

Dissertation Abstracts

Andrews University, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

Title: A Theoretical Proposal for Reaching Irreligious Czech People through a Mission Revitalization Movement

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The main goal of this study was to develop a theory of missionary outreach to unchurched Czech people which is biblically informed and culturally relevant.

The theoretical proposal for a plausible model of churching in the Czech Republic builds on basic theological, philosophical, and conceptual assumptions (chapter 2), a societal analysis of the problem of Czech churching (chapter 3), and a review of the issues relating to the situation of existing churches and religious movements.

Based on Wallace's theory of revitalization movements a model is developed for starting a missionary movement that aims at reaching today's unchurched and seemingly irreligious segments of the Czech population.

This model allows for more flexible ways of communicating the gospel and envisions multiple forms for developing a community of believers.

The field research underlying the theoretical proposal included ethnographic and assessment-oriented research. The ethnographic research combined qualitative and quantitative methods. A newspaper content analysis searched for dominant themes and prevalent cultural values in the newspaper media, and then analyzed newspaper articles related to religion and/or church.

The ethnographic field research measuring the religiosity of the Czech people consisted of a survey of religiosity (Appendix B), and six in-depth interviews of unchurched people (Appendix A). By clarifying some aspects of the religiosity of unchurched people it contributed a depth dimension to the proposed revitalization movement model.

In order to test some emerging conclusions, a number of brief interviews with unchurched believers, active church goers, and church leaders, as well as a survey measuring the health of congregations (Appendix C) were done. The multivariate methodology generated the findings that provided the building block for my theory of a context-sensitive model of churching.