a group of SDA missionaries was pushing north from South Africa going into present day Zimbabwe. Under Fred Sparrow, the missionary party reached Bulawayo at the end of June 1894. On 4 July, the imperialist Cecil Rhodes gave part of a piece of land (12,000 acres) he had bought or taken from the local people under chief Soluswe on which Solusi mission (a corruption of the name Soluswe) was founded (Mfune 2002:1, 2).

Upon learning of the Solusi mission via the *Review and Herald*, which he regularly received through the colonial postal service system created in 1891 (see Baker 1971:14, 15), James decided to travel to Solusi and not return home to the USA as has been claimed in some sources (compare MMA 1977:2; Doss 1993:17, 18). It will never be known for sure why James decided to go to Solusi, although it is possible that after spending a grueling year walking in villages, preaching, and talking to chiefs and other missionaries, the stark reality of being a missionary in the hinterland of Africa without church support must have become apparent to him. It has been noted that James “came to realize, however, that without an organization behind him, and a piece of land where he could open up a mission station, his work could not be permanent” (AHC 1952:4).

Perhaps he went with the intention of meeting the Solusi missionaries “to tell them of the bright prospects in Nyasaland [Malawi], and then return” (AHC 1952:4), James bid Booth and other acquaintances farewell, bought a passage on a small boat on the Shire river on his way to Solusi. The suggestion in some extant sources that the missionaries in Solusi sent James “funds to make the trip” is difficult to substantiate (*The Review and Herald* 1898:14). There is a story repeated in missionary narratives that when local people heard that he was leaving they “cried as the paddle-steamer started its slow trip down the Zambezi” (Cripps 1971:5) with him assuring them that “he would return with more missionaries” (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* 1996:81).

A Lonely Demise

Tragically, James never completed that journey. Soon after setting off he became gravely ill probably from recurring malaria, and died soon afterwards in the boat, leaving behind his favorite violin as a permanent reminder of his presence. Porters who travelled with him quickly buried him in an unmarked grave on the banks of the Shire River (Doss 1993:18; Cripps 1971:5). Although James died a lonely death, he was never forgotten by the local people who knew him and they could who never forgot the white man who preached about the Sabbath and entertained them with the ‘box that could sing’ (Koester 1994:13). James seemed to have left a lasting impression that some years later, William H. Anderson, the missionary who established the Rusangu mission (established 1905) in Zambia, met “some Nyasaland Africans who describes the very features of George James” (Doss 1993:18).

Many of the historical records about James differ regarding not only when he died but also “how long did James actually work in Malawi?” (Doss 1993:18). Some sources say that James died of malaria on his way

to Solusi (Malawi Union 1993b), while other sources report that he “remained in Malawi for three years, preaching and captivating the crowds with his violin music” (Cripps 1971:3). Additional sources report that James worked in Africa for five years and died in 1897 or 1898 (compare Doss 1993:18; Malawi Union 1993b:1).

What seems to complicate the issue further is that the news of James’ death took a long time to come to the notice of the church. Being a self-sponsored and independent missionary meant that there were no official ties that kept track of his whereabouts or what he was doing. News of James’ death only came to the attention of the church in the late 1890s, when his obituary appeared in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* of 22 February 1898, five years after his death and with factual errors. The obituary stated: “You will all be sorry to hear that Brother George James, who has been in the interior of South Africa the last five years, died last week at sea, on his way home either to America or to Britain” (Freeman 1898:130).

Perhaps unsure of the circumstances and details of his death, the reportage in that issue suggested that James had died that year (1898), and went on to erroneously state that he had been in the interior of Africa from 1892 until his death at sea in 1898 on his way back either to America or to Britain. Even in the excerpt cited above, further factual errors are evident. Some observations are necessary here. First, James did not work in the “interior of South Africa” rather he worked in the interior of central Africa (here again South Africa should be distinguished as a country and not a region). From the evidence collected and analyzed, James worked only for a year and three months in the interior of central Africa (Malawi), from March 1892 to June 1894, and not for five years as has been suggested. James died on the Shire River and not at sea, and finally, his destination was Solusi mission, Zimbabwe, and not America or Britain.

Critical Observations

How much George James contributed to the Adventist Church during his brief stay in the Malawi has been slightly exaggerated in some extant sources, perhaps to support the popular legend about him as the pioneer SDA missionary to Central Africa. Robert Folkenberg, president of the General Conference from 1990 to 1999 suggested that as a result of James’ efforts in Malawi “the gospel went into the neighbouring countries of Zambia, Tanzania, and Mozambique” (1993:4). Wenson Masoka (1947-2014) president of the SDA Church in Malawi from 1988 to 1997 stated that James “planted the seed but never saw it grow to maturity” (1996, personal communication to author). Similarly, others such as Koetser and Folkenberg have claimed that James’ arrival in Malawi in 1893 signaled

the beginnings of the SDA Church in that country to the extent of Koester erroneously claiming that James had “a small group of converts [that] continued to worship together [after his demise a year later]” (compare Folkenberg 1993:3; Koester 1994:13).

Sources are lacking to provide a comprehensive account of the contribution James may have made for the Adventist Church during his brief missionary sojourn in Malawi. What is not in dispute is that James was the “very first Adventist to preach our distinct message in the heart of Africa” (Malawi Union 1993b:3). However, from the discussion in this paper there is no evidence to support the claim that James’ arrival signaled the beginnings of the Adventist Church in Malawi. While James should be credited for helping Booth embrace the Sabbatarian doctrines, the cold facts are that the circumstances leading up to the official beginnings of the church at Malamulo mission in 1902 had no direct connection to James (see Matemba 2002:1; Matemba 2004:27).

When assessing James’ evangelistic work it is worth stressing that there is no evidence to suggest that anyone was converted or that a church building, however rudimentary, was built by the time James left to go to Solusi. James’ evangelistic work was done with the help of Booth and in Booths’ churches or among his congregations to the extent that when Booth left briefly for Durban on 19 or 20 March 1893 James was at a loss as what to do, admitting that without Booth he could not see the way forward in his endeavors. In a letter James wrote to the Foreign Missions Board, his concerns are revealing: “Mr Bs [Booth] leaving will cause the work done already, if left without anyone [to] die out, as it is quite new to them and will meet with many foes; so I deem it best, for the present, to continue the work, adding to it all I can, and in the meantime studying the language, so that I can be able to travel better among the natives (TARSH 1893:518).

Despite what others, such as Beverly Koester, have claimed, there is no evidence to support the suggestion that James left “a small group of converts that continued to worship together” and neither was Booth “among his first converts” (Koester 1994:13). From available sources, James’ interaction with the local people and indeed with Booth, did not convert anyone nor did he leave a group of converts during his brief time in Malawi. It would take eight long years before *real* SDA work was started at Malamulo mission in 1902, and then it took the church three more years before seven men were baptized on 30 September 1905 (AHC 1952:4).

If James’ work had any impact, it was through Booth who embraced the Sabbath teaching but not as a converted Seventh-day Adventist. Although Booth had “Sabbath” leanings and at one point embraced Seventh Day Baptists, he remained a First Day Baptist all his life (see Fielder nd; Matemba 2001:3). This information about Booth is important because

although he preached about the Sabbath to his local congregants, which continued after James' died, such teaching did not have the purpose to encourage conversion into the SDA Church for him or for his Baptist congregants. While it is not a matter for dispute that there was some Adventist influence in his thinking about the Sabbath, most likely he was preaching his own version of Sabbatarianism—a mixture of Seventh-day Adventism and Seventh-day Baptist theology. Shepperson and Price have noted Booth's theological dilemma: "Booth was not yet ready for the Adventists' eschatology, and he found in the ideas of the Seventh Day Baptists a more amenable combination of his old Baptist principles and the new idea that the true Sabbath was the seventh day (Shepperson and Price 1987:119).

There is an incident concerning an evangelistic trip Booth made to the Mang'anja people living near Nsanje under a headman called Chataika. The dating of this incident is not clear and has been suggested to have taken place either in 1893 or 1894 although most likely it took place after James' demise in 1894. Through an interpreter, Booth preached about the Bible and there was an immediate excitement among the people especially among the village elders (Langworthy 1996:47). When Booth began preaching about the fourth commandment [the Sabbath] Chataika is said to have retorted: "Tell us which is that day; we are ready to give God His day. . . . Tell us which is the Seventh Day, and we will watch and mark, and give that day to God" (Langworthy 1996:47).

Booth replied, "Today is the first day of the week. Yesterday was the last day of the week, so yesterday was the seventh day. Almost all white men worship on the first day, for that is now the custom." "I was again surprised at the swift retort of this man." He leaned forward and said, "Who gave you white men power more than God? Have you power to make laws, and put the laws of God under your own? What is this you tell, that white men worship on the first day, when God has told them to give him the seventh day?" (Langworthy 1996:47).

After some discussion among themselves, the people resolved not to keep the white man's day (i.e., Sunday), but God's, and from that day about fourteen people in the village began to keep the Sabbath even before Booth himself (Langworthy 1996:47, 48). In this exchange, Chataika exuded clarity of thought that the seventh day Sabbath was "new" light that challenged Booth's previous theological teaching about God's day of worship. It is also interesting about Chataika's realization of the white man's self-imposed authority in changing at will God's law regarding the biblical seventh day Sabbath (i.e., Saturday). That such a debate was taking place at the first encounter between Africans and the SDA message as early as the 1890s is interesting as it is enduring because the Sabbath question remains an on-going theological debate within Christendom.

The actions of Chataika and his people in “rejecting” the white man’s day of worship speaks to wider issues of the subaltern’s ability (or not) to think and speak for himself (see Spivak 1988:271-273; Sefa-Dei 2012:41-44), albeit within the confines of a missionary/colonial hegemony in the social space in which such complex theological discussions took place. Finally, the Chataika-Booth Sabbath debate serves as a lasting example of the impact James’s evangelistic work may have had on Booth and the local people that he interacted with, for the Sabbath question is one of the key theological teachings and practices that distinguishes the SDA Church from other mainstream Trinitarian Christian denominations (Höschele 2004:37).

Conclusion

The purpose of this article has been to bring a greater awareness to and appreciation of the pioneering missionary activities of George James, who in 1893 was the first SDA to come to Malawi. In recounting this largely untold story, the article has also addressed some of the factual errors in extant sources where aspects of James’ story have appeared. James’ evangelistic work was affected by the reluctance of the Adventist church leaders to endorse him as a missionary. If James had received the necessary support, the SDA church could have had a mission in Malawi, probably even before the Solusi mission. Finally, we will never know what James could have achieved had he survived the trip to meet the Solusi group. It is likely that he would have asked the Solusi missionaries to help him establish a mission in Malawi.

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CHIGEMEZI NNADOZIE WOGU

Returnee Immigrants and the Founding of the Seventh-day Adventism in Europe

Introduction

The beginning of the Seventh-day Adventist mission in Europe is directly connected to returnee immigrants. Those returnee immigrants were former settlers of the New World who left Europe for America and eventually became Adventists. After their conversion, some became missionaries to their home countries and other areas in Europe. It is in this context that the contributions of Michal B. Czechowski, Ludwig R. Conradi, Jan G. Mattesson, and Jakob Erzberger to Adventist mission in Europe are well known. However, there are other relatively unknown figures—also returnee immigrants—whose missionary efforts also played a key role in the founding and establishment of Adventism in Europe. This article will focus on three of these lesser known individuals: Conrad Lubahn, Julius Theodor Böttcher, and Reinhold Klingbeil.

This article will look at the background for the large European emigration to the United States, followed by briefly tracing the relationship of German immigrants and the early Adventist years. Then brief accounts of the individual missionary mission contributions of Lubahn, Böttcher and Klingbeil in Europe will be highlighted.

European Immigration and Religion

Many Europeans became settlers in America in the 1800s. As a result of land and job shortages, rising taxes, crop failures, and famine, many Europeans left their home countries and were forced to flee to the United States, which was perceived as the land of economic opportunity.

America, the New World, received its largest number of immigrants from Europe between 1870 and 1900. According to the United States statistics, 12 million immigrants arrived during this time (Library of Congress n.d.). The immigrants came from Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Scandinavia, and from southern and eastern Europe. These new immigrants became vital forces of American life, bring innovation and of course their religious heritage and practices.

“Jews, Protestants, and even some Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists arrived in the successive waves of massive immigration to the United States between the 1840s and 1920s” (Byrne 2000). With the steady stream of immigrants from Europe, Protestantism in the United States changed from a tight-knit group of educated aristocrats who owned land into a diverse mass of urban and rural immigrants. They came from different countries, spoke various languages, held a variety of social statuses, and placed emphasis on distinct aspects of their Christian heritage.

By emphasizing different doctrinal aspects of their Christian heritage the various immigrant groups maintained their ethno-religious identity in their new settlements. This helped them adjust and survive in their new environment (Yang and Ebaugh 2001). However, since many Europeans went to the US for the sake of religious freedom, it was easier to join new religious groups that were emerging because of the waves of religious revivals that swept over North America in the 1800s. The Second Great Awakening took place between 1790 and 1840 and resulted in many of the immigrants joining new denomination. Of special interest to Seventh-day Adventists is the Millerite revival of the 1830 that was led by a Baptist preacher—William Miller (1782-1849) and which had a number of European settlers among its adherents. The Seventh-day Adventist denomination, which grew out of the Millerite Movement, had a number of German-speaking converts join its movement in the early years of the denomination.

German Emigration to the United States

The case of German immigrants to the United States is of particular interest for this article. Historically, Germans were the largest immigrant group entering the USA. They began migrating to the US as early as 1683 (Lüber 2018). After the start of industrialization, the German population began to grow exponentially. By the mid-19th century, a number of farmers in Germany could no longer eke out a living as a result of land scarcity. Thus, they began migrating in 1816 to the United States. In the US, they were exposed to better opportunities such that a peasant farmer who barely had half a hectare of land in Germany could secure about 64 hectares after ten years.

In addition to access to cheap land, politically the US seemed to be “the land of the free.” After the revolution of 1848 in Germany, many people realized that the common person was very unlikely to experience much freedom. This was especially true for those belonging to the left-wing liberal class; therefore, emigration to the US, a democratic nation, became the best option around 1848. This resulted in the so called “48ers” (Lüber 2018).

There were other reasons why so many Germans moved to the US. Some, like the Volga Germans (or Beresan German-Russians) who had settled in Russia, were attracted to the prairies in the US, which were unlike the semi-arid steppes of Russia. Additionally, many Volga Germans fled to the US after 1871 when Czar Alexander II “decreed that both the Volga and the Beresan German-Russian colonies would be forced to conform to Russian laws in an attempt to create a unified Russian identity” (Mans 2019). This most likely was the case of Conrad Laubhan (1838-1923) and his wife, Katherine Sophia Meier (1842-1929), who emigrated to America in 1878.

Others emigrated due to personal reasons or because of familial contacts they maintained with relatives. For instance, Julius Theodor Böttcher (1865-1931) emigrated to the US after the loss of his parents in 1879 and 1880 respectively. His move was made possible because his sister, Mary Just was living in Minnesota at that time. In the case of Reinhold Gustav Klingbeil (1868-1928), he emigrated to the US in 1876 together with his family. Whatever the case, these individuals became Adventists in the US and later became missionaries in Europe.

Conradi: Mission, Conversion, and Ministerial Motivation among European Migrants

It is interesting that aside from the fact that Böttcher and the Laubhan and Klingbeil families moved to the US during the same period, all of them either became Adventists through the ministry of Ludwig Richard Conradi or were motivated to join the Adventist ministry and mission work through Conradi’s efforts. Conradi needs no introduction in the history of Adventist mission. Born in Karlsruhe, Germany, he had migrated to America as a young man. In 1878, he became an Adventist. The next year, after meeting with Ellen White, he attended Battle Creek College. In 1886, he was sent to work in Europe where his mission work in adapting and contextualizing Adventism among Europeans gave Adventism its needed boost and growth. He led European Adventism for a number of years until he left the Adventist Church 1932 (Heinz 1998).

Before returning to Europe, Conradi began working among German-speaking people in the Mid-West after his studies at Battle Creek College. The fact that Adventist mission was being carried out among German-speaking immigrants is surprising for that time period. Many of the Adventists who survived the “Great Disappointment” of 1844 were not willing to tell non-Millerites about the Second Coming. They argued that the door of grace had been shut on those who had not accepted the Millerite message. Yet, in 1849 and from the 1850s onwards, this view changed. Early Adventists began evangelizing among North American immigrants. Eventually, when the Adventist leaders became more open to the necessity of world missions, Uriah Smith argued that since the United States received many immigrants from among the peoples of the world, the mission of the Adventist Church could be fulfilled by never leaving America (Schantz 1983:233). In this vein several European immigrants in the USA engaged in mission to their own people. Additionally, training institutes like German institutes and Scandinavian institutes were organized for the various language groups.

As these immigrants became Adventists, they wanted to tell their relatives back home in Europe about the imminent return of Christ. Thus, magazines were printed in foreign languages and shipped to Europe. For instance, the Danish paper, *Advent Tidende*, from 1872 onwards, and other magazines in French, German, Norwegian, and Swedish were sent to Europe. It was in this context that Conradi began working among Germans in the US. Soon, in 1882, Conradi was ordained to the Adventist ministry. His ministry focused on German-speaking people who were largely recent immigrants.

Lubhan, Böttcher and Klingbeil: Background, Conversion, and Mission

After Laubhan (born on April 22, 1838) and Katherine Sophia Meier (born on February 4, 1842) married on January 3, 1861, they had ten children. All of them died in infancy except one, who became Mrs. Richards (Obituaries 1923:7; Obituaries 1929:7). In 1878 Laubhan and Katherine Meier emigrated to America and settled in Kansas. While in Kansas they became Seventh-day Adventists through the ministry of Conradi. From then on, the couple began working as Adventist lay workers until they were called to Europe.

In the case of Klingbeil (born on September 7, 1868), at the age of seven, in 1876, his family moved to America, and settled in Wisconsin. In 1887, he was baptized as an Adventist. However, his life soon took another direction after he met Conradi who encouraged him to pursue a five-month

course in pastoral/missionary training in 1893 at Union College in College View, Nebraska. It was after his training that Klingbeil received an invitation to minister back in Europe.

For Böttcher (born on April 8, 1865), after settling with his sister in Minnesota at the beginning of the 1880s, he became an Adventist through an evangelistic series in Minnesota that was conducted by W. B. Hill in 1885. Immediately after, Böttcher wanted to share the Advent message with others as well. He went to Battle Creek College in Michigan where he did his training in the German Department led by August Kunz (Voth 193:28). By 1887, Böttcher was already working as a lay pastor in Ohio under the Cleveland mission (*Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* 1888:64). In the winter of 1888 and 1889, after attending a training institute with his wife, Nellie Loreana (born October 19, 1864), they both accepted a call to go to Germany to work under the leadership of Conradi. It is interesting that the General Conference had earlier called for J. S. Shrock to go to Germany. However, Shrock declined, and in his stead, Böttcher was recommended (Synopsis of the Proceedings of the General Conference Committee 1889:235).

Having established the connections between Conradi, Adventist mission, and German settlers in the US, the next sections offers more details concerning these three returnee immigrants and their contributions to Seventh-day Adventist mission in Europe

Laubhan: Pioneer Mission Work in Russia

As early as 1883, Volga Germans in Crimea were already receiving Adventist literature sent from a German residing in Kansas (*Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* 1890:62). As a result, the Crimean Germans began corresponding with the Adventist leaders in America. In 1886, after Conradi had organized a church in Crimea, Laubhan and his wife Katherine were sent to Russia to begin pioneer mission work (Conradi 1889:582). The couple settled in Saratov, on the Volga, and began their ministry in a familiar environment. The next year Laubhan was ordained to the gospel ministry and by 1888, just two years after the launch of pioneer mission work, there were more than 100 Adventists in the south of Saratov. Additionally, from the spring of 1888 onwards, Laubhan was instrumental in organizing about five churches. Laubhan and Katherine also met with a number of Russian Sabbath keepers, which was an advantage to his ministry as he built on and contextualized the Sabbath theology in order to bring Adventist teachings into perspective (Wogu 2021a).

The Laubhans were very successful in their mission in Crimea, such that Conradi reported that the number of Adventists increased to about

300 partially due to the work done by the couple (1889:582). However, after twelve years of mission work, Laubhan's health failed and the family returned to the USA (Wogu 2021a). Laubhan died on April 4, 1923 and his wife Katherine died on July 12, 1929 (Obituaries 1929:7). Yet their mission contributions and the legacy they left behind survived them.

Böttcher: Pioneer Mission Work in Germany, Switzerland, and Russia

When the Böttchers arrived in Hamburg in the winter of 1888/89, they immediately joined Jakob Erzberger and Conradi in organizing several evangelistic series. They were quite successful. For example, the evangelistic lectures held in the city of Barmen where Erzberger and Böttcher preached generated interest among the attendees concerning the Adventist message. The next year, in 1890, Böttcher was ordained and by 1892, he was already leading the mission in Hamburg. However, 1892 was not an easy year in Germany and it was also the year of the cholera outbreak in Hamburg. There were many difficulties of doing mission during that time, yet Böttcher took the reins of leadership with courage.

From 1892 onwards, Böttcher became an instrumental force in the pioneering work of Adventist mission in Germany. This is captured in how Böttcher was ready to join efforts with others when it came to evangelism (Wogu 2021b).

In June 1893, Böttcher and Johann G. Obländer held a tent meeting in Schleswig, Germany. Since this was the first tent meeting ever held in Germany, several people came merely out of curiosity. Nevertheless, a number took an interest in the Advent message, leading to the organization of a church there. Another church was organized at Harburg, five miles from Hamburg, after some lectures by Emil Frauchiger and Böttcher. Emil Frauchiger was the one principally working in that area, but because Böttcher was in charge of the mission in Hamburg, he joined efforts with Frauchiger. Hence, Böttcher was an instrumental element in the founding years of Adventism in Germany. (Wogu 2021b)

Böttcher not only worked in Germany, but also in Switzerland and Russia. He was one of the early Adventist cross-cultural missionaries. After the Böttchers returned to the United States in 1894, they worked in Minnesota and Ohio as evangelists. However, because of their missionary experiences, Böttcher was appointed to teach at Union College in Nebraska. There, he led the German Department for about seven years. During this time, he trained workers who were preparing for cross-cultural mission work outside the United States (Voth 1931:28).

It is not surprising that Böttchers later returned to Europe as missionaries. This time, they went to Switzerland where he served as president of the newly organized German-Swiss Conference in Basel, while his wife Nellie began working as a matron in the Basel and Gland sanitariums. While leading the administration, Böttcher not only facilitated evangelistic lectures, colporteur work, and Bible studies, he “also led out in the organization and reorganization of several churches that contributed to the already formed foundation of the Adventist denomination among German-speaking Swiss people” (Wogu 2021b).

Böttcher later served as the president of the South German Conference from 1905 to 1907 before moving to Russia to head the newly created Russian Union Conference. Working as a mission administrator in Russia was difficult as a result of the lack of religious freedom. In spite of the dangers and difficulties, Böttcher’s passion was focused on the spread of the Seventh-day Adventist message as well as in training indigenous workers. In his zeal, he facilitated numerous public evangelistic meetings, led out in the recruitment of colporteurs, ensured the opening and organization of new fields (Böttcher 1909:12; Wogu 2021b), and the establishment of local churches in the vast Russian territory (Böttcher 1908:13, 14).

At the turn of the 20th century, Böttcher became an important figure in the history of European Adventism. In 1911, he was elected as vice president of the European field, a position he held until he returned to the US in 1916. Before his death in January 1931, Böttcher worked with the German Department of the Bureau of Home Missions where he coordinated the employment of workers and organized churches, education, and publishing among the German population in North America (Böttcher 1922:13; Wogu 2021b).

Klingbeil and the Dutch-Belgian Adventist Mission Work

Immediately after his pastoral training at Union College, Klingbeil, the youngest of the missionaries under consideration, first went to Germany as an evangelist and colporteur. This was after he accepted an invitation to work in Europe. In Germany, he requested to work around Magdeburg (Wogu 2021c). While the twenty-five year old was busy holding Bible studies and public lectures, the Foreign Missions Board had recommended Klingbeil as the best candidate to commence mission work among Germans in Holland (*Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* 1893:70).

In Holland, Klingbeil began working among the Germans in Rotterdam and among the Sabbatarian Christians he came in contact with (Conradi 1894: 282). In Rotterdam, Klingbeil preached and sold books to the sailors. In addition, he was instrumental in establishing Adventist

Churches in Amsterdam, Zwolle, and the Hague. As a result, the Dutch Church grew to about 240 baptized members (Wogu 2021c). In January 1902 when the Dutch field was organized into a conference, Klingbeil was elected as president (Conradi 1902:148).

Klingbeil's success in the Dutch field was also replicated in the Belgian field. In 1903, Klingbeil was sent to Belgium to begin pioneer mission work. The country was firmly steeped in Roman Catholicism and the state Protestant Churches. This created several challenges for Klingbeil. Once, the contract for a rented hall, which he used for his evangelistic lectures, was withdrawn because of threats from the Catholics. This did not deter Klingbeil as he resorted to using the large room in front of his house for public evangelistic meetings (Wogu 2021c).

According to a report by Arthur G. Daniells, then president of the General Conference, after Klingbeil transferred the services to his house,

one of the priests in that part of the city stirred up the people to mob the place. One Sunday night hundreds of angry people gathered in front of the house to break up the meeting, but they did not succeed. They seemed to be restrained by some unseen power. This demonstration caused many people to make inquiry regarding the things Brother Klingbeil was teaching, and in the end really proved a blessing to his work. (Daniells 1905:6)

After the incident, Klingbeil continued his meetings without interruption. He pioneered Adventism in Antwerp and further in Brussels where he trained Bible workers, and established churches. Klingbeil continued working in Belgium and in Holland alternatively. For instance, in 1909 he worked in Holland, then in 1911, he returned to Belgium. Then in 1919, he came back to Holland to lead the West Holland Mission until 1923. From 1923 to 1926 he led the mission in Belgium as the president of the conference there. In 1926, Klingbeil returned to the US with his family. He began pastoring a congregation in Michigan but died suddenly after a heart failure on April 27, 1928 (Piper 1928:22).

Lubhan, Böttcher, and Klingbeil: Appraising the Contributions of Returnee Immigrants in Europe

The three individuals and their wives discussed above played a significant role in the founding years of Adventism in Europe. They were not the first missionaries to have entered Europe; however, their crucial roles as pioneer missionaries in both unentered and entered regions in

Europe gave Adventism a needed boost in those early years. In the case of Conrad Lubahn and Katherin Sophia who worked as pioneers in Russia, in a eulogy, J. N. Anderson, commented that “In common with many other non-conformists,” Laubhan

preached a faith that was under the ban of the government, and he paid dearly for persisting in preaching his message in the face of officers of the law whose studied purpose it was to silence his voice of truth. Many a time was he compelled to flee in the dead of night lest he be apprehended and cast into prison. Much of his most effective work was done under cover of the darkness. . . . He was known here as a quiet, consistent Christian. He passed away in full faith, trusting in the great Father of life who will in that day call all His sleeping ones. (Anderson 1923:22)

Heinrich J. Löbsack recognized the efforts of Laubhan in Russia and its reverberations in Eastern Europe. According to Löbsack, it was from the earliest endeavors of Laubhan that the Adventist message spread in Russia. Local ministers and colporteurs were trained. Churches, conferences, and union conferences were established all throughout Russia and Central and Northern Asia (1929:8).

The lives of Julius and Nellie Böttcher portray the stark commitment of a husband and wife who served their denomination in mission. Their efforts as pioneer missionaries contributed to the founding years of Seventh-day Adventism in Germany, in some cities in Switzerland, and to what was then the Russian Empire.

Reinhold Gustav Klingbeil the youngest of the three missionaries, served the Seventh-day Adventist church as evangelist, pastor, missionary, and administrator from 1893 to 1928. In his thirty-five years of mission and ministry, he played a key role in the establishment of Adventism in some parts of Europe, especially in the Netherlands and Belgium. In those two countries, he was instrumental in founding several congregations. As mission administrator, he trained and mentored Dutch and Belgian workers whose later took over the affairs of the Adventist Church in their regions. His approach to mission in difficult situations remains a cherished memory during those founding years of Adventism in Europe.

Conclusion

This article demonstrated that aside from the popular names like Czechowski, Conradi, Matteson, and Erzberger, other returnee immigrants like Lubahn, Böttcher, and Klingbeil were instrumental in the

founding years of Adventist mission in Europe. It is interesting to note that all three individuals had emigrated to the US in approximately the same time period and either met or worked with Conradi. Conradi was instrumental in the conversion of Lubhan, encouraged Klingbeil to do ministerial training, and was the first contact Böttcher had when he returned to Germany as a missionary.

What is more interesting is that the three returnee immigrants had an advantage over home workers. Having lived in the United States for some time, they gained much-needed cross-cultural experience that must have helped them adapt Adventism to the European context. This claim comes in the view of the fact that some Adventist workers have been criticized for transplanting Adventism to Europe without taking note of the context. For instance, Czechowski, John N. Andrews, and Jakob Erzberger have come under some disapproval for adopting the method of American evangelism while doing Adventist mission in Europe (Pfeiffer 1978:19-25; Heinz 2010:51-62). Nevertheless, as demonstrated in this article, Laubhan, Böttcher, and Klingbeil were sensitive to their various contexts. Laubhan for instance contextualized Adventism through Sabbath theology among Russian Sabbath keepers. In the case of Böttcher, who worked in several fields, he focused not only on doing contextualizing Adventism but also on training indigenous Adventist workers for the denomination in the regions where he worked. Klingbeil adapted Adventism in the Dutch context such that he was successful among German settlers there.

By the time all three missionaries left the European context, Adventism was well established in Europe such that European Adventism competed in several instances with American Adventism. That competition was very visible at least in numbers. While numbers are not the best criteria to rate success, numbers are very tangible and quantitative. Nonetheless, the account above does not claim finality to the story of the early Adventist mission enterprise in Europe. Hence, what is left untouched in this article can be summed up in several questions that could guide future research. Which other returnee immigrants contributed to the founding of Adventism in Europe? What challenges did those missionaries face in spite of their cross-cultural advantage? Were these missionaries always successful? Finally, why did most of these missionaries return to the United States even when they worked in their birth countries?

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PAVEL ZUBKOV

Towards the Effectiveness of the Missionary Activity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Moscow: A Comparative Study of Church and Society

The socio-cultural dynamics of urban life posits additional challenges for a Christian community in the cities (Bakke 2002:33). There is no universal recipe for successful mission endeavor in big cities. What works in other settings may not prove successful in urban areas. The problem may not only lie within the methods used to approach urban population but also on the demands that people in the city put on the church. In highly individualistic societies, one cannot expect people to come to the church just because of duty or societal culture. Rather, where there is great diversity of religious institutions and practices, people are not in a hurry to make choices that depend on personal criteria and preferences.

This study seeks to assess two entities—the church and society—to note the demands and expectations of the population and how they are reflected in the reality of the church. The first part of this study looks at public opinion in urban areas concerning spiritual issues and the church itself. The second part seeks to analyze church life and practices to better understand the spiritual and missional dynamics as well as how successfully public expectations were met by the church.

The Context of the Study

This research article is a summary of a 5-year study which began in September 2012 and ended in the spring of 2017. I joined the research team in 2013. My colleagues Leonty Gunko and Dmitry Fokin conducted the first part of the project; however, we worked together to accomplish the second part.

Why Moscow?

Moscow, with its more than 13 million population, stands among the largest cities in the world. It is the northernmost megacity on the planet and the second most populous city in Europe. After the unprecedented religious freedom and church growth in the 1990s, the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church in Moscow has faced a new reality of a growth rate slowing down and almost plateauing. Only a few churches have been planted in the last decade. At the time of writing this article (2020), Moscow had 16 churches downtown and 12 churches in the suburbs. The 28 churches consisted of 3,321 members, providing a challenging ratio of 1:4,000 Adventist to non-Adventists.

In the last decade, any positive growth of the Adventist Church in Moscow was predominantly brought about by an influx of immigrants from other regions or post-Soviet countries such as Moldova or Ukraine. Very few church members came from the local Moscow population. At the worldwide level, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has placed significant priority on urban evangelism in order to reach the population in the large cities of the world. In response to this initiative, the Euro-Asia Division worked to actively develop new strategies and models for urban mission.

Each of the 16 Adventist churches in the city proper has tried various approaches and initiatives to reinforce the mission impact on the Moscow population. A special focus was given to youth ministry, music events (festivals, choir concerts, music bands, etc.), and social welfare programs. A new TV studio to produce various programs to reach Muscovites was established. In addition, the local conference designed a special project to reach immigrants. However, in spite of all these efforts, there was still little growth in the church.

The aim of this study was to analyze the current approaches and missionary activities of the Adventist Church to identify internal and external factors affecting church growth in Moscow. Based on the findings, several recommendations were made.

Research Methodology

This study utilized the quantitative approach to data analysis that covers the years 2012 to 2017. In the first part, 322 respondents of different ages were randomly recruited from the streets of downtown Moscow and were given a survey to fill out. The survey consisted of 18 questions covering demographic data, life priorities, and perceptions about religion, the

role of the church in the society, and its various missionary activities such as book sales, Bible study, and TV programs. The survey was developed after feedback from two focus groups and was validated by specialists. All variables yielded sufficient reliability levels (Cronbach's $\alpha \geq .70$).

In the second part, a new set of respondents were recruited from 16 Adventist churches located at the heart of Moscow City. A total of 1,027 respondents were recruited by using purposive sampling in order to obtain a representative sample (Cooper and Schindler 2006:424). Of the 1,027 survey forms filled out, only 897 were analyzed while the other 130 were sorted out because they were either only partially filled or spoiled. The survey consisted of demographics, ways of conversion, missionary activities, spirituality, fellowship, retention, satisfaction, identity, and leadership qualities. All variables yielded sufficient reliability levels (Cronbach's $\alpha \geq .70$). The data received from both parts of the study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and AMOS for SPSS.

Moscow Research: Part I

One of the purposes of this research was to identify the areas of life most important to Muscovites. Of the various areas, the respondents suggested the areas of leisure and amusement followed by health and family, thus suggesting the three most popular areas of interest among the respondents were leisure, health, and family. The least popular areas of interest were philosophy and esoteric practices. This finding reveals a low interest in the issues related to the meaning of life in this world and the world to come.

Religion was scaled somewhere in the middle towards the bottom in terms of priority. This suggests religion to be of interest to a narrow segment of the population just as business or design are. Differences across genders suggest that males, on one hand, are more interested in sports (44.4% compared to 17.3% for females) and the Internet (34.8% compared to 22% for females). Women, on the other hand, are much more interested in family (29% to 14.8%), travel (23.8% to 9.6%), and child rearing (21.5% to 5.2%). Among the common interests for both genders were movies/TV and music. Religion is also among the equally shared interests.

Differences across age groups were also present. The younger Muscovites appear to cling more to music, the Internet, and sports and less to family, health, books, and children. This may be the reason why the traditional approaches of the SDA Church of offering family and health seminars and selling books do not receive a better response from the younger generation of Muscovites.

When asked to identify their biggest concerns in life, the majority of the respondents mentioned personal and family well-being and health. This younger group showed the least concern about child rearing (2.2%) and family relations (5.9%). This result reflects the popular idea of being well and healthy without much effort. Besides, personal and family well-being is attributed to material rather than spiritual or psychological factors. The respondents did not care much about meaning in life and spiritual issues (5.6% and 3.7%), but they cared about moral issues (19.6%). This finding suggests urban people are more concerned about personal integrity rather than religiosity.

The difference in the responses across genders is somewhat logical. Females were more concerned about financial well-being and children, while males were more concerned about politics and immigration issues. Hence, the females focused more on the practical issues of life, such as food, and clothing, among others and the males were less involved in practical matters. These are important factors to consider when the church offers programs focusing on practical areas of life. The church may cater to the needs of the female population but leave out the concerns of the male population.

When asked to share their spiritual interests, the respondents showed a strong interest in knowing the meaning of life (54.7%), and they also wanted to know about faith in God (26.7%); however, they had little or no interest in reading the Bible or spiritual books (8.7%). This result suggested that acquiring knowledge on the meaning in life was not related in their minds to Bible knowledge. The Bible for urban people does not necessarily give answers to life issues. The issue on the meaning of life was not important for the respondents when asked about their biggest life concerns (54.7% to 5.6%). This result suggests that the respondents connect the meaning of life with the spiritual realm. Hence, the evangelistic efforts of the church could be more effective if they start with life issues and not the Bible. Having said this, we, by no means, diminish the role of the Bible in outreach but rather, propose bringing people to the Bible through their experiences. According to the findings, direct Bible study will be of little interest to the Muscovites in this generation compared to the Muscovites during the unprecedented evangelistic boom in the 1990s.

The fact that one of the most important spiritual demands of the respondents was feeling their friends' support suggests that the church needs to pay more attention to forming a loving, friendly community among church members.

Though the respondents showed little interest in Bible study, they did not mind visiting a church where people walk the talk (18.3%) and where the pastor has excellent moral standing (17%). It matters more to Musco-

vites what kind of people we are than what we believe. Thus, witnessing in a postmodern urban culture should primarily be connected with the quality of the moral life of believers and only then later with their beliefs.

Among the respondents' life priorities, the predominant answers were health and well-being (56% and 22.5%, respectively). Spiritual development concerned less than 4% of the respondents. This result suggests the Adventist health and wellness programs to be important assets in making contact with the community.

For the question, What should the church you want to visit look like? more than a half of the respondents (55.5%) preferred the three following answers: (1) the leaders of that church practice a moral life, (2) church members treat each other well, and (3) they seek the opportunity to serve. Other areas of church life such as worship and sermons were important only to 15% of the respondents. This raises the idea that mission priorities should focus on the (1) training and mentoring of spiritual leaders, (2) quality of relationships in the church, and (3) community service. The responses across ages suggest that people of older age (31 and above) are more demanding of spiritual leaders than are the younger generations (to them it is more important how people treat each other: 30.3%). The responses across genders suggest that relationships in the church are significantly more important to females than to males. Likewise, the higher the level of education of the respondents, the less they pay attention to the church facility.

With regards to religious literature, the respondents were asked, "If you were given a religious book, would you read it?" Almost half of them (45%), would pay little or no attention to it. The higher the educational level of the respondents the less they were interested in religious books. Although books can still reach some people, the literature approach is no longer effective as a primary means of reaching the urban population of Moscow. It is also interesting to note that the immigrants would be much more willing to accept religious books than resident Muscovites (32.5% to 23.3%). This finding suggests that immigrants in the city are more receptive to the gospel than is the native population.

When asked about purchasing a religious book from an unknown person, only 6.5% of respondents said they would buy religious books in that way, and another 8.7% were not sure. The rest (62.1%) of the respondents would not buy a religious book from a stranger, and 18% were not interested in religious literature at all. This finding could reflect a low overall tendency to read books with thoughtful content. This study suggested book and literature sales to be a complementary rather than a primary means of evangelism in the city.

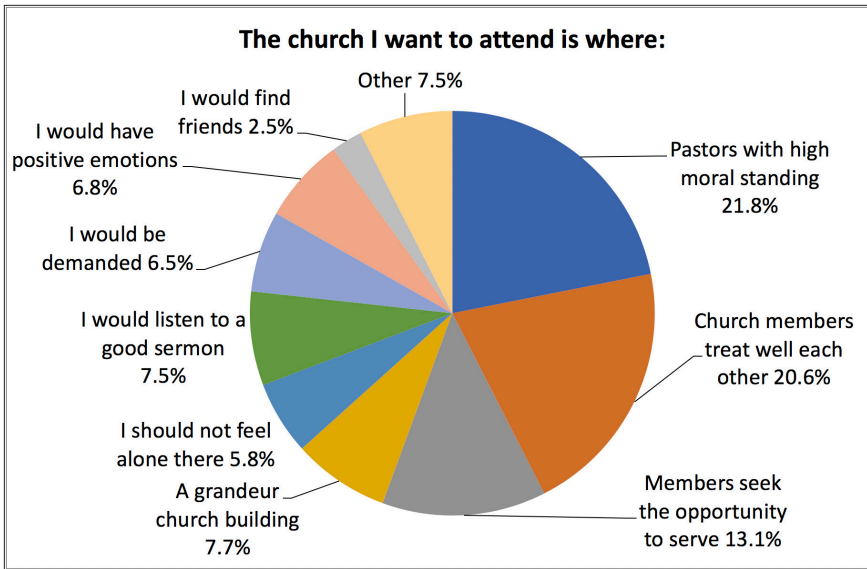


Figure 1. Perceptions about a church Muscovites would attend.

In answer to the question, In what occasion would you study the Bible? the majority of respondents preferred to study the Bible with a pastor (18%) or with a friend who had already read it (17%), and only 7.8% were ready to study the Bible in special training seminars. The same number of respondents (7.8%) would not study the Bible at all. This finding suggests that Bible study is still important for urban people; however, they prefer to study privately rather than in public meetings. This is why public Bible study seminars receive a poor response from the community. At the same time, people indicated they would respond more positively to an invitation coming from a friend or even a pastor than from a stranger. An approach to studying the Bible with friends was significantly more prominent among the female respondents than the males (22% to 11%). As for the males, they tended to have significantly less interest in Bible study compared to females (28.1% to 15.6%). The respondents who were most interested in studying the Bible were the older ones.

When asked if they regularly watch religious TV programs, only 5.9% of respondents replied positively. The rest either did not watch regularly or were not interested in watching such programs at all. Likewise, when offered to subscribe to a religious magazine, only 7.5% would accept the offer. Concerning denominational choice, only 1.6% would trust a Protestant denomination. The majority still prefer the Russian Orthodox Church (66.6%), Islam (11.2%), and atheism (7.1%). This poses additional

impediments to the interaction between the Adventist Church and the society, which has to deal with common prejudices toward other Christian denominations apart from Russian orthodoxy.

Conclusion for the First Part of the Project

Based on the findings presented above, the Adventist Church in Moscow faces some challenges and opportunities with its mission to the Muscovites. First, this study revealed a major shift in the religious paradigm of a postmodern society. Whereas before, the church was associated primarily with deities, religious traditions, and physical culture (temples, images, and rituals); today, it is more about religious experience, the people, the believers (Goncalves 2014:88). The people of Moscow are not as interested to know about God as they are to see a church incarnated in human shape with an emphasis on friendships and relationships.

The outreach programs of the church would be more effective if they related to people's real experiences and practical issues such as health, family, child rearing, and other areas. Evangelistic activities should be more natural, in the context of everyday routines and relationships, and not event-based (Hall 2014:151). A missional community model can be utilized to accomplish this (Santos 2014:76, 77). The quality of life of church members has become a prominent factor in reaching the non-Adventist community. Practical ministry and service should follow verbal witness. This study shows the different interests and demands of the Muscovites across their demographic and social features. It strongly suggests that the church should stay focused in reaching groups in terms of culture, age, vocation, education, and ethnic background (Hiebert and Meneses 1995:340). The church is also closely associated with its leaders. The personal qualities of a pastor as a spiritual person is at the forefront of urban mission (Witmer 2009:246-266). Therefore, the church needs to give more attention to developing spiritual, service-oriented, and caring leaders. This study also suggests several new areas for evangelism in the city, such as leisure and lifestyle (sports, music, internet, travel, etc.). The Moscow Adventist Church needs to develop a new strategy of reaching city dwellers through those areas that fall within the category called the 3rd place, apart from home and workplace (Hall 2014:151, 152). Finally, a community welfare service for the people in need would be of great importance in the city (Christian 1994:197; Conn and Ortiz 2001:325). In addition, such activities help reduce the prejudice Russian orthodox people have towards Protestant churches and will also build mutual trust.

Moscow Research: Part II

The second part of this study dealt with the social and spiritual profiles of the Adventist members and church activities and mission in Moscow. It assessed how church projects, the level of relationships among church members, the perception of members' satisfaction, and how the members' spirituality affected the church's mission. It also assessed church members' perception of church leaders' leadership role since that also plays a significant role in postmodern society.

Measures

The main instrument dealing with this part of the study was a cross-sectional survey composed of 96 items. It included demographics, how people were converted, and the main reasons for decisions to be baptized. It also assessed the various ministries church members were interested in taking part in. The leadership qualities were assessed using Kouzes and Posner's (2010:17, 18) scale on the 20 characteristics of admired leaders. It was modified into a 22-characteristic scale by adding "spiritual" and "called by God." The 13-item mission activity scale was developed by a focus group at Zaosky Adventist University with the students and the faculty in February 2015. The 11-item spirituality scale was adapted from Thayer's long-form faith maturity scale (2008). A 13-item psychological climate scale was used in order to assess group cohesiveness (Ilyin 2013:507), but was modified for a church setting. To measure the level of satisfaction of church members, a 13-item scale was developed on the basis of the social exchange theory (Corcoran 2013:335-369).

To measure members' level of fulfillment by the quality of their church life, a 16-item scale was developed based on a focus group interview conducted in Zaosky Adventist University with the students and the faculty in February 2015. A 12-item scale was constructed to measure the church members' spiritual identity based on social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979:35) and self-categorization theory (Turner, Oakes, Haslam, and McCarthy 1994:456). The survey was pilot-tested at three Zaosky Seventh-day Adventist churches during the fall of 2014 and after undergoing a reliability analysis, produced an acceptable Cronbach's alpha level of $\geq .70$. Some items were deleted or modified to ensure the validity and the reliability of the instrument.

Demographic Profile

The demographic profile of the respondents is as follows: 30.7% (n = 265) were male and 69.3% (n = 598) were female. The ages of the respondents were distributed among six age groups ranging from below 22 to 61 and above. The group below 22 years old was represented by 5% (n = 44), 23-30 years old by 14% (n = 122), 31-40 years old by 19.8% (n = 171), 41-50 years old by 18% (n = 151), 51-60 years old by 17% (n = 148), and 61 years old and above by 26.3% (n = 227).

For the level of income, four groups comprised the perceived measures: low, small, average, and high. Ten percent (n = 88) of respondents identified themselves as falling within the low-income group, 36% (n = 312) with the small-income group, 52% (n = 448) with the average-income group, and 2% (n = 15) as belonging to the high-income group.

The legal residential status of the respondents was represented by three groups: native Muscovite (born and raised in Moscow), immigrant (migrated to Moscow less than 10 years prior to the study), and moved-in (moved to and had been staying in Moscow 10 or more years by the time the study was conducted). Of all the respondents, 33% (n = 284) claimed to be native Muscovites, 29% (n = 253) to be immigrants, and 38% (n = 326) were moved-ins.

In terms of occupation, the majority of the respondents were retirees (29%, n = 251). The rest were specialists (18%, n = 153), students (7.5%, n = 65), workers (7%, n = 63), housekeepers (6.5%, n = 10), office workers (6%, n = 52), clerks (4.5%, n = 38), department heads (3%, n = 25), managers and businessmen (2.5%, n = 21 each), unemployed (2%, n = 19), on maternity leave (2%, n = 17); chief executive officers (1.5%, n = 13), freelancers (1%, n = 12), and others (7%, n = 57).

Concerning the respondents' religious background in relation to the SDA Church, the majority of them reported having a non-SDA background (80%, n = 691) while 20% (n = 172) had a SDA background. The respondents were also asked to indicate their membership span in the SDA Church. Among five assigned groups (according to years in church), the largest group had been members for 16-24 years (45%, n = 386) followed those who had been in the church for 4-15 years (33.5%, n = 291). One-tenth of the respondents (9%, n = 78) had been members for 25 or more years, 9% (n = 76) for less than 1 year, and 3.5% (n = 32) for 2-3 years.

For church involvement, 29.5% (n = 254) of the respondents served as deacons/deaconess and elders and 14.5% (n = 125) as Sabbath School teachers. An additional 7% (n = 62) engaged in music ministry, 6% (n = 53) in Pathfinder/ Adventurer clubs, 4% (n = 36) in health ministry, 4% (n =

35) in personal/mission ministry, 1% (n = 9) in welfare (Dorcas) ministry, and 1% (n = 5) in women's/family ministry. One-third, 33% (n = 284), were not involved in any ministry.

When asked to identify their marital status, 52% (n = 447) reported they were married, 21% (n = 181) single/never married, 14.5% (n = 126) divorced, and 12.5% (n = 109) widowed. When asked about children, 33% (n = 282) had no children, 21% (n = 184) had children below 18 years of age, and 46% (n = 397) had children above 18 years of age.

The level of education of the SDA members in Moscow is high. Almost half (47%, n = 40) reported holding either a master's or doctoral degree, 4% (n = 35) were college-degree holders, 43% (n = 374) university-degree holders, 36% (n = 312) vocational-school graduates, 12% (n = 102) were high-school graduates, and 5% (n = 40) had only finished primary school.

Overall, the demographic profile of Moscow's Adventist Church members suggests that the church had a predominant female population (69%). One-third of the church members were retired, almost half (43.4%) were above 50, half were married, and only one-fifth (20%) reported to have young families with children under 18 years old. Only one-third of the members were native Muscovites while the other two-thirds were either newcomers or immigrants.

In terms of membership, the absolute majority (80%) were not born Adventists. Almost half the members had been in the church for more than 16 years, thus suggesting the majority joined the church in the 1990s and the early 2000s. Only one-tenth had joined the church recently (3-5 years).

The collective typical demographic portrait of Adventists in Moscow appears to be an elderly female, single or with grown-up children, well educated, with a fair income, and baptized 15 or more years at the time the study was conducted.

The Ways of Conversion

The respondents were asked how they became Adventists and what prompted them to join the church. It appears that one-third came to the church through traditional evangelism strategies: mass evangelism (27%), books (2%), and TV / Radio, and health / welfare programs (1.5%). The other two-thirds joined the church through the influence of their family (19%) and friends or relatives (41%).

Table 1. Cross Tabulation of Ways of Conversion to the Age of Respondents

	Adventist lifestyle	Adventist beliefs	Music ministry	Relatives	Pastor	Answers to questions	Friendly members	Positive changes
Below 22	13,2 %	24,0 %	3,1 %	12,4 %	3,9 %	7,8 %	2,3 %	7,0 %
23-30	7,1 %	19,1 %	4,3 %	10,8 %	3,1 %	7,7 %	6,8 %	6,8 %
31-40	6,4 %	19,8 %	4,6 %	5,6 %	3,2 %	10,0 %	10,4 %	5,6 %
41-50	6,9 %	20,4 %	2,9 %	4,7 %	3,1 %	12,8 %	8,9 %	5,8 %
51-60	7,8 %	23,1 %	2,4 %	4,6 %	3,4 %	13,4 %	8,5 %	4,6 %
61 above	7,1 %	20,0 %	3,9 %	2,3 %	4,5 %	10,4 %	5,3 %	6,9 %

When asked what the crucial factors were that prompted them to join the church, one-fourth (25%) pointed to SDA beliefs, 16% attributed their decision to their questions being answered, and the rest were impressed by friendly church members (13.5%), by SDA lifestyle (14%), by changes in their lives (10%), by music (7%), by relatives (7.5%), and by a pastor (7%).

Based on this data, there was a shift from mass evangelism to personal contact, friendship, and family. This is even more important for the younger generations growing up in the church but not necessarily staying there for a lifetime. The cross tabulation of the age of respondents to their conversion experience (see table 1) clearly shows this pattern. The younger the respondent, the more prominent was the influence of family, friends, and relatives on their decision to join the church (see “Relatives” column in table 1).

The impact of outreach had become minimal for church growth in Moscow. Traditionally, strong SDA methods such as public evangelism, health programs, canvassing, and even new developments in media evangelism (TV/radio, Internet) produce few results, especially among the younger generations.

Younger people are likely to make their choice for God based on their spiritual and social experience in the church and when observing the life of other Adventists. However, once people are in the church, the role of sound doctrine cannot be neglected as it remains one of the strongest argument in favor of the truth through all ages and generations (see table 2). In other words, people come because of experience but stay because of the truth (Goncalves 2014:91).

Leadership Qualities

The first part of this study revealed the high expectation Muscovites have for a spiritual leader. In this part, the perceptions of church members concerning their leaders was explored—what qualities members perceived to be the most important for the pastor. The scale of 20 characteristics of admired leaders was adapted from the study of Kouzes and Posner (2010:17-18), which was conducted in many countries and organizations. The goal of using the 20-qualities scale was to compare the results obtained from the SDA churches in Moscow with the ones obtained by Kouzes and Posner. Moreover, since this study was conducted in a church setting, we decided to add two more specific qualities of a leader: spirituality and call. This helped identify some specifics about leadership perceptions in the Adventist Church setting.

Table 2. Factors of Conversion

	N	Percent
SDA lifestyle	146	14.0 %
SDA beliefs	257	24.7 %
Music ministry	77	7.4 %
Relatives	78	7.5 %
Pastor	71	6.8 %
Questions answered	167	16.0 %
Church members	139	13.4 %
Changes in life	106	10.2 %
Total	1041	100 %

Although each of the 22 qualities was given as a possibility, the following seven qualities of leadership received over half of the votes of the respondents (55%): spiritual, honest, called by God, intelligent, dependable, fair-minded, and loyal. These were the specific qualities characterizing leadership in the church. One-third of all respondents (30.6%) selected the three most important qualities: spiritual, honest, and called by God. At the same time, the other qualities that basically marked the professional side of leadership such as straightforward, independent, courageous, mature, ambitious, forward-looking, competent, and cooperative received the least votes (13.9%).

According to Kouzes and Posner (2010:17), the first seven characteristics of admired leaders in their study were honest, forward-looking, in-

spiring, competent, intelligent, broad-minded, and dependable (see table 3). Two of those characteristics were equally important for the church and the society: honest and dependable. People in the church expect to see in their leader a person who has a close relationship with God rather than one who is a professional administrator; hence, it is the personal and then professional qualities of a leader that are important in the leadership essence in a church setting.

Based on the overall results, this study suggests four important areas of leadership in the church: spiritual (spirituality, called by God), moral (honest, dependable), intellectual (intelligent), and social (fair-minded, loyal, broad-minded). However, the difference on the responses across ages was significant. The respondents 61 years and above preferred a leader to be a dependable, caring, and fair-minded, whereas younger respondents (20-30 years old) sought an ambitious, determined, and independent leader. For the middle age group (31-50 years), they perceived a leader to be mature, courageous, competent, and cooperative; hence, the middle and older age groups were more concerned with the practical dimensions of leadership while the young age group seemed to prefer a leader who could overcome the world.

Table 3. A Comparison of Characteristics of Admired Leaders

#	Moscow SDA Church	Kouzes and Posner	#	Moscow SDA Church	Kouzes and Posner
1	Spiritual		12	Inspiring	Straightforward
2	Honest	Honest	13	Caring	Determined
3	Called by God		14	Determined	Cooperative
4	Intelligent	Forward-looking	15	Competent	Ambitious
5	Dependable	Inspiring	16	Forward-looking	Courageous
6	Fair-Minded	Competent	17	Cooperative	Caring
7	Loyal	Intelligent	18	Courageous	Loyal
8	Broad-minded	Broad-minded	19	Mature	Imaginative
9	Supportive	Dependable	20	Independent	Mature
10	Imaginative	Supportive	21	Straightforward	Self-controlled
11	Self-controlled	Fair-minded	22	Ambitious	Independent

Relationships among Variables

For all statistical tests, an alpha level of .05 was used. The correlations were computed among six continuous variables (mission, spirituality, community, satisfaction, fulfillment, and identity). The results of the Pearson correlation indicated that there is a significant positive association between mission involvement and spirituality ($r(698) = .65$, $p < .001$), between mission involvement and community ($r(698) = .25$, $p < .001$), between mission involvement and satisfaction ($r(698) = .26$, $p < .001$), between mission involvement and fulfillment ($r(698) = .09$, $p = .016$), and between mission involvement and identity ($r(698) = .39$, $p < .001$). This suggests that all the independent variables (spirituality, community, satisfaction, fulfillment, and identity) are related to a dependent variable, mission involvement. This also suggests a high level of interdependence between the variables of the study. The way people believe, practice spirituality, or do mission affect how they experience church in terms of self-satisfaction, fulfillment, and relationships with other members.

Table 4. *Correlations of Latent Variables.*

	Mission	Spirituality	Community	Satisfaction	Fulfillment	Identity
Mission	---	.648**	.249**	.258**	.092*	.391**
Spirituality		---	.266**	.332**	0.63	.426**
Community			---	.440**	.371**	.206**
Satisfaction				---	.221**	.344**
Fulfillment					---	0.67
Identity						---
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						

The second highest correlation was between identity and spirituality. The more people associated with the church, its teaching, and practices, the more they felt God's presence in their lives. It is noteworthy that identity did not have a direct effect on mission involvement, but it did on spirituality. Sharing the Adventist beliefs and going to church on Sabbath did not automatically mean being involved in mission. However, religious practices gave the believers an opportunity to experience God's presence in their lives and become actively involved in mission.

Multiple Regression Analysis of What Predicts Mission Involvement

Hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of five control measures (spirituality scale, community scale, satisfaction scale, fulfillment scale, and identity scale) to predict the level of involvement of church members in mission (mission scale) after controlling the influence of gender, age, income, residence, SDA background, church membership, marriage status, and education of the respondents. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure that there was no violation on the assumptions of normality, linearity, multi-collinearity, and homoscedasticity.

Gender, age, income, residence, SDA background, church membership, marriage status, and education were entered at Step 1, explaining 18% of the variance in the mission variable. After the entry on the spirituality scale, community scale, satisfaction scale, fulfillment scale, and identity scale as Step 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 50.3%, $F(5, 684) = 53.18, p < .001$. The five control measures explained an additional 32% of the variance in mission after controlling gender, age, income, residence, SDA background, church membership, marriage status, and education of the respondents ($R^2 \text{ change} = .42, F \text{ change}(8, 681) = 89.51, p < .001$).

In the final model, only six control measures were statistically significant: gender ($t = -4.19, p = .000$), age ($t = 6.75, p = .000$), residence ($t = 1.94, p = .053$), education ($t = -2.29, p = .022$), spirituality ($t = 17.41, p = .000$), and community ($t = 1.95, p = .052$). It was also found that the spirituality variable makes the strongest unique contribution ($\beta = .55, p < .001$) to the explanation on the dependent variable (mission) along with the age ($\beta = .24, p < .001$) and the gender ($\beta = -.12, p < .001$) of the respondents.

Spirituality

The results of the multiple regression analysis suggest spirituality to be the strongest predictor of mission involvement. The more people devote their time in studying the Bible and meditation, the more they experience God's love as reflected in a relationship with others, in dedicating their lives to Jesus, and in getting involved in witnessing to others through personal contact, Bible study, colporteur ministry, and prayer regardless of people's national or religious backgrounds.

Table 5. The Final Model of Missional Church

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate	Change statistics				
					R square change	F change	df1	df2	Sig. F change
1	.421a	.177	.168	.47626	.177	18.562	8	689	.000
2	.709b	.503	.493	.37163	.325	89.510	5	684	.000
a Predictors: (constant), education, gender, residence, income, membership, SDA background, marriage, age									
b Predictors: (constant), education, gender, residence, income, membership, SDA background, marriage, age, community mean, fulfillment mean, spirituality mean, satisfaction mean, identity mean									
c Dependent Variable: mission mean									

The spirituality scale consisted of 11 items measuring the spiritual components and practices of Moscow Adventists. Among the highest scoring items were “I can sense that God is guiding me” ($M = 4.84$, $SD = .455$), “every day I see evidences that God is active in the world” ($M = 4.83$, $SD = .519$), and “my life is filled with meaning and purpose” ($M = 4.70$, $SD = .651$). Among the lowest scoring items were “I talk with other people about my faith in Jesus Christ” ($M = 4.32$, $SD = .893$) and “I take time for periods of prayers or meditation” ($M = 4.48$, $SD = .776$). It appears that spirituality for Moscow Adventists is more of an internal, abstract phenomenon rather than something practical measured by time and action.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the spirituality scores of the male and the female respondents. There was a significant difference in the scores of males ($M = 4.47$, $SD = .50$) and females ($M = 4.67$, $SD = .36$; $t(861) = -6.37$, $p < .001$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = .20, 95% CI: -.25 to -.13) was moderate (eta squared = .044). The result of the t-test suggests that female respondents had a significantly higher perceptions of spirituality compared to the male respondents.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of age on spirituality. The respondents were divided into six groups according to their age (Group 1: 22 years old or

younger; Group 2: 23 to 30 years old; Group 3: 31 to 40 years old; Group 4: 41 to 50 years old; Group 5: 51 to 60 years old; Group 6: 61 years old and older).

There was a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) in the spirituality scores of all six age groups ($F(5, 857) = 12.74, p < .001$). The actual difference in the mean scores of the groups was quite large. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .06, which is considered to be medium (Cohen 1988:284).

The statistical outcomes of the difference in the perceptions of spirituality across age groups suggest that older people (51 to 60 and above) have a significantly higher perception of spirituality compared to people of younger and middle age (below 22, 23 to 50 years old; see figure 2). It seems that perception of spirituality grows as people age.

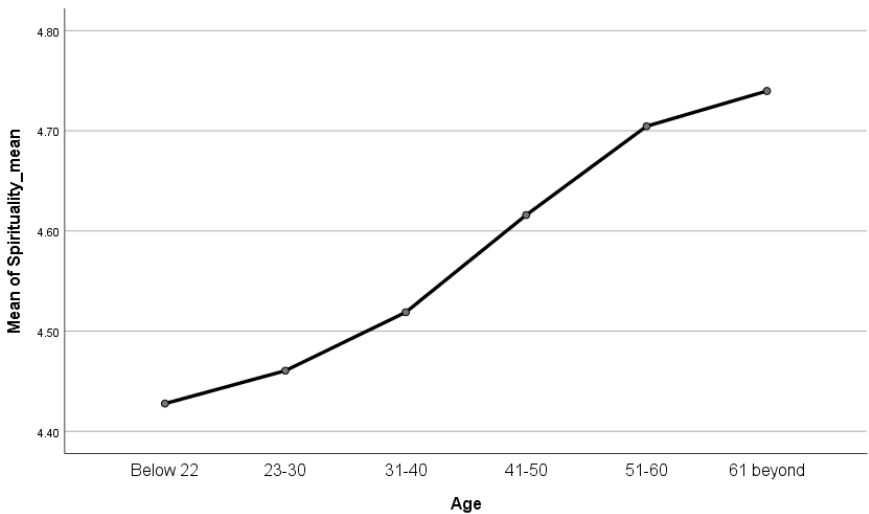


Figure 2. ANOVA of Spirituality to Age

It was found that the occupation of the respondents correlated with their perceptions of spirituality. There was a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) in the spirituality scores of the five occupation groups ($F(14, 848) = 4.64, p < .001$). The actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was quite large. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .07, which is considered to be medium (Cohen 1988:284). The post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the retirees ($M = 4.73, SD = .351$) was significantly different from the students ($M = 4.43, SD = .445$), specialists ($M = 4.54, SD = .451$), managers ($M = 4.38, SD = .522$), and CEOs ($M = 4.18, SD = .632$). The mean score

for CEOs ($M = 4.18$, $SD = .632$) was significantly different from the clerks ($M = 4.70$, $SD = .287$), unemployed ($M = 4.73$, $SD = .226$), and construction workers ($M = 4.62$, $SD = .449$). It appears that retirees, unemployed people, and construction workers scored highest in the perception of spirituality while students, specialists, managers, and CEOs scored the lowest. The higher the social status of the church members in Moscow the lower their perception of spirituality.

It was also found that the marital status of the respondents correlates with their perceptions of spirituality. There was a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) in the spirituality scores of all the four marital status groups ($F(3, 859) = 10.80$, $p < .001$). The actual difference in the mean scores of the groups was quite large. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03, which is considered to be small (Cohen 1988:284). The post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for married ($M = 4.61$, $SD = .407$) was significantly different from the single ($M = 4.48$, $SD = .480$) and widowed respondents ($M = 4.75$, $SD = .354$). The mean score for the singles ($M = 4.48$, $SD = .480$) was significantly different from the married ($M = 4.61$, $SD = .407$), divorced ($M = 4.65$, $SD = .406$), and widowed respondents ($M = 4.75$, $SD = .354$). This suggests single respondents have the lowest perceptions of spirituality while widowed respondents have the highest. The other demographic variables (residency, religious background, and education) of the respondents did not significantly affect their perceptions of spirituality.

As is shown above, the perceptions of spirituality significantly differ across gender, age, occupation, and marital status. Since spirituality is a primary predictor of mission involvement (see regression analysis above), it is crucial to address the issue of the spiritual growth of the Moscow church members, especially of male, younger, single, and higher social status church members.

Community

Along with spirituality, the community scale was a significant predictor of mission activity. The more people felt united, developed friendships, empathized care for each other, accepted new members, and worked together, the more they were ready to reach out to new people in their community, share their faith with their friends and non-acquaintances, and give Bible studies.

For the community scale, the respondents were asked to assess the level of unity and relationships among church members. A psychological climate assessment scale was used (Ilyin 2013:507). A 13-item dichotomous scale provided options from extremely negative to extremely positive

attitudes (i.e., from “church members are indifferent to close relationships, they do not participate in common activities,” to “they are eager to spend time in common activities”). Overall, the respondents shared positive feelings about their church community (M = 4.01; SD = .693). Among the highest rated indicators were the ability of the church family to empathize in common successes or failures (a = 4.28, SD = .844) and to feel proud if someone was recognized by the leader (M = 4.15, SD = .947). The least scored indicators of community were “people are engaged in common activities with eagerness” (M = 3.67, SD = 1.039) and “the church family is active and full of energy” (M = 3.76, SD = 1.017). It is noteworthy that people in the church are ready to share their feelings but not time, they feel proud for each other but are not ready to work with each other, and they are friendly but not active; hence, church unity appears to be more emotional than practical.

Satisfaction

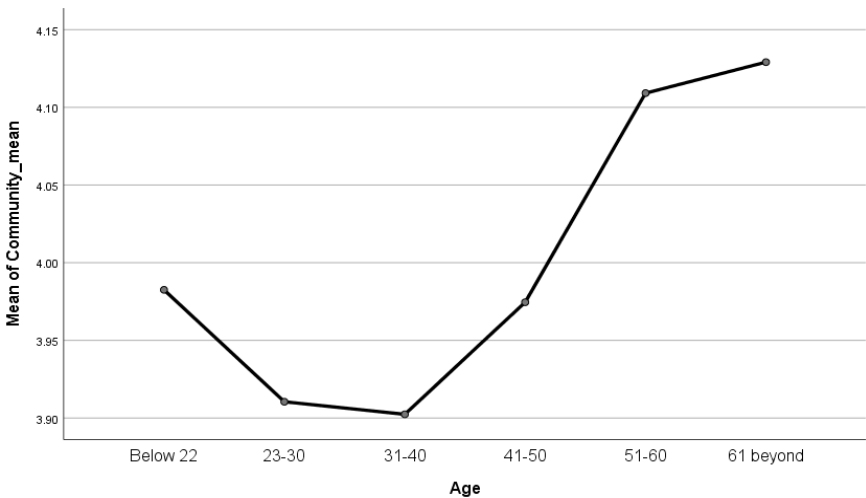


Figure 3. ANOVA of Community to Age

The respondents shared their perceptions of church unity differently across age groups. There was a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) in the community scores of the two age groups ($F(5, 857) = 3.40, p = .005$). The actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was medium. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .01, which is considered to be small (Cohen 1988:284). The post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 3 (M = 3.90, SD = .655)

was significantly different from 61 beyond Group ($M = 4.12$, $SD = .713$). Older church members scored highest in the perception of church community while younger aged church members scored the lowest.

Even though the level of satisfaction does not directly affect mission involvement, it significantly affects perceptions of spirituality and community, which in turn affect mission. The more people feel support from fellow members, the more they are involved in ministry. The more they feel needed in the church, the more they perceive their church united and their life committed to God and to others.

Church members of the 23-30 age group have a significantly lower perception of satisfaction in the church ($F(5, 857) = 4.26$, $p = .000$) compared to the 51-60 age group ($F(5, 857) = 4.48$, $p = .000$) and the 61 and beyond group ($F(5, 857) = 4.43$, $p = .003$). The actual difference in mean scores of the groups was medium. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .02, which is considered to be small (Cohen 1988:285). It appears that the most satisfied people in the church are those above 50 years old, while the least satisfied are younger respondents of 23-30 years old (see figure 4).

An alarming difference in the perception of satisfaction was found across the residence status of the respondents. The post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for native Muscovites ($M = 4.42$, $SD = .455$) was significantly different from the immigrants ($M = 4.29$, $SD = .548$). Recently migrated church members felt uncomfortable in the church compared to native Moscow church members. They were the least involved in ministry and had the fewest friends. In other words, they are not a vibrant part of the church body. However, the immigrant members reported a higher perception of mission involvement. The cross-tabulation analysis revealed that 77% of the immigrants in the church are between 20 to 50 years old, and 50% of them are between 20 to 30 years old. If this group was better assimilated into the church, these people (one-third of the whole membership) could be a driving force for mission in Moscow.

Considering marital status, the most satisfied church members were widows, followed by married and singles, while the least satisfied were divorced members. The widows had a significantly higher perception of satisfaction in the church ($F(3, 859) = 4.47$, $p = .000$) as compared to the divorced respondents ($F(3, 859) = 4.24$, $p = .000$). The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .01, which is considered to be small (Cohen 1988:284).

The fulfillment and identity scales were not found to be significant predictors of mission involvement. However, they both affected satisfaction explaining 42% of its variance ($\beta = .58$, $p < .001$; $\beta = .23$, $p < .001$).

Mission Involvement

For the mission involvement scale, two of the items most respondents chose were “praying for my friends’ conversion” ($M = 4.28$, $SD = .979$) and “my friends know about my faith” ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 1.042$). At the same time, on a practical level of witnessing, only one-third (33%) of members were willing to give Bible studies and one-third (33%) experienced fear in witnessing. It is important to note that based on the cross-tabulation between the two items mentioned above, 49% of those experiencing fear were also not involved in giving Bible studies. The Pearson correlation supports this outcome. The less fear respondents had in witnessing to others, the more they reported that their friends know about their faith ($r(863) = .14$, $p < .001$) and the more they shared their faith with others ($r(863) = .33$, $p < .001$), the more they witnessed to people of other faith ($r(863) = .12$, $p < .001$).

Another alarming factor was a new tendency favoring non-contact evangelistic methods: media, Internet, social programs, personal example (items 6, 9). Among church members, 36% preferred a non-personal contact type of witnessing and another 25% were not decided on their opinion. The majority of Moscow Adventists (61.2%) believed that personal example is enough as a witnessing method. This could be the reason that in spite of many contacts by church members with non-Adventists, few lead to conversion and baptism.

It is also interesting to note that those engaged in doing mission through books distribution, prayers for conversions, and Bible studies also scored high on items 11, 12, and 13: “I’m learning to be a successful missionary” ($M4: r(863) = .30$, $p < .001$); ($M2: r(863) = .21$, $p < .001$); ($M8: r(863) = .28$, $p < .001$), “I witness to non-Christian people” ($M4: r(863) = .38$, $p < .001$); ($M2: r(863) = .32$, $p < .001$); ($M8: r(863) = .40$, $p < .001$), and “I seek the opportunity to witness to all people” ($M4: r(863) = .40$, $p < .001$); ($M2: r(863) = .24$, $p < .001$); ($M8: r(863) = .42$, $p < .001$). This correlation proves the idiom “practice makes perfect,” thus suggesting that people practicing missionary work are more open to learning new approaches and serving in the context of urban diversity.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to explore the impact of religious background on the level of mission involvement as measured by the mission scale. The respondents were divided into two groups according to their SDA background (Group 1: SDA background and Group 2: non-SDA background). There was a significant difference between the scores of the respondents with a SDA background ($M = 3.34$, $SD = .57$) and

the respondents with non-SDA background ($M = 3.50$, $SD = .59$; $t(863) = -3.18$, $p = .002$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = .16, 95% CI: $-.25$ to $-.06$) was small (eta squared = .011). The result of the t-test suggests that the respondents with a SDA background are significantly less active in mission compared to the respondents with a non-SDA background.

Among the initial control variables, gender was found to be one of the strong predictors of mission activity among the respondents. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the mission scores of males and females. There was a significant difference in the scores of males ($M = 3.40$, $SD = .63$) and females ($M = 3.49$, $SD = .23$; $t(861) = -2.03$, $p = .042$, two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = .09, 95% CI: $-.18$ to $-.00$) was very small (eta squared = .004). The result of the t-test suggests that the female respondents are significantly more active in mission compared to the male respondents.

The age of the respondents was reported to be a relatively strong predictor of mission activity. A one-way between-groups ANOVA was conducted to explore the impact of age on the level of mission involvement as measured by the mission scale. The respondents were divided into six groups according to their age (Group 1: 22 years old or younger; Group 2: 23 to 30 years old; Group 3: 31 to 40 years old; Group 4: 41 to 50 years old; Group 5: 51 to 60 years old; Group 6: 61 years old and older). There was a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) in the mission scores of all six age groups ($F(5, 857) = 32.14$, $p < .001$). The actual difference in the mean scores of the groups was quite large. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .15, which is considered to be large (Cohen 1988:284).

The statistical outcomes of the difference in mission involvement across age groups suggest older people (51 to 60 and above) to be significantly more engaged in mission ($M = 3.71$, $SD = .520$) compared to younger people (Group 1: $M = 3.21$, $SD = .649$) and middle aged people (Group 2: $M = 3.15$, $SD = .549$; see figure 4). Among all six age groups, two age groups: 51-60 and 61 and beyond significantly differed from the other four younger age groups, thus suggesting 51-year old and older church members to be the main mission potentials of the SDA Church in Moscow. Likewise, the least engaged in mission are the 23 to 30 and 31 to 40-year old church members, which is particularly alarming.

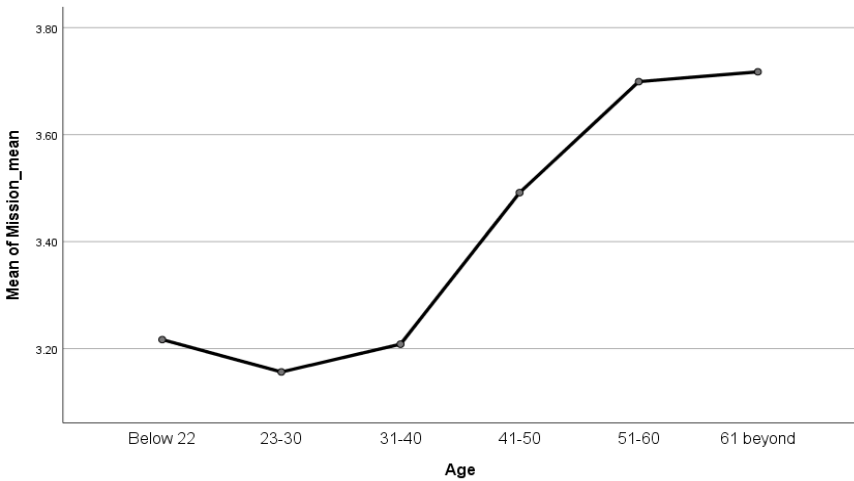


Figure 4. ANOVA of Mission Involvement to Age

The residence variable was found to be a significant predictor of the respondents’ involvement in mission. A one-way between-groups ANOVA was conducted to explore the impact of the respondents’ residence status on their level of mission involvement as measured by the mission scale. The respondents were divided into three groups according to their legal status (Group 1: native Muscovite; Group 2: immigrant; Group 3: moved-in). There was a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) in the mission scores between the 1st and 2nd group ($F(2, 860) = 4.06, p = .018$). Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was quite small.

The post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 2 ($M = 3.39, SD = .619$) was significantly different from Group 3 ($M = 3.53, SD = .576$). It did not differ significantly from Group 1. Likewise, the mean score for Group 3 ($M = 3.53, SD = .576$) was significantly different from Group 2 ($M = 3.39, SD = .619$). Group 1 ($M = 3.45, SD = .589$) did not differ significantly from either Groups 2 or 3. The results of the ANOVA test suggest recent immigrant church members to be significantly more active in mission than their more settled counterparts.

The educational level of the respondents was a significant predictor of their mission involvement. A one-way between-groups ANOVA was conducted to explore the impact of the respondents’ educational level on their degree of involvement in mission as measured by the mission scale. The respondents were divided into five groups according to their highest educational attainment (Group 1: incomplete school; Group 2: high school; Group 3: vocational school; Group 4: college/university; Group 5:

graduate/postgraduate school). There was a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) in the mission scores of the respondents who completed high school and vocational school: $F(4, 858) = 6.64, p < .001$.

Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in the mean scores of the groups was quite small. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03. The post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 3 ($M = 3.59, SD = .560$) was significantly different from Group 4 ($M = 3.36, SD = .621$). Group 3 did not differ significantly from either Groups 1, 2, and 5. Likewise, the mean score for Group 4 ($M = 3.36, SD = .621$) was significantly different from Group 3 ($M = 3.59, SD = .560$). Group 1 ($M = 3.52, SD = .498$), Group 2 ($M = 3.42, SD = .576$), and Group 5 ($M = 3.48, SD = .579$) did not differ significantly from either Groups 3 or 4. This data analysis suggested that people with basic professional education to be significantly more active in mission than college graduates.

Summary

The first part of the study focused on the Moscow community members and their perceptions and attitudes toward life, spiritual matters, and church while the second part of this research project aimed at identifying factors affecting church growth in Moscow. Several critical points will be offered as well as points of growth affecting Adventist mission in Moscow, followed by several general conclusions of the study.

Critical Points

Among the critical points that emerged from this study were age, the way a person was converted, and the atmosphere in the church. It is hoped that these points will be addressed primarily by the Moscow Conference.

Aging church. First, considering the demographic data, this study reported almost half of the respondents (43%) to be 50 and above. Only 19% are youth and young adults aged 18 to 30 years old. This reflects the overall picture of an aged Moscow population (Drumi 2015:668). However, considering the future, the church needs to focus especially on young adults and young families since 21% of the church members have children under 18 years old. Gender imbalance is another challenge. Males represent only one-third of the Muscovite church members, while the rest (two-thirds) are females. In many respects, the SDA Church in Moscow is driven by women who are considerably more active in church ministry, mission activity, and spirituality. Their male counterparts are less active and associate less with church life and teaching. A special focus needs to be given to the male population in the church and community.

Age as predictor of mission. The younger generation in the city church is an important asset for mission as they are “prospects for advancement” (Keller 2012:160), supportive of innovation and change. The urban youth are also a significant source of leadership in the church (161). However, the results of the descriptive and the correlational analyses suggest that the age group between 23 and 40 years old are the most reluctant to identify themselves with the SDA Church in terms of doctrines. They are also the least to be satisfied with church life and activities, to participate in ministry, to feel God’s presence in their lives, and to be involved in mission. They are the least among the church members to accept the writings of Ellen G. White as a prophetic guide and to believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is God’s true church. This group also shows the lowest score on trust when it comes to business contacts with their fellow believers, which is partially explained by their moderate involvement in church life and activities.

Yet, this group could be the most useful for mission in terms of social and professional contacts, family life, income, and spiritual gifts. The church has invested significant amounts of resources among the younger generation of teenagers and youth below 20 years old. This investment provides this group with multiple opportunities to be involved in various ministries (such as Pathfinder Club, Adventist Youth, music, camp meetings, etc.). However, once they enter adulthood, their choices of church programs and activities becomes very limited. They are expected to contribute more rather than being on the receiving end of church programs.

People not programs. The ways people were converted over the years suggest public evangelism to be less and less relevant to the younger generations who became Adventists mostly through their friends, relatives, and colleagues. At the same time, church members prefer remote methods of evangelism such as social welfare programs and personal example. Personal spiritual talks and Bible studies have become rare in urban societies. This was also noted by the Barna Group (2018) in its recent study entitled “Why People are Reluctant to Discuss Their Faith?” Hence, very few contacts with non-Adventists result in them visiting the church.

Welcoming church. In an urban culture of individualism, the church has to provide a counterculture by creating a loving and caring community of believers (Miller 1998:122). An alarming finding emerged from the cross-tabulation of the level of church members’ satisfaction and their residence status. The recent immigrants indicated the least level of satisfaction, but they are the most active in mission and the highest in perceiving Adventist identity. According to qualitative data, the recent immigrants to Moscow told how they were poorly treated in church and were given little chance to be involved in ministry. Immigrants from other post-Soviet countries

consist of one-third of the church, and they can be instrumental in church mission and ministry. One needs to remember that the church is incomplete without the gifts of the poor, homeless, and immigrants (Mowry 1994:116).

Points of Growth

The points of growth emerged from this study were based on demographic factors, members' life as mission, church leadership, evangelism and social action, and the church's unique talents. If properly managed, these areas could become turning points for the advancement of Adventist mission in Moscow. Recommendations will be provided in each case.

Demographic factors. The demographic report indicates that older people were actively involved in mission. Considering the influence of the older Muscovite church members on their children and grandchildren as well as their relatively high social status, this group appears to be a significant resource for mission in Moscow.

The other related area of growth was related to the high level of education of the church members in Moscow. Many of the members occupy high-skilled jobs. Unfortunately, neither the educational level nor the level of personal income correlate with the mission activities of the church as was mentioned above, which is subject to an intervention from the Moscow SDA Conference leaders.

Members' life as mission. One of the major findings of this study was that the quality of church life is a predominant contributing factor to mission involvement. The life of a believer plays a significant role inside and outside the church, thus attracting non-Adventists to explore and experience the same quality of life with God and a Christian community. The more people make use of their talents in the church, the more they feel fulfilled with church life and activities. The more they experience God and his power in their lives, the more they want to serve him by witnessing to others. This study also found that traditional evangelistic activities such as public evangelism, free distribution of books and Christian newspapers, colporteur ministry, and Bible study seminars had little impact on Moscow society. However, this finding does not claim that religious issues and talks about God are completely irrelevant to Muscovites. On the contrary, Muscovites show a keen interest in religion embodied in the life of believers. They want to "feel" religion before knowing it. Secular people are first interested in people, not products. Religion is interesting to them as long as it is connected with living representatives, their behavior, life-style, and relationships.

Church leadership. One of the findings was related to leadership qualities in urban churches. The groups of respondents from the city and the church community prioritized the personal moral characteristics of a Christian leader, such as being honest, spiritual, and called by God over professional characteristics, such as being intelligent, broad-minded, or competent. Urban people expect the church to be a different reality than just another social group. The Moscow Conference needs to give special attention to conducting trainings for city pastors for them to become an integral part of the urban community. Such trainings will provide them with an opportunity to see themselves as people of credibility and integrity (Jones 2015:201).

Evangelism and social action. There are two opposite outlooks: a church *in* the city *versus* a church *with* the city. At times, a church *in* the city is tempted to produce more programs to reach more people. However, if the SDA Church in Moscow wants to be *with* the city, it needs to listen to the people, to reflect people's life issues in its' mission strategies, and respond to people's needs (Clifton and Crum 2009:135; Tiersma 1994:23). This is exactly how Muscovites perceive genuine Christian community to be—seeking opportunities to serve others. The city church faces many social challenges in an urban community related to poverty, social injustice, human trafficking, and illegal migration, among others. Hence, "Urban spirituality is about vision and values" (Luscombe 1998:206). From the church' side, this also implies a need for action on social issues and suffering in the city.

Focused ministry. Each SDA church in Moscow City has some distinctive characteristics and resources. One church may be filled with more educated members while another is more accommodating to immigrants and people of other ethnic backgrounds. One church has grandiose worship services and a choir while another has plenty of young people and a contemporary worship style. Each single church however talented should not (and dares not) become a "department store" for the community by offering a variety of services. Rather, each church in Moscow can become a "boutique" of service by doing one thing extremely well (Linthicum 1998:50-51). Hence, all 16 churches in Moscow need to develop and synchronize their distinctive gifts in order to impact the Muscovites in a meaningful way.

Conclusion

This study sought to explore the values, spiritual demands, and expectations of Muscovites as well as the factors contributing to Adventist mission in Moscow. It was shown that people in an urban postmodern society still long for a spiritual experience but they do not trust the

signboards advertising a church—they want to see genuine Christians. The Adventist Church has much to offer to Muscovites in meeting their needs in the area of health, family assistance, and spiritual support. On the other hand, city dwellers do not need another product as much as they need people embodying the gospel in their spiritual and moral values. Hence, the most important factor contributing to success in urban mission is the quality of congregational and personal life of church members in terms of relationships, social atmosphere, and spirituality. In a culture dominated by leisure and entertainment the church has little to offer to Muscovites, but what it does have is to offer themselves as a living example of the power of Christ.

At the same time, even before facing the external challenges of mission, Adventists in Moscow need to address the internal challenge of losing connection with their most active and creative part—young adults—who need to be disciplined in faith and in service.

Finally, on a denominational level, with duly respect to a church unity, the leaders need to encourage diverse, distinctive qualities and gifts in every single church, to let the body of believers produce their own ministry style in the most natural way. The result of a mass mission product is often mediocrity coupled with a lack of motivation. Thus, it is primarily a congregational, not a denominational strategy, that will be most fruitful in urban setting.

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JERRY CHASE

Anti-Urbanism in Culture and Seventh-day Adventism: Advocacy and Action for Urban Ministry

Introduction

During its first 150 years, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has had at best an ambivalent relationship with the missional needs of the city. Because of internal and external societal factors, the church largely failed to embrace the enormous challenge of the growing cities. Instead, in practice if not by overt teaching, Adventist retreated from the cities while the growth of the population in cities accelerated with currently over half of the world population residing in urban centers.

In an effort to reclaim what had become numerically the largest segment of the mission field the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist in late 2013 hosted a conference of church leaders entitled, *It's Time: Refocusing Adventist Urban Mission for the 21st Century* (McEdward and Trim 2014:1). The focus of that conference was on the 500 plus *urban agglomerations* of a million or more at that time according to Thomas Brinkoff. Data on the Adventist presence in these urban centers was collected and presented through a series of maps. Although this conference brought needed attention to the missional challenge of urbanization, the Adventist Church has yet to address the systemic attitudinal factors within and without, which led to the current neglect of large cities around the world.

Over the last century, while much of the Adventist population has been preoccupied with fleeing the cities to live in the country, the weight of world population has been steadily shifting from the country to the cities. In 1900 a mere 13% of the world's population lived in urban areas (United Nations 2006); however, by 2008 the world population was divided equally between those who lived in the country and those who lived in urban centers (United Nations 2015). In 2018, 55% of the world population is urban and the share of city dwellers is anticipated to climb to 68% by 2050 (United Nations 2018).

The urban and rural makeup of the world is remarkably different today from when the early Adventist pioneers were growing up and so has what constitutes the mission frontiers for Christianity. Because the Adventist Church was established in North America, it is important to examine the shift in urbanization in the United States.

The percentage of US urban population had a precipitous climb during the early developmental period of the Adventist Church and its first hundred years of existence. The US started the 1800s with a 6.1% urban population, which by midcentury had reached 15.4%. By the beginning of the 1900s the urban population share stood at 39.6%. The rate of decadal urban population growth was over 50% for all but two of the decades in the 1800s, topping out at 93.7% for the period between 1840 to 1850 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2012). By 1920, US urban population reached 51.2% and has steadily grown, albeit at a lower rate than the previous century, to 82.5% in 2018 with a projected 89.2% urban population by 2050.

Description of the Issue

Anti-urbanism is not something unique to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A precise definition of anti-urbanism is elusive, but its presence is pervasive. Steven Conn writes in *Americans Against the City*, "To define what I mean by anti-urbanism demands that I define what 'urbanism' itself means, and that is no small task" (2014:3). Michael J. Thompson points out that "Hatred of—or even ambivalence toward—the city or urban life seems a constant companion to the history of cities themselves" (2009:9). And although the focus and expressions of anti-urbanism have changed over time, according to Thompson what unites the expressions of anti-urbanism throughout history "is an emphatic rejection of urban life, of a linking of the urban with all that is in opposition to virtue, nature, truth" (9).

What is critical to take away from this is that negative views towards large urban centers has existed across history, both from within and without the Christian community. Christian negativity, and in cases outright hostility, toward the cities has hampered evangelization of a new demographic,

which is now a clear world majority and trending larger every day. This is borne out by the fact that the Christian urban population is not keeping pace with the global urban population. Although the number of urban Christian adherents is increasing year by year, it is at a slower rate than the population at large. The statistic is stark: the global urban population has been growing at an average annual rate of 2.2% between 2000 and 2016 but Christian urban population has only experienced a 1.6% growth rate during this same period (Johnson 2017). In simple words, *under the current trends Christianity is losing ground among the urban population of the world.*

The Challenge for Christianity

Assessing and categorizing the state of Christian evangelization of the cities is not an easy task. Harvie M. Conn and Manuel Ortiz in *Urban Ministry: The Kingdom, the City and the People of God* initiate the conversation this way: “Is the church losing the cities? That language can be misleading to some degree” (2001:74). They proceed to identify some of the challenges.

First, in countries traditionally hostile to Christianity there is massive population growth with accompanying rapid expansion of cities. These areas of the world have represented a historical challenge to the church and will require exceptional Spirit-led efforts to turn the situation around. No, the church is not losing these cities, it never “had” them to begin with.

Second, although there are exceptions in some parts of the world, often, most of evangelical church growth has taken place in rural areas, towns, and smaller cities, exemplifying the church’s identification with its rural heritage. The answer in this case is that in some places, the church is winning the cities, but in many other places the church is losing the cities.

Third, there is an unevenness in the churches’ geographical spread throughout the city. So, whether it is social or economic segmentation of the cities, the church is not uniformly distributed in the city. So finally, my summary to the question of how the church is doing in the cities is this. *It depends on what cities, and where in those cities you are looking; however, in the end the numbers do not lie. Over all the church is losing ground in the cities.*

Urbanism Issues within Christianity

It is important to ask, Why have Christians abandoned the city? What factors may have influenced the church to cede the cities to the enemy? These questions are certainly too strong and overstated, for it is not true of every Christian, but one must still ask in order to seek answers. I have found the discussion in Conn and Ortiz on the development of cities and

the ways Christians have related to the city very helpful in understanding our current state of missional engagement with urban areas. What follows is a brief overview of some of their points.

The story of the precursor of our current cities is the industrial city, which came into its own in the 1800s. Fortunately, there are snapshots of the state of church attendance and church adherence in England and the United States from this period. Conn and Ortiz provide some provocative statistics. "In 1851 the only official census of religion ever taken in England was conducted. It indicated that somewhere between 47 and 54 percent of the total population over the age of ten were in church on census Sunday" (2001:53). Noteworthy is the ratio of attendance in rural areas and small towns: 71.4% contrasted with 49.7% for large towns with a population of more than 10,000. By 1979, the adult church attendance had dropped to 11%.

In 1890 and 1906 the United States conducted the only two religious censuses in its history. Interestingly, during that time, church membership grew 60% nationally but more astoundingly, the growth rate in cities was more than 87%. Therefore, in the United States at this time the trend was the opposite of what was seen in England and what we are seeing today. Whereas 39% of all Americans belonged to some church, over 46% of city residents were affiliated with a local congregation (2001:53).

How was it that church affiliation in the United States during this time period grew at a greater rate in the cities than in the country at large? Conn and Ortiz suggest that massive immigration from largely Catholic areas of Southern and Eastern Europe could account for this. The largest increases to the Catholic membership came between 1890 and 1906 as a result of this immigration. Because the highest percentage of these immigrants settled in the major cities of the north, the share of church adherents in the cities shot up. Undoubtedly, this massive influx of Catholic immigrants during that period fostered a growing blend of anti-Catholicism and a disdain of the urban neighborhoods that they populated.

Another important consideration is the view of the working class toward the church. "In England the urban working class viewed the church as aligned with the powerful and the privileged. Its clergy were suspect because of their middle-class character and comfortable lifestyle" (2001:54). In the United States, the laboring classes shared a similar view. The Protestant church leaders pursued the middle class and, when possible, the upper classes. Even urban revivalists such as Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899) and Charles Finney (1792-1875) reached primarily the middle-class, rural-born native Americans rather than the laboring classes.

With the industrialization of the city came mounting pain and squalor. How would Christians respond? Would they address these ills by

transformative intervention in the struggling communities of the city, or would they mostly offer assistance from without?

In England, Christian leaders in Parliament sought to address many of the social ills like child labor in factories, and female labor in mines through legislation. In the United States and England, moral crusades were mounted to combat the slave trade and alcoholism.

At the same time, a trend in individualism among the middle-class church led to the rise of charities and voluntarism to respond to the social needs in the city. The outcome was a host of large-scale religious philanthropy such as rescue missions and the Salvation Army. In the end, most of Christianity became more comfortable with charity than with justice.

Conn and Ortiz finger a “growing Christian dualism that looked for individual converts in the city but turned against the city as a perversion of nature” as an important step in the Protestant Church isolating itself from the industrial worker. “A growing transatlantic anti-urbanism divided the poor of the cities into worthy and unworthy and would eventually isolate evangelism from social transformation. Class sensitivities in England and Anglo-Saxon racist attitudes in America toward blacks and new immigrants molded negative opinions about the city” (2001:57).

The anti-urban dualism of individual and society began to be reflected in the theological formulations. In the early twentieth century, sides were being taken. Evangelicals and the fundamentalists were focused on evangelism. Their mantra could be summed up with “Change the person and you change the setting.” On the other hand, the more liberal, mainline denominations supported a wider program, referred to as Social Gospel. They claimed, “Change the setting and you change the person.”

Because in the nineteenth century most of the world was rural, mission leaders rightly focused mainly on rural areas. Anti-urbanism reinforced the focus of the mission enterprise on a rural strategy. So, in Brittan, missionaries came from churches that ignored the massive urban problems back home and in the United States there were missionaries “motivated to some degree by a desire to flee the decaying American cities” (Conn and Ortiz 2001:60).

At the end of the colonial period, the theological divisions eroded the holistic certainty of the gospel. “Liberalism . . . would move toward the Christianizing pole in a comprehensive approach that gave equal space to preaching, education, medical assistance, and technical and socioeconomic aid.” Some evangelicals, on the other hand, “would reduce their calling to personal evangelism. Christianity’s mandate for social transformation became charitable service” (2001:62).

What had started out as unreached peoples primarily living in a rural mission field was at an ever-increasing rate becoming an urban mission

field. By the 1950s, the urban wave was reaching Latin America, Asia, and Africa. In 1961, Latin America crossed the 50% urban population threshold. The United Nations projects that Asia's urban population will exceed 50% in 2019 (2018). The new reality was that the overseas mission field was both rural and urban and rapidly becoming increasingly more urban. In recognition of this, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE) held the Mini-Consultation on Reaching Large Cities in June of 1980. The overall purpose was stated as: "The covenant vision is a redeemed city, and the specific task is to encourage, equip, and empower 'the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole city'" (Bakke 1984).

The LCWE brought in its wake more attention to mission to the cities, but that did not mean that today Christianity at large has embraced holistic ministry to the cities of the world. Eduardo Mendieta in his chapter "Fundamentalism and Antiurbanism: The Frontier Myth, the Christian Nation, and the Heartland," in the book *Fleeing the City: Studies in the Culture and Politics of Antiurbanism*, writes this:

These born-again Christians, evangelicals, and fundamentalists have become exurban, that is exiles from the cities of Babel, Sodom, and Gomorrah. In an irony that should not escape this new soldier of god, they seek refuge in the suburbs of urbanized rural America, in the mega-churches of the heartland, where they gather under steel and glass structures to be connected via satellite with like-minded believers. (2009)

Politically, the plight of decaying inner cities is increasingly controlled by the suburbs where most statewide and national elections are now won. As the more affluent Christians have fled to the pastoral suburbs, they have taken their money, taxes, and jobs with them. In so doing they have left the inner-city core with less resources to serve its population. In the words of Warren R. Copeland, a Christian professor and the Mayor of Springfield, Ohio,

Once upon a time, the cities were seen as the birthplaces of civilization and democracy; now they are seen as centers of crime and deterioration. I believe that the tendency to withdraw from cities and let them decline is a profoundly destructive force in our society. I also consider it a fundamental ethical issue for our citizens and a critical religious issue for people of faith. (2009)

Foreign and City Mission in Adventism

I have purposefully held off discussing the Adventist relationship to urbanism. As a denomination, Adventists often perceive themselves as

being set apart, unique, more focused on truth than others, the bearers of a last day message—the *three angels' messages*. It may be so in God's idealized plan, but in everyday operations how true are Adventists to God's plan and how often do they reflect the culture around them? I begin with a brief survey of the development of Adventist mission and a review of initial reporting on mission to the cities.

At first, the group who developed into what is now the Seventh-day Adventist Church did not believe in mission. The Adventist vision for missions grew progressively. Following the 1844 disappointment, the Millerites, who eventually accepted the Sabbath were known derogatorily for a time as the "Sabbath and the shut-door people" as a way of calling attention to their distinctive beliefs. "During the shut-door period of Adventist mission development Sabbatarian Adventist believed that evangelistic outreach of their movement was restricted to those who had accepted the Millerite message of the 1830s and early 1840s. The door of mercy had shut for all others" (Knight 1999:49).

However, by 1850 James White reported the "accession of a man who 'had made no public profession of religion' before 1845" (in Knight 1999:65). Conversions like this one increased over the following two years. Here were examples of the work of the Holy Spirit correcting theology. By 1852, White had switched to an open-door evangelistic policy. Nevertheless, Sabbatarian Adventist had not opened the door to mission very far. "For one thing, some of the Sabbatarians believed that the Millerites had accomplished the preaching of the first angel's message to all the earth through the sending of their publications around the world" (66). Others like Uriah Smith thought that it might not be necessary to give the third angel's message outside of the United States because "our own land is composed of people from almost every nation" (67).

So, when Michael Belina Czechowski, an former Roman Catholic Polish priest who had converted to Adventism in America in 1857, expressed an interest in going as a missionary to his native people in Europe, the Adventist leadership said no. The leadership had its reasons including questions of Czechowski's readiness and suitability for the task. However, he would not be deterred. He "requested and received missionary sponsorship from the Advent Christian denomination (the main body of Sunday keeping Adventists)" (1999:82).

While in Europe, he planted Adventist doctrinal seeds which eventually bore fruit in Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, and elsewhere, even though he hid his Seventh-day Adventist roots. Eventually one of his Swiss followers discovered the existence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and contacted the leadership in the United States. The American Seventh-day Adventist leadership invited this Swiss believer to the United States,

where he received training in Adventist beliefs. In 1870, he returned to Europe as an ordained Seventh-day Adventist minister. Again, the Holy Spirit was propelling the Church to new frontiers.

One result of the contact with European Adventists was the development in 1869 of a missionary society to send printed material to foreign lands. In 1874, the Adventist Church sent its first "official" foreign missionary, John Nevins Andrews; however, for the next fifteen years Adventist mission was primarily to the Protestant nations (1999:99).

That would change in 1889 when S. N. Haskell and Percy T. Magan were sent on a two-year "itinerary around the world to survey opportunities, problems, and possible sites for Adventist missions in various parts of Africa, India, and the Orient" (1999:100).

Haskell and Magan reported on their tour in the *Youth Instructor*, capturing the interest of Adventist youth. This awakening of the hearts and minds of Adventist youth to mission was taking place at the same time as the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (founded in 1886) was growing.

During this same period, a recognition developed for the need of mission to Black America. In 1891, Ellen White presented a "testimony" on the matter to the delegates of the General Conference session in which she "especially called for more work among the Southern Blacks. Her appeal soon went into print as a 16-page tract entitled *Our Duty to the Colored People*" (1999:103). However, her appeal for work among the Southern Blacks went unheeded until her son Edson White "discovered" the document in 1893 and teamed up with Will Palmer to build a traveling mission station boat, the *Morning Star*. Lacking the confidence and support of Adventist Church leadership, White's and Palmer's endeavors were mostly self-supporting. By 1896, the General Conference recognized the need for the education of Black workers and opened Oakwood Industrial School. When in 1901 Edson's mission, known as the Southern Missionary Society, was merged with the newly established Southern Union Conference it had nearly 50 schools in operation. As the Adventist Church was awakening to its worldwide mission there was also a parallel awakening to the need of mission in the homeland encompassing racial, ethnic, and urban diversity in North America.

It would be helpful at this point to consider the background of the early Adventist leaders in relationship to urbanity. Just as most of the population in the early stages of the Adventist Church was from a rural background, so were its leaders. It is not surprising that the church grew most naturally in the more rural environments. Contributing to this tilt toward the rural was that for most of the leaders, cities were "foreign." Of the three key founding leaders, only one, Ellen White, grew up in what then would have been called a city.

Joseph Bates, whom George Knight considers the “real founder of the Seventh-day Adventist,” was born in Rochester in Plymouth County, Massachusetts, on July 8, 1792. “The next year the family moved the seven miles to New Bedford, just across the Acushnet River from the town that became Fairhaven in 1812” (2004:2). In 1790, New Bedford was a small town with a total population of 3,313. It got its first post office in 1792 but experienced little growth over the next few decades with a population of just 3,947 in 1820. New Bedford did not become a city until 1847 with a population of around 15,000 (*Wikipedia* 2018; *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. New Bedford).

James White’s hometown of Palmyra, Somerset County, Maine, was even smaller and more rural than Joseph Bates’ hometown. It was incorporated in 1807 and when White was born there in 1821 Palmyra had a population of little over 360. Unlike New Bedford, Palmyra has remained a small town with a 2019 estimated population below 2,000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2019)

Ellen White was born in 1827 in Gorham, Maine, but shortly after her birth, the family moved to Portland, Maine. Except for a brief time between 1829 and 1833 when the family relocated to Poland, Maine, Ellen White grew up in Portland, the largest city in Maine (Moon and Fortin 2013:19). By 1840 Portland boasted of a population of over 15,000, and although not a large city by modern standards it was an important regional urban center of its day (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. Portland Maine). None-the-less, even her experience in Portland, Maine, would not prepare her for the challenges of the super cities, which were rapidly growing in the United States and elsewhere.

City mission was definitely not in the Adventist DNA from the beginning, as will be seen from Monte Sahlin’s introduction to the development of urban mission in the Adventist Church; however, his book *Mission in Metropolis: The Adventist Movement in an Urban World*, mentioned that it did take off when the circumstances were right.

From 1893 through 1893, the original city missions were established. These usually included housing for a team of Bible workers and literature evangelists, a reading room and bookstore, and a lecture room. During 1884, eight major articles appeared in the *Review* concerning city mission work. In *Testimony Number 32*, published in 1885, Ellen White released a 17-page letter written a year earlier to a conference president urging “The Support of City Mission.”

From 1885 through 1904, the General Conference published a yearly report on city missions. The first one indicates that the New York City mission had been operating since June 1883. The 1886 report included reports from 36 city missions. These employed 102 denominational workers with an additional 224 laity serving as staff interns and trainees.

The city missions during this era had the goal of planting Adventist congregations in unentered metropolitan areas. They “often faded away when [the] immediate objective in the establishment of a thriving church was completed.” (Sahlin 2007:8)

Some key points in Sahlin’s narrative are worth highlighting. First, city mission began with Ellen White’s strong endorsement. She would continue to press leadership to do more on behalf of city mission for the rest of her life. Second, when the church embarked on city mission there were sizable resources, compared to the size of the church at the time, devoted to reaching the cities. Sampling the *Seventh-day Adventist Year Book* during this time yields some amazingly ambitious plans. This relatively young and vibrant movement was still accustomed to putting their whole heart into any endeavor deemed critical.

The first two points Sahlin makes bode well for the development of city mission. However, the last two points give us some indication why city mission flourished for a time but did not ultimately have the same traction in SDA circles as foreign mission. In 1904, the GC published the last of the city mission reports which it had begun in 1885. Dropping the city mission report coincides with the 1901 and the 1903 reorganization of the administrative structure of the Adventist Church. The church during the next thirty years, under the combined leadership of A. G. Daniells and William A. Spicer, saw unparalleled growth in Adventist missions. Sadly, during this time that the GC leadership focused on foreign mission, home mission to cities declined in importance. Finally, Arthur White’s observation that city missions “often faded away when [the] immediate objective in the establishment of a thriving church was completed” (1970:3) is but one factor that could be cited for the demise of city mission in the North American Adventist Church.

It is fascinating to observe the rapid development of city mission from 1883 through the end of the century. Mention of “city missions” can be found in each of the *Seventh-day Adventist Year Books* from 1884 through 1891. A “Directory of City Missions” appeared in the 1904 *Year Book*. An even more fruitful read is found in the minutes to the GC Sessions during this period. On November 19, 1885, a “committee of nine was appointed to consider the matter of city missions, and report to this Conference in regard to the best methods of conducting them” (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 1863-1888:272). Seven days later the newly appointed committee on city missions presented their recommendations with the following introduction.

Considering the character of our work, the extent to which the message must go, the limited time in which we have to perform the work assigned us, together with the fact that the Spirit of God has said that the time has come when we should enter our cities, villages, and towns, and that the standard of truth should be planted in the great thoroughfares of travel, the conviction urges itself upon us that vigorous steps should be taken, and wise plans laid, whereby the truth can be successfully carried forward in these localities. (1863-1888:285)

What follows are fourteen recommendations, some dealing with strategy and broad plans, and others pertaining to logistics and staffing needs in specific locations. The first recommendation is representative of the boldness in their thinking. "1. We therefore recommend that each conference having cities of sufficient size to [make] such a move desirable, have in its bounds at least one mission where there shall be special training and special instruction given to the workers in connection with their actual work in these missions, and thus prepare persons to enter other missions that must in the near future be opened" (1863-1888:285).

A lengthy tenth recommendation pertained to financial support. It recognized among other things, the need for differentiation in remuneration between settled workers employed by a conference and "persons who may be considered as experimental workers" who might receive as their remuneration "their board and lodging" until "they have become acceptable workers," and that "persons sent from one state to another to be instructed in a city mission" have their board and room-rent "paid by the conference which sends them" (1863-1888:285). Funding the expanding city mission was certainly a challenge. Later in the same GC Session, the Committee on Finances reported that there was "great need of a fund to support city missions outside of organized conferences" (1863-1888:300). They recommended that \$10,000 be raised for the support of city missions, which ostensibly was to come from Christmas donations solicited from "our people everywhere."

In the 1886 GC Session, a few items concerning city missions surfaced involving logistics of the work and screening potential workers, which were addressed. In the following year, on November 16, 1887 the Committee on City Missions reported on the need for "broader and more careful plans" (1863-1888:356). This nine-point "plan" was adopted the following year at the 1888 GC session focused primarily on education for city missions and canvassing work. Items one through three pertained to training to be offered at the main Adventist educational institutions. Items four through eight pertained to conference conducted city mission training schools. Four conferences were identified to conduct quarterly trainings "so as to accommodate workers from other conferences that may be

selected to receive a thorough preparation in all branches of this work" (1863-1888:357). Further details were provided on how persons sent to these schools should be screened. Item nine was a reminder of the ever-present financial concern, that if city missions were not run well that they would become a financial liability, which might "result in injury to the cause" (357).

The *Seventh-day Adventist Year Book for 1890* with the report of the 1889 GC Session has features related to city mission, which are worth noting. First, along with the one-page table of "Statistics of Home and Foreign Conferences and Missions" (1890:59) there are tables on two pages related to city missions, twelve in the United States, and in London, England (1890:60, 61), and "Population of Cities in the United States" lists 115 cities with population estimates for 1888, 1880, and 1870. Additionally, at the bottom of the page is a breakdown of the nationality or nativity of the foreign-born inhabitants of the United States, according to the census of 1880 (1890:140). The Great Britain report (65-67) highlighted cities with an enumeration of 192 towns having a population of over 10,000 inhabitants, and over twenty towns with a population of over 100,000. The report points out that while the area of the United Kingdom is smaller than that of California, the four cities of Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, and Leeds, have a population equal to that of California, North Pacific, and Montana. "The United Kingdom, with an area . . . much less than California, has a population exceeding one half that of the United States" (66). The report further stated that "the London mission is paying quite a heavy rent, and has room for nearly a score of workers, but does not have one half that number at work in a city of 5,000,000 inhabitants" (67).

The original city missions, from 1883 through 1897, were characterized mainly by an emphasis on Bible workers and literature evangelists. During the second period of major city mission, from 1897 through 1904, the emphasis was on "health and social work alongside the continued efforts of Bible workers and evangelists. Dr. John H. Kellogg sponsored the most sophisticated of these 'medical missionary' projects in Chicago" (Sahlin 2007:8).

Kellogg's prominent involvement in city missions was soon to become a liability. At the turn-of-the-century when there was a crisis between the church administration and Kellogg, one of the casualties was the city mission work. Kellogg's drive for power and his ambitious plans, which tied up a large portion of the church's resources, elicited a number of Ellen White's counsels on this matter. "Much has been made of isolated quotes from Ellen White, often taken out of context that seem to discourage aggressive ministry in the large cities. . . . Prejudice against city life is mingled with misunderstood fragments to create a distorted picture of Ellen White's real views on urban mission" (Sahlin 2007:9).

A brief flurry of “large city evangelism” occurred in 1909 and 1910 as a result of Ellen White’s insistence that city mission should not be ignored. Unlike the 1909 session where Ellen White spoke in person many times throughout the session, in 1913 she sent greetings through her son W. C. White and two written messages to be read before the delegates. W. C. White, in delivering greetings from his mother, quotes her saying, “Tell our brethren I feel perfectly clear that it is God’s will that I shall remain at home and reserve what strength I have to help in the work of bringing my writings into book form” (White 1913:5-6).

In the first written message read on Ellen White’s behalf, she recalled her dissatisfaction with the leaders’ response in 1909. She then went on to say that when “those in positions of trust” gave prayerful and careful study of the “various messages given” and began to venture out to implement what they learned, “It has brought great rejoicing to my heart to see the marvelous transformations that have been wrought in the lives of some who thus chose to advance by faith in the way of the Lord, rather than to follow a way of their own choosing” (White 1913:34). It appears that the two individuals that White had singled out to take a more decided leadership in city mission, Prescott and Daniells, had begun to do so, at least in her view. I have not found any further references in her writing on this matter.

Examining the 1918 General Conference Bulletins, there is evidence of renewed interest in city mission, but it is important to notice a shift in focus. At that time, the emphasis was primarily on reaching major immigrant groups under the auspices of the newly created Home Missionary Department. The North American Division Conference organized this department at its Executive Committee in the autumn of 1914, shortly after the division itself was organized in 1913 (Evans 1918:25).

In the 1918 General Conference Daniells, as expected, addresses a number of topics in his presidential address. He began his remarks on city work by reminding the listeners of the “stirring messages that came to us through the Spirit of Prophecy a few years ago in behalf of the masses gathered in our large cities” (Daniells 1918:4). He then related how at that time they “had done little real successful work in these great congested centers. . . . But aroused by oft repeated and most urgent messages, we applied ourselves to the great understating. Our efforts have been blessed of God. We have made good headway” (4).

Daniells closed his address by reading extensively from Ellen White’s first message shared at the 1913 General Conference Session, which he introduces as follows. “At the opening of our conference five years ago there came to us through the Spirit of prophecy a most cheering, encouraging, uplifting message” (1918:5). It almost seemed that he was taking a victory lap over the effort put forth in working for the cities.

Despite Daniells' and Spicer's exceptional emphasis on world missions during their shared time as General Conference President and Secretary from 1901 through 1926, the North American Church would begin to lose ground in the cities during their tenure. Even though some in the church would periodically attempt to revive church planting in the cities over the subsequent years, inner city church planting focused on those born in the United States has languished. The possible exception to this is ethnic congregations focused on recent immigrants. Membership trends for the population born in the United States for multiple generations is stark. Were it not for the influx of recent immigrants into the Adventist Church, membership trends would be similar to the downward trend of many mainline churches. Make no mistake; the North American Adventist Church has crossed a threshold into stagnation and decline. The root causes of the ineffectiveness in reaching the vast populations in urban areas must be discovered and responded to before the church loses its capacity to function.

In a subsequent paper, I will explore the years following the 1918 General Conference and a new movement within Adventism that focused on the families and the evils of the city. W. A. Spalding and others through the Home Commission, created in 1919, would be instrumental in fanning an anti-city movement among North American Adventists. The subsequent study will examine the various factors that contributed to blunting the church's dedication to and effectiveness in urban mission.

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CLIFMOND SHAMEERUDEEN

Christian History of East Indians of Guyana

Historical Footprints

Guyana is the only English-speaking country of South America and is part of the English-speaking Caribbean, mainly because of language, culture, and religious background. The formation of this multiethnic community is a result of many historical events. These events are viewed differently, depending on one's ideology and school of thought. However, it is undeniably true that the mass migration orchestrated by the British colonizers separated people groups from their places of origin over a span of hundreds of years and many generations.

The British colonizers are responsible for transporting and settling laborers from India to the West Indies. These individuals, known as East Indians, were recruited mainly for indentureship, to replace the freed African slaves on the sugar plantations. The indenture system began in 1838 in Guyana and ended in 1917 in the southern Caribbean region. It is estimated that 240,000 East Indians came to Guyana and 144,000 to Trinidad during the indentureship period (Barrow 1996:342). In Trinidad, sixty-eight percent of the East Indians brought during this period were males, while only thirty-eight percent were females (Vertovec 1992:101). A similar gender disparity was found in Guyana, where males were also in the majority (Singh 1993: 223).

Crossing the *Kala Pani*

The term *kala pani* (black waters) encapsulates the treacherous journey of the East Indians leaving their villages, socioreligious environments, and

family ties to cross the “seven seas” to Guyana (British Guiana). Sumita Chatterjee (1997:82) suggested that the term *kala pani* is also a “metaphor” for life on the sugar plantation. Chandra Jayawardena (1968:428) reported that many emigrants perceived that crossing the black waters meant they would never return to their homeland.

In one account, Bharath, a young man from a remote village in Uttar Pradesh, was recruited by underhanded recruiters to accept a job without knowing that he was agreeing to leave his home and the land of his birth. Bharath assumed he was traveling to a nearby city for a job that promised high pay and good benefits. It never crossed his mind that he should say goodbye to his parents. This story of Bharath reveals the innocence of the indentured laborers and the devious practices of the recruiters in getting Indians to the British overseas sugar estates. Bharath was not aware he was going overseas for a job and would never see his family again. When he did realize it, it was too late because of the expenses incurred to transport him from his local village and house him in Calcutta. This young man’s story represents the limited understanding many immigrants had of the distance between India and the Caribbean, the cultural adjustment they would encounter, and the risk they faced of being permanently cut off from their family, caste, community, and country of birth (Chatterjee 1997:88). This could be one of the explanations behind the meaning of the phrase *kala pani*.

Munshi Khan, a survivor of the *kala pani* and the sugar plantation, writes in his memoir about the journey from Calcutta to Surinam. According to him, the recruiters were very convincing in their description of the benefits he would receive for working at a government job. On the ship to Suriname, his world changed forever. The mixing of castes was forbidden and was tantamount to going to hell. For a Brahmin, to eat and sleep next to a Dalit was impossible to imagine. Many Brahmins chose to fast rather than eat with other Indians from a lower caste (Khan 2005:82). Despite such treatment, many immigrants, including Brahmins, continued to board the ships to Guyana until 1917. It seems that agents were successful in enticing Indians to board the ships and cross the ocean. An account from an emigrant agent testifies that if the Indians had known about the *kala pani*, they would not have gone to the Caribbean (Chatterjee 1997:85).

The East Indian Immigrants

Many East Indians did not intend to stay in Guyana after completing the five-year contract on the plantations. Between 1838 and 1917, it is estimated that 75,808 indentured labors returned to India (Barrow 1996:342). Scholars have observed that many Indians who returned to

India struggled to assimilate into their society again and chose to re-emigrate to the British West Indies (Chatterjee 1997:55).

Scholars differ as to which states in India most East Indians came from and how many came from each province. However, they seem to agree that most of the East Indians came from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, while a smaller percentage came from places such as Bengal, Orissa, Punjab, and Mumbai. Most were from the lower castes (Vertovec 2001:626 627).

Singh's (1993:56) research suggests that the ratio of men to women was imbalanced. Scholars observe that the emigration percentage of Muslim women was higher than Muslim men, and the same was true of Brahmin women. The recruitment of women was mandated by policy, and thus, recruiters were paid a higher wage for women who signed up for the West Indies. One-third of the women who came were married, and the rest were single, widowed, or had run away due to family problems. These women were to have high morals, which was important to plantation life (Chatterjee 1997:59).

Many scholars fail to mention that a small percentage of the Indians came as Christians to the Caribbean. The religious affiliations of the East Indians were as follows: 83.6 percent Hindu, 16.3 percent Muslim, and about 1 percent Christian (Seecharan 1990:8). Records indicate that between 1876 and 1892, forty-six women who came to Guyana were Christian (Chatterjee 1997:50). These surprising statistics are a strong argument that challenges the status quo in Guyana and Trinidad regarding the origins of the Christian faith among East Indians. Christianity was not imported by White Christian missionaries but arrived in the British Caribbean in the same way as Hinduism and Islam.

Integration in an Alien Environment

One of the internal and external challenges that faced the immigrants was the issue of language. Scholars suggest that there were at least eight languages and about eleven dialects spoken on the plantations (Bronkhurst 1883:226; Tinker 1974:208). The East Indians adopted a common dialect known as "plantation Hindustani," which contributed to the loss of their native language in Trinidad and Guyana and the formation of a common language of communication (Vertovec 2001:631).

Plantation life could be described as legal slavery, where the East Indians had little or no control of their lives during the contracted period (Klein 2015, 35). During the indentureship period, most aspects of the East Indians' lives were governed by the Indian Immigration Ordinance (Klein 2015). Chatterjee (1997:141) observed that the ordinance was always slanted in favor of the plantation owners who had full control of the worker's

lives. For example, Brinsley Samaroo observed that British colonial policy was against any form of a socio-religious identity in Trinidad and Guyana. The British rulers argued that East Indians were not a separate people group but rather West Indians (2005:5:114). Eventually, after the indenture-ship period ended, East Indians slowly became recognized as citizens of the colony and were given opportunities to settle. By 1881, thirty-four percent of these indentured laborers were living outside the plantation, and by 1921, that number increased to fifty percent (Jayawardena 1966:222).

Sociological research has generally accepted that the East Indians' worldview was modified to fit the new context, mainly due to the necessity of survival in an alien environment. Bush's (1997:56) findings support the assumption that the religious practices of East Indians in the British West Indies evolves from the motherland. She further states that the reason for this difference is due to the restrictions encountered in practicing Hinduism in British territories. For example, Jayaram (2000:169) noted that caste no longer exists as a functional institution among Hindus in Trinidad. The modified religious practices became new traditions for Hindus in Guyana and led to the renaissance of Indian culture in the early twentieth century (Vertovec 2000:633). This position is supported by Edmonds and Gonzalez's (2010:179) and Janet Naidu's (2007) research indicating that Hinduism in the Caribbean is distinct from Indian Hinduism and can be considered an unique form of that religion.

The Birth of Christianity in British Guiana (Guyana)

The birth and development of Christianity in Guyana (formerly British Guiana) were influenced by the political, sociological, and religious pursuits of the invaders from Europe. The story begins with the Europeans' acquisition of land belonging to native people and the forced conversion to Christianity of all occupants of the newly acquired lands. The Dutch were the first to settle in Guyana and referred to the area as the "Wild Coast," which was considered uninhabitable by the Portuguese to the east and the Spanish to the west for many reasons, especially because the area was constantly flooded by saltwater, making the land of little use for planting (Ramerini 1998). The Dutch settlers developed the "Wild Coast" and made it usable for planting tobacco by a system known as the polder drainage method. In 1781, war between the Dutch and the British led to the British occupation of Guyana; however, the Dutch joined the French and regained control for a short time. In 1831, Britain became the legal owner of Guyana until its independence in 1966 (Merrill 1992).

History reveals that the policies implemented to govern Guyana during the period of European occupation favored the ruling class and

did not always have the laboring class' interests in mind. The first known Christian presence in Guyana was the Protestant Dutch Reformed Church, which built their first worship building in 1720. However, Blacks and natives were not allowed to become members. The Lutherans joined the Dutch Reformed Church in British Guiana and followed the same policy of barring Blacks and natives from joining their church (Melton 2005). History reveals that the missionaries, such as the Anglican missionaries in British Guiana, were also owners of plantations and slaves (Rooke 1977:21).

Britain was a major player in the development of British Guiana as a colony as well as in the spread of Christianity there. Britain tried to leave religious matters to the bishop of London, including the appointment and responsibilities of its priests. However, once the priests arrived in the British West Indies, they were subject to the authority of the British governor of the West Indies and not to the bishop of London (Hunte 2001:2:95). Until the end of slavery, the British Crown supported the Church of England's policies to limit religious instruction to non-British subjects. Historians note two possible reasons: (1) African slaves were using baptismal certificates as a means to gain freedom, and (2) baptism elevated a slave to a higher status (Edmonds and Gonzalez 2010:68).

With the removal of the restrictions on evangelizing non-British subjects, the doors were opened for many denominations to begin proselytizing more widely. The three established churches in Guyana—Presbyterian, Catholic, and Anglican—played a key role in the evangelization of Africans, Europeans, and especially the East Indians in British Guiana (Hunte 2001:2:106).

Anglican Church in Guyana

England saw religion as a necessity for its people and its colonies throughout its era of expansion. Historical documents indicate that it was a natural process for the British government to ensure that its citizens had adequate religious support in British Guiana. In the early stages of the Anglican Church in Guyana, it was common practice for both Anglican and Dutch Reformed members to share the same space of worship; however, this changed when the planters' class increased in size and in political and economic power (Pinnington 1968:365).

The Church of England enjoyed a short period of success in its evangelization efforts among the non-Whites, mainly because of financial support from England, which included paying the salaries for the clergy (357). However, this period of success was short-lived. The first notable weakness was in its leadership dynamics. Only priests from England were

allowed to serve in the parishes. The second challenge was the dependence on funds from England. In 1868, the British parliament stopped funding the clergy and shifted the responsibility to the local government in British Guiana. The third challenge was the language of the colony. The clergy struggled to share the gospel in the languages of the newly arrived immigrants (Titus 1999:351). Additionally, as the colony's population expanded, clergy numbers remained the same at fifty, which reduced the Church's effectiveness in the colony (Edmonds and Gonzalez 2010:75). Finally, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland and the Church of England were partners in the colony and benefited both financially and politically from the government. This alignment of church and state contributed to the Church's decline (78).

The 2012 census indicates a decline of membership in the Anglican Church when compared with the 2002 census. Currently the Anglican Church in Guyana has 38,962 members or 5.22 percent of the population, which decreased from 58,418 or 6.98 percent in 2002. The census provides two possible reasons for the decline in membership. Anglicans are joining other faiths and/or migrating to foreign lands (Bureau of Statistics 2002).

Catholicism in Guyana

Until 1834, Catholics were not present in British Guiana. However, on May 8, 1835, with the arrival of forty Portuguese laborers, mostly Catholics, from the island of Madeira, British Guiana would no longer belong to Protestants only (Menezes 1988:4:58). Between 1835 and 1882, a total of 30,809 Portuguese immigrated to British Guiana (Pillai, Tivary, and Keatinge 1924:10). The religious needs of the Portuguese did not go unnoticed; after ten years and many failed attempts, they were successful in getting a Catholic priest who was able to speak their native language (Menezes 1988:4:60). Jesuit priests were responsible for providing religious instruction, establishing and maintaining churches, and evangelizing non-Catholics (61). In 1857, the Catholic Church was the first mainstream church to begin evangelizing East Indians and Blacks on the sugar estates (63).

The Portuguese immigrants to Guyana became wealthy and controlled many shops and businesses; they also became involved in politics. However, after the independence of Guyana, the Portuguese population suffered a backlash for their support and alignment with British policy. This led to ethnic animosity that exploded in the 1960s against the Portuguese, who were victims of lootings, riots, and attacks on their culture and identity as Guyanese. This led to a mass migration of Guyanese Portuguese to the United States and Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Ferreira 2006:75).

Two factors contributed to the decline of Roman Catholicism in Guyana. First was the political unrest and mass migration of Portuguese Catholics. By the 1960s, there were only 3,218 Portuguese in Guyana, compared to 35,000 in 1858 (*Wikipedia* 2017). The second reason was the aggressive proselytization of Roman Catholics by Protestants, such as Pentecostals and Adventists. The Catholic population dropped from 18.4 percent (107,000) to 7.1 percent (52,000) after the 1960s. An in-depth analysis of the 2002 and 2012 censuses supports the conversion theory of Roman Catholics to Pentecostalism and Adventism in Guyana. Within the same administrative regions and villages, the number of Roman Catholics declined, while two Protestant denominations, Adventism and Pentecostalism, had an increase in membership (Bureau of Statistics 2002). According to the census, the current Catholic population is mainly made up of Afro and Amerindian ethnic groups (Bureau of Statistics 2002).

Protestantism in Guyana

The entrance of Protestantism into British Guiana came through two avenues. The first was through nonconformist religious organizations, and the other was through the mission societies of England. The Moravians were the first Protestant Christians to enter British Guiana. They came at the invitation of a plantation owner and arrived in 1738 to minister to the slaves on his estate (Bronkhurst 1883:413). In 1808, the London (Baptist) Missionary Society was the first society to be established in England and the first to begin missionary activities in British Guiana (Platt and Holland 2003).

Missionary societies were birthed as a result of William Carey's promotion of missions to the people of the world religions. Ministers and lay-members were the catalysts in the formation of missionary societies that were independent from the established churches in Europe and they were the ones who felt a burden and a responsibility to share Christ with the non-Western world (Rooke 1977:79). The missionary societies received funding initially through grants from the British government, but eventually funding ceased, and the organizations were forced to become self-sustaining (Bayley 1909:292). Unlike the established churches, whose focus was the European population in the colony, the missionary societies concentrated their activities on the education and evangelism of slaves, East Indians, and even Amerindians (Dunn 1971:5).

The effectiveness of the established churches began to decline after the abolition of slavery, while the Protestant missionary societies and new denominations exploded with growth in British Guiana. The rise of nonmainstream Protestantism did not take place in isolation. In the Guyanese

context, political affiliation played a major role in race segregation and has affected evangelism both historically and presently. The historical records indicate that the established churches, mainly the Church of England, were first established to serve the ruling class but eventually began evangelizing the immigrants. When the Protestants came to British Guiana, their mission was primarily to the Afro- and Indo-Guyanese (Dunn 1971:4).

The Birth of Christianity among the East Indians

The influx of East Indians to British Guiana created many opportunities and challenges for the missionaries and the state churches. Between 1838 and 1850, little mission activity was initiated among East Indians on the estates for a number of reasons, such as, resistance from plantation owners, language, culture, and lack of motivation by missionaries to begin work among this people group. Henry Bronkhurst (1883:457, 458), a Wesleyan minister among the East Indians, quoted Reverend E. Bhose, who was among the first to begin work among the East Indians, as saying that one of the main reasons for rejecting Christianity was that if they converted, “they must remain in the country. They always had an expectation of returning home. . . . After ten, fifteen or twenty years we made no progress.” The missionary activities of Reverend Bhose indicate that his labor among the East Indians was in vain. They spurned Christianity because their goals and ambitions were set on making money and returning home to India.

After 1850, it became evident that the East Indians were becoming permanent residents. This motivated the Wesleyan, Anglican, and Presbyterian churches to correct their failure to witness to the East Indians since their arrival in 1838. In 1852, the Wesleyan Church in England sent its first missionary to work among the East Indians; however, he died from yellow fever within ten days of his arrival. It took another eight years for another missionary to arrive in the colony to continue evangelizing the East Indians. In 1871, the Church of England took steps to place more missionaries among the East Indians. However, the missionary activities of the Anglican, United Presbyterian, and Wesleyan Churches were met with failure. They were not able to successfully baptize East Indians. Some of the reasons for failure included: (1) the language and culture of the East Indians was foreign to the missionaries, (2) East Indians viewed the churches’ intentions with suspicion as agents of the government to make converts, and (3) the East Indians determined that they could not forsake the religion of their ancestors for the British religion (Bronkhurst 1883:459).

Protestant missionaries from newer denominations were successful, for many East Indians saw their churches as caring places that valued family, health, and progress. They also provided inner peace and freedom from illness and evil spirits and promoted a sense of belonging and equality that did not exist in the established churches. Many East Indians noticed that the new wave of Protestant churches promoted more indigenous involvement in leadership that did not exist in the traditional, established churches.

Wesleyan Methodist East Indian Mission

Henry Bronkhurst, a Wesleyan Methodist minister, arrived in 1861 to work among the East Indians in British Guiana. He authored three books on his experiences with the indentured laborers in British Guiana. He states that between 1861 and 1870, thirty-seven East Indians accepted Christianity and were baptized into full membership in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. In his 1876 report to the mission board in England, he stated that between 1876 and 1881, the church membership was as follows: 48, 47, 38, 43, and 45. Three reasons contributed to the lack of growth: (1) the missionaries' struggle to witness to and mentor new believers because of constant migration of the East Indian indentured laborers to other parts of British Guiana, (2) a high number of laborers returning to India after baptism and achievement of full membership in the Wesleyan Methodist Church (it is estimated that fifty East Indian Christians returned to India from 1876 to 1881), and (3) the death rate of East Indian Christians. About thirteen East Indian members died between 1876 and 1881 (Bronkhurst 1883:465-67). After independence from Britain in 1966, the mission activities among East Indians ceased.

Church of England East Indian Mission

In 1871, the Church of England brought missionaries to work specifically among the East Indians. Even though they brought one missionary from India who understood the language, culture, and religion of the Hindus, it was still challenging to baptize adult East Indians. In 1881, the membership was about 226; approximately 70 members were lost due to death or migration back to India. The report notes that many of the villages had no Christians when work began among them, but by 1881, the numbers had increased.

The challenges of witnessing to Hindus were threefold. First was the internal struggle within Hindus themselves. They refused to join the Christian Church because it had no immediate benefit for them. Hindus

expected to return back to India, and if they became Christians, they would have to stay in British Guiana. A second reason was that East Indians were very satisfied with the religion of their ancestors and felt no need to join another religion. A third reason was that they did not trust the missionaries. They would ask questions like, "How does the government pay you for making Christians of us, and how many Christians have you made?" (Bronkhurst 1883:457, 458). As a result of these challenges, the missionaries began working with children by setting up schools on the estates, in villages, and in cities. This method provided an opportunity for a breakthrough in witnessing to East Indian children. One missionary described Hindu adults as granite stones and Hindu children as plastic clay (455).

The progress of the Anglican Church among East Indians was limited mainly because of its support of colonial government policies and the plantation owners (Bronkhurst 1883:458). Scholars agree that the policies and worldview of the plantation owners became a stumbling block for Christian missionaries for decades because of the Church's alignment with the plantation owners and colonial authority that did not reflect the teachings of Jesus.

Canadian Presbyterian East Indian Mission

John Morton and his wife were Canadian Presbyterian missionaries who had worked among East Indians in Trinidad. They arrived in British Guiana on December 30, 1880, at the request of their sister denomination, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in British Guiana, to evaluate the missionary work among East Indians and suggest improvements (Morton 1916:293). Morton's observations were the following. First, he found that there were four Protestant churches in British Guiana: Congregational, Wesleyan, Church of England, and Church of Scotland. However, Morton noted that only the last three were active among the East Indians. Second, he observed that the moral standards of the ministers was lacking. After his survey, he recorded that only two of the eleven Protestant ministers in the colony were not alcoholics, and those two were Canadians. Morton claimed that one of the significant reasons for the failure in evangelizing East Indians was consumption of alcohol by the Protestant ministers in British Guiana. Third, the established churches received grants from the colonial government, which paid the salaries of the ministers and funded the work among East Indians. According to Morton, the financial support received from the government became a hindrance in reaching East Indians.

The decision by the Wesleyan and Anglican denominations to hire Hindi-speaking East Indians as Bible workers to evangelize the Hindus

had a measure of success but was short-lived. Morton suggested two reasons why the established churches failed to be successful in baptizing Hindus on the plantation. First, there was a lack of organization and strategic planning in developing a structure for mentoring the Hindus who accepted Jesus Christ. Second, many East Indians were suspicious of their fellow East Indians who became Christians. They were called traitors and supporters of the White man's religion.

In his 1880 report, Morton indicates that there was a need for a Canadian Presbyterian Church presence in British Guiana to open the work among East Indians. In Morton's appeal, he states, "The Canadian church should push on to do something for the 60,000 to 70,000 Heathens there" (Dunn 1971:16).

The recommendations of John Morton for focusing on evangelizing the East Indians were partly followed, despite many hurdles. Gibson arrived in 1885, after completing one year of Hindi language and mission training in Trinidad, to advance the work among the East Indians in British Guiana that was first initiated by wealthy plantation owners such as Ewing-Crum, owner of Better Hope estate on the East Coast of Demerara (Morton 1916:298).

Gibson, the first missionary sent by the Canadian Presbyterian Church, observed two obstacles in his ministry. First, many East Indians accepted Jesus Christ but refused to be baptized into the White man's church because of their "Indian family and cultural ties" (Dunn 1971:32). Second, Gibson's experience suggested that the threat of Islam was an overwhelming challenge to mission activities among the East Indians. He stated, "When Christianity has once taken hold of the Muslims of this colony, the success of missions among our Indian population will be ensured" (*The Maritime Presbyterian* March 1888:81).

The sudden death of Gibson in 1888 as a result of yellow fever delayed the East Indian missionary thrust and revealed the harsh realities of working among East Indians in British Guiana. *The Presbyterian Witness* (January 20, 1912) labeled British Guiana as "The White Man's Grave" because of the high death rate and continuous illness of Canadian missionaries. Most of the missionaries coming from Canada struggled with the climate and living conditions, while a few managed for a short while before eventually succumbing to tropical diseases such as malaria, yellow fever, and typhoid.

It was not until 1896 that another Canadian missionary came to work among the East Indians in British Guiana. He was James Bassnet Cropper, son of the protector of St. Lucia. His background, fluency in Hindi, and knowledge of the culture prepared him for the vast work of evangelizing the Hindus in British Guiana (Dunn 1971:40).

Cropper's initial observations were the same as Morton's and Gibson's. Cropper's training in administration and leadership put him at an advantage in making progress among the East Indians. The government of the colony decided to offer land instead of providing passage back to India to the indentured laborers. Cropper stated, "We should be in a position to plan an agency in every settlement at the time of its foundation" (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1899:130). The expansion of the East Indian mission activities spread to highly populated villages such as the newly formed village, Helena (Dunn 1971:46).

In the 1900s, more missionaries were sent to work among the East Indians. Ross, a new missionary who arrived in 1900, recognized his dilemma when he stated, "Hinduism in the books is one thing; Hinduism in life is quite another" (*The Presbyterian Witness*, August 25, 1900). The sentiment of Ross seems to categorically summarize the challenges faced by foreign missionaries.

Ross continued where his predecessor left off. He recognized that the hospital was the best place to witness to East Indians. He wrote, "There the seed of the word very often finds good ground and bears an abundant harvest for eternity" (*The Presbyterian Witness*, August 25, 1900). Ross expressed the need for East Indians to maintain their culture after they accepted Christianity. He wrote, "We seek to have our people take more pride in their Hindi name. . . . We endeavor to eradicate the idea so readily entertained to be Christian-ized means to be Anglicized as well" (*The Presbyterian Witness*, August 25, 1900).

The increase of missionaries and Bible workers in the first decade of the twentieth century indicates some growth among East Indians. In 1918, the Canadian Presbyterian church membership was at 1,933, spread across the colony in fifty-nine congregations, and was nurtured by missionaries and twenty-nine Bible workers. There were forty-six Sunday schools, thirty-eight day schools, and one high school (Minutes of the Board of Foreign Missions, November 12, 1918).

Despite the apparent growth, the statistics suggest that the Canadian Presbyterian membership among East Indian population of 238,909 was about 0.8 percent. Looking at the statistics another way, for every member, there were 123 unreached East Indians in the colony. Fisher, the missionary in the county of Essequibo, observed in the 1911 census there was one Christian living for every ten Hindus and two Muslims (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1912, 86). About seven years later, the membership had increased to 3,000, and there were about thirty-five Bible workers in the colony. Also in the same year, British Guiana had the most missionaries at one time working among the East Indians—six ordained ministers (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1925:122). Dunn (1971:212) noted that after

thirty-one years, from 1885 to 1927, the Canadian Presbyterian Church in British Guiana “is not a statistical success story.”

The Role of Plantation Owners

East Indian evangelism did not begin with the missionaries but with committed estate owners who desired to see the gospel go to their indentured laborers from India. The relationship between the missionaries and plantation owners had both positive and negative effects on the sustainability of evangelization among the East Indians. On one side, in most cases, the missionary’s success depended on the financial support of the plantation owners. At the same time, missionaries were at their disposal, and many times they were used as puppets. The estate owners had little interest in the success of the missionaries except when it benefited their cause. In some instances, they provided funding to assist the missionaries with educating the East Indians with the goal that they would continue to work on the plantation; other planters did not subscribe to such generosity. When the colony faced financial hardship, the planters felt they could no longer afford to support the mission (Dunn 1971:37).

In 1916, the planters willingly supported the Presbyterian missionaries in building schools. This move by the planters was intentional because in 1917, indentureship ended, and thus, the planters needed a way to retain their workforce (Dunn 1971:122). Two years later, however, the planters began to build mosques and temples for the East Indians in exchange for their service on the estates (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1919:86). This move by the planters to align themselves with East Indians is another example of the agenda of the planters, which was not the same as the agenda of the missionaries. The planters showed their disregard for religious observance and even the law of the land by keeping the wages of East Indians until they worked the Sabbath day (Sunday) and forcing the children to work long hours on school days and even on the Sabbath day (Fisher 1906).

Unfortunately, the historical record indicates that the foreign missionaries did not object to or speak out against the indenture system even though the policies of the plantation owners were in direct contradiction with the gospel preached by the missionaries. Ross only attacked the lack of education and abuse of the law which stated, “No youth between the ages of 10 and 16 shall be indentured to any employer who has not previously made all available provision for the instruction of such in reading, writing and elements of arithmetic” (*The Presbyterian Witness*, August 25, 1900). Many missionaries viewed the Blacks and East Indians as lower-class humans, which suggests that they were influenced by their culture and worldview (Dunn 1971:ii).

The lack of numerical success among the East Indians was a continuous problem for the missionaries. The missionaries learned that their efforts to baptize East Indians were generally met with disappointment. Gibson stated, "It is the rule rather than the exception to be disappointed several times" (*The Maritime Presbyterian* 1888:81). The assumptions were that the East Indians were poor, illiterate, and held on to evil beliefs even though they were slightly above the former African slaves on the social structure created by the British (Dunn 1971:70).

Impact of Bible Workers on the East Indians

Every missionary working in British Guiana from the established Protestant churches or missionary societies utilized locals as a bridge between the foreigners and East Indians. The Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Anglican, and Scottish Presbyterian churches called them catechists (Bible workers) or Bible women. These men and women seemed to play a major role in the success or failure of the East Indian work in British Guiana. In general, little is known about their work except for a few instances where they are mentioned (Dunn 1971:44).

Many of them were recent converts to Christianity whose mother tongue was Hindi. Most had little theological training. These men and women were assigned to work with the missionaries in reaching the unreached East Indian community. Their responsibilities were to visit the homes of the East Indians, visit the sick in the hospital, conduct Bible classes in the schools, gather children to attend church school, provide reading classes at night, and preach at open-air meetings in Hindi. On Sunday, they conducted religious services in Hindi (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1902:124, 125). The Bible workers received weekly training in areas such as "comparative religions, Bible subjects and English" (Dunn 1971:59). They lived as an example to their fellow East Indians. They were given a plot of land to plant crops, providing the opportunity to identify with their neighbors in order to share the gospel with them (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1903:132-35).

However, the custodians of the missionary activities in British Guiana were not the natives but the foreign missionaries. They concluded that the native Christians were not qualified and did not have the potential to advance as leaders among their own people groups (Dunn 1971:61). Cropper, who dreamed of starting a training school for Bible workers, was thwarted due to financial constraints. However, Scrimgeour made a breakthrough. In 1918, he conducted his first ten-day training for the native workers in religious instruction (Minutes of the Board of Foreign Missions 1918).

Despite the benefits of having Bible workers able to speak the language of the people, there were challenges as well. The Bible workers were accused by their fellow East Indians of siding with the oppressors by receiving money from the government to convert them to Christianity (*The Presbyterian Witness* 1904). Nohar, a Bible worker, was preaching at an outdoor meeting when a Brahmin came up on a donkey cart and shouted at the Christian preacher, accusing him of forsaking the religion of his fathers for the White's man religion (*The Presbyterian Witness* 1900). These two accounts reveal the cultural struggle faced by the native Bible workers who came into daily contact with Hindus and Muslims.

Method and Models

The missionaries relied on public evangelism as the most effective method. Fisher claimed that "open-air preaching was the only method of evangelization that was likely to succeed" (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1907:99). However, the formal services that were held in buildings for the East Indians failed to attract them except when a slideshow was presented. The East Indians preferred the outdoor meetings that addressed their questions (Dunn 1971:85).

According to Dunn, the missionaries combined education and evangelism for two reasons. First, the plantation owners and the colonial government did not see education for the East Indians as a priority; therefore, the missionaries filled the void. Many stories have been passed down from one generation to another indicating that the East Indians were also skeptical of education offered by the colony. Second, through education, the missionaries and the Bible workers were able to evangelize the Hindu children, who had the potential of influencing their parents (Dunn 1971:85). At first, the teachers were the Bible workers. Then eventually, teachers were trained to teach in the larger schools started by the missionaries in East Indian communities (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1910:109).

The Bible workers and the missionaries were well received when they visited the East Indians in their homes. The East Indians viewed the visits as an honor and treated their guests with respect. Both the missionaries and Bible workers were given undivided attention when it came to spiritual matters and Bible studies (Beramsingh 1970; Rambali 1970; Sukra 1969). These cottage meetings were one of the most successful models for engaging the East Indians. The cottage meetings centered around events such as birthdays, weddings, funerals, and recovery from sickness. Neighbors would visit the home where the meetings were being held. At the end of the meeting, the people remained for food and further discussion concerning spiritual matters, as presented by the Bible workers or missionaries (Dunn 1971:83).

Gibson was the first missionary who began visiting East Indians in the hospital, where he would read the Bible and preach to the sick (Presbyterian Church in Canada 1888:xii). Ross promoted hospital ministry; he stated that it was in the hospital that many East Indians first heard of the Great Physician and opened themselves to the gospel (*The Presbyterian Witness*, December 1, 1900). Jugmohan, a Brahman and a critic of Christianity before arriving in British Guiana, shares his conversion story. Jugmohan's life came to a halt when he got sick and ended up in the hospital. He was visited by a Bible worker who prayed for him, and thus, he received healing and was given a Bible. After leaving the hospital, his view of Christianity changed, especially concerning the life of Jesus. He eventually got baptized. This story illustrates one of the successful models used by missionaries (*The Presbyterian Witness* 1904). This model of reaching East Indians became part of the missionaries' daily witnessing, but it lacked the engagement of the entire family.

The sacrifices made by all the missionaries in British Guiana are still valued to this day by the recipients and their families. However, two of the longest-serving missionaries laid the foundation for others to follow in the great work among East Indians. Cropper was known for riding his bicycle with three coconuts—his meal for the entire day—while Scrimgeour was known for riding his bicycle for forty miles on Sunday to visit all the parishes (Cropper 1957:1). These men were known to walk many miles, “ate their food, slept in their cottages” (Dunn 1971:109).

The missionaries did not fully understand the culture but over time learned methods that were effective. Cropper was well received and respected by the East Indians. His celibacy and long white beard earned him a title given only to holy men. He was called a *sadhu*, which earned him respect and permission to be a teacher among the East Indians. He was also given the nickname *sahib*, a father figure title in the culture of East Indians. This demonstrates that he was seen as a person of maturity and authority (Dunn 1971:163). In essence, Cropper became an insider among the East Indians rather than just a foreign white missionary.

In summary, the excellent work started by the Canadian Presbyterian missionaries was broken by the weakest link, which was the failure to develop native East Indian Christians into leaders and ministers. The assumption was that the church would continue to send Canadian missionaries, a plan that failed due to financial and church leadership issues. The missionaries' tight grip on authority and the misguided theological shortcomings on the issue of race meant that the church did not have a succession of local leadership when a crisis ensued. Despite these shortcomings, it is evident that the church's missionary work laid the foundation for others to build on—the work among East Indians in Guyana continued.

Adventist East Indian Mission

The Adventist message came to Guyana in 1884; about fifty years after East Indians in the region were introduced to Christ. In 1892, the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* recorded the first baptism of Hindus in British Guiana. Chadwick, a General Conference missionary, wrote, "I went out eighty-five miles in the country, held a few meetings, and baptized eight, and later sixteen were baptized in Georgetown, of whom three were Hindus. The church was strengthened, and I left it with a membership of forty-one" (1892:12).

According to the report by Chadwick, from the very beginning of the work among the Hindus, only a few accepted the gospel. However, a change of leadership in 1899 from Elder Hale to Elder David Babcock, who was transferred from Trinidad to Guyana, brought renewed effort among the East Indians (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 1901:238). It appears that the new superintendent, Babcock, was an excellent planner and organizer of the Church's mission operations of sharing Jesus Christ with all people groups. In the first six months of his leadership, East Indians in Guyana were mentioned in the *Adventist Review*, and the Church voted to allot \$250.00 to carry out the work among them (238).

The challenges of sharing the gospel with Hindus were evident during this period. Babcock stated that Hindus would not attend meetings where blacks were present; therefore, he requested a separate evangelistic tent for "twenty-three thousand of these darkened souls" (Babcock 1903b:12). On November 19, 1902, Babcock complimented Brother Hyder for his work on Leguan Island because it was the first time he had seen twenty-five Hindu women present at a meeting, along with fifty men (Babcock 1902:15). Brother Hyder stated, "It seems very difficult to associate the different nationalities of this colony in religious services." However, he observed that once people join the Church they seem to unite under one roof for worship (15).

The leaders of the churches in British Guiana during the 1900s were willing to try different approaches to reach Hindus. The first approach, noted above, was to hire a native from India to work among Hindus. A second strategy was the use of education as an evangelistic tool. Babcock (1903a:14) wrote, "After considering the question with the young man and Brother Hyder, it seems to me that the best results can be obtained by school work among children." He continued by saying Hindus could be reached through their children because once the confidence of their children was won through education, the leaders had access to the parents.

Babcock seems to have championed the work among Hindus during the time he ministered in British Guiana. He made a profound statement

that continues to be relevant in the twenty-first century, when the Adventist Church still struggles to effectively reach Hindus. He stated, "Persons who have never labored among this class of people cannot realize the many difficulties to be encountered" (1904:17).

After Babcock, Hyder, and Belgrave left the mission field in British Guiana for other parts of the world, it seems that the mission focus moved from East Indians to Amerindians. E. C. Boyer, the president of the newly organized South Caribbean Union, stated in his report that the Roman Catholics were evangelizing the Amerindians, and he appealed for missionaries to go there to prevent a Roman Catholic takeover of the mission field. However, he also mentioned that the young East Indians should be reached by our schools, seeming to imply that traditional public evangelism had not been successful among them (Boyer 1918:17).

Thirteen years after the last major emphasis given to evangelizing East Indians, a general meeting was held in Georgetown, attended by all twelve churches. The leaders reported, "Although a few of this race are faithful members of our church, it can hardly be said that our work for them has begun. In Trinidad, there are more East Indians than in Guiana; still we do not have a worker in either place devoting his time to this people. Urgent calls are coming from them; and to these calls we must no longer turn a deaf ear" (Andross 1925:21).

East Indian Missionaries

Just over two decades later, in the 1950s, Roy McGarrell recalls that the first East Indians to begin witnessing to Hindus in Guyana were from Trinidad, including Pastor Charles Manoram, Pastor Charles Dirgoonanan, and Pastor Paul Rambharose and his son David Rambharose. The first Indo-Guyanese pastor to serve in Guyana was Pastor James Persaud. Pastor Subramani Wailu began his ministry in the 1960s and continues to fund church planting projects in Guyana today (McGarrell 2013). Two other notable pastors were Peter Dookie and Bertie Toolsiram. Dookie was a very successful evangelist among all ethnic groups, especially Hindus. Toolsiram also worked tirelessly among the Hindus.

Philbert Ramotar, a Guyanese pastor, was one of the most successful at witnessing among Hindu people. Many of the Guyanese pastors mentioned above came into the Adventist Church due to his ministry. According to McGarrell (2013), Pastor Ramotar's ministry began in the 1950s and continued into the 1990s. Many churches were planted from his work in Hindu villages. He was known to bring many Hindus into the church through praying for them when they were sick and casting out evil spirits. Ramotar also testifies of a miracle that took place when an attacker tried to

kill him with a dagger. “The Dagger would not go in,” said the assailant, whose hand became paralyzed for seven days (Fearing 1960:22).

After four years, seven evangelistic campaigns were held and 107 persons were baptized. Even his attacker started Bible studies (Fearing 1960:22, 23). Sadly, after Ramotar left one village to move on to another one, the church that he had planted there often fell apart because there was no system in place to care for the new believers. Pastor Margret Ramsarran, treasurer of the Guyana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, was one of the persons who joined the Adventist Church through a campaign held by Brother Ramotar. She concurs that most of the former Hindus eventually left the Church due to poor mentorship (Ramsarran 2012).

In 1980, the newly elected president, Pastor Martinborough of the Guyana Adventist Church, made a renewed effort. He appointed two East Indian Bible workers, Bertie Toolseram and Phillip Joseph. These two evangelists started many congregations among the East Indian communities across Guyana. However, in 1980, evangelist Phillip Joseph was involved in a traffic accident that claimed his life. Evangelist Toolseram continued making inroads among East Indians and was honored for baptizing over one thousand members into the Adventist Church (personal email from Gordon Martinborough, October 13, 2013).

In 1983, the Caribbean Union took some proactive steps to continue the work among Hindus. They invited Pastor Justin Singh, an evangelist from New Delhi, India, to conduct evangelistic meetings in their territory. He used Hindi music as a bridge to reach Hindus. This approach was very successful in bringing Hindus to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ; however, many of these former Hindus left the Church soon after.

Implications of an Ethnocentric Church

In the Caribbean, the Adventist Church is mostly an Afro-Caribbean church based on the identity of its leaders and their leadership style. The church is about ninety-five percent Afro-Caribbean even though the Indo-Caribbean peoples make up the largest people group in both Guyana and Trinidad. One of the challenging questions first raised in the 1900s is still relevant today: “Is there room for East Indians in the Adventist Church?” This question has many facets and would require another paper to explore completely.

An ethnocentric church is defined as one that ignores the uniqueness of other people groups and forgets that each ethnic group has a culture that shapes its identity. This identity is what each person carries with them wherever they go, including to church, and that ethnic identity is not necessarily against biblical teachings (Hiebert 1999:378). The Adventist

Church in the Caribbean does not appear to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate other people groups. It tends to impose many of the same nonessentials that the Western missionaries imposed on native Guyanese a century ago when they presented the Adventist message.

For example, one of the unwritten rules of dress is that men must wear a Western suit to preach in or to participate on the platform rather than native formal wear more appropriate to the climate. All of the photos examined in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* indicate that both foreign and indigenous leaders wore a jacket and tie in temperatures above eighty-five degrees Fahrenheit (Delafield 1951:19). There seems to be an underlying attitude that to follow Christ, one must adopt the culture of the majority in the church. Currently, it is the dominant group in the church that is imposing and adding many cultural requirements to the gospel and implying that for a Hindu to follow Jesus, he or she must become “one of us” by dressing, talking, eating, and behaving in the same manner as the majority ethnic group.

A second example of ethnocentrism is the church hymnal used in the Caribbean. It is made up entirely of Western hymns adopted from the United States. The issue is not the songs but how local music written in the context of the culture is viewed and treated. The indigenous songs of East Indians are treated as inferior to the songs in the church hymnal even though the message and composition of the songs meet biblical standards.

Another challenge to any ethnocentric church is the difficulty of engaging members on important issues regarding cross-cultural evangelism. The prevailing attitude is that the issues would be resolved easily if the minority would simply accept the policies of the majority. This has created significant problems for social integration in the Caribbean Adventist Church.

Pentecostal Movements among the East Indians

The last to arrive, Pentecostalism, came to Guyana in the 1950s as a grassroots movement that spread among all ethnic groups. In 1956, the Church of God of Prophecy was the first to arrive in British Guiana, followed by the Assemblies of God Church, and the Church of God World Missions Church in 1957. The third group was the Churches of Christ, who joined their sister organizations in 1959 (World Mission Atlas Project 2017).

According to the 2012 census, the Pentecostal movement is the second largest religious group, with a national average of 22.8 percent. When compared with the 2002 census, the movement grew from 17.4 to 22.8 percent. The 2002 Census reveals that the Pentecostals are making inroads

in most villages, including East Indian communities (Bureau of Statistics 2002). Pentecostalism is appealing to East Indians, especially Hindus, for a number of reasons: (1) it connects with all levels of society, (2) it is an indigenous movement that promotes leadership from within the ethnic group, (3) its theology is based on faith healing and the prosperity gospel, and (4) it seeks to meet the physical needs and spiritual longings of East Indians rather than providing intellectual discourse.

Summary

This article surveyed the history of how Christianity came to Guyana and how it was intertwined with culture, religion, and politics. It began with ministers who were sent mainly to meet the religious needs of the British subjects. This paved the way for both the established churches and missionary organizations to set up their individual denominations in British Guiana. With the abolition of slavery, a new workforce arrived from India. These workers changed the dynamics of the colony in ways that many, including the East Indians, did not anticipate.

The Anglican, Wesleyan, Roman Catholic, and the Canadian Presbyterian Churches were involved in witnessing to the East Indians. The Anglican, Wesleyan, and Roman Catholic churches relied on traditional models. They were concerned only with baptizing the East Indians. They had no plans for them after baptism. For example, they expected East Indians to join the existing churches and adopt the English way of worship (Dunn 1971:11, 12). The Canadian Presbyterian Church, on the other hand, was totally dedicated to evangelizing the East Indians. They focused on helping the Indians with education, witnessed to them in their native language, and respected their culture. They established separate worship centers for the East Indians, spent time with them in their homes and villages, learned the language of the East Indians, and used cottage meetings instead of tent evangelism (Dunn 1971:83). Their impact is still felt today in most Indian communities across Guyana. In contrast to the Adventist Church, they were focused on starting new churches and generally did not apply contextualized approaches. Adventists experienced far less success reaching the East Indians than they did the Afro-Guyanese. This was another roadblock for East Indians who wished to join the Adventist Church, which had become a predominately Afro church. The Adventist Church's success among the East Indians was a result of certain leaders. For example, in 1901, Babcock took a contextualized approach to reaching the East Indians. He allowed them to have their own meetings and used education as a tool to reach them. He brought a Hindi-speaking Bible worker from India. The second leader was Martinborough, who followed a similar approach.

The challenges faced by the all the churches that attempted to evangelize the East Indians were numerous. The first major challenge the missionaries faced was a misunderstanding of the East Indian worldview. Many missionaries had the assumption that because East Indians were poor, uneducated, unsophisticated, and lacked resources, they would accept the White man's religion just as their counterparts, the Africans, had. They soon realized that this was not the case, and this great disappointment led many missionaries to assume that British Guiana was a cursed place. They also blamed the religious leaders, such as the Brahmans, for the low number of East Indians who accepted the gospel (Bronkhurst 1883:461).

Missionaries were also unsure of how to make inroads into the social network of the East Indians. In many instances, East Indians accepted the gospel but could not abandon the religion of their families and community. The missionaries failed to acknowledge the needs and desires of the East Indians, such as their wish to become wealthy and return to India rather than accept a foreign way of life that cut them off from their families and communities locally and back home in India. East Indians had their own language, culture, and religious background that they were not ready to give up for the sake of the missionaries.

Racism among the people groups in the country also impacted the environment in which mission work took place. The missionaries encountered prejudice that existed between the Africans and East Indians. The missionaries' own philosophy that the East Indians were not capable of becoming leaders and ordained ministers among their own people groups hindered church growth. The missionaries' worldview led them to believe that East Indians and Africans were not equal to them and must be treated as such.

Some challenges faced by the missionaries could not be totally avoided. The first was the color of the missionaries; it reminded the East Indians of their oppressors. It was difficult for them to trust the missionaries, even the Bible workers who were former Hindus or Muslims. The Church's alignment with the planter class and government created a disadvantage for the missionaries. Some East Indians may have valued the religious services but refused to be part of or identify with the foreigners' religion.

An additional challenge affecting the productivity of the missionaries in British Guiana was susceptibility to tropical diseases. Recruitment and long-term service were a struggle because the colony was labeled the as a White man's graveyard.

In conclusion, the missionaries felt they had failed because the number of baptisms among East Indians was not equal to that of Africans. However, the seeds sown by the missionaries through education and

evangelism continue to be effective in reaching East Indians in the twenty-first century. The methods and models used by missionaries, especially the Canadian Presbyterian churches, were advanced for their time and could have been more successful if applied consistently.

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ANDREW TOMPKINS

Theological and Missiological Lessons from Telugu Marriage Engagement and Betrothal Ceremonies

In the South Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, much like other parts of India, weddings and the events surrounding them are the most important moments of life. There are many events that make up a wedding in India, including the engagement and betrothal, ceremonies which are the focus of this article. While there is value in exploring Hindu weddings and all the different rituals involved, this article is focused on weddings in Andhra Pradesh village and town settings involving followers of Jesus. The purpose is to demonstrate how local Telugu people (the dominant language in Andhra Pradesh) have developed engagement and betrothal ceremonies by combining their own wedding traditions and heritage with the Word of God to create dynamic experiences of relationship, joy, and love.

There are limited sources in this article because I am drawing primarily from my own experiences in India. I have participated in numerous weddings in Andhra Pradesh as an attendee of friends' and church members' weddings, as a pastor, as a groom in my own wedding to Anuradha Chadalawada, which took place in India, and as the head of the household for my wife's sibling's marriages.¹ These experiences have given me ample opportunity to observe and participate in marriage engagements and betrothals both as an observer and as an immersed participant.

The Engagement

Most Indian marriages are arranged by the parents and involve limited decision making by those getting married, although often they are

now given some say in whether or not they agree to the marriage match that the parents have chosen. Once this is done an engagement ceremony date is agreed on by the parents of the two people who will be married. The church is also involved in this process and the engagement ceremony often takes place at the local church where the young woman is from. Attendees at the ceremony include far more than the parents of the future bride and groom. It also includes important extended family like brothers and sisters, grandparents, and close uncles and aunts. Usually the local church members are also invited and attend as witnesses to the engagement.

There are certain important ritual actions that take place at the engagement ceremony. The future groom must provide the future bride with a new sari of high quality, while the bride to be must provide the future groom with a new set of high-quality dress clothes, usually a shirt and pants. There is also often an exchange of engagement rings between the couple.² These items are displayed in front of all present as a testimony to the agreement and union between the two individuals and their families. The pastor reads the story of Abraham's servant who goes in search of a wife for Isaac found in Genesis 24. The pastor often emphasizes verses 52-54. It is in these verses that Abraham's servant presents a number of fine gifts to the family of Rebekah as a sign that they desire to have her marry Isaac. It is also clear in this story that the whole family on both sides are involved in the decision-making process, not just the individuals getting married, much like in India today.

After the pastor reminds the couple and the attending audience of the story of Rebekah, the two who are getting engaged are then asked to leave the room and change into the clothing that has been bought for them. They then come back, sit before the church in their new clothes and proceed to officially demonstrate the engagement by the exchange of flower garlands, which they drape over each other's necks. Then the pastor blesses the couple along with the family members.

Afterwards, a large feast is prepared for all in attendance. This also follows Genesis 24:54 in which food and eating together was a demonstration of hospitality by Rebekah's family towards Abraham's servant. The engagement in India takes place at the location where the future bride is from, which is similar to the narrative of Genesis 24. From this point onward the wedding plans will commence, with the wedding usually taking place a month or two later, but it can also be much later. If either party were to break off the engagement at this stage it would cause a great deal of shame to both families but especially to those perceived as responsible for the annulment. This, however, rarely takes place once the engagement has occurred.

The Betrothal

While in much of the Western world marriage no longer has a betrothal ceremony, in some parts of Southern India this event is still a very important part of the wedding process. The betrothal ceremony takes place the evening before the day of the wedding. This event includes the bride and her family such as aunts, uncles, cousins, the groom's parents, and the local pastor and church members. It takes place at the home of the bride. The groom is not allowed to come to the ceremony. The groom and bride are not allowed to meet until the next day at the final wedding ceremony in the church.³

This ceremony also draws from Genesis 24 for its inspiration. Along with the reference to Genesis it is also often noted by pastors that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was betrothed or pledged to marry Joseph prior to the consummation of their marriage. This ceremony of betrothal is one of the most joyous occasions in the marriage process and involves several elements that bring joy into the event and draw the two families together.

Similar to the engagement, the betrothal includes the giving of gifts. However, in the betrothal there is even more similarity to the Genesis 24 narrative whereby Isaac and his family are the only one's recorded to have given gifts, while Rebekah and her family share their hospitality and food. The groom's sisters and often times aunts must travel to the home of the bride bearing gifts. At the betrothal event itself the groom's sister or close female relative must display the gifts they have brought one by one to the onlooking members of the bride's family while the audience and pastor look on. These items include clothing, makeup, sometimes jewelry, and other items. These items are sent with the expectation that the bride will use them for the wedding as a sign that she is now leaving her family and joining her husband's family. Often this event takes on an air of comedic fun when the bride's family feigns disappointment in the meager number of gifts or the quality of gifts resulting in a make-believe dispute usually ending in laughter all around.

After this the local pastor or pastors give a biblically-based message on the importance of marriage and what God expects from those who get married. The passages of Scripture used vary based on what the pastor feels is the most appropriate message for the occasion. There is also a special prayer of blessing for the bride-to-be at which point several of the important female relatives surround her and pray for her.

After this the whole gathering once again eats together in a feast provided by the family of the bride. This is usually a time of joyous laughter and interaction between friends and family, which serves to strengthen the bond that will be cemented in the final wedding ceremony on the following

day. The betrothal often goes late into the night. Finally, the bride, along with some close female relatives, will go and spend the night in a house in the groom's village or town although not in the groom's home. This is an experiential symbol of the change coming with the marriage when the bride will leave her family to live with her husband. This final leaving often involves some tears as the realization of the changes to come begin to be experienced by the bride.

Both the engagement and the betrothal are joyous occasions that involve clothing, sermons, and special instructions by the elders concerning marriage, food, feasting, laughter, and tears. These events engage all five senses and are a delight to be a part of whether you are the bride or groom, a family member, village elder, or pastor, or church member. These are moments when the community is strengthened and families bonded together in new and important ways. Most significantly, all of the events connected to the engagement and betrothal are infused with connections to God. Many prayers of special blessing, carefully chosen Scripture narratives, and biblical passages that are relevant to the marriage event are important aspects of the ceremony. The spiritual connection demonstrated between the real-life marriage of the couple and God's love for them and for their families are exemplified in the joyous interactions between the couple and their families.

God's Word and Localized Theology

While there are several important lessons that can be learned from these ceremonies I will focus on a few pertaining to the importance and power of people engaging with the Word of God and doing theology in a localized setting to meet the needs of a local community.

The engagement ceremony and the basic approach to marriage among Telugu people, whether they identify as Christian or Hindu share similarities. Both consider marriage to be life's most important event, and thus deserving of special attention in preparation, use of resources, and connection to the transcendent. There is no doubt that those who are following Jesus and using the Word of God as a guide do some things differently in the engagement ceremony than Hindus. But most Hindus recognize that what these Christians are doing is an engagement because many of the elements are the same. What is clear is that the engagement ceremony of those following Jesus is very different from the average engagement process that European and North American societies practice. The Telugu engagement ceremony draws on ancient Indian traditions for inspiration. The engagement ceremony is not traceable to any Western missionary influence as my research in both English and Telugu has revealed. Rather,

in its development that took place several generations ago, Indians incorporated the Word of God into an existing practice to make sure that it was in line with what they saw God's people doing in Scripture concerning marriage engagements.

Hindus also have a similar ceremony to the betrothal that followers of Jesus continue to practice. Basically, no European or North American Christian traditions have this type of ceremony the night before the wedding. Thus, once again this is something that has been developed by Indian's several generations ago to creatively bring together families in a way that both celebrates the marriage and keeps God in the center of the wedding experience. They have drawn from narratives and passages of Scripture to legitimate this ceremony and have creatively allowed normal Telugu practices around weddings to be included so that even someone who does not identify themselves as a follower of Jesus can participate and appreciate what is taking place.

What this demonstrates is that the Word of God, being inspired through the Holy Spirit, among faithful followers of Jesus has the power to lead followers to creatively celebrate marriage in ways that are locally meaningful, while keeping God front and center in the process, and leading to joyous celebration or "abundant life" (John 10:10). While the translation of the Scriptures into Telugu was originally done by non-Indians, even this aspect of the foreigner's role has been superseded by superior translations done more recently by local Telugu scholars. Thus, the role of non-Indians in this process is basically non-existent. Why is this significant?

First, this clarifies and demonstrates the power and role of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit in the local experience of followers of Jesus. All too often in books that deal with contextualization the role of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit comes across as secondary, while the role of the contextualizer appears primary. The instances shown above are a reminder that even without the input of a foreign influencer the Word of God and the Holy Spirit can lead sincere followers to creatively design ceremonies and experiences that reflect the Bible and the local setting. They often do not need the added, biased, influence of someone who has a limited knowledge of the local setting, which is the case with most foreigners.

Second, these experiences demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is guiding and inspiring people to creatively utilize the various elements of life that all humanity shares to further God's mission and build up the community towards the "abundant life" he desires all humanity to have. Hindu's have long celebrated marriage, and while they often include elements in the marriage that are meant to invoke a non-biblical god or goddess, it must still be recognized and affirmed that the emphasis they put on marriage is not merely a similarity between them and those who follow Jesus.

It is actually an example of the Spirit of God shining through in the act of marriage, which God initiated in the beginning (Gen 2:23-25). It is right to continue to follow many of the same styles of celebration that Hindus have been doing if those practices lead to family bonds that are stronger and uphold the sanctity of marriage as found in the Bible. Other things in the marriage process that Hindus observe may need to be discarded or replaced as the Christian Telugu communities have done.

Neither the Hindu community nor those following Jesus would see any relevance to separating the cultural and religious aspects of these ceremonies. Everything is so intertwined that the only way to describe the events is to claim they are living out life as they see God wants to them to. This includes the prayers and Bible readings, but it also includes the food and the clothing aspects. All are important and if any elements were missing the ceremonies would be impoverished and become less than they should. Therefore, it is unwise to claim that some elements of these ceremonies are religious while other elements are cultural. All the various aspects are meant to build relationships within the community and draw people towards God.

Missiological Implications

So, what does this mean for mission? First, it is a reminder that one of the primary roles of mission activity is to get the Word of God into people's hands so that they can read or hear it and begin to incorporate it into their lives. This should be done in such a way as to prioritize their freedom in developing their life around the text without too much dictation from those outside their community. The Holy Spirit can be trusted to inspire and guide all people in any given place to creatively apply the Word to their local situations.

Some may ask, but does this mean the church should no longer have intercultural missions beyond getting the Bible into people's hands? I would argue that the answer to this is no but a nuanced no. Certainly there are many misconceptions about the role of the foreign agent in mission that put too much pressure and responsibility on the "missionary" and often block or get in the way of the actual Word of God and Holy Spirit from working. However, there is still a place for intercultural relationship building, in fact I would argue a necessity for it. This is true on a few different levels.

First, I myself have benefited from living and working in India and building numerous deep and meaningful relationships with Telugu people. As a result, I was both able to observe the ceremonies described above and become an intimate participant in them. My understanding of

the depth and riches of the Word of God grew exponentially through this process. I was able to learn new ways of reading narratives in the Bible such as Genesis 24 that impacted life in ways I had never imagined prior to my experience in India. This has thus broadened my understanding of God and humanity in ways that are immensely positive and helpful in my own walk with God and people. I am also then able to share these experiences with others from different contexts as I travel to give them a glimpse of God's creative goodness, demonstrated through his Telugu followers in India. Therefore, the process of sharing in mission and expanding the world's understanding of God is made possible through intercultural relationships. Paul Hiebert appeared to be hinting at something along these lines in an essay he wrote towards the end of his life for the book *Globalizing Theology*. In this essay he spent very little space discussing contextualization but rather began exploring the idea of the "missionary" as a go-between people among different backgrounds to help increase the knowledge of God around the world (Hiebert 2006).⁴

There is another element to the intercultural engagement that is also important. This element, however, must come after an extended period of time has been given for relationship building between the local person/people and those coming from another context. Without the building of meaningful relationships this aspect should not be engaged in. The person or people coming from another context may be able, over time, to recognize certain practices or beliefs that they feel are outside what the Scripture allows and that are not being noticed by local people. There is sometimes an ability for an outsider to notice things that are not obvious to those who have thought or practiced them for a long time. This could aid the community to move creatively towards correcting or enhancing their ways of living and believing to fit better with God's Word. Of course, those from an outside context need to be open to correction from those they are with, thus allowing for a mutual give and take.

Concerning the above practices of engagement and betrothal, I personally found little that I could creatively address to change at this point in the ceremonies. However, in other areas of life I have made suggestions on certain issues, to my Indian friends and family, that I feel could be done differently based on my reading of Scripture and experience with God. They have also done the same for me and have helped me grow. Experiencing the above ceremonies has certainly created opportunities for me to mature in my understanding of God and be able to share new ways of living with those I come in contact with.

Conclusion

In theological and missiological engagement there needs to be a greater emphasis on local settings. Often both theology and missiology are overly reliant on macro-discussions at the general level leaving out localized questions and applications. It is demonstrated above that the Word of God and the Holy Spirit are invested in local settings where real life questions are asked and where creative, biblically-based answers are being devised. This is a reminder of the power of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit within any group of people who desire to follow Jesus and use his Word as a guide for life. This is demonstrated above by looking at the creative practices of some Telugu followers of Jesus in their marriage engagement and betrothal celebrations which have been developed and continue to be practiced by many.

Notes

¹ My wife and her brother and sister lost their parents prior to our getting married. As a result, when my wife and I got married we became the head of the household and had the responsibility of arranging and overseeing the marriage of both her brother and sister. We are happy that both of them are married and have children of their own now.

² Sometimes wealthier families will also present the bride to be with a gold chain which the groom's sister, if he has one, will place around the neck of the bride to be.

³ In fact, the entire week prior to the wedding day the groom and bride are involved in numerous activities and functions related to the wedding but none of them are done together with each other.

⁴ Hiebert does briefly discuss contextualization but it is a peripheral idea to his overall argument.

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JERRY CHASE

Graphic Information Systems Support for Mission to the Cities: Determining Options for Quantifying Population and Spatial Boundaries for Urban Agglomerations

The objective of this article is to examine questions related to the concept of Urban Agglomerations as it relates to the implementation of the objectives of the initiative “It’s Time: The Urgency of Urban Mission” (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 2013), voted October 15, 2013 (Kellner 2013a), during the General Conference Annual Council, here after referred to as It’s Time. The It’s Time document was produced during the four-day Urban Mission Conference ending on October 1, 2013, here after referred to as the It’s Time Conference (Kellner 2013b).

The first section of this article will deal with the It’s Time document, identifying components of implementation that require Geographic Information Systems (GIS) support for implementation along with current challenges of implementation. The second section will deal with technical considerations about urban agglomerations including definitions and data sources. Finally, the third section will focus on needed resources for fulfilling the reporting goals of the It’s Time initiative, concluding with some general observations about hurdles of implementation.

It’s Time: Measuring Progress

Key to the original It’s Time plan was regular assessments to measure the progress of Adventist work in large cities. Under the heading, “How

Will We Know What Is Being Done?" two objectives are specified in order "that our work in the cities has a careful plan of evaluation and accountability." They are "1. A twice-yearly reporting and assessment system that informs the church about urban mission objectives, activities, and progress. 2. Regular quantitative and qualitative evaluations of goals and processes" (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 2013)

The details of how these two objectives were to be met were not spelled out in the document; however, some of the key planners for the conference did have expectations of how to provide ongoing "evaluation and accountability." There was a recognition that data was critical to moving this initiative forward. The presentation by Rick McEdward, who oversaw the data collection, and David Trim, who was responsible for the data analysis, was a pivotal point at the conference. Through a series of charts and maps McEdward and Trim gave a compelling report of comparative Adventist presence in the 500 largest urban areas of the world. In particular, it was the maps displaying ratios of Adventist presence to population, showing a massive swath of urban areas with little to no Adventist presence in the 10/40 Window, which stunned the audience and galvanized them into bold action (Trim interview 29 October 2019; Kellner 2013c). In the view of at least McEdward and Trim these three aspects were in view:

The first component envisioned for "evaluation and accountability" was periodic updates of the data collected in preparation for the It's Time Conference. McEdward and Trim provided a summary of the data collected in an article in the *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* (2014:1-19).

Large urban areas considered for "urban mission objectives" are what McEdward and Trim call "urban agglomerations" (2014:2). Although various sources of data and definitions are referenced, the statistical analysis was based on Thomas Brinkhoff's "Major Agglomerations of the World," available online (Brinkhoff 2020). Unfortunately, one key aspect in the rollout of the data collection for the 2013 It's Time Conference was overlooked. Missing in the communication in the data collection was an explanation of what constitutes an "urban agglomerations," why Brinkhoff's data set was chosen, nor was there mention of Brinkhoff's website (Brinkhoff 2013).

For each "urban agglomeration" with a population of one million or more the following Seventh-day Adventist Church statistics were compiled: (1) SDA membership, (2) churches and companies, (3) denominationally owned and operated medical institutions, (4) denominationally owned and operated educational institutions, (5) denominationally owned and operated media outlets, (6) denominationally owned and operated publishing houses, and (7) other denominationally owned and operated institutions not listed above.

The second component was a Division Strategic Plan, later referred to as the MTC (Mission to the Cities) Strategic Plan (Mission to the Cities 2014). In a later version this document consisted of a page of introduction and a two page outline to guide divisions in identifying the urban areas within their division with the least Adventist presence, and the objectives and actions plans to reach those urban areas. The intent of the document was to help division leaders prepare for a meeting with a representative from the Office of Adventist Mission to review their Mission to the Cities planning.

The third component in “evaluation and accountability” has been a twice-yearly seven to ten-minute interview / report by each division president (at Spring Meetings and Annual Council). This is one aspect, which has functioned more or less consistently. However, despite this, a full “twice-yearly reporting and assessment system” has yet to be implemented. The initial data collection in 2013 took a great deal of time and effort, including great tenacity on the part of the person managing the survey. It is true that some divisions have submitted data on all their urban areas a few times, but they have been the exception. Data collection in the subsequent years suffered, for a time, from a lack of a point person spearheading the data collection, but in the main because of a lack of a system for collecting, managing, analyzing, and reporting the data. Consequently, there has not been a comparable data collection, analysis, and report since the It’s Time Conference.

There was also a deeper challenge, which was not recognized at first—how to report consistent, trendable data when there was so little understanding what constituted an urban agglomeration. In retrospect, the challenge is completely understandable. For many an agglomeration is a new concept. What is an urban agglomeration, and for any given agglomeration, what constitutes its boundaries? That is the crux of the dilemma: For the church to report regular and statistically reliable data, suitable for trend analysis, there needs to be a common understanding of what constitutes an agglomeration. Furthermore, to assist in this regular, periodic data collection, the church needs to provide an online data collection system which includes a geographic information system (GIS) with mapped boundaries of urban agglomerations overlaid with Adventist congregations and institutions. The next section will explore the idea of what constitutes an urban agglomeration and suitable sources of urban agglomerations of the world.

Technical Considerations

Survey of Urban Agglomeration Definitions and Databases

Complicating a uniform reporting for Mission to the Cities is the great variation in how urban is defined from country to country, and differences on how researchers aggregate urban centers into agglomerations. The United Nation's *World Urbanization Prospects: 2014 Revision*, puts it this way: "There exists no common definition of what constitutes an urban settlement. As a result, the urban definition employed by national statistical offices varies widely across countries, and in some cases have even changed over time within a country" (United Nations 2015:4). In the United Nations 2019 Report, this statement about the lack of a "common definition" is no longer present. It appears that the United Nations (UN) demographers are first of all attempting to focus on communicating their ideal of what constitutes an urban agglomeration, and second, the proxy for urban agglomerations when that is not available.

For this report two supplementary concepts have been used to improve the comparability of measurements of city populations across countries and over time. "Urban agglomeration" refers to the population contained within the contours of a contiguous territory inhabited at urban levels of residential density. "Metropolitan area" comprises an urban agglomeration and surrounding areas at a lower settlement density with strong economic and social linkages to the city (United Nations 2019:5). When using data from *World Urbanization Prospects (WUP)* one must always be on guard that data from one country may not align directly with that from another country. For example, in Japan, cities, defined as *shi*, have to satisfy several conditions, including 50,000 inhabitants or more (United Nations 2015:109). Imagine the discontinuity to the standard used in Peru where urban population is defined as "population centres with 100 dwellings or more grouped contiguously and administrative centres of districts" (2015:114).

Finally, an important note on *trend analysis*. There are cases where data within one country may not align from one period to another. This has important ramifications on the suitability of the data for trend analysis. Before utilizing WUP for trend analysis one must be sure to check the documentation for the country in question. For example, in China the definition has evolved and changed with each passing census after 1982. "For the 2010 census, urban population included all urban residents meeting the criterion defined by the National Bureau of Statistics of China in 2008, that is, the criterion used in the 2000 census plus residents living in villages or towns in outer urban and suburban areas that are directly

connected to municipal infrastructure, and that receive public services from urban municipalities” (United Nations 2015:104). The implications of these changes need to be understood before attempting to interpret and apply the data. For instance, the official urban population in China “more than doubled between 1982 and 1989—not because of a major population shift, but because the threshold at which a settlement was defined as urban changed in that period” (Day, Chen, Ellis, and Roberts 2016:5).

Definitions from Other Sources

In search of clarity and consensus on urban agglomeration one is drawn to Chuanglin Fang’s and Danlin Yu’s massive review of “32,231 urban agglomeration-related works from the past 120 years in an attempt to provide a theoretically supported and practically based definition of urban agglomeration” (2017:126). Terminology has evolved over time. The concept of “town cluster” can be found as far back as 1898, but Fang and Yu credit the United Nation’s Center for Human Cluster for coining the term “urban agglomeration” which is their favored term to designate a “spatial organization of clusters of cities” (2017:127, 128). However, in the end, Fang and Yu do not come up with a definitive definition either. “Although a consensus on what constitutes an urban agglomeration, or even regarding a term to name such a spatial organization of cities, is hardly within reach, this emerging phenomenon is clearly on the horizon” (2017:135).

What is agreed upon is that population centers cluster, or agglomerate into contiguous or mostly contiguous built-up areas that “function as an integrated economic unit, linked together by commuting flows, social and economic interactions” (Alex Blei, personal communication, 21 July 2017). As these population centers grow, they become increasingly stronger “magnets” for human activity, whether it be manufacturing, commerce, creativity (art and scientific invention), and information, to name just some of the aspects.

What is equally true is what is not agreed upon, namely, how to calculate the extent of the agglomeration. Criteria and methodology for determining the extent of an agglomeration varies by the conventions of a given country or demographer, and according to the presuppositions or specific interests in play in that instance. There is hope, however. There is a stream of demographers that are working from a parallel set of assumptions as the UN WUP demographers are employing, but without the hindrance of following country specific conventions where those conventions deviate from a pure urban agglomeration.

To help explain some of the possible differences between data sets, even when similar presuppositions are in play, look at an example of the Washington, DC, urban agglomeration. Table 1 compares the computed population and figure 1 maps the extent of three similar data source. The divergence in population figures highlights the impact of differing criteria and methodology utilized for determining the extent of an agglomeration. Although underlying presuppositions or specific interests are not always available for each data source, some general characteristics and tendencies may be inferred from comparing these three data sources.

Table 1. Washington, DC Urban Agglomeration Population Comparisons (2015)

Source	Pop in thousands	Source
UN WUP	4,955	Statistical concept: Urban Agglomeration
Brinkhoff	8,300	Consolidated Urban Area (CUA), includes Baltimore
Demographia	4,889	National census authority built-up urban area data

Sources: Data compiled from: UN, World Urbanization Prospects, <https://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/> Brinkhoff, <https://www.citypopulation.de/world/Agglomerations.html>*

Demographia, <http://www.demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf>*

*Data for 2015 accessed through WayBackMachine, <https://archive.org/web/>

The figures for the UN and Demographia are relatively close. Both data sets adopt the same boundary or footprint for the area in consideration, as designated by the US Census as the “Washington, DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area.” The minor divergence in population is explainable by the fact that the UN data for 2015 is based on forecasts made prior to 2014, whereas Demographia’s uses a rolling update where approximately one third of the data is updated yearly, allowing the demographer to utilize the most recent population estimates (Wendell Cox, personal communication, 23 May 2017). Where countries utilize the urbanized area concept for delineating their urban agglomerations (instead of, for example, the metropolitan designation) the UN and Demographia will be very similar.

Though Brinkhoff’s documentation expresses a similar view toward agglomerating urban areas as the UN and Demographia, in practice his agglomerations generally take in a larger area. His basic rationale for aggregating urban areas into an agglomeration is not clear and has been complicated by sparse documentation limited mainly to a “Remark” column in his online offering. Repeated attempts to contact Brinkhoff for clarification, both by email and phone over more than a year, have gone

unanswered. But by overlaying Brinkhoff’s urban agglomeration boundary with related datasets and by observing the rest of his work, some general assumptions can be deduced (figure 1). Here and elsewhere Brinkhoff agglomerates (combines) a broader area within his urban agglomeration boundary than the UN or Demographia. His “Remarks” column indicates that for Washington he is using the statistical concept of Consolidated Urban Area (CUA), which includes Baltimore. In this case it appears that Brinkhoff is favoring a combination of the US Census CBSAs in the CSA. This will be discussed further in the next section.

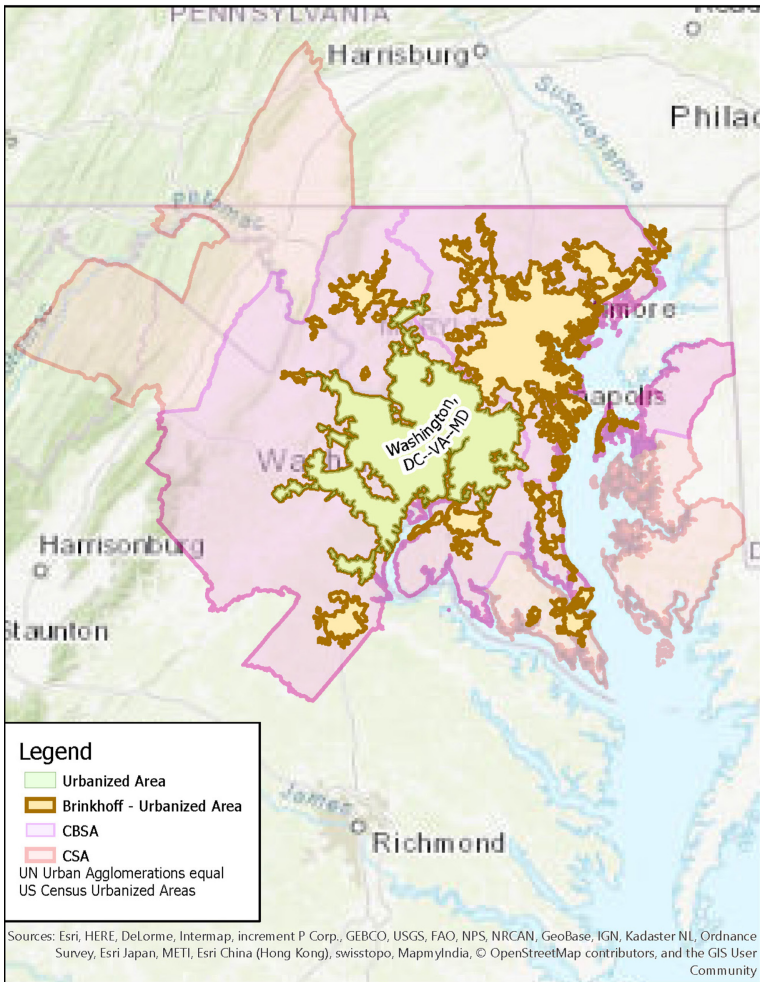


Figure 1. Washington, DC Urban Agglomeration Designations and US Census Boundaries

The definition and identification of what constitutes an MSA is under the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). MSAs are derived from Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs). CBSAs “consist of the county or counties or equivalent entities associated with at least one core (urbanized area or urban cluster) of at least 10,000 population, plus adjacent counties having a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured through commuting ties with the counties associated with the core” (U. S. Bureau of the Census 2012). Then MSAs “are CBSAs associated with at least one urbanized area that has a population of at least 50,000” (U. S. Bureau of the Census 2012). Furthermore, CBSAs can be grouped together into *Combined Statistical Areas* (CSAs) when two or more CBSAs “have substantial employment interchange” (U. S. Bureau of the Census 2012).

What is critical to take note of is that CBSAs, and by extension MSAs are comprised of a “county or counties” with an urbanized area. Notice that the entire county or counties are not required to be urbanized. Some, or even most of a county may not be urbanized yet be included in a CBSA/MSA. Therefore, the boundaries of an OMB MSA will generally be much different from the boundaries of a Census UA.

Examining the Census Urban and Rural classification, the only term that is concisely defined is *Rural*. “‘Rural’ encompasses all population, housing, and territory not included within an urban area” (U. S. Bureau of the Census 2015). Unfortunately, understanding rural is predicated on the definition of *Urban*.

The Census Bureau’s urban-rural classification is fundamentally a delineation of geographical areas, identifying both individual urban areas and the rural areas of the nation. The Census Bureau’s urban areas represent densely developed territory, and encompass residential, commercial, and other non-residential urban land uses.

For the 2010 Census, an urban area will comprise a densely settled core of census tracts and /or census blocks that meet minimum population density requirements, along with adjacent territory containing non-residential urban land uses as well as territory with low population density included to link outlying densely settled territory with the densely settled core. To qualify as an urban area, the territory identified according to criteria must encompass at least 2,500 people, at least 1,500 of who reside outside institutional group quarters. The Census Bureau identifies two types of urban areas: Urbanized Areas (UAs) of 50,000 or more people; Urban Clusters (UCs) of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people (U. S. Bureau of the Census 2015).

The differences between Metropolitan and Urbanized areas can be summarized as follows: MSAs are designated based on the presence of

an urbanized core and include the entire territory of one or more counties with both its Urban and Rural components. On the other hand, UAs only include territory that is Urban. Unlike MSAs, UAs can have holes in its territory and its territory can be made up of disconnected pieces. This is because any rural components in its region are excluded from its boundary or territory.

So, to understand Brinkhoff's designation for the Washington urban agglomeration it has been helpful to understand not only what constitutes an *urbanized area*, but also what is a combined CBSAs/MSAs (see figure 1). From this example and others that have been studied it appears that in general Brinkhoff tends to favor using CSAs (combined, or to use Brinkhoff's terminology "consolidated," CBSAs) to aggregate urbanized areas into one urban agglomeration and what the US Census might divide into two or more separate agglomerations. Additionally, he at times includes smaller outlying UAs within and without the CSA in view.

What then are we to make of the differences between various sources? Before answering this question, a short recap is in order. As was pointed out earlier, Fang and Yu in their comprehensive review of the literature on Urban Agglomerations conclude, "Although a consensus on what constitutes an urban agglomeration, or even regarding a term to name such a spatial organization of cities, is hardly within reach, this emerging phenomenon is clearly on the horizon" (2017). However, most demographers would agree that population centers cluster, or agglomerate into contiguous or mostly contiguous built-up areas that "function as an integrated economic unit, linked together by commuting flows, social and economic interactions" (Alex Blei, personal communication, 21 July 2017).

Returning to Fang and Yu, the examples examined are but a narrow band of the continuum of what in the urban studies constitutes an urban agglomeration. For Fang and Yu as well as many other urban specialists, Washington, DC is considered part of the so called BosWash Megalopolis (2017:135), megalopolis being considered by some as a synonym to urban agglomeration (Beauregard 2009:839), which "extends from Fredericksburg, south of Washington, DC, to Portsmouth and Dover-Rochester, New Hampshire, and into southern Maine" (Morrill 2009:500).

Again, what do we make of all of this? Yes, it is very confusing, and yes, there are many competing ideas of how to resolve what constitutes an *urban agglomeration*. And up to this point the discussion has only involved one example in the United States. Divergence and complications multiply as one moves into the rest of the world. But one need not despair. Despite the frustration of wading through all the various applications of the term urban agglomeration, it is abundantly clear that there is consensus on the phenomenon of urban clustering or agglomeration. Differences become

apparent in the threshold or criteria for determining the extent for combining urbanized areas into a said agglomeration. What is happening is that each researcher, or stream of researchers, is adopting standards that complement their field of inquiry. Hence a researcher studying housing and transportation might focus on smaller, more localized *agglomerations*, than would say an economist who is interested in manufacturing and finances on a regional basis. The question is not one of right or wrong, but rather what is appropriate and helpful for the analysis of one's field of study.

Finally, an important point on terminology. It is worth noting that the term urban agglomeration is synonymous with a number of terms, including urban area, built-up urban area, urbanized area, urban center, and so on. A number of countries and demographers are choosing to steer away from the term agglomeration in favor of simpler and more familiar language. In my opinion, Mission to the Cities would do well to do the same. My suggested term is *urban area* which I will use interchangeably with *urban agglomeration*.

In Search of an Appropriate Urban Area Database

This brings us back to the It's Time document and the objective of quantifying "what is being done" in the large cities. A necessary component to this process is a consistent data set of *urban agglomerations with GIS boundaries*. Until recently, finding such a dataset seemed illusory, but within the last couple of years several options have surfaced, which hold some promise. Currently, four datasets documenting large urban areas of a million or more are known to this researcher. This section will introduce four datasets, suggest criteria for evaluating their suitability for the Mission to the Cities initiative, and finally, identify a preferred dataset.

First, the United Nations World Urbanization Prospects is by far the best known and the most referred dataset on urban population. This dataset has the advantages of an extensive team of demographers, periodic planned updates of population estimates going back to 1950, and projections going forward to 2035 (United Nations 2018). Yet there are inherent limitations "in the UN's mandate, restricting it to the use of numbers provided by member states" (Angel 2018:16). Despite this it is still a very important source, which is consulted by many demographers who depend on parts of the analysis even as they understand its limitations. For the Mission to the Cities initiative the biggest drawback is the lack of matching GIS boundaries. Although the UN has been promising a release of GIS boundaries for the areas that they tabulate since 2016, a companion GIS dataset for their urban population has yet to be made available.

The second dataset, Brinkhoff's Major Agglomerations of the World, is well known because of its web presence (2020). It was used in 2013 as the reference data set for ranking population data in the It's Time report. For a time Brinkhoff's site provided an outline of the urban area in a popup for some of the urban agglomerations. During the summer of 2017, an intern with Adventist Mission worked on collecting screenshots of the available boundaries in the hopes that this might be useful in the future. At the time, it seemed like the only option in the short term. However, there were some serious concerns about the viability of using Brinkhoff's product. The most significant was our inability to make contact with Brinkhoff in order to obtain permission to use his material. With no way to communicate with the author, and the fact that only about half of the urban area boundaries had been found online, it just did not seem wise to invest in this option further. Recently when the site was tested (July of 2020) the outlines of the urban area boundaries were no longer present in the popup maps. For these reasons, Brinkhoff's dataset no longer appears as a viable option.

A third set, *Demographia World Urban Areas*, authored by Wendell Cox under the name of his organization Demographia, was also selected for this study (Cox 2021; Demographia 2020). It is often closer to the UN World Urbanization Prospects than is the Brinkhoff's set. An added benefit is that Cox has been available for extensive dialog on the merits and challenges of his and other sources. Importantly, Cox has made public, through a collaboration with the General Conference, his own urban area boundaries. We will return to Demographia in the next section.

A fourth dataset was released in early 2019 by the European Commission called the GHS [Global Human Settlement] Urban Centre Database 2015 (Florczyk et al. 2019b). This project is an example of what the UN has called efforts "to produce globally consistent estimates of the proportion urban with uniform criteria to define urban areas by relying, for example, on satellite imagery of land cover or night-time lights" (UN 2015, 4). Furthermore, this project relies completely on machine analysis to generate the urban area boundaries and population totals. The authors claim that the "Global Human Settlement Layer Urban Centres Database (GHS-UCDB) is the most complete database on cities to date, publicly released as an open and free dataset" (Florczyk et al. 2019b:4). The description sounds too good to be true. After examination at its current iteration there are some concerning deficiencies. It is worth following however, in the hopes that eventually these deficiencies will be rectified.

There are certain criteria, which an ideal Mission to the City urban area database should have. Five criteria are offered here as a guide in selecting a dataset.

1. The *agglomeration definition and guiding principle* fit the practical planning and organizational structure of the church. To take the Washington, DC urban agglomeration as an example, which model is most helpful for structuring, organizing, and assessing urban ministry? Is the church better served by aggregating larger regions together, such as the BosWash approach, or would it be better if the focus was on smaller contiguous urban areas such as in the UN approach in the Washington, DC area? The point is that the philosophical perspective that drives the agglomeration level needs to align with the needs of Adventist Mission. A balance between adequately bringing attention to large urban areas without losing touch with unique local dynamics is critical. This would seem to point to a strategy of aggregating communities, which results in the smaller versions of urban agglomerations based mostly around one central large city rather than stringing multiple distant, noncontiguous large cities together.

2. The *update frequency and likelihood of future availability* of the data service are acceptable to church needs. Due to the nature of urban agglomeration data, it needs to be updated at a reasonable frequency. Additionally, and of equal importance, the church needs a source that has permanence. Organizations such as the UN World Urbanization Prospects and the European Commission would seem to have the best chance of permanency.

3. The data is appropriate for *trend analysis*. The concern is that changes in population values represent real changes in population, not an artifact of some other change such as the definitions of urban and agglomeration, or enhanced data acquisition technics. Wendell Cox, the author behind the Demographia website puts it well in the caution about using his data for trend analysis: “*Demographia World Urban Areas* is not intended for trend analysis. Year-to-year changes indicated in population and land area may merely reflect better data that was not available before and may not, therefore indicate a trend” (Demographia 2020, 20). Demographia’s disclaimer notwithstanding, comparatively speaking, it and the European Commission fit this criterion the best. However, the UN’s goal has been and continues to produce time series data despite examples of challenging data variability. No matter the source, it is good to be aware that changes in data definition or processes of population and/or extent calculation can disrupt trend analysis and are inevitable from time to time. Therefore, one needs to be attentive to details that might affect this facet in order to safeguard against unwarranted conclusions.

4. The *boundaries* of the agglomerations are available for inclusion in a GIS. A critical step in tracking progress of Mission to the Cities is a comprehensive and robust GIS, including all urban agglomeration boundaries. Until recently, this seemed the greatest hurdle toward a seamless data collection system. Without specific outlines of the extent of

the area that correlates to the population published, it would be extremely difficult and highly subjective in summing up the church assets that are within each agglomeration. Currently Demographia and the European Commission have GIS boundaries for all the urban areas of a million or more. Brinkhoff's website, for a time, displayed outlines for around half of the urban areas. Currently the outlines are no longer available.

5. The *scope*, *detail*, and *consistency* are adequate for the needs of the church. The data set needs to cover the whole world and all urban agglomerations with a population of one million or more. Ideally, the data set would apply consistent criteria throughout. This last criterion is a challenging one because demographers are limited by the conventions of each country and the data made available to them. Advances in spatial intelligence and GIS are beginning to liberate demographers from the limitations created by the variance and inconsistency in data from country to country. The European Commission and Demographia have moved in this direction.

Exploring Options

It is worth noting that when a search for an appropriate urban area data source was initiated in 2016, some of the options that are available now did not exist. By mid-2017, it became apparent that the GIS boundaries from the United Nations would not be forthcoming any time soon and all attempts to reach Brinkhoff had failed. An exploration was made as to whether a satisfactory urban area dataset could be developed on our own. Initial research suggested that it was theoretically possible, but that it was fraught with difficulties and deficiencies. Two studies are cited and the results from a consultant retained to test the viability of developing a dataset for use by Mission to the Cities are given.

As part of the World Development Report 2009 for the World Bank, Hirotsugu Uchida and Andrew Nelson prepared a background paper entitled "Agglomeration Index: Towards a New Measure of Urban Concentration" in which they developed methodology for a "globally consistent definition of settlement concentration" (World Bank 2008:i). Although the ideas they have proposed are intriguing with the potential of greater specificity on population density, the outcome has been hampered by the age and availability of certain data. The Digital Chart of the World (DCW), last updated in 1992, was used for the road network. Furthermore, the researchers point out that they had limited information on the quality of the roads and lack "some measure of accessibility other than roads" for quantifying public transportation.

In an article dated June of 2016, Thomas Brinkhoff explores the suitability of using Open Street Map (OSM) data as a source for built-up urban areas on a global scale. His study explores these questions: “(1) Which OSM features can be used for computing built-up areas on [a] global scale? (2) How can we derive built-up and urban areas on [a] global scale in sufficient accuracy and performance by using standard software and hardware? (3) Is the quality of the result sufficient on [a] global scale?” (2016:557). Brinkhoff’s concludes that the extraction of built-up areas from the OSM dataset is feasible on a global scale, but with the following caution: OSM data tends to be more complete for developed countries, hence reliability of the analysis is uneven across the globe (559).

In the spring of 2017, Adventist Mission and I began discussions with Gonzalo Pita about the feasibility of producing our own urban agglomeration boundaries for areas with a population of 1 million or more by using GIS technology (Pita 2017). In May 2017, during the discussion phase with Pita, I came across Wendell Cox’s *Demographia World Urban Areas*. Although his publication did not include maps of the urban areas, I was impressed with his documentation and so took a chance in reaching out to him. Cox was most generous with his time and helped point me to additional resources. But what turned out to be most impactful, Cox shared samples of urban areas boundaries which he had developed on his own. These were used for comparative purposes as Pita was exploring methodology to compute our own boundaries. Pita’s analysis utilized two datasets, the European Space Agency (ESA) Land Cover CCI Climate Research Data Package providing the urban areas (ESA 2017), and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC) Global Human Settlement Layer providing the population (JRC 2015). Although the project yielded some important insights, in the end it became apparent that refining the urban areas was beyond our current capacity.

Recommendation on Urban Area Database Selection

After the conclusion of Pita’s project, discussions with Cox in early 2018 revealed that he was creating maps of the urban areas for his own private use when they were not available from national sources. These maps, hand drawn by Cox in Google Earth, were used in his calculation of the area and population for the urban areas. In February of 2019, following months of discussion, Adventist Mission and Cox entered into an agreement whereby Cox would provide his private map files for use by the Seventh-day Adventist Church and in exchange Cox would be reimbursed for his time in preparing the files to send to us. By mid-2019, the completed set was ready for a beta rollout.

Combining lessons learned from Pita's work, some experiments were run calculating population for urban areas using the European Commission GHS 2015 250-meter gridded population data set (GHS_POP_E2015_GLOBE_R2019A_54009_250_V1_0 (Florczyk et al. 2019a). Cox reviewed the results and based on his extensive first-hand knowledge concluded that with just a few exceptions, the population estimates derived with the GHS data were superior to other means he had been using in the past. Therefore, in 2020 Cox began using GIS calculated population from the GHS data as the preferred population data source in the Demographia products. In the few instances where the outcome from the GHS data was inconsistent with other measures, Cox returned to his previous practice, which had been, in order of preference, statistical authority data, then local or other identified sources, and then the UN data.

After searching for four years for a suitable urban area dataset, only two datasets come close to meeting the needs of a Mission to the Cities urban area database. They are Cox's *Demographia World Urban Areas* and the European Commission's GHS Urban Centre Database 2015. They are the only sets that currently offer GIS urban area *boundaries* (criteria 4), and seemed to share a similar *agglomeration definition and guiding principle* (criteria 1) which fit most closely to the needs of Mission to the Cities. Regarding these two criteria, both sets at first seemed fairly equal. However, under closer inspection the European Commission's dataset exhibited unusual results in certain circumstances which call into question its suitability of criteria 1.

GHS-UCDB's claim that "Urban Centres are defined in a consistent way across geographical locations and over time" (Florczyk et al. 2019b:4) sounds good in theory; however, demographers have been quick to point out that GHS's efforts to use a consistent definition of Urban Centres has resulted in both over and under identification of urban areas. Shlomo Angel et al. states, "The European Commission is to be applauded for taking the first attempt at a method that, in contrast with the UN Population Division, uses a common urban population threshold for all countries. Unfortunately, it coupled this threshold with an unrealistic urban *density* threshold and produced implausible estimates" (2018:18). For example, "the low 'urban density threshold' adopted by the European Commission results in the inclusion of entire cropland regions as urban: In Java, Indonesia, for example, 96% of the population living on cropland is classified as urban" (2018:2).

On the other hand, in different circumstances and in other countries (primarily more developed countries) the European Commission's urban standards at times under-represent the urban area. Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States, is a rather stark illustration of European Commission's

under-representation of an urban area (see figure 2). The Atlanta Urban Area population density of 1,639 per square mile is among the ten least dense cities in the world. By comparison, the city with the greatest population density is Dhaka, Bangladesh, with a population density of 87,676 per square mile. Notice how the European Commission's area for Atlanta Urban Area is but a fraction of the US Census.

In criteria 2 with regard to *update frequency*, Demographia has a track record of publishing yearly updates. Demographia uses a three-year rolling update for population and boundary data on each urban area. GHS-UCDB does not state the frequency of their updates. The question of *future availability* is a much different question. In the case of the European Commission, one would expect that their products will be around for a long time. On the other hand, Demographia is a product from an independent demographer. It is reasonable to expect that Cox's Demographia will not be around indefinitely. However, this consideration should not disqualify the product in the short term, it is certainly worth noting.

Criteria 3 has to do with suitability for *trend analysis*. Cox's cautions against relying on Demographia's product for trend analysis have already been quoted earlier. His cautions are worth noting; however, what he states about his own product is more or less true of all the other products that are being considered even in some ways with the robust UN WUP. Improvements in methodology, new census data, etc. will all affect the trend value of a dataset, unless demographers go back and adjust past yearly estimates to be compatible with the current methodology. Cox's point is that he and other demographers such as Brinkhoff do not create coherent time series. Their published figures are their best assessment of the current population based on current data and methodology. No attempt is made to correlate data back to previous years.

It is not clear how GHS-UCDB is handling their updates. Their portfolio of products has been evolving over time, building one product on another with the Urban Centres dataset being the latest product released. The premise behind the entire GHS series of products is intriguing. "The satellite archives and available census data allow generating information layers for four epochs: 1975, 1990, 2000, and 2015" (Florczyk 2019b:5). One would anticipate that additional epochs would be added over time. It is also reasonable to expect that when GHS adds a new epoch, given the sophistication of its enterprise, that previous epochs would also be updated as well. As previously mentioned in relation to criteria 4, only the European Commission and Demographia makes available GIS *boundaries* for the urban areas in their dataset. Demographia uses national sources for GIS boundaries when the local statistical authority's definition of an agglomeration is compatible with Demographia's definition, otherwise

the boundaries are hand drawn. The European Union GIS boundaries are machine generated using a kilometer square grid. They certainly look different in a map, but effectively accomplish the same thing.

European Commission GHS Urban Centre Database 2015 Compared to US Census Urbanized Area

Atlanta Urban Area
EC GHS-UCDB2015
US Census Urbanized Area

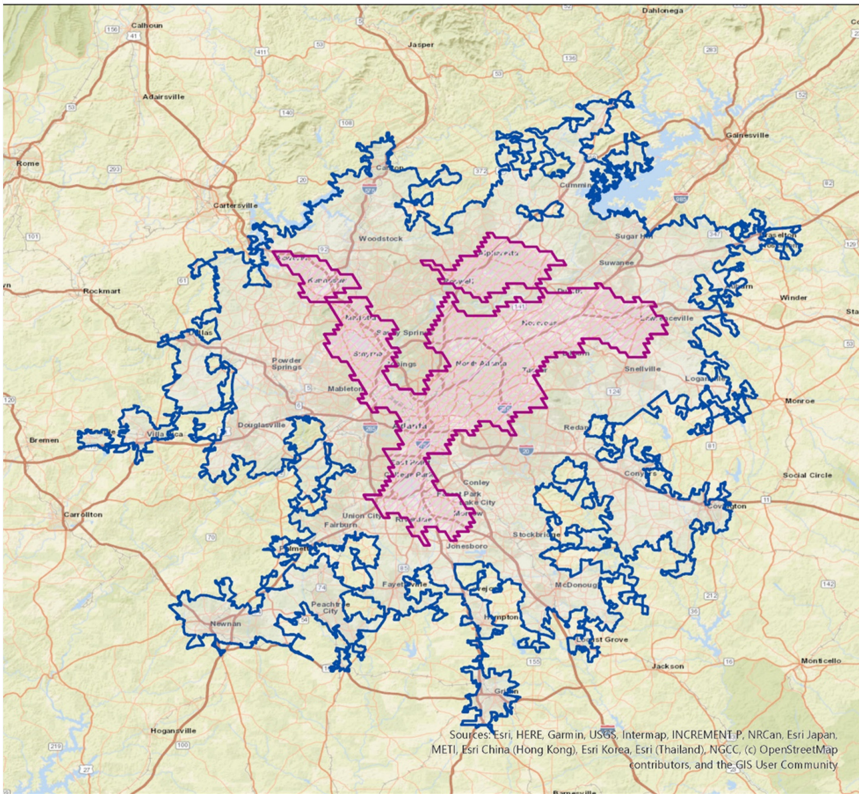


Figure 2. European Commission GHS Urban Centre Database 2015 Compared to US Census Urban Area

Finally, concerning criteria 5, the *scope*, *detail*, and *consistency* are adequate for the needs of the church. First, I would like to note that there is a wealth of data on many urban areas of the world from a variety of sources. The challenge has been that few datasets are global. However, it is important to note that there is an abundance of urban area data which may be selective, either by region, or focused more narrowly on the largest urban areas. The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy deserves special note here. Shlomo Angel et al. are conducting ongoing research on the 200 largest urban areas of the world (2016a; Angel et al. 2016b). What the *Atlas of Urban Expansion* lacked in the number of urban areas, it more than makes up for in depth of information on each of the 200 largest urban areas in its study. Much of their data and publications are available for free download at their website (Lincoln Institute of Land Policy 2016). I highlight this dataset here because I do not want to leave the impression that the four datasets reviewed in this article are the only sources of good information on urban agglomerations. However, what has been sought is a dataset which will supply a steady and consistent benchmark for assessing the progress of Mission to the Cities.

At this time Cox's Demographia is, in my view, the best fit for the Mission to the Cities initiative. His *agglomeration definition* and *guiding principle* are best aligned with the needs of this project. Demographia *updates* its product on a yearly basis, with each urban area being reassessed every three years. Although Cox says that Demographia is not a good source for *trending* purposes, if one understands the liability correctly, and close attention is paid to the ample documentation on this product, then there is no reason not to use this source. Furthermore, it has been seen from comparisons to other products, that none of the other sources is immune from this particular concern.

Finally, Demographia currently provides *boundaries* for all urban areas with a population of a million or more and is currently working on adding boundaries for urban areas all the way to 500,000, generously exceeding the initial *scope*. Furthermore, Cox is accessible for consultation and collaboration. For all the above, I strongly endorse the selection of Demographia as the source for urban area boundaries for use by the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the Mission to the Cities initiative at this time.

Practical Concerns and Matters of the Heart

I have been involved in the Mission to the Cities initiative since mid-2013 with the preparation for the It's Time Conference. I was asked to do the GIS analysis and prepare the maps used in the pivotal presentation by Trim and McEdward. Their presentation was instrumental in communi-

cating the missional challenge posed by the mega-cities around the world. Over the last seven years I have reflected often over my own attitudes and history of involvement in engaging people in large cities. Like many “good” Adventists I thought it was a sin, or at least a demonstration of spiritual lacksidaisycalness to loiter around the cities. “Out of the cities” was the cry. When I graduated from the seminary, I was not interested in a pastorate in an established church in a large United States city. Rather, I wanted to be a “missionary” to the Native Americans in the rural southwest. But God had other plans for me. After waiting almost seven years for a call after graduation, I was invited to serve the Akron, Ohio parish. I wish that I could say that I turned that medium-large city upside down for Christ. The reality is that under my leadership the congregation’s involvement with the community was mostly for immigrants and refugees, a noble work for sure, but little effort or contact was directed at the native residents of Ohio.

Why do I raise this issue at the conclusion of this paper? It is because I fear that without continued intentionality this phase of city mission will die out as has so many in the past. Ted Wilson is to be commended for making mission to the largest cities a priority under his leadership. The question now is will the focus on Mission to the Cities survive into a new quinquennium and continue to grow and finally be embraced by all parts of the Adventist Church or will it revert to its default “preparing for the end” mentality by leaving the cities and abandoning the precious inhabitants for whom Christ gave his life? In my humble opinion technology, and specifically GIS, can play an important part in helping the church with assessing the needs for city mission, in developing strategies for city engagement, and for communicating opportunities and victories in city mission to the world Adventist family. So, in closing, let me briefly paint a picture of how GIS in tandem with other technology can assist the church in developing a strong response to the missional challenges posed by the growth of mega-cities in the world.

As stated at the beginning of this paper the church needs an efficient system through which the local fields report, monitor, and communicate the needs and progress of city missions. This system needs to delineate the extent of the urban areas so that reporting of city related data is consistent and thereby trendable. After waiting seven years from the launch of the Mission to the Cities initiatives, the General Conference is in the process of developing just such a system. It is envisioned to be added as a component in a larger system for managing Global Mission projects called Mission Priority System (MPS). The first phase of the system is scheduled to be rolled out before the 2020 Annual Council. The MPS is built with GIS as part of its core infrastructure so spatial analytics and map views of data

will be native to the online system. The system is designed to provide analytics in comprehensive dashboards to track key performance indicators from a variety of sources. Most importantly, leaders at all administrative levels of the church will be able to have access to this system and view locations, metrics, and much more related to the mission of the church.

This reporting system in MPS is just the beginning of what is needed. With current technology, the various streams of church data should be connected into the MPS thereby providing in one place a way to analyze data from all departments of the church. One major benefit from such a platform is that much of a regular Mission to the Cities report could be mostly automated. Using GIS, the computer can do the work of selecting entities that are in the system which are within or connected to the urban areas being reported. Each department of the General Conference maintains their own information, which up to now has not been integrated into a church-wide system. If these “silos” of information were integrated into the MPS platform most of the data having direct bearing on Mission to the Cities KPIs would be available in one place. The relevant information includes the following:

1. Secretariat is the keeper of membership records, which are the backbone of church statistics and which flow up the organizational chart. This information is increasingly being maintained in “membership systems.” The congregation addresses are readily converted to map coordinates for ready GIS placement on maps and for spatial analysis. Congregation counts and membership totals can then be easily summarized with GIS technology.
2. The General Conference Education Department and its affiliates in the field have computer systems tracking their institutions which, similarly to the congregation information, should be brought together for analysis.
3. Likewise, the Health Ministries, Publishing Ministries, Youth Ministries, Public Campus Ministry, Hope Channel International, and Adventist World Radio departments should also be linked appropriately to the MPS platform in order to feed their contribution to the Mission to the Cities initiative.
4. The General Conference needs to work out a plan by which independent supporting ministries who are contributing to the mission in the cities can report as well on this platform.

In addition to the quantitative data collected described above, there also needs to be qualitative research as well. The church needs to support a robust network for scholars and practitioners where they can exchange ideas and support one another and come together in regularly scheduled conferences to focus on the most effective ways of expanding city mission.

Finally, the Mission to the Cities metrics need to be communicated far and wide. Rather than a side project of a few, it must become a passion of the many. With clear metrics (let's call them missio metrics) for tracking the needs and progress in our cities, our church can more effectively mobilize human and financial resources into the cities with the greatest need. This is my dream. Even so come Lord Jesus.

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PETR ČINČALA, CRISTIAN DUMITRESCU, AND CHUNG YIN MAK

Beyond the Statistics: Learning from the History of Mission behind the Iron Curtain

It is shocking how much of today's world "takes place" online. You can search for almost any topic and find fairly reliable information with a few simple taps on your keyboard or a couple of clicks of your mouse. When I was growing up behind the Iron Curtain in Czechoslovakia, this kind of information access was unthinkable. Teachers would present information that they learned from other teachers' lectures. Every once in a while, a book worth reading would pass through censure, but most often, reading material was so heavily censored that one could not be sure if it was reliable or not. People had to connect with others either through face-to-face interactions, a landline phone, or through letters. In case of emergency or in the absence of a phone, people would rely on the use of a telegram. In addition, travel was limited to only a few other Eastern European countries.

I remember that when I came to Andrews University to study, I would write letters to my parents at least every other week. While email communication was available at that time, it could only be used to communicate with those who had a personal computer, an internet connection, and an email provider. As such, these requirements eliminated e-mails as a means of communication with my parents.

Additionally, when the Internet first made its appearance, users needed to know the exact URL of the website they wanted to visit. It took years for Google to arrive on the scene, and even more time for the millions upon millions of articles, books, dissertations, and various studies to be posted online, as it is in the present.

In view of this, I especially appreciate the innovation and courage of my mentor, Dr. Erich Baumgartner, who suggested in the pre-Google days that the *Annual Statistical Reports* be digitized. His idea was to provide

easy access to all the information related to the Adventist Church and mission growth, in any field, at any time, in the history of our denomination. His proposal was well-received, and the work of entering the data all the way from 1863 to 1984 (the pre-computer age) started in 1996. Little did we know back then that God would later send a gifted programmer our way who would put in place an online database, allowing users to build various tables and charts. Formulas were programmed in to measure rates such as growth rate, accession rate, death rate, etc. (information that is available at www.adventiststatistics.org). This is a fascinating tool, particularly for those who love statistics.

However, a deeper look into the study of mission reveals that some amazing stories are hidden behind the numbers. In this article, we will examine how, while the numbers may indicate interesting trends over the years, there is more to mission than mere statistics. This article will provide insights into some historical developments of Adventist Church growth behind the Iron Curtain—the stories inside the data—by examining three examples: the Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference, the Chinese Union Mission, and the Romanian Union Conference.

Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference

Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference Membership

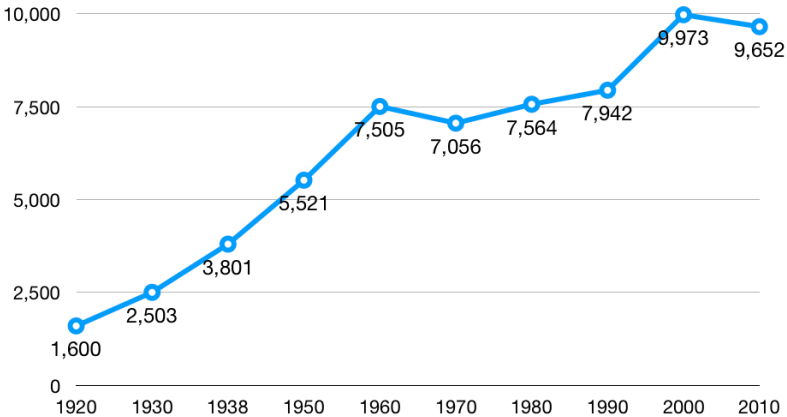


Figure 1. Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference Membership, 1920-2010. *Source: Annual Statistical Reports, 1920-2010.*

Seventh-day Adventism first reached Czechoslovakia through magazines and brochures published in Hamburg, Germany, under the

leadership of missionary Ludwig R. Conradi. These publications were translated from German into Czech to be republished and distributed. While there were already Christians within Czechoslovakia at that time, many desired a deeper understanding of Scripture—something that Adventist teaching did. As in so many other parts of the world the Adventist Church in the Czecho-Slovakian Union was started through literature evangelism.

Literature evangelism was soon followed by personal evangelism. Several mission-minded Adventists from other countries came to Czechoslovakia and won people (mostly evangelical Christians) for Adventism. Newly converted Adventists took their faith seriously and through their personal evangelistic efforts other people soon joined the church. People gathered in homes for Bible studies, and later for worship services. Once the fellowship grew, public space was sought out to accommodate the Sabbath gatherings.

The local mission field was not organized until the end of World War I, around 1920. By then, there were approximately 1,200 baptized members across the country. With the establishment of the official church organization, a publishing house was founded and literature continued to be distributed in the Czech language. A school was also established to train Bible workers. The church continued to grow despite somewhat negative societal perceptions, and by the 1930s, Adventism had become an active part in society-at-large through the establishment of volunteer organizations and other humanitarian associations.

Although the statistics (shown in figure 1) do not show this clearly, during the years of World War II there was a major loss of membership; this was primarily due to the departure/ displacement of German-speaking people from the border areas. This people group had made up approximately 25% of Czechoslovakian Adventists; however, the decadal data does not reflect this loss due to the “rapid growth of the church in the first five post-war years” (Piškula 2009:86). After the war was over, the church blossomed in many ways, gaining strength and becoming one of the leading denominations in Czechoslovakia, despite the establishment of the Communist regime.

However, the Communist government soon recognized the influence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and because Adventism came from “the West” (i.e., America), the Communists wanted to eliminate its influence. Thus, by 1952, the Communist government put the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its members outside the law. Notice what the late Miloslav Šustek, who had been an active leader, recalled in his handwritten letter of October 1, 1952. “The operation of our denomination was stopped. However, we continued to gather in homes, to have Sabbath

School, sermon. We supported God's work, and celebrated communion. We had regular rehearsals of our choir. Whenever there was nice weather, we walked outside of Prague into nature and conducted our worship services there" (Šustek, n.d.).

During the four years that the Adventist Church was outlawed, many pastors were sent far from their homes to do hard labor; some were even imprisoned. Parents who refused to send their children to school on Sabbath (Saturday) were penalized. "Despite the significant injustice," wrote Šustek (n.d.), "the church members continued faithfully to fulfill their duties towards the state, worked well in their jobs and hoped that the matters [would] be solved."

Public evangelism, or even witnessing in many cases, was not possible. The Communist ideologists planned for the churches to disappear as their members died off. Woe to the pastor or priest who had children and youth in his church. Because of such situations, the only form of evangelism possible proved to be the most effective approach, even in times of great freedom: establishing friendly relationships and personal contacts with members, sharing of personal testimonies, and personal invitations to visit worship services. "This is how we decided to go back then," recalls Jiří Drejnar (2004:147, 148) in his book *On Roads and Detours of My Life*.

The government soon realized that putting the Adventist Church outside the law was a mistake, as the prohibitions did not deter its faithful members. In fact, the members followed the Lord even more zealously than before, tirelessly working for the kingdom of God.

The state leaders faced an unpleasant problem: where once there had been one government-approved pastor, there were now several enthusiastic and sanctified lay preachers. Where once there had been one small church body that officials could easily control, there were now "five, eight, or even ten home groups . . . created without any control of the regime" (Drejnar 2004:106). Phenomenal growth was recorded. While "those who feared the future events, left the church. Disloyal people took this opportunity and separated, and thus the church was purified" (Sustek n.d.:26).

The story of Jiří is an example of the importance of personal relationships under Communist rule. In 1978, Jiří was a church leader who had aspired to be president of his union; however, because he would not collaborate with the Communist party, he lost his job. After being laid off work for a period of time, he was able to find a civil job in which the Communist leaders could not intervene or prevent his hire; Jiří found work in a clinic where his wife worked at the reception desk.

Shortly before Christmas in 1980, an official in the Communist government was hospitalized. Jiří was given the task to set up a private phone link in the official's room. As Jiří worked in the room, the official lamented

that he would have to stay in the hospital over the Christmas holiday. He asked Jiří if the hospital would serve the traditional Czech Christmas dinner: fried carp with potato salad and fish soup. When the official learned that the hospital was not going to provide this special food for Christmas, he was disappointed, sharing with Jiří that this would be his first Christmas without this meal.

At home, Jiří and his wife decided that they would prepare the traditional Christmas dinner as a surprise for the official, and that is what they did. When they arrived at the hospital with his Christmas dinner, the official was surprised and touched—so much so that he asked Jiří to stay and talk for a bit. While they talked, the official asked, “How long have you been working in the clinic?”

Jiří told him, “I have been working here for two years, first as an ambulance driver, and the last six months as a janitor.”

“What did you do before?” the official pressed.

“I was editor of a magazine,” Jiří said. When asked what magazine, Jiří carefully avoided the question. “I am sure you would not be familiar with this magazine. It is not sold publicly.”

However, the official continued to push until Jiří revealed that the name of the magazine was *Signs of the Times*. “*Signs of the Times*?” he gasped, surprised. “The magazine from the Seventh-day Adventists? Do you have anything in common with this church? What is your name?”

When Jiří answered the questions, the official immediately remembered where Jiří had been pastoring, and was surprised to find him working as a janitor in a hospital. Jiří, of course, could not figure out how this official knew all about him.

Upon further discussion, Jiří learned that this official had joined the Communist Party right after World War II, convinced that church was the opium of the people. Each member of the party was told to do all in their power to fight against this “enemy.” This official had become a member of the state police and was involved with a group that strategized how to get rid of the church. He, along with other members of the Communist Party, determined to disband one denomination after another. The first church selected was the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The official went on to explain, “Before the actual termination of the Adventist Church, we knew we had to work our way in among the members; this started by mingling with them. We were trained to study the Bible and use the hymnal and other books as our ‘working tools.’ I was trained not to sit immediately when I arrived at church for worship. I was advised to remain standing with closed eyes for half a minute, hands folded, to look like I was silently praying, which was the habit of the believers. This was done so that the members would consider me a believer.”

The official continued talking to Jiří, listing off the names of believers he knew personally, as he had visited them in their homes. Although he admitted he had felt somewhat sorry for deceiving these people, he strongly believed that church was dangerous for society and was determined to do whatever it took to do away with it—no matter how radical.

“That is why we closed the churches in 1952—to completely eliminate it,” he continued. “Soon, however, we realized that our plan had not been well thought through. In cities where there was one local church, which we had under control, there were suddenly a number of small groups. Those groups met in homes, and we lost control over them. That is why we legalized the church after four years—as an attempt to create conditions so as to regain control over the church. I was personally assigned to lead the department that supervised the Seventh-day Adventists.”

Jiří and the official continued their conversation, and as Jiří prepared to leave, the official surprised him by a request. “Jiří, I told you that I carried a Bible to church. However, I must confess that I have never read the Bible. Could you please bring your Bible to work one day and read some to me? Please, would you read something solely for me?”

While this request was the last thing Jiří had expected, he responded by suggesting that he could bring his Bible right away and read a bit. When he returned to the hospital with his Bible, the Holy Spirit moved his heart to understand that this official was a modern Saul. Jiří knew exactly what to tell him. Jiří started by reading John 3:16, sharing the truth of what God did for each person, including this official, through Jesus. Then Jiří continued by citing Isaiah 53:6, sharing how all of us have gone astray, yet Jesus took our sins upon himself. “The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” There were tears in the eyes of the official after hearing this message. He kept asking Jiří questions, and at the end of this first Bible study, he asked for two things: for prayer and another Bible study.

Step by step, the official received assurance that his sins had been forgiven as he continued to study. His sickness was terminal, and there was no hope that he was going to return home from the hospital. His meetings and Bible studies with Jiří continued for nine months.

God worked on this official’s heart, and somehow, he knew when his last meeting with Jiří had come. He requested a final prayer, as he told Jiří he did not believe he would be alive on Monday when Jiří was scheduled to come back to work. The official told Jiří, “What wonderful news that God can forgive all my sins! I am still amazed He would accept such a sinner as me.” After prayer, the two departed, not as enemies, but as brothers.

The official passed away the next day, on Saturday morning.

It was not until the church was legalized again that it stopped growing for the first time since its beginning; this stagnation in growth lasted for

three decades. The church needed to renew its structures, regain lost property, etc. Slowly but surely, the church began to become more institutionalized, and the active members were replaced by the activities of a professional clergy. Additionally, the government made sure that the clergy were under their control. The Adventist Church, in general, was tolerated, but thought to be doomed. These were not easy times for Adventism as it also faced a number of internal conflicts, caused by both the government and leaders/members being suspicious of each other.

The 1960s membership loss was primarily caused by the immigration of some of the members during the Prague Spring of 1968, before the occupation by the Soviet army and before the tight normalization. During those years, the church was barely able to maintain the status quo; there was limited relational growth, and only every now and then did the Church see a conversion. Yet by God's grace, the Adventist Church was able to survive those dark days, and by the second half of the 1980s, there was increased interest in religion emerging from among the atheists, as well as some of the Communists.

The forty years of the Communist regime can be divided into two epochs. The first was when the Adventist Church was outlawed, which ironically resulted in dramatic growth and expansion. The second occurred when the Church received permission to continue as an organization, but with the state heavily meddling in its operations. Historical research shows that the state interfered with the management of the Church and allowed only those who succumbed to the system to hold leadership positions. As a result, the church no longer grew as rapidly as before.

When the Communist regime fell in 1989, a wave of interest in religion and spirituality followed. The church responded in the best way it could: through public evangelism. At first, evangelists from the North American Division held evangelistic meetings while training local pastors/lay people in public evangelism. The lecture halls were flooded with people; sometimes, lectures had to be repeated multiple times a day, as not all the people who wanted to attend could fit into one service. The Adventist message made people excited; many of them came to believe in Jesus and accepted the invitations extended by local churches. Hundreds of new people were baptized and joined the Church, and many of them became actively involved.

The Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference has seen only two periods of membership decline. The first case, between 1960 and 1970, was due to political circumstances that led to the immigration of many people. The second case took place at the turn of the millennium and first decade of the 21st century. This decline was attributed to a lack of religious receptivity, as well as newer members leaving the church because they had not rooted

deeply enough relationally and were not well socialized in the church community. This was an unfortunate side effect of public evangelism being the primary method of reaching people.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference continues to be actively involved in various areas, such as health clubs, community outreach centers, humanitarian help, prison ministries, correspondence courses, and book evangelism. Although there is no Adventist hospital in the conference, there are institutions that may help the church continue to fulfill its mission (i.e., a theological institute, publishing house, and Adventist elementary school). The Czech and Slovak societies are more secular than ever and, in general, resistant towards churches and public evangelism. History clearly shows that personal, relational evangelism is the most reliable and effective way of mission. The challenge within the Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference is whether, and to what degree, the church members are willing to be involved as they were when the church was outlawed.



Figure 2. Chinese Union Mission Membership, 1920–2010. Source: *Annual Statistical Reports, 1920-2010*.

From 1931 to 1949, Christian missionaries had a strong presence in China. When Mao Zedong, the founding father of the People’s Republic of China, and his forces defeated the Nationalist government in 1949, there

were approximately 750,000 Protestant Christians and 3,000,000 Roman Catholics in China (Pierson 2009:15, 16). However, the Communist Party wanted to rid Chinese religion of its foreign influences in an attempt to stop imperialism.

At the beginning of communist rule in China, missionaries were allowed to serve but could not work in leadership roles. However, after the Korean War, many missionaries were accused of opposing the revolution. As a result, some missionaries were deported while others were imprisoned. By 1951, most of the missionaries in China had departed, and the churches in China became more and more indigenous (Bush 1970:40–65).

In the 1940s and 50s, the Adventist Church placed an emphasis on building large institutions: office buildings, missionary residences, etc. However, the construction of new churches and chapel buildings was neglected. “The cost of churches and chapels amounted to only 2.3% of the total denominational investment in China” (Lin 1976:25). Missionary residences received about 40% of the total investment, and the remaining 57.7% was invested in sanatoriums, schools, and office buildings. Amazingly, “the 2.3% investment in churches and chapels has turned out to be the most useful part in the long run, as the other 97.7% [was ultimately] either rented out or taken over by other organizations” (25).

The Cultural Revolution began in 1966, and over the next several years Christians suffered greatly and most churches were closed. Those who converted to Christianity were considered to be a part of the Western invasion. Some Chinese even felt that becoming a Christian was betraying one’s nationality, resulting in the saying, “One more Christian means one less Chinese” (Ting 1981:28). However, many Chinese Christians kept their faith alive through the development of home churches, and as a result, many unofficial, unregistered meetings were held. As a result, Christianity and Adventism continued to survive despite opposition.

After the fall of the nationalistic regime in China in 1949, the church was forced to get along without many things. First, no church organization or structure beyond the local level; in particular, no international structure. Anything foreign was considered an intrusion and was outlawed. Second, no institutions, including schools, hospitals, clinics, or publishing houses. Third, no financial structure. When the organizational structure was lost, so was the financial structure. Fourth, no regularly paid clergy. Fifth, no churches. Most, if not all, church buildings were lost. However, without all of these things, the church in China survived and in the end, grew and prospered. After an initial drop, membership soared over time to a level never known before (Dybdahl 1998:9, 10).

The statistics from 1950-1980 indicate a stagnant church. However, the reality was much different. The church grew constantly, in spite of being

oppressed by fierce persecution. The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the gospel. The church no longer existed in a traditionally organized form. Conferences and churches disappeared and a different organizational system was born. The mother-daughter church system gradually developed, shaped by the Chinese culture and socio-political context. Adventist hymns were transformed with Chinese tunes, and new songs were composed. Sermon collections were handwritten, were passed along for the benefit of new believers, and often became doctrinal manuals. Resistance and survival created a new Adventist culture along Chinese cultural lines. While the statistics indicate a lack of growth, the reality on the ground looked much different.

As a whole, Chinese Protestantism has experienced two major growth spurts. The first occurred in the rural parts of China during the 1970s and 80s. This revival was marked by signs and wonders, and “rapid evangelism took place, largely along kinship lines” (Fulton 2018). The second growth spurt occurred mainly in urban areas during the 1990s and early 2000s. This growth was “fueled by the post-1989 [turning] to Christianity among young intellectuals, a proliferation of campus fellowships that would later form standalone unregistered churches, and massive urban migration—all within a period of relative openness” (Fulton 2018). Because of these factors, between 1986 to 2001, Christianity saw rapid growth after years of persecution.

Janet (not her real name) is an individual who came into the Adventist Church during this last period of growth. She became a Christian when she was about 20 years old, even though no one else in her family was Christian.

Janet was an ambitious, hard worker. When in school, she was a leader, and at work, she focused her energy on becoming a member of the Communist Party. Because of her aspirations to join the Communist Party, Janet extended her education. She worked and studied so hard that she became sick. She began losing consciousness and was hospitalized.

Janet’s doctors were not able to make a proper diagnosis in spite of running many tests. Finally, she was sent to a larger hospital, where the doctors determined that she had been born with a heart disease and would need an operation. The doctors gave Janet a 2% chance of surviving the surgery, but she had no chance of living without it. Janet’s illness decreased her productivity at work and as such, she slipped into depression, feeling that her life had no purpose.

A man who worked in Janet’s office had a mother that was Christian; she took Janet to church one Sunday. While there, Janet was attracted to the music and the sense of peace she felt during the service. Since she did not know how to pray, church members taught her a simple prayer: “Jesus heal me.” It was that day in 1980 that Janet became a Christian.

Unfortunately, the church Janet attended did not produce healthy relationships. Because of this, she did not have any close relationships with church members, even though she attended this church for eight years. When reflecting on this time, Janet says, "I was a Christian in my heart, but did not have a clear picture of Christ or the Bible. However, I knew Jesus loved me; I really felt that."

Because of the severity of her heart condition, Janet decided to move forward with the risky operation recommended by her doctors. While her family was against it, she believed that Jesus would protect her. Even though she still did not really know how to pray, Janet said to Jesus, "Either let me die or completely heal me. If you heal me, I will serve you."

When the day of the operation arrived, the hospital bumped Janet's surgery back because someone else, a younger man, needed the same operation, and the percentage for success was higher in the younger man's case. Tragically, the young man's operation failed, and he died. However, when Janet had her operation, it was totally successful; she knew it was God who caused it to happen.

Janet's health improved and she went back to her secular work. She attended church when she had time. However, in 1988, Janet followed through on the promise she had made to God before her surgery and dedicated herself to work for the Lord. She was baptized into the Adventist Church, becoming part of a small body of believers.

Janet began to learn and understand the Scriptures better. She found her personal value and significance through the teachings of the Bible and in the Church. She began to witness to others, including people she knew from the Sunday-keeping church.

The small body of believers that Janet had originally been a part of was a home church. However, in 1989, this group was given permission to gather in a big church, and as a result, many people started to come. Some people were Christians who had gathered in home churches before the church doors opened.

This church was in the center of a big city. After some time, Janet moved from the mother church to another place to start a church plant. Through home churches, Bible studies, and visitation to families, Janet and other believers who had gone with her to plant the church developed several cell groups. Over time, they established ten home churches, until they had 100 members. In 2005, they submitted an application to the government for an official church building for Sabbath services. The government granted their request.

Today, this church has 500 members, with another 300 members attending the mother church. The church plant has 12 different home/family churches and continues to work on developing more. However, as of 2018, the government no longer permits the home churches to function.

As you can imagine, the membership picture is more nuanced than the explosive growth figures seen in figure 2. In addition to the varied Adventist identities that developed due to a lack of unified printed materials, the Church also became divided based on how they related to the Chinese authorities. Even today, there are Adventist churches that are under the Three-Self umbrella. These churches are government-registered and therefore report to the government. Often, the government provides buildings for the members, pays the salaries of the pastors, and subsidizes their theological training in exchange for the church allowing governmental control. CCTV cameras are installed in the buildings and sermons have to be approved by the authorities.

Additionally, there are churches that are registered with the government but do not report to it. However, there are also churches that are not registered and refuse to report to the authorities. In recent years, the government has stopped tolerating such underground churches and has requested that all churches register under the Three-Self organization.

The Chinese Communist government does not want to eliminate Christianity but does want to control it: "There are already thought to be more Christians there (some 100 million) than members of the Communist Party (87 million). . . . Perhaps the most striking statistic in this story is that Christians now make up about 5% of the Chinese population. . . . It's about the level when religious minorities become too big to ignore, and yet too small to feel secure" (Brown, 2015).

The Chinese government has recently attempted to Sinicize religion (i.e., create a Christianity with Chinese characteristics, but based on Confucian philosophy), and to make it compatible with socialistic ideas (Sudworth 2016; Wu 2018).

One can easily surmise that membership figures in China hardly reflect the reality on the ground. Currently, underground churches that refuse to register with the government dissolve and the members scatter, forming new churches or joining existing ones. The fluidity of membership cannot be contained or reflected in statistical figures. In addition, the church in China has a history of flying under the radar and developing functional structures to support the mission of the church. Within China, there are members devoted to the Lord and committed to his mission, no matter the circumstances. The greatest challenge today involves reaching young people who are not part of a body of believers and who no longer depend on the education the church provides. Their values reflect the increasingly secular and materialistic values of society. Therefore, one of the biggest challenges facing the Adventist Church in China is reaching young people to guarantee the future vitality of the body of Christ.

Romanian Union Conference

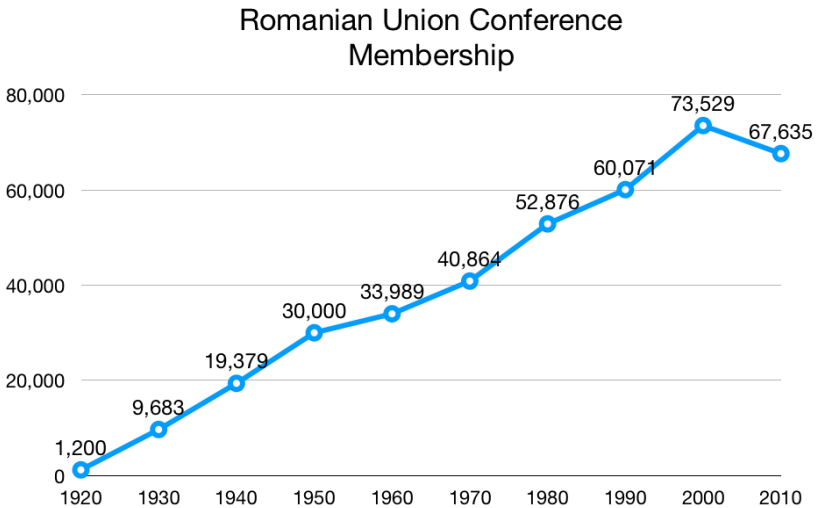


Figure 3. Romanian Union Conference Membership, 1920–2010. *Source: Annual Statistical Reports, 1920–2010.*

Romania is primarily an Eastern-Orthodox country. Because of this, Protestant and Catholic minorities were not welcome in this country for much of its history. Although Transylvania, the Western part of the country, was influenced by the Reformation (the first mention of it appears in documents as early as 1521, and the first Lutheran school was started in Brasov in 1524), oppression was constant against the German traders who brought Protestant ideas to the Carpathian mountains. In parallel with the Lutheran and the Unitarian churches, a Sabbatarian movement developed in Transylvania under the leadership of Giorgio Blandrata, Eössi András, and Simon Pécsi. Sabbatarians not only kept Saturday as the Sabbath, but also strongly believed in the soon return of Christ.

In spite of a toleration edict issued by the king, who wanted to create an oasis where people of different religions could live together, Sabbatarians were greatly persecuted. As such, they turned to the Jewish synagogue to find protection and, by 1568, the Sabbatarians had integrated with the Jews.

Seventh-day Adventism entered Romania first in 1869 when the former Polish Catholic-priest-turned-Adventist, Michael Bellina Czechowski, started preaching the biblical message in different cities and towns. As

a result of his efforts, the first Romanian Adventist church was established at Pitesti in 1870. The first Seventh-day Adventists were merchants, providers for the royal house of Romania.

Ludwig R. Conradi visited Romania in 1890, searching for remnants of the Sabbatarian movement. As an active evangelist, he converted a number of families from among German immigrants, and the records show that about 50 Adventists were converted in the city of Cluj-Napoca as a result of Conradi's activities. German refugees coming from Russia and the Crimea Peninsula were also receptive to the gospel, and in 1891, a church was established by the Black Sea. These refugees then shared the Adventist message with the local people. As a result, Adventism continued to grow during the end of the 19th century and into the beginning of the 20th.

A number of Romanian intellectuals became Adventists during the first decade of the 20th century. Most of them went to Friedensau, Germany, where they studied theology and learned about church organization. By 1920, there were more than 2,000 Adventists in Romania, although some of them could not be publicly identified as such due to the persecution by the Orthodox majority (data in figure 3 does not reflect this reality). The Adventists were not recognized as a legitimate religion in the country at that time, and as a result, they functioned only as a more or less tolerated religious association. The Romanian Union was established in 1920, followed by a publishing house in 1923, and a theological seminary and hospital in 1924. This organization of mission explains the explosive growth of the Romanian Adventist Church after 1920.

The Adventist Church in Romania grew exponentially between the two World Wars, from about 2,000 in 1920 to 30,000 baptized members in 1944. Records also show that there were about 11,000 members in 1931, but do not indicate the almost 10,000 additional youth and children who joined the church with their parents. While the decade between 1940 and 1950 saw fierce persecution of Adventists and the outlawing of the Adventist Church, this decade was followed by an explosion of growth after the end of World War II.

The 1950s were marked by the Communist takeover and the systematic persecution of religious people. A significant number of pastors and leaders were arrested and imprisoned in forced labor camps or in subhuman prisons where they suffered or even died. Communists declared that their goal was to create a "new humanity," free from the opium of religion. Atheism was imposed by conviction and force. However, due to economic and financial needs, as well as the desire to access funds from Western countries, Romanian Communists had to maintain an appearance of religious tolerance, even support, for the diversity of churches existing at the time.

Adventists resisted persecution and refused to work on Sabbath, even while in prisons and labor camps. Richard Wurmbrandt, a Lutheran pastor who was imprisoned for challenging the Communist authorities, recalls that in prison, everyone knew when it was Saturday because they could hear the Adventists being beaten (2011). Persecution became the most effective missionary activity during the time. Max Banus, a journalist, shares the following story from Stoenesti (a forced labor camp), where the Adventists refused to work on Sabbath.

I have to admit I've never heard about the Adventists before going to prison. I met them for the first time at Stoenesti camp.

The Adventist's problems started on their first day of work. A barber told me of the Adventists: "They are crazy. Have you heard what their request is? They asked the commandant to provide them with raw food and let them cook for themselves. They are not going to eat food prepared by others. And not only that! They said they are not going to work on Saturday. Not in the world. But they are ready to work on Sunday." I smiled, but did not pay much attention to it. I knew the Securitate methods very well.

One Saturday, we returned to the camp very tired. I entered the building and thought I should rest a bit. All my joints ached. Suddenly I heard the sergeant yelling, "Everybody out! In rows!"

What the hell happened? Nobody had a clue. We took our place and the commandant came. We all feared him. He was violent, sadistic . . . brutal. And he was enraged now. He started yelling and shouting. I could not make out much of his speech; I heard only some of the words.

In short, the Adventists had refused to work because it was Saturday. Who did these prisoners think they were? Did they think the regulations were going to be changed because of their foolishness? The commandant could understand why they did not want to eat kitchen cooked food. He was generous and accepted that. But refusing to work? They would be punished as an example. Because they did not work that day, each would get 20 lashes to the soles of their bare feet.

I couldn't sleep all night because of their moans and wailing.

The next morning, Sunday, they could barely walk. I talked to one of them, a peasant from Craiova. "Isn't it a pity, to let yourself be tortured by them?"

The man looked at me with goodness in his eyes. He did not reproach me, didn't tell me this wasn't my business, or chide that I shouldn't meddle. "It's not what you think," he said. "Others have suffered for their faith, too."

I did not understand what he meant. He was intelligent, and was speaking elegantly. "But you know that finally you will have to work on Saturday."

His answer was so determined, I felt uneasy about it. “We will not work on Saturday!” I let him alone and did not insist.

The next day, Monday, we all went to work. I was curious to see what was going to happen to these Adventists. When Friday night arrived, the sergeant on duty summoned them and started to talk politely to each of them. “You should behave wisely. Please do not create trouble again tomorrow! Work, and everything is going to be okay!”

Saturday morning, the Securitate used different tactics. They divided the Adventists and scattered them in different work groups. No more than two Adventist were allowed in a work brigade. There were two in my brigade. I checked them briefly. They were clean, nice-looking people with bright, sincere eyes. On top of that, they were cheerful. “Maybe they have decided to work,” I told myself. It was time to put an end to their ordeal. Both of them were from the Western part of the country, from Transylvania; they were hard, manual workers. One was from Hunedoara, the other from Deva.

We started to work. Both of the Adventists stood with their hands in their pockets. They leaned on each other, not even touching their shovels. Ten minutes passed. The sergeant looked at them with a growing frown. Next to him stood a soldier with a ferocious dog. “You pigs! You really want to upset me? Take your shovels and start working immediately!”

No one said a word. I felt a shiver go down my spine, anticipating what was coming. The Adventists did not move. I didn’t even know their names, but I knew Sergeant Tanase. He was a real beast—a well-known bully. The sergeant walked toward the older prisoner, who was about sixty years old. He hit the prisoner right in the face with full force. The prisoner fell to the ground. Then he stood up again with much difficulty; he could barely remain standing. “Son of a bitch, you will start working immediately!” yelled Sergeant Tanase.

The old Adventist could barely reply, “I am ready to work on Sunday.”

The sergeant got angry, spit on him, took out his gun, and gave it to the soldier. He came closer to the Adventist, threateningly. “You gangster, take your shovel and immediately start working! Now!”

The following scene was unbearable. The sergeant began hitting the prisoner with his feet, palms, and fists. The old man’s face was barely recognizable. He fell to the ground in pain. The other Adventist, the young one, dared to say, “Sir, sergeant, you are going to kill him!”

The sergeant stopped for a moment. Then his face darkened. Turning to the young man, he said, “You, what are you waiting for? You are young and strong, start working!”

It was true; the younger prisoner was tall, strong, perhaps around 30 years old. But he did not move, but just looked at his friend, suffering and writhing on the ground. He started to help him when, suddenly, the sergeant exploded, “Leave him alone and start working!”

The young prisoner did not answer. His countenance became calm.

He knew very well what was coming. The sun was already burning. The sergeant abandoned his cap. His face was sweating. "You bandits, criminals! You will get me in trouble!" And suddenly, without a warning, hit the young man at the carotid. He fell at once.

Somebody yelled, "You killed him!"

The sergeant turned furiously towards the group where the voice came from. "Shut up! The devil does not die so easily."

One prisoner came to help the young Adventist. Others brought water. Finally, the young man came to his senses and looked around him. Some prisoners helped him up. He could barely stand. The sergeant came over to him, threateningly. "You are one of those Adventists, aren't you?" But he did not wait for an answer and asked again, "Why have you been sentenced?"

The prisoner hardly breathed, but made an effort to reply. "Because I am an Adventist."

Sergeant Tanase started yelling again. "You liar! You were sentenced because you did not want to use a gun. Because you don't want to work on Saturday. But now, you will work, criminal! You will work, or you will never leave this place alive!" His face was red. Sweat poured down his face.

Sergeant Tanase was 220 pounds and tall. He looked twice the size of the older prisoner who was still writhing in pain. "Start working! Right now!"

The young Adventist, whose nose was bleeding, stuck his hands in his pockets. I admired him, but I felt he was simply going to commit suicide. Was he crazy or what? The sergeant started to beat him again. And again the young fellow fell to the ground. The sergeant stooped, took him by the coat, and dragged him to the center of the field. "You criminal, I've found something for you!"

The sergeant took a shovel and forcefully hit the ground with it a few times, as if to test its strength. Then he took a tree branch and nailed it to the shovel in such a way that it looked like a cross. He bound the young Adventist to this cross, practically crucifying him. Then the sergeant yelled at him again, "Are you going to work, or not?" The man did not answer; but by not answering, he had given his answer.

The sergeant took a sharp shovel and placed its tip underneath the prisoner's chin, forcing him to stare at the sun. We were watching a man being crucified on a cross. "When you decide you are going to work, I will take you down, and you will be free."

The young man could barely breathe. With a hoarse voice, he answered, "I am not going to work on Saturday."

"You will work, criminal! You will work, unless you want to die!"

An hour passed. The crucified man was so weak he couldn't stand any longer, but he couldn't move either. Sergeant Tanase was circling around him. "Aaah . . . don't you think the sun is beautiful, bastard? Call on your God! Call Him to save you!"

My mind refused to think. My head was spinning. A man was crucified in front of my eyes. And it was the last half of the twentieth century!

None of the Adventists gave up; not one of them had worked on Saturday. To every question, every insult, they simply answered, "I am ready to work on Sunday." During the week, however, they worked normally, and were extremely serene each evening.

Several days passed. When Friday night came upon us again, I was anxious to see what the commandant would come up with. Surely, he would have us go out in rows and would threaten us again. I anticipated that some of us would be beaten. The man tortured by Sergeant Tanase was feeling better.

The Adventists huddled in a corner, speaking in hushed voices. A sergeant came to their corner. A tense silence fell, suddenly. They looked at him calmly. The sergeant stopped right before them. "Maybe he will start threatening them," I thought.

The sergeant inhaled deeply and announced, "Tomorrow you are not going to work. It is the commandant's order. You will work on Sunday!" No one said a word. One could hear a pin drop. The sergeant turned and left. And when he was nowhere in sight, and no one could see them, the Adventist prisoners embraced each other, with tears in their eyes.

The Securitate, the beastly Securitate, was felled by some simple people who believed in a more simple life. Cruelty was defeated. By goodness. By dignity. By perseverance. By unity. (Banus 1991, translated by Cristian Dumitrescu)

The Communist Religious Liberty Law of 1952 officially recognized the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Romania as a legitimate religion for the first time. Ironically, this law was followed by the arrest of the entire union and conference leadership and pastors in 1958 for supposed financial fraud. Although only the union president and treasurer served long sentences, many pastors were never able to return to serve their churches in an official ministerial capacity (Modoran 2013). In spite of the brutal decapitation of the church, membership growth continued under the ad-hoc leadership of local elders or deacons.

The church entered a new phase when the secret police, the Securitate, infiltrated all levels of the church structure. Archive documents prove today that all of the union and conference presidents, as well as some of the other leaders, were Securitate informers or even secret police agents. The Communists made sure that seminary theology students were recruited early and trained to accept the control of the government over the church. Everyone became suspicious of everybody else. When church leaders could not be trusted, local members organized and ran underground networks in order to smuggle Bibles into the country and illegally print

children's Sabbath School lessons. Members would conduct Bible studies during a time when two families gathered together, which gave the Communist authorities cause for alarm. Underground youth meetings took place in high-rise apartments, in the forests outside cities and towns, and youth camps were organized in the mountains. The 1960s and 1970s were years of miraculous and constant growth, in spite of the more subtle, but vicious, persecution.

After the fall of Communism, the 1990s again saw explosive growth within the Adventist Church. Between 1990 and 1992, there was phenomenal religious interest due to the demise of Communism. Yet after 1992, this interest started to fade as materialism replaced the previous shortage of food and goods and the consumerist society brought with it secularization. Although the statistics indicate a membership decline only after 2000, the process actually started earlier. Adventists followed the trend of the general population and looked for opportunities to immigrate or to look for better-paid jobs in Western Europe.

Sadly, the first decade of the 2000s was marked by a fairly steep decline in membership. However, again, quantitative measurements cannot accurately reflect the reality experienced on the ground. Although the yearly number of baptisms continued to be significant, the membership drain towards other corners of the earth became unstoppable—especially after Romania joined the European Union, and people could travel without a visa or work permit. This, coupled with an aging church due to the departure of young people and local church leaders, caused the total number of members to suffer a significant drop. The sudden growth of the Italian, Spanish, Greek, Irish, and other Adventist Unions in Western European countries during this time is, actually, due to the great influx of Romanian Adventists. In fact, more than half of the Spanish Union's membership is currently made up of Romanians.

The mission endeavors of the Adventist Church in Romania are still active, but the approaches have evolved in order to reflect the changing context. Radio and TV programs, social media projects, religious liberty conferences, educational institutions and academic programs, hospitals and nursing schools, prison ministries, study by correspondence schools, and development and relief activities are now part of the scenario. As secularism becomes the norm in Romanian society, the church must adapt and contextualize its strategies, basing them not only on quantitative measurements but also on qualitative ones.

Conclusion

The cases above demonstrate that numbers alone cannot adequately portray history. However, the information in each figure regarding church membership figures should raise our curiosity, prompting us to ask questions that only historical research can answer.

Quantitative studies are more useful in understanding and diagnosing church health and missiological effectiveness when it comes to contexts where social and cultural phenomenon happen in rapid succession or even overlap. However, mission strategies should be based on a contextual and historical understanding that reveals the mosaic of factors that support or inhibit growth. Numbers alone may deceive us into believing all is well; however, when statistics are fleshed out with historical lessons, mission strategies become sharper and more effective.

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WARREN SHIPTON, YOUSRY GUIRGUIS, AND NOLA TUDU

Humanism and Christianity: Shared Values?

Introduction

The word humanism is derived from the Latin *humanitas* that originally meant the study of human nature. The idea was to elevate humanity with a focus on human dignity and potential through education (Ritchie and Spencer 2014:15, 16). The meaning attributed to the word humanism, in its broadest sense, allowed Christians and non-believers initially to occupy common territory (64-78). In the early-middle Christian era, some thinkers sought to acquaint themselves with the achievements, literature, and thought of past civilizations, particularly Greek, with a view to reconciling theology with the philosophy of the classical philosophers (*New World Encyclopedia* n.d.; Odom 1977:126-128, 183-186). Outside Christian circles, elements supportive of the pre-eminence of human thought and abilities have long been seen among philosophers; however, not all forms of humanism were atheistic, as seen in Confucian thought (Gupta 2000:8-12). There also are those who have been called “religious” or “spiritual” humanists (Eller 2010:10).

The Medieval civilization that followed the collapse of the Roman Empire (AD 476) was marked by the rule of kings with nobles supporting the king in return for privileges. The majority of the population existed in serfdom; the Church reigned supreme. A change came in the 14th century helped by the fact that famine and disease created disaster. The abuses in the Church and the pessimism prevalent in society created a climate for change in Europe. The change commenced in northern Italy where some of the cultural greatness of the ancient world, Greece, and Rome was still

retained. The merchants and artisans encouraged the artistic revival on account of the political and economic environment associated with the great trading cities there. Individualism was permitted to flourish, and the Renaissance was born, an era that fostered creative thinking and individualism (Bolles Organization n.d.; Brown 2013:33-36, 42; Burke 2014:33-36, 42).

The Renaissance (14th-17th century) was a cultural movement that had a widespread influence on the humanities—language, literature, linguistics, history, classics, philosophy, ethics, politics, religion, and art—with the aim to produce individuals of good language and analytical skills. It affected the intellectual life of Europe, beginning in Italy. About the sixteenth century, the movement spread throughout Europe. It was a reaction against the stultifying effect of the Middle Ages; the movement sought to stimulate intellectual life through reviving interest in the works particularly of Greek scholars and sought new approaches to human endeavors. Its influence was felt in religious circles too, although it was not an anti-religious movement initially. Many of the great works of the Renaissance were devoted to Christianity. However, a subtle shift came when the intellectuals of that era approached religion by using strategies adopted in many other areas of learning (Michael 2007:169).

Emphasis on the dignity of humans as rational beings apart from the idea that God made them led eventually to an anti-religious idea being applied to the cultural movement. The pre-eminence of the Scriptures was displaced progressively in preference to reliance on the human intellect. This movement would lead, ultimately, to the idea that final authority rested with humans and that nature was the teacher (Gupta 2000:8; Ritchie and Spencer 2014:17-18; Schaeffer 1990:214-218). The basic issue was that Christians regarded the inner human nature as fallen, whereas those in the classic humanistic tradition of the Greek philosophers rejected this concept (Dallmayr 2009:139). It was the mathematician Blaise Pascal who said regarding the inadequacy of human self-understanding—“Know haughty man, what a paradox you are yourself. Humble yourself, impotent reason; be silent, imbecile nature; learn that man infinitely surpasses man, and hear from our [divine] master your true condition of which you are ignorant of. Listen to God” (Pascal 1864:244-245). Pascal here appealed to a higher voice than human reason for understanding humanity. He regarded introspection as pointless, as a means of learning about human nature. In so doing, he rejected the self-confidence expressed by naturalistic/secular humanists (245-247).

Hence, different forms of humanism emerged (e.g., Existentialism, Liberalism, Marxism, Naturalistic). Still, the consequence has been to displace the idea of the supernatural in favor of humans determining their own destiny and the shape of the society in which they live according

to the dictates of reason and as a result of their own efforts. The central concern of humanism, ancient and modern, has been to assist humans in reaching their full potential and experiencing happiness. Most humanists are interested in the here and now and not the hereafter, if indeed their emphasis even extends to that domain (Gupta 2000:8-10).

Today the predominant varieties of humanism found in the West have a decidedly anti-religious stance, as seen in the Amsterdam Declaration issued by the International Humanist and Ethical Union (Humanists International 2002). While the Declaration was comprehensive in its scope, it was brief in its content. It affirmed, “the worth, dignity and autonomy of the individual and the right of every human being to the greatest possible freedom compatible with the rights of others” (Cliquet and Avramov 2018:178, 179). The framers of the Declaration saw modern humanism as a viable alternative to “dogmatic religion” (Spencer 2016:67). This type of humanism might be labelled Naturalistic humanism or Secular humanism (Deagon 2017:43).

In this article, the strand of Christian humanism, that sometimes is labelled *ideal* (see Explanatory Note), is affirmed and is supported by Christ’s words and actions, (compare: Gupta 2000:6-7; Murray 1941:106-115) as seen in the statement made in Mark 2:27 (NKJV). “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath,” and in his and his followers commitment to the well-being of the human race (Gupta 2000:6-7; Ritchie and Spencer 2014:54, 55). The pursuit of this form of humanism was championed by the early church and the Reformation champions. Those in the movement understood that the Bible provides a basic knowledge of the Creator God, humans, and nature. Fallen humanity is guilty before God and can do nothing to rectify the situation, but God has provided the way to remedy the problem. He gave all heaven to remove our guilt and to deliver humanity from eternal destruction (Schaeffer 1990:147, 218, 240). Hence, ideal humanism gives unity to knowledge and provides a group of ideals designed to promote human well-being, social functioning, an elevated concept of nature, and a hopeful and thankful view of the future. In other words, humans have a purpose in this world.

Secular or Naturalistic Humanist Ideals

Naturalistic humanism dispenses with any form of supernaturalism and insists that life, as experienced in the here and now, is the only form that exists (Gupta 2000:8). Naturalistic humanism places value on reason, free thought, and criticism of religion. However, there is no agreed defence of the position taken. Commonly, atheism is seen as a worldview without

god, a natural cosmology, based on science and capable of discovering all reality. For others, atheism is the exaltation of reason that gravitates to an attack on religion as being unreasonable (Shook 2015).

The ideals enunciated by secular humanism are contained in the Amsterdam Declaration (Humanists International 2002), which identifies seven fundamentals. At the outset, the Declaration aligns the Congress as “friendly to evolution, anathema to dogma.” It finds no place for divine intervention in the solution to this world’s problems or for world religions. The seven fundamentals of secular humanism are as follows:

1. Ethics and morality are inherent rather than external or imposed. The worth, dignity, and autonomy of individuals are affirmed giving freedom compatible with the rights of others.
2. Rational thought and action by applying science and technology is a way to solve human problems rather than seeking divine intervention. The creative use of science is affirmed.
3. Democracy and human development are rights and are applicable to many relationships and are not limited to methods of government. The fullest possible development of humans is a right, together with experiencing the principles of democracy.
4. Personal liberty and social responsibility are noble aims. In pursuing these, personal responsibility to society and the natural world is recognized.
5. Humanism is an avenue to reliable knowledge in contrast to that offered by dogmatic religions.
6. Artistic creativity and imagination are valued. The transformational significance of literature, music, and the visual and performing art is recognized.
7. Maximum possible life-fulfillment is the aim, being achieved through creative, ethical, and rational means.

The question might be asked, which of these secular humanist ideals can be supported by the religious community.

Christian Ideals Contrasted with Humanistic Ideas

It has been observed that many of the beliefs of humanism have their origins in Christian thought and find a more solid foundation there than in an atheistic setting (Ritchie and Spencer 2014:29).

Ethics and Morality

For secular humanists, ethical understanding comes from within a person's concern for others rather than via divine authorization. On the other hand, for the Christian, ethical understandings are based on the character of God, as revealed through the teachings of Jesus, especially as expressed in Matthew 22. Love to God and fellow humans is described in verses 37 to 40 as representing the fulfilment of the law, for it reflects God's character (1 John 4:8). In contrast to the relative expression of ethical values in much of human endeavour, many Christians hold that there are absolute values. A genuine and lasting ethic derives from the principle of love, God's self-giving love. The recognition of this love, the ability of humans to experience it, and a grateful acceptance of its reality are expressed in sharing with others as equals (worthy and dignified—see the next section); it does not come in response to the promise of rewards or threat of punishment. Such a view gives access to objective moral truth (Ritchie and Spencer 2014:63-64, 74).

Christian ethics increase self-understanding as well as mutual understanding. It is two-dimensional—vertical and horizontal. The vertical dimension relates to a personal God; the horizontal dimension concerns the welfare of others. There is a theocentric element to Christian ethics that deals with what God does to deal with evil. God is at work to bring reconciliation to the world. The Christian will reflect the grace and the peace of God offered (cf. Eph 1:2; 6:23, 24). The believer is called to highlight the redemptive role of Christ as the central figure in overcoming evil (cf. Eph 1:15-23; 2). Ideally, the Christian will exhibit a life that is free from the destructive evil that surrounds them and give considerable attention concerning the development of character and virtue. The message of Paul to the Ephesians explains the redemptive act of God. The Church should play a reciprocal role in being an agent of light to the world, showing how the gospel transforms and reconciles individuals (Eph 3:8-10). A special responsibility devolves on the community of believers (ecclesial) created and redeemed by Christ. There is mutual encouragement within the community of faith to “walk worthy” of their calling. Corporate worship (liturgy) is regarded as essential to witnessing, and is seen as an activity that shapes the approach to other tasks as well. Worship assists the believers to perceive the world as it truly is and it provides a forum to encourage others to live faithfully (Eph 4-5). The final aspect of Christian ethics is eschatological. The focus is on the fact that, as God created things perfectly and not tainted by sin, he will re-create things anew. Christian ethics find fulfillment when witnessing and worshipping are anchored on the hope of the fulfillment of last day events (Holloway 2013:11-16).

Dignity, Autonomy, and Worth: Human dignity is variously described and disputed among ethicists. The term can be used in the social arena. It has a prominent role in the Declaration of Human Rights. The basis of the inviolable rights, however, are given sparse attention in secular humanistic literature, but seem to reside in keeping a decent individual identity. Humans are considered by some humanists to have “an intrinsic worth” on account of their rationality and hence are capable of recognizing moral law. This is a flawed view as some impaired individuals are not gifted with great rational faculties. In the biblical sense, an individual has worth because they are loved, in this context by God (Rachels 1986:114-117, 122-123; Stoecker 2011:7-17; Ritchie and Spencer 2014:51, 57).

Human dignity is connected with loved individuals being created in the image of God and the fact that Christ died for all. Humans, as created, shared some of the characteristics of their Maker—creative, productive, and generous; they have a sense of purpose in stewardship; and they recognize their relational obligations to God, others, and created things. This represents the Christian ideal (Ritchie and Spencer 2014:51-53). The entrance of sin damaged the image of God in the human family, but salvation’s offer contains within it the promise of its restoration.

Being created in the image of God has profound significance for the Christian. Human creation represented acts wholly distinct from those involving the creation of other life forms in that God was involved in personal, preparatory acts before breathing into the nostrils of the clay model of a man. Then he created a woman after surgery on the man (Gen 2:7). Humans shared something of the physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual qualities of God. In the physical domain, they were clothed with light (Ps 104:2; cf. Gen 3:7, 11), and given useful and pleasurable employment—dignity of work (Gen 2:15). In the social area, they were created to complement each other and be procreative (Gen 1:28; 2:20-24). Intellectually, Adam was challenged immediately to be creative in thought and to accept the responsibility to care for the environment in which he was placed (Gen 2:15, 19). Spiritually, the couple was immediately involved in relationship building with their Creator on creation day and especially the day after they were formed (Gen 2:2, 3; cf. Mark 2:27; Heb 4:4-7). At creation, they also were provided with an inbuilt concept of right and wrong (absolutes) and a moral compass, the conscience, to keep them focused on their Maker and his ways (Rom 2:14-16). The presence of rational faculties enabled them to choose (Davis 1977:14-15, 27-34). The moral fabric given to the race represents the area of fundamental significance in describing the substantive nature of the “image of God.” This becomes evident in that Christ came to restore the marred image damaged by moral lapses. Restoration will result in the moral redirection and the development of other faculties (White 1952:14-16).

The human race was formed from the dust through the will and acts of God. He gave essentially worthless dirt value through his creative act. The race was given autonomy, which they exercised in defiance of God's expressed desires (Gen 3:11). In so doing, the image of God was marred (White 1973:11). Following the Fall, human worth and dignity, in God's eyes, was proclaimed afresh through the price paid for the race's salvation and the promise (inherent in the sacrifice) to repair the marred image (create a new heart, Rom 12:1-2). This was the position of the Dutch philosopher and Christian humanist Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536; famous for his creation of a new Greek edition and Latin translation of the New Testament "NT") who argued that human dignity was established through Christ's atonement and the abundant grace he offered (Gupta 2000:7).

It is through the cross alone that we can estimate the worth of the human soul. Such is the value of men for whom Christ died that the Father is satisfied with the infinite price which He pays for the salvation of man in yielding up His own Son to die for their redemption. What wisdom, mercy, and love in its fullness are here manifested! The worth of man is known only by going to Calvary. In the mystery of the cross of Christ we can place an estimate upon man. (White 1973:175)

Since Christ died for all (2 Cor 5:14-15), it follows that all are of equal worth in his sight. "The wealth of earth dwindles into insignificance when compared with the worth of a single soul for whom our Lord and Master died. He who weigheth the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance, regards a human soul as of infinite value" (White 1892:71).

Rationality and Faith

Propositions that are not contrary to reason are termed rational. In this respect, there is some common ground with the humanist and the Christian. However, the similarity is fragile when it is considered that for the secular humanist, all knowledge, meaning, and value are sought within the human sphere. Such individuals are termed rationalistic (Shaeffer 1990:9, 124).

Investigation of the processes and events in the natural world are realistically pursued using observation and analytical methods. The avenues of knowing in classical philosophy center on logic (deductive and inductive). However, there are yet other avenues for gaining information about the world (Kattsoff 1953:67).

When the formation of associations among observations is accompanied with explanations, this is classified as the expression of reason. It was the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BC) who held that

our humanness was defined by our reasoning ability. Reason involves assessing evidence, evaluating arguments and so on—judgment is involved. Some issues confronted in life are so complex that the discovery of a solution is not possible through the application of reason, which leaves desires and emotions to take over. The purest form of reason is known as logic. This involves forming valid arguments (do the conclusions follow from the premises made), rather than determining the truth of an assertion (Burton 2019; Dorrien 2012:38-42). Logic has its limitations of which language is a foundational problem. Logic in the biological sphere is not thought of as being dependent on unchangeable rules, and rather it varies depending on the constraints imposed by the prevailing conditions. Hence, for an evolutionary biologist, logic is relative (Cooper 2001:177-180). In other words, humanity expresses ignorance personally as well as collectively in various ways.

There are limitations on the reliability of our reasoning ability on account of the damage brought through sin (Ritchie and Spencer 2014:34-35). This means there are limits to our understanding of the universe. Such a limitation can be illustrated in quantum mechanics where the very act of observing something appears to change what is observed (Webb 2013). Even after a hundred years from the formulation of the theory of quantum mechanics, scientists do not agree on what the theory says about reality or whether reality actually exists. For one author, quantum mechanics simply expresses human ignorance for there is no certainty what it actually describes about tiny particles (’t Hooft 2018).

Reasoning is an essential part of formulating explanations in the scientific domain. Generating explanations from observations (inductive reasoning), cannot give certainty. Such an approach is problematic and at best can provide possible solutions. With the arrival of quantum mechanics and the theory of relativity, it became evident that certainty of knowledge was not attainable. To move forward, the widely accepted approach in much of science is to generate an hypothesis from observations and then enunciate logical outcomes (deductive reasoning). Falsification of these expected outcomes would mean that the theory requires alteration or the generation of an alternative explanation. Scientists attempt to eliminate sources of error in their investigations and maximize the probability that the explanations offered are credible. Hence, it can be seen that reasoned processes are integral to science, but at the same time, these processes do not necessarily lead to absolute certainty of knowledge (Andersen and Hepburn 2016).

Information gained in the scientific domain through experimentation, hence, is best regarded as tentative. This has been summarized well by R. A. Lyttleton in the statement: “Never let your bead ever quite reach

the position 0 or 1." By this, he meant that scientists should keep an open mind and never be totally certain or be completely unbelieving in a new idea (Lyttleton 1977:13-15). A similar type of argument was formulated by David Hume, who maintained that "all knowledge degenerates into probability." There is some truth in such advice (Lynch 1996:90), as seen often in science. Something that may be scoffed at today is embraced tomorrow, as for instance the discovery that stomach ulcers could be caused by a bacterium. This idea was initially dismissed, but its proponents persevered and won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2005 for their efforts (Nobel Prize Organization 2005). A great number of theories have been discarded or altered with the accumulation of knowledge and this practice will continue. One of the most notable changes has occurred in the field of geology where the dominance of the theory of uniformitarianism (the present is the key to the past) has been displaced by the recognition that catastrophic events have occurred, as for example the occurrence of mega-flood events. Both views are now combined in a modern synthesis (Rogers 2017).

Blind faith is not in the vocabulary of the Christian. Faith is a reasoned and reasonable response to the evidence available. The exercise of the reasoning powers of the mind is essential in living the Christian life, as indicated by the apostle John: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1 NKJV). Such tests are completed against certain criteria; in other words, the truth of a phenomenon can be determined (Isa 8:20). Knowing what is true is, for the Christian, to embrace a greater pool of knowledge and experience than the atheist. An infinite-personal God is acknowledged, as are the realities of human creation in the image of God, the subsequent Fall, and Christ's death and resurrection to rescue doomed humanity. This allows a unified body of knowledge and a proper place for God, humans, nature, law, morals, and a concept of good and evil (Schaeffer 1990:218, 261-264).

The Scriptures reveal the origin of the cosmos, humans, and of evil. The post-fall purpose and destiny of humanity are revealed if the Christ-story is accepted. The Bible presents a coherent account of the human condition and brings hope and direction in a fractured world. It invites the engagement of reason in the pursuit of understanding the world about us. The existence of such a coherent view also explains the reason for scientific advances spearheaded by Christians in the early period of modern science (Schaeffer 1990:226). Studies undertaken by physicists have revealed the exceptional fine-tuning of our universe, which is essential for life. Christians take this as a piece of strong evidence for the planning and creative activity of God.

Both science and religion are faith-based. In the Christian religion, faith involves accepting the work of salvation completed by Christ on the cross. Faith rests on a person and his acts, meaning that faith has substantive content. The individual accepts the divine solution to the problem of guilt (Schaeffer 1990:146, 147). Science demonstrates its faith in the belief that the universe is ordered by physical laws. So far, this has proven to be the case. For rationalistic minds, there is no answer to the question: Where do these laws come from? They are of unspecified origin—"they just are." A well-respected cosmologist, Paul Davies, has remarked, such an answer "is deeply anti-rational." For the notorious atheist, Antony Flew, this question and others, such as the origin of life and reproduction, were the turning point in his acceptance of the notion that there is a God. Failure of scientists to answer such questions leaves orthodox science at present with a substantial claim to dependency on some form of faith (Davies 2007; Flew 2007:95-96).

The avenues of knowing accepted by believers are as illustrated in table 1 below—revelation and experience. This means that the Christian has access to explanations that an atheist must be content in calling coincidences. The prophet Daniel and apostle John mentioned, or demonstrated by their actions, a heaven-inspired opinion on fundamental aspects of knowing in four areas commonly understood as being capable of contributing to certainty by a Christian believer. These four areas of knowing were affirmed by our Lord (e.g., Luke 7:22-23; 10:2-9, 17; 14:8-11; 15:11-25; 24:25-27).

Table 1. Some Foundational Aspects of Knowing Acknowledged in Scripture through the Period When Sacred History Was Written. Indicative Verses/Passages Are Mentioned

Aspect	Time Frame			
	~1500 BC	c. 1400-900 BC	c.800-300 BC	27-100 AD
Revelation and/or Scripture	Job 38-41	1 Sam 3:10-14; 1 Kgs 17:16	Isa 45:1-3; Dan 9:2	2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:19-21; Rev 1:3, 9-11
Experience (authority)	Exod 17:11-13; Job 42:7-10	Josh 4:22-24; 23:14	Ps 32; Dan 3:21, 26-28	2 Pet 1:16-18; Rev 12:11
Logic (reason)	Job 21:22-34; Exod 18:12-26	Josh 23:14-16; Judg 13:22-24	Dan 9:1-6	Acts 17:11; Heb 6:4-6; Rev 13:18
Experimentation	Gen 2:19; 3:6-7; 11:2-9	Judg 6:37-40; 1 Kgs 18:20-39; Ps. 34:8	Dan 1:12-19	Matt 6:33; Rev 10:9-11

The apostle Peter has given one of the most explicit statements regarding the place of prophecy. “We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts” (2 Pet 1:19 NIV).

A similar affirmation was given by Christ in the words: “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” (Luke 24:25-26 NKJV).

Prophecy cannot be removed from the study of history and archaeology. The words of the prophet must be assigned a given place and time, and the authenticity of the author established. The accepted manner for conservative Christians to approach such problems is through the application of the grammatical-historical method, a method involving examination of the language of the text and the historical circumstances at the time of writing. The goal is to find the meaning that the authors of the Bible intended to convey and which will be understood by the readers. The method makes a number of assumptions of which the most significant are the recognition of the Bible in its entirety as the Word of God, belief in the unity of the scriptural record, Scripture as its own interpreter, and the literal meaning of the text can be found only by referring to the original language in which it was written (Surburg 1974:281). Even with the best endeavors, the full meaning of the text may not be evident as the words were written by human authors under the influence of the Holy Spirit in a cultural context with language limitations. Subsequent readers of the text are operating under different circumstances with limitations (Poynthress 2007:97-101).

Even with the limitations indicated, prophecy is a source of knowledge. It can be tested against historical data. It has been rightly said that: “Evidence is the pillar of historical research.” From this evidence, the past is reconstructed. Certainly, there are challenges, but objectivity is possible using the best methods and precautions available (Adeoti and Adeyeri 2012). Archaeology is a close companion in the reconstruction of history in certain fields. Take, for instance, the history of ancient Egypt. Some regard the Old Testament (OT) stories as entirely fictional on account of being unable to find verifiable archaeological evidence of the ancient Israelite nation. The problem sometimes resides in the chronological framework into which scholars have attempted to fit the jigsaw puzzle pieces. When a revised chronology is applied, the narratives in the OT are consistent with archaeological findings, which moves the Bible from the category of myth to history (Rohl 1995:7-39).

As an illustration of the benefit of prophetic knowledge, consider those early believers who took the advice of Christ to respect the words of Daniel the prophet regarding the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt 24:15-20; cf. Dan 9:27b). Their action on this belief saved them from certain death. The historical details are as follows. Jerusalem was assailed by Cestilius Gallus in AD 66/67 to quell a rebellion. He set up a camp on the Mount Scopus and was able to enter the city, but failed to capture the Temple Mount. He was unaware of how close he was to overcoming the city and instead of pressing the siege, he withdrew and suffered heavy losses in an ambush. This withdrawal is seen by some as providing an opportunity for the Christians to escape. A subsequent opportunity apparently also existed during Vespasian's temporary cessation of military activities in Judea following Nero's death and the civil war in Rome. Jerusalem finally was taken by Vespasian's son, Titus, in AD 70. Early historians record the escape of the Christians to Pella before the destruction of Jerusalem (Josephus 1936: book 2, chap. 19, sect. 7; Maarschalk 2017; Scott 1998; Sheppard 2013:11). Pella was one of the ten cities on the east bank of the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee; it is about 80 kilometers northeast of Jerusalem in what the Romans called the Decapolis. Pella functioned as the "home of the first Christian community" (Gottheil and Krauss 1906).

Another example of the uncanny accuracy of prophetic knowledge is illustrated by the words of the prophet Isaiah (45:1). He gives interesting insights into the fall of Babylon to Cyrus well before the event. The Euphrates River ran through the city, which was secured against entry by brass river gates. In a cunning strategy, Cyrus diverted the river and his troops traversed the riverbed and entered through river gates that had not been secured (Halsall 1989:20-29; Herodotus 1862:1.189-1.192). The fall of Babylon was foretold by Isaiah about 150 years before it took place (Lim 2018: chap. 11).

Personal experience and the witness of those in authority can be a powerful informer. When John the Baptist's disciples came enquiring about of Christ whether he was the One who was to come for the salvation of the race, his reply was: "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that *the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them*" (Luke 7:22, NKJV). The story of John Newton's conversion stands as a witness to the power of experience. Exposed to Christianity early in life, this slave trader, blasphemer, and reprobate was converted during an enormous storm at sea after reading *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis in which the uncertainty of life had been highlighted. He accepted that he was a sinner and that he was forgiven through his faith in Jesus. He was ordained in 1768 into the ministry within the Anglican Church and spent

the remainder of his years living out his faith. His efforts after conversion helped William Wilberforce's efforts to end the slave trade. The hymns he composed ("Amazing Grace" is the most remembered) stand testimony to his sincerity and have functioned to strengthen many (Sheward 2015).

Democracy and Human Rights (Equality)

Humanists indicate that the fullest possible development of humans (education) is a right together with experiencing the principles of democracy. Humanists have a focused interest on human rights and issues of equality (e.g., access to abortion, right to die with dignity). Opposition is well established to exemptions provided to religious and belief groups enabling them to discriminate. For example, there is strong opposition to discrimination in employment on the grounds of religion/beliefs or admission to educational institutions or housing arrangements on such a basis. There is a dedicated campaign to eliminate all practices, in the public domain, with any reference to religious belief, including the issuing of postage stamps containing religious symbols. Where faith-based hospitals or schools are publically funded by the state, then even the elimination of all religious symbols in public wards is urged (Humanists UK 2019; Humanist Association of Ireland 2009; Humanist Society of South Australia 2018).

Democracy is favored by humanists since the basic concept is that the pooling of wisdom of the people gives rise to the least adverse solutions and removes decisions from those with special insights into the will of God or gods. It is contended that democracy is efficient in terms of figuring out what to do in the absence of divine guidance and it attempts to act justly through giving equal rights to all. However, the proposition also has been made that pooled knowledge may give rise to collective ignorance (Morris 2015) or, we might say, descent to the lowest common denominator in the absence of recognition of absolute standards.

Democratic governments are faced with the problem that the majority have the ability to overpower the minority. Indeed, in the movement, noted on the world stage, towards direct democracy, where every individual has a vote on issues, the minority could be oppressed. This difficulty is somewhat removed in a representative democracy, where the people's representatives are meant to champion ideas or broker compromises (Radu 2017).

Christians have and continue to live under various forms of government. The Scriptures give advice that governments are to be recognized and their laws respected (Rom 13:3). This does not mean that Christians are never to become politically active (cf. Gen 42:6; Dan 2:48; 5:29). While

the general principle for the Christian is to avoid political activity, the believers can exercise their knowledge of politics without compromising their faith. However, the example of Jesus comes to the fore in that he did not enter into political debate, although he did make comments about those with religious privilege who lorded it over others through their religious, rigid laws. He always upheld the existence of absolute moral standards based on God's character.

When it comes to the post-theocratic period of God's leading of his people, the reign of kings and the guidance of prophets, the NT church leaders discussed issues. They came to a reasoned outcome that functioned to preserve the doctrinal integrity of the church, promote unity, and act with understanding towards various cultural groups (Acts 15). There was a certain level of democracy involved. It has been argued in some quarters that non-democratic authority is inefficient and repressive (Moiser 1975:100-110). There is certainly truth in this assertion, which is evident in that selected Christian groups have adopted different models of democracy based on the concept that democracy is consistent with the gospel message and the general tenure of instruction in the NT.

Personal Liberty and Social Responsibility

Personal liberty and social responsibility indeed are noble aims. In pursuing these, personal responsibility to society and the natural world are recognized. Liberty pursued without justice rewards privilege, and emphasis on social justice without liberty serves to repress individuality and with it initiative and creativity. Hence, humanism finds liberty and justice best served under a democratic system of government. A balance between the two is sought within societies with the aim to further societal development and promote its peaceful operation governed by appropriate high cultural ideals while encouraging it to move towards worthier ideals. Hence, humanism rejects the notion of absolute truth and rejects social conformity. Rather, it moves endlessly to reform and improve so as to maintain the "spirit of outrage against any degradation to humanity" (Shook 2012).

Humanism also seeks another type of liberty, that is, freedom from an external metaphysical environment, so that one is free to determine the moral values accepted. In fact, humanity is itself the source of truth and morality; it is autonomous (Dallmayr 2009:139, 142). While humanism played a role in increasing the knowledge of the outside world, it was during the Reformation era that the inner self was brought into focus.

The rule of law in the West, with its democratic institutions, has been influenced deeply by biblical principles and the higher law that it

proclaims. This emphasis has given rise to many rights and freedoms, for all humans are considered equal in God's sight. Personal liberty is provided under God's law in terms of the understanding that it fosters the good of society (Zimmermann 2005:67-73). However, for many, the concept of social justice and good works may be lost in the emphasis on the centrality of faith. This is not merited for the Bible admonishes all to love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly before God (Mic 6:8). The basic characteristics used to describe God are that "righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne" (Ps 89:14 NKJV). It follows that these two elements are to be reflected in the lives of believers, as emphasized by Jesus (Matt 22:38-40). It also has been pointed out that the gospel is primarily about justice (Rom 3:16). God has delivered humanity from the oppression of guilt and has promised liberty as well as moral and spiritual renewal. God's involvement in human affairs by his death on the cross indicates, in a radical manner, the interest he showed towards members of all social classes and in promising justice to all (Marshall 2000:11-14).

Jesus' acts on earth indicated that he was interested in delivering social justice to those in the communities he served and this is our example to follow (Acts 10:35). Jesus said, "He [Spirit] has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19 NIV). In order to display the same attitude, conversion is required; a radical change in thinking occurs (Luke 19:1-10). The outcome of such a change is outlined in Matthew 25 (vv. 31-46; Dudley and Hernandez 1991:14-15, 26; Pittman and Drumm 2008). Liberty offered in Christ does not mean a license to do whatever one wishes (Rom 6:18-22). The ability to become a "dutiful servant of all" is a consequence of the gift of grace received. Christian liberty from sin given to believers, as a consequence of justification, is recognized as freely given and unmerited, leading to the generous attitude displayed by those receiving grace towards others. In joyful recognition of this gift, the believer is more than willing to share knowledge of the gift of salvation with neighbors. More than this, service devolves from the freedom given (Forell 2002).

The social responsibility for the Christian moves beyond an interest in and concern for our fellows—the poor and suffering. It involves responsibilities towards creation that labours in bondage and pain (Rom 8:20-22). Our attitude towards God's creation, His second book of information (Rom 2:14-16), and the stewardship role that we have been given to preserve it (rather than domination and destructive utilization) represents a compassionate view that is consistent with Jesus' example of stewardship and His concern regarding the callous and the destructive

attitude towards His works expressed by some (Rev 11:18). Our treatment of creation affects the dumb creatures, the present generation, and those generations to come.

Secular Humanism an Alternative to Dogmatic Religion

It is held in the Declaration that secular humanism is an avenue to reliable knowledge in contrast to that offered by dogmatic religions, for it arises through a “continuing process of observation, evaluation and revision” (Humanists International 2002).

Secular humanism, at its core, is against all religions that have a belief in the supernatural. Throughout history, neither the major religions nor notable atheistic regimes have any claim to the moral high ground. Millions have suffered under the repression of both in their attempts to force compliance to their belief systems.

Reliable knowledge is not limited to the domain of science. David Berlinski, mathematician and a secular Jew, said: “Arguments follow assumptions, and assumptions follow from beliefs, and very rarely—perhaps never—do beliefs reflect an agenda entirely by the facts” (Berlinski 2010:135). Albert Einstein also said: “Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind” (Einstein 2011:335). The Templeton Prize-winning scientist, Marcelo Gleiser, resonated with this comment when he asserted that science has been unable to provide answers to the mystery of our unique human existence. He went on to say that “atheism is inconsistent with the scientific method—no doubt a shocker to those who take it at face value” (Gleiser 2016:69). This claim was made on account of the inconsistency of some who dogmatically proclaim their atheism and all the while being prepared to make judgments on whether something is right or wrong in the absence of evidence (Billings 2019).

Artistic Creativity and Imagination Are Valued

The transformational significance of literature, music, and the visual and performing arts is recognized. Within the humanistic movement, symbolism is valued as it is considered to give another dimension to knowing beyond the physical world. It facilitates self-understanding so that humans can reach a higher level of self-understanding. Language is one form of symbolism (Dallmayr 2009:140). Art, music, poetry, and the performing arts also have been used to convey philosophical ideas, as seen clearly in Italian Renaissance paintings and iconography. The Renaissance approach varied with contrasting themes being portrayed with those conveying a humanistic emphasis being illustrated as superior to concepts held by the

church and state. The Renaissance was a time of extraordinary vitality in the arts—in metalworking, architecture, painting, and sculpture. Art was used as a device to change culture and to elevate the power of the human mind and gave expression to individualism (Grudin n.d.; Schaeffer 1990:211-216).

The basic humanistic argument relating to art is that the individual should be free to create to gain and give aesthetic satisfaction and in so doing convey the uniqueness of the individual. However, in this view assessment of a work of art or literature cannot be judged against some “correct” standard. It is valued because it represents a unique and individual creation; it is a creative expression (Wilsmore 1987:336-344). Christians hold to another view.

Christians believe in creativity. First and foremost, humans were created in God’s image and hence they possess creativity. Adam was struck by the beauty and appeal of Eve and the account in the first three chapters of Genesis conveys the idea that the special Garden made by God was full of pleasing and distractingly beautiful features. The beauty in creation was meant to maintain our focus on the Creator and to awaken a desire for eternity with Him (Eccl 3:1; Pastirčák n.d.).

The expression of creativity and production of skilled artistic work was seen in the construction of various versions of the sanctuary / temple featured in the OT (Exod 31:1-10; 39:1-7; 1 Kgs 6:14-38; 7:13-51) and this was approved by God. Song and music was composed and played in this and other environment and the people expressed their joy at the remembrance of the Sabbath by using these art forms (Exod 15:20; 1 Chron 13:7-8; Neh 12:27; Ps 92), as they continue to do in Jerusalem and elsewhere. Indeed, God has provided all things for our enjoyment (Eccl 3:12-13; 1 Tim 6:17) and we are meant to express joyfulness (Luke 15:24).

All of God’s created works and gifts can be subverted and used for evil purposes. Art can be perverted and degenerate into “a religion of nothingness” and artists are exalted to “the status of God” (Pastirčák n.d.). Christian beauties are distinguished from all others in that they express and lead to holiness (Ps 29:2; 96:9), which is something foreign to naturalistic / secular humanism. This establishes parameters about artistic expression and usage in the Christian context.

Aim for Maximum Possible Life-Fulfilment

Maximum possible life-fulfillment is the humanist’s aim, being achieved through creative, ethical, and rational means. In other words, individuals create their own meaning through realizing their own potential, trying to fulfill their desires, and seeking to find justification for sympathy

towards others. Through the exploration of the individual and social areas of existence, a pathway to meaning and fulfillment can be found. Meaningful social relationships provide purpose and fulfillment in the lives of many humanists. It is here where love may be found. God is not needed in order to find such an experience. Other pathways to joy may be found in intellectual pursuits and appreciation of beauty and the wonders around us (Storey n.d.).

Christians believe whole-heartedly in living a fulfilling existence. Living with purpose and experiencing happiness commences with the realization that we were created with a purpose and our Creator-God has assured those who believe in the saving work of Jesus a life hereafter. The tasks given to earthlings are to care for God's creation and to share the love that he has showered on us with those about us. Happiness is found in serving and utilizing the talents given for the benefit of others.

What Should We Think of Christian Humanism?

Christian humanism came to the fore during the Renaissance where freedom from religious authoritarianism, rational enquiry, and freedom to follow the dictates of conscience were held to be compatible with Christian belief. Christ's core command, "You shall love . . . your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27 NKJV) expresses the practical outworking of the philosophical basis on which it rests. The emphasis was on the study of ancient languages—Greek, Latin, and Hebrew—and scriptural and patristic (early Christian theologians) writings and scholarship. The long practiced traditions of inquiry (dialectic method involving back and forth debate used in universities by the scholastically inclined and the use of the allegorical approach to understanding the Bible) were challenged by a reliance on philology (study of languages) and historical methods (so called humanistic methods) to study the classical texts. The motivation was to understand the historical and cultural roots of Christian beliefs and to bring reform and spiritual renewal. The movement stirred a storm of debate, but came to influence clerical education, helped stimulate reform, led to revising the biblical texts, and played a role in the Protestant Reformation. Erasmus, a Catholic scholar and priest, was a leading figure and he issued the NT in Greek in 1514 together with a Latin translation, in which he sought to accurately and clearly present the meaning of the Greek text. Martin Luther identified with such humanistic methods, including much that was accepted by Erasmus, and put belief into practice by translating the Bible into German (Bentley 1983:165; Montfasini 2008:15-38; Nauert 2006:155-180; Rummel 2008:1-14). Hence, these two movements (humanism and Reformation) initially were linked in their conceptual approach.

In the Renaissance period, the humanists, who were interested in the biblical text, placed reliance on philological and historical criteria to establish the meaning of the original Greek text of the NT so enabling it to become the “source of pure moral and religious doctrine and as the record of early Christian experience.” This contrasted with the use of Latin translations by scholastic philosophers and theologians to create support for the theological system erected by the Church (Bentley 1983:3, 8). The emphasis on the philological method laid the foundation for the literal historical-grammatical approach to biblical interpretation favored by the Reformers. The work of Erasmus in particular exposed translation corruptions and errors in the Latin Vulgate, with some passages affecting doctrine (Augustijn 1990:97; Bentley 1983: 140; Ross 2016; White 1950:245). His work ultimately undermined the authority of the Catholic Church (his aim simply was to reform Christendom based on a clear presentation of God’s word; Bentley 1983:124). For example, his replacement of the phrase “do penance” to “repent” in Matthew 3:2, according to the Greek, raised a storm of protest from the Church (Rummel 2017). Support for the doctrine of original sin suffered a serious blow following Erasmus’ correct translation of the Latin text (Romans 5:12) fundamental to its support (Bentley 1983:170-172). Luther and other early reformers clearly grasped the contribution of this early Christian humanist approach in its ability to increase the clarity given to biblical interpretation, particularly in directing the reader’s focus to Christ. They utilized this method to clarify biblical understandings (Bentley 1983:192; Johnston 1996a:163-170). Conservative Christians today are devoted to the use of the historical-grammatical approach (Methods of Bible Study Committee 1987:18-20).

After the Reformation, many forces affected biblical interpretation, which is beyond our consideration here. The critical assessment of the biblical text with the application of the rationalistic approach eventually led to a loss of faith in biblical authority and the idea of the miraculous was abandoned in some circles. The various strands of endeavor led to the development of the historical critical method. The end result has been that, for many, the Bible contains numerous mistakes, it does not contain moral absolutes, and does not have relevance to history (Johnston 1996b:154-162; Schaeffer 1990:176-177).

Another consequence of the secular emphasis in humanism was the elevation of the idea of humanities’ unlimited domination over nature and the assumption of a god-like status, potentially enabling humans to mold nature into whatever form required to serve their purposes. No particular intrinsic value was placed on nature by greats such as Francis Bacon (1561-1626). The conquest of nature was held as being for the benefit of the race. These ideas resonated with Greek rather than biblical precepts. The

prevailing sense for many years in Christian circles was that all creatures exist for and reflect the glory of God. Humans share with other creatures in praise of their Creator rejoicing in the beauty and the worth of creation rather than focusing on exaltation above creation or unlimited dominion. In more recent years, the idea has emerged in some Christian circles that God has given the care of his creatures to human beings in trust (Bauckham 2011:43-62). This is a concept that we support heartily.

Conclusions

The stream of humanism emerging from the Renaissance period and which has become prominent today places great confidence in human reason and potential and rejects any notion of the supernatural. Secular humanism based on atheism has taken on the mantle of vigorous opposition to the idea of the supernatural and of a Creator God, concepts firmly held by some of the early Christian supporters of humanistic inspired initiatives adopted with the noble aim to reform the church and society. There have been counter secular humanism movements throughout history, and such have been fueled in recent years by the calamities and inhumanities of war and of ego-centered activities. It even is acknowledged that there are inherent limits to human self-understanding. Today, the products of secular humanism are seen in the plethora of inter-human violence incidents and environmental damage. This is a result of the self-assertion and egocentrism resident in the very concept of mainstream humanism, where secular human minds attempt to measure themselves against the infinite universe. Some speak of the end of humanity, and others search for what is human. In reality, humans are following an infinite process of finding their identity, which is in line with the concept of the evolutionary nature of human beings (Dallmayr 2009:137-150).

The principles expressed by Christ and the early church leaders have been equated by some with an *ideal* type of humanism that is as relevant today as it was originally. Today, dedicated Christians everywhere seek to understand the meaning of God's moral principles, his ways of living, methods of relating to others, and the benefits of maintaining a joyful relationship with their Creator and protecting his handiwork. The reliability and relevance of the biblical record are foundational to the beliefs expressed in conservative Christian circles.

It is not surprising that some secular humanistic principles find more reliable support in Christian circles than in other domains, such as concepts of ethics, human dignity, worth and equality. The place of reason in the Christian approach to knowing is affirmed, but access to evidence for the Christian worldview goes beyond the use of reason and the experimental

approach. This provides a more holistic concept of human experiences and of the universe and its origins. The application of the so-called humanistic principles of philology and historical methods during the Renaissance period led to the production of a biblical text from which many errors were removed and to the use of the historical grammatical method of biblical interpretation, a device still used by conservative Christians. The humanism understood and practiced by the early church and during the Reformation contains valuable lessons and practices.

Explanatory Note

Christian Humanism (*ideal strand*) is based on a firm belief in the reliability and divine authorship of the Bible. It came to the fore during the Renaissance and Reformation era and represents a philosophical view in which human freedom in Christ, the value of the conscience, and rational enquiry were fundamental aspects. Christ was seen as the example to follow. The value of human nature was recognized, but the necessity to elevate it to a higher plane was affirmed. This involves seeking divine assistance in order to approach the ideals displayed and taught by the divine-human person, Christ. The forgiveness offered and power given enables reflection of God's character to others. These states of mind give a broad view of personal social responsibility, give vibrant hope, promote happiness, enable joyful participation in the present life, and thankful anticipation of the gift of life in the hereafter.

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