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CONTENTS

Editorial v

Cultivating Ethnically Diverse Leaders: An Exploration of the Need for Ethnic Diversity in Leadership Positions and Its Potential Impact on the Mission Work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guatemala........ 1
Benjamin M. Bonilla López

The Decline and Recovery of Apostolic Leadership in Adventist Ministry 19
Anthony WagenerSmith

Mission Leadership Development in the Chinese Adventist Church: Reflections in the Light of Traditional Chinese Philosophies of Leadership........ 43
EP

Adventist Church Leadership and Religious Liberty in India: Impact on Mission and Ministry........ 56
Santosh Kumar

A Mentoring Model: A Leadership Style for Seventh-day Adventists in Southern Asia........ 71
Clifmond L. Shameerudeen

Intercultural Mentorship as a Leadership Role 89
Daniel Nae

Prolegomena to a Theology of Eschatological Leadership: 13 Leadership Principles for the End Time Gleaned from the Book of Revelation........ 109
Gregory Pierce Whitsett

https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jams/vol17/iss1/1
DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.32597/jams/vol17/iss1/

Adventist Use of the Qur'an: An Old Debate 130
Andrew Tompkins

Worship Contextualization in Seventh-day
AdventistEthnic Congregations in São Paulo 139
Christian C. L. Britis
Marcelo E. C. Dias

Editorial

In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus set the agenda for the Christian church in all eras and contexts. In a sort of farewell speech, he said to his disciples: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Making disciples of all nations was so central to the identity of the Early Church that each of the four gospels ends with a version of it (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 24:45-49; John 20:21-23). Since then, this commission has been interpreted and applied differently over the centuries. Today there is renewed emphasis on the fact that effective mission leadership is of critical importance to the fulfillment of Christ's commission to make disciples of all nations. Effective mission leaders not only do their best to serve God at their maximum potential, they also make it a point to intentionally equip, motivate, and enable others to do the same.

This edition of the *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* focuses on mission leadership. The contributors to this volume attempt in a unique way to address specific mission leadership issues in their ministry contexts. A special emphasis is put on intercultural mentoring, leadership development and succession planning, and biblical principles of leadership. Because making disciples requires crossing boundaries (physical, social, cultural, religious, etc.), the points these authors raise reinforce the mission principle that one size does not fit every situation. Benjamin Bonilla's article challenges positional leaders and church administrators to be intentional about developing and including indigenous leaders in decision-making. Anthony WagenerSmith pleads for the recovery of apostolic leadership in Adventist ministry. Daniel Nae and Clifmond Shameerudeen's articles highlight the unique place of mentoring in the process of making disciples. I encourage you to carefully read each of the seven articles.

Boubakar Sanou, associate editor

BENJAMIN M. BONILLA LÓPEZ

Cultivating Ethnically Diverse Leaders: An Exploration of the Need for Ethnic Diversity in Leadership Positions and Its Potential Impact on the Mission Work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guatemala

Introduction

This article explores the issue of ethnic diversity in leadership, especially in the context of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guatemala. Different conceptualizations regarding the contributions that ethnic diversity in leadership positions can bring into an organization will be analyzed. The analysis will be combined with my personal observations made from a fieldwork visit to Guatemala during the months of October and November in 2017. Moreover, it will be argued that based on observations made during that fieldwork, the Adventist Church in Guatemala has an issue with a lack of diversity among its leadership since its membership in some locations is almost entirely composed of people from different Maya ethnic backgrounds.

Apart from the contributions made by leadership scholars to the issue at hand, I will seek to explore what the biblical text contributes and what lessons could be learned from Scripture regarding ethnicity and the people of God, especially regarding minorities in leadership positions. More specifically, I will consider examples from the Old and New Testaments that I believe are crucial in understanding how God is accepting of all,

regardless of ethnic backgrounds, and how God uses minorities to fulfill his purposes. From the biblical findings, I will seek to argue that it is not only imperative to treat people equally and without regard to their ethnic backgrounds, but that doing so and by placing them in leadership positions, the missional reach of the church can be furthered.

Finally, I will consider the missional challenges and implications this issue has over the mission work of the church by applying a conceptual framework, developed by Janice L. Dreachslin, which aids in the understanding of how organizations can improve their equality in leadership positions. Along with the aforementioned conceptual framework, I will include my own missiological reflections of how the issue that affects the church in Guatemala can be possibly ameliorated and ethnic minorities in the region provided with the necessary tools that will enable them to occupy leadership positions in the Guatemalan Adventist Church.

Description of the Issue

During the months of October and November of 2017, I visited different regions within the administrative department of El Quiché in Guatemala, more specifically the municipality of Chichicastenango, where I was able to collect field data on the K'iche' Maya indigenous people and their relationship to the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) of the region. Within my study, I placed special attention to SDA church members who were ethnic K'icke' Maya people and tried to discover how they became Seventh-day Adventists, what processes of identity and belonging occur when their ethnic identity meets a foreign, mostly North American, religious tradition like the Adventist faith, and the result of this clash between a predominantly Western religious tradition and a Maya indigenous community.

While a more comprehensive study in the form of a doctoral dissertation is currently being developed to explore issues of identity and belonging, I was able to observe an issue that relates to leadership and ethnic diversity among leaders which I intend to explore within the scope of the present work. While the department of El Quiché, and the municipality of Chichicastenango in specific, are among the most ethnically indigenous in all Guatemala, I was able to observe that almost all of the SDA church leaders and pastors in the region are not indigenous people, but *Ladinos* (a term used to refer to the Spanish-speaking mestizo of Guatemala). Upon closer investigation, a local church leader confided that this same pattern is true for the rest of the Adventist Church in Guatemala, where only a handful of its pastors are from a Mayan ethnicity and none, to my present knowledge from the field work data gathered in the fall of 2017, occupies a leadership position.

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However, the Adventist Church membership in these regions with large numbers of Maya people, like the case of the municipality of Chichicastenango and its Adventist churches, is predominantly Maya. Thus, I was driven to ask, Why is there no ethnic diversity among church leaders in the region and, moreover, no inclusion of Maya indigenous people in the decision-making process of the church leadership, when the church membership in these regions are predominantly Maya? Additionally, Why are Maya church members not provided with pastors who share their ethnicity and, therefore, can be well informed of the perceived needs while being inherently connected to their church community?

The answer to these questions are complex and involve larger social issues that have persisted in the history of Guatemala for centuries (like the institutionalized ethincization that persists in Guatemala against the Maya people) and has most recently been marred by a civil war that ended a little over two decades ago, but left the country deeply divided and scarred. More importantly, when minorities are discriminated against by limiting their access to leadership positions, it involves a complex process where stakeholders and decision makers hold false presuppositions about the minority group's leadership qualities and their ability to successfully perform in an important position (Eagly and Chin 2010:217). Additionally, while I will continue to fluidly use the concept "Maya ethnicity" when referring to the culture and ethnicity of the Maya people group I seek to explore in this study (the Maya K'iche' people group), it is important to know that Mayan culture and ethnicity is longevous, complex, and composed of multiple ethnic spectrums—each being unique for every Maya people group within Mesoamerica. It is important to keep in mind that any consideration regarding the interplay of leadership and ethnicity, must be correctly analyzed and applied at a micro-level and in accordance with whatever circumstances surround the social group that is being studied (Holmes, Vine, and Marra 2011:8-9).

For lack of space, I do not intend to explore all the facets that influence the lack of diverse leadership in the Guatemalan context and that especially affect the Maya people, but will be more focused on exploring why diverse leadership is needed, the biblical point of view regarding ethnicity and leadership, and a model that is believed to be effective for the development of Maya indigenous Adventist leaders in Guatemala. Interviews with Maya church members revealed a need for the development of a Maya indigenous Adventist leadership that can understand and address the needs of the Maya people in ways that a Ladino leadership simply cannot understand because of their different ethnicity and worldview. Furthermore, special focus will be placed on the missiological benefits that can be achieved from having a diverse body of leaders in the Guatemalan Adventist Church.

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The Need for Ethnic Diversity among the Leadership Body

A study published in 2003 and based on empirical data collected from field research, explored the impact of diversity on church membership within religious organizations. It concluded, "The creation of strong cross-racial and ethnic social networks in a religious organization clearly influences group ability to sustain diversity as members rely less on outside social networks and become more dependent on, comfortable with, and committed to in-group relationships" (Jenkins 2003:394). While the scope of this study is related to multicultural congregations in the United States of America that operate in a high-boundary[1] framework and explore race and ethnic relations between church members within these groups, I believe the principles drawn from the field data are applicable to any context where ethnic diversity abounds, especially the context of the SDA Church in Guatemala. As the study concluded, I too, believe that cross-ethnic networks in religious communities promote diversity.

However, I believe this principle is more consequential when adding the dimension of leadership within a religious organization. The promotion of diversity within a leadership body speaks of the denomination's commitment to diversity and the biblical principle of the equality of all people, regardless of ethnic ties, because of our sharing of one Savior, Christ (Gal 3:26-29). This becomes relevant to the Guatemalan context since the continuation of a Ladino dominated leadership body, especially in contexts where church membership is predominantly Maya, speaks of denominational disregard to diversity and the biblical principle of equality in Christ.

Also, provided the historical oppression of the indigenous populations in the Americas that started with the violent conquest perpetuated by European invaders and continued by neocolonial powers in the region, having a majority Ladino leadership over a predominantly Maya church population perpetuates the image of the "superior white man." Because Adventists have incessantly risen to defend biblical faithfulness, the promotion, knowingly or otherwise, of institutional structures that hinder the ability of minority groups to occupy leadership positions becomes our worst self-contradiction (Eagly and Chin 2010:217). Thus, the Adventist Church in Guatemala is in dire need of a model that helps promote the placement of minority populations in leadership positions.

Creating these spaces for diversity in leadership is not only our social and Christian responsibility, but institutionally favorable and missiologically imperative (Alire 2001:95). Speaking of the urgent need for leaving behind notions that promote inequality Sanou adds:

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> The church will not become a model of unity and a sign of hope for the world if tribalism and racism within its structures are not bravely addressed and discarded as a sin. What is distinctively Christian lies not so much in doctrinal and theological purity, although this is important; what is distinctively Christian is evidenced in one's personal experience with Jesus Christ, his transforming love, and the ability to share that love with others, even with one's enemies. (2015:102)

Because of how consequential providing paths for diversity in leadership is, I will seek to demonstrate its benefits below.

Cultural Competence

Regarding the cultural heterogeneity brought forth by a diverse leadership body, Eagly and Chin comment that "leaders and followers from diverse identity groups generally face some degree of pressure to behave like leaders from the majority group. On the other hand, leaders from diverse groups no doubt continue to express their own cultures to some extent" (2010:219). Thus, while in some instances the historical disparities faced by minority groups can lead them to accommodate into the dominating culture, it is evident that their culture of origin continues to be present and thus, supplementing existing leadership structures and institutions with their uniqueness.

It is this uniqueness of thought and practice, brought forth by diversity, that can provide balance to institutions and the way these are managed. "People, regardless of their personal diversity, can best build on and use that competence in organizations that nurture it" (Dreachslin and Hobby 2008:11). Therefore, while the cultural competence brought forth by a diverse body is beneficial for any organization, if there is no structure within the organization for the support of said competence, the benefits that come from having a diverse body of individuals is lost. While individuals who belong to ethnic minorities are able to continue enriching any institution they belong to with their presence and active involvement, I believe that it is by placing these individuals in decision-making positions that the institution can better benefit from the cultural competence especially brought forth by the diversity of values ethnic minorities can contribute (Bordas 2013:100).

Promotion of Equality

When analyzing the benefits of having individuals who belong to racial and ethnic minorities occupy leadership positions in public libraries in the United States of America, Camila A. Alire provided an answer to

the question of *why* having minorities in leadership positions matters. "They can serve as role models, leaders, and spokespersons and provide the necessary linkages to minority communities (however the community is defined), as the minority population grows and as the demographics of this country shift" (2001:95). In other words, as the population of the United States of America shifts and becomes more racially and ethnically diverse, it is imperative for people in leadership positions to involve these minority groups because of their power to promote and sustain equality. Alire adds, "These leaders can create an environment where no one is disadvantaged (or preferred) because of race, ethnicity, creed, gender, sexual orientation, et cetera" (97).

Moreover, a study concerning the promotion of equality in leadership positions within global scientific societies discovered that boards who are younger and more diverse, are much more likely to have women—and by extension minorities—as presidents or chairs of these societies (Potvin, Burdfield–Steel, Potvin, and Heap 2018:14). Therefore, if spaces are created for ethnic minorities to occupy leadership positions, these will in turn create a chain reaction effect that will beget more minorities moving into leadership; thus, promoting equality. From the results of their study, Potvin et al. (2018) generated a chart that assists organizations that wish to generate spaces for equality in doing so (see figure 1 in the appendix). While this checklist was specifically developed for gender equality within global scientific societies, I believe its principles can be consequential for the creation of spaces that promote ethnic diversity in leadership positions in the Guatemalan Adventist Church as well.

Effective Management of Perceived Needs

Another example of how minorities within leadership positions can contribute to the workplace is by providing awareness of integrity and justice; more specifically, relating to the inclusion and fair treatment of minority groups (Eagly and Chin 2010:219). When dealing with policy and how these are effectively implemented within the healthcare spectrum, a study found that diverse leaders perform better within these healthcare systems. The ability to perceive and fight against disparities in caregiving facilities can be better identified by leaders that come from minority populations because their lived experiences as members of minority communities inform their decision-making process. "Diversity leaders aim for concordance between policy and procedure and strive to implement both policies and procedures that conform to best practices" (Dreachslin and Hobby 2008:9).

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While interviewing Maya church members and asking about how not having Maya church leaders influenced their relationship to the Adventist Church, one was emphatic of the need of pastors who can understand the struggles the Maya people go through and their specific needs. As part of making his point, the individual narrated a case where an international development agency had implemented a project to provide help to the Maya people by supplying them with large cisterns for storing water. For leaders at the agency, the interviewee narrated, the Mayas in that municipality had a tremendous need of storing water for what they perceived to be a dry season. In reality, however, Maya farmers used these cisterns to store corn instead of water. For the interviewee, the lack of knowledge of the perceived needs of the Maya people led the agency to provide something that was not needed; this would have been avoided if the Mayas were consulted or, better yet, if a Maya person was given the opportunity of leading the development project.

In the context of the Guatemalan Adventist Church, it is impossible for Ladino church leaders and pastors to know, firsthand, the struggles of the Maya people. While an idea can be formed by consulting local Maya people, observing the perceived needs of Maya church members, and by being immersed in Maya communities, this cannot replace the impact Maya church pastors would have by having similar worldviews and lived experiences as their church members. This was confirmed by a Ladino church pastor, who has under his care over 10 small groups and churches—all of which have a majority Maya church membership—and who was not able to connect with his members at the worldview level.

While conversing, the pastor admitted that as a Ladino from an administrative department in the south of Guatemala, his background and understanding was very different from his Maya church members. When the pastor was assigned to a Maya district of churches by the local church administrative body, he mentioned that the culture clash almost caused him to ask his administrative leader to be switched into a different district of churches. Issues as simple as speaking a different language and as complex as having a mostly transcendental worldview—true for the Maya people because of their existing traditional religion—did not allow the pastor to connect with his church members. The pastor acknowledged that after being in the region for over four years and taking time for the study of the local Mayan language and culture, he still feels out of place among the Maya people; not because of lack of hospitality from the Maya people, but because of their different lived realities.

Biblical Perspective

While it has been made evident that promoting ethnic diversity among leadership bodies and creating spaces for ethnic minorities to access these positions within organizations—including the Adventist Church—is beneficial, it is yet to be biblically supported that ethnic diversity in leadership should be a Christian concern. While there is little evidence of a concern for ethnic diversity similar to that which we have seen in postmodernity, the Bible does mention several influential leaders who can be categorized as ethnically diverse because of their non-Hebrew/Jewish roots. Still, it is my belief that the mention of these characters and their influential positions among the Hebrews of the Old Testament and the Jewish nation of the New Testament can be interpreted as supporting evidence for a theology of ethnically diverse leadership.

Ethnically Diverse Leadership in the Old Testament

Several stories in the Old Testament illustrate how consequential non-Hebrew leaders have been for the wellbeing of Israel and how these, knowingly or otherwise, have been used by Jehovah as his instruments. Some of these include the Egyptian Pharaoh, whom God guided into placing Joseph as head of his whole kingdom (Gen 41:41-46), and Ebed-Melek, who intervened in favor of Jeremiah the prophet (Jer 38:7-13). Ethnic diversity in itself is an important topic for Old Testament theology and one that is constantly present. Thus, in the next section special attention will be given to show how ethnic diversity was important among the people of the Old Testament and how two members of minority groups occupied significant positions of leadership.

Ethnic Diversity in the Old Testament

The Old Testament speaks about the ethnic composition of the people of God that came out of Egypt and includes, apart from the Israelites, "many other people" (Exod 12:37-38). Regarding these, Milton Acosta comments, "The Hebrew word used here is defined as 'mixed people or race'. So from the very beginning of Israel's history as a nation, salvation was possible not just for Israel, but for all sorts of people" (2009:314). Hence, the Old Testament clearly establishes that those who were deemed as "Israel," the chosen people of Jehovah, were not only composed of ethnic Israelites, but also of others whom we can assume were ethnically diverse yet fully considered as part of Israel because they chose to keep the communal faith.

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A second example could be drawn from the similar situations that were registered as lived by the characters Ruth and Naaman. In the case of Ruth, we can observe a woman who was not an ethnic Israelite, but a Moabite (Ruth 1:3-4). Nonetheless, Ruth was considered as part of Israel not only because of her marriage to an Israelite, but also because of her decision to accept the faith of Israel (Ruth 1:16-17). John Markovic points out that changing previously acquired cultural values, norms, and assumptions about life and its fundamental questions takes much time (2015:420); still, Ruth made this decision when she chose to accept the God of her mother-in-law and became a part of the nation of Israel while keeping her Moabite ethnicity. Therefore, in the example of Ruth we can observe an instance where an individual who is clearly not an ethnic Israelite, becomes part of Israel through her acceptance of the God of the Israelites.

Likewise, Naaman—even as a military leader of a foreign nation with animosity towards Israel—underwent a similar process of accepting the God of Israel (2 Kgs 5). Jesus later expanded on the story and clarified that Naaman was granted passage into Israel (Luke 4:16-28). However, while Jesus counted Naaman as part of those who were righteous and gained salvation because of their acceptance of the God of Israel, Naaman can be seen as not only retaining his ethnicity, but even aspects of his previous faith (2 Kgs 5:18).

These stories therefore, confirm that within the Old Testament being considered as part of Israel was not always linked with the ethnicity of individuals, but by their faith. Hence, Ruth was able to be an ethnic Moabite who worshiped the God of Israel and lived among the Israelite nation. Similarly, Naaman was able to keep his Syrian ethnicity and accept the faith of Israel while not physically belonging to the nation of Israel; still, his faith granted him passage into the more significant "spiritual Israel"—those who are considered to be saved from sin by the sacrifice of Christ. Therefore, in spiritual Israel there is no space for discrimination of people on the basis of their ethnicity; on the contrary, when a person—regardless of their ethnicity—chooses to accept God, that individual is fully considered part of God's people.

Caleb as an Ethnically Diverse Leader

The book of Numbers, more specifically in Numbers 32:12, identifies Caleb as a faithful follower of the Lord. It is in this same instance where it is revealed to the readers that Caleb is not an ethnic Hebrew, but a Kenizzite through his father's lineage. Though there is no consensus among scholars regarding the origins of the Kenizzites and by extension, of Caleb (Lemche 1998:126-127; Szpek 2002:245), his Kenizzite heritage through his father

would make him part of an ethnic minority within Israel and, moreover, a descendant of a land whose people Jehovah would submit to Abraham's descendants (Warning 2001:234; see Gen 15:19-21). His belonging to a minority, however, is by no means a diminishing factor to his influential position among the Israelites. On the contrary, Caleb is a leading figure among those who Moses trusted to such extent that he sent them to do reconnaissance of the Canaanite territory (Numbers 13).

Uriah the Hittite as an Ethnically Diverse Leader

Uriah the Hittite has passed into Judeo-Christian history, most notably, for his marriage to Bathsheba and his eventual demise through the plotting of King David (2 Sam 11). However, his importance and position of leadership among David's ranks—albeit his ethnicity and belonging to a minority—is often ignored. Uriah is mentioned as part of those who were loyal to David and counted among his mighty men (2 Sam 23:39; 1 Chron 11:41). Therefore, like Caleb before him, belonging to a minority among Israel was not an obstacle for Uriah to become a powerful warrior and an influential figure among the Israelites.

Ethnically Diverse Leadership in the New Testament

The New Testament contains numerous instances where ethnic diversity can be seen among the people of God. Regarding this, Acosta notes, "What we see in the OT should not come as a surprise in the NT since this is the time the promise given to Abraham to bless all nations comes true in a more general fashion" (2009:320). It is natural, then, for the New Testament to show continuity to the behavior and approaches to ethnic diversity that were evident in the Old Testament. The next section explores how important diversity is for New Testament theology and briefly present the example of one follower of Christ who had a respectable position within the Early Church regardless of his ethnicity.

Ethnic Diversity in the New Testament

Theologically, our *togetherness* as a community of believers in the salvation provided by faith in Christ, is best expressed by our sharing of one spiritual parent: God the Father. Christ, shares with every believer his own sonship, his identity, and thus, we become children of God (Mwaura 2009:20). Moreover, Paul is clear when he emphasizes that all of us who claim to "live by the Spirit" must undoubtedly be "walking in the Spirit" (Eph 4:22-32). For Mwaura, this living and walking implies that the

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identifying mark of those who live and walk in the Spirit is rooted and grounded in love (Eph 3:17; 1 Cor 13).

Thus, “The core identity of all Christians is the mutual love among them which in the light of the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to them by God (2 Cor 5:18-20) flows out to all God’s children and the entire creation” (Mwaura 2009:21). Consequently, those who claim to “live” and “walk” in the Spirit of God and have as their foundational characteristic the togetherness that is brought forth by our love for God and others, cannot seek to create, sustain, or promote ethnicizised structures within the Christian community and church governance. This state of togetherness is best represented and experienced by the apostles in the Council of Jerusalem where the Early Church established clear foundations for what a Christian community should look like: an ethnically diverse community united not by uniformity, but by love and obedience to Christ.

Regarding this biblical instance, P. N. Mwaura states, “The council legitimized the existence and identity of the Christian community as a cultural and international mix of Jews and Gentiles. Despite various moral challenges and cultural diversity (Acts 5), the early Christian community attempted to live as brothers and sisters” (2009:21). Therefore, we, as a people who are a living continuation of the Early Church established by Christ and through the work of his apostles, must continue to share one common identity in Christ, rejecting uniformity, and being one through our faith in him and enriched by our diversity.

Another important example can be observed in a subsequent example, that of the caring for the “helenistic widows” illustrated in Acts 6:1-6. In this specific instance it is interesting to note that the author has what can be interpreted as a twofold intention: (1) to demonstrate the importance of showing interest and making an effort to address the lived issues of those who are typically perceive as “different,” which in this specific case the author points towards the lived experience of the widows from a helenistic background; and (2) to provide an early example of contextualization, where an issue that could potentially involve many cultural nuances was turned over to a group of believers who were able to understand these nuances and provide biblically-centered contextual answers, observed through the appointment of Greek-speaking men to care for the issue. This instance demonstrated the Early Church’s response to the need for leaders knowing the language and culture of a group of people who lived outside the margins of the majority in society

Luke

Seventh-day Adventist academia in general agrees that the author of the Gospel according to Luke and the Acts of the Apostles is the hellenic Luke (Nichol 1956:6:1051), doctor of Paul (Phlm 1:24; Col 4:14; 2 Tim 4:11). Apart from Luke being the author, his ethnicity has come into question as well (Strelan 2016:102-110). Still, Adventist academia generally agrees as well, that Luke's ethnic background was, in fact, hellenistic and not Jewish (Nichol 1956:6:1051). Consequently, it is evident that while his ethnic origins were that of a minority among the Jews who dominated the Early Church, his place of leadership cannot be negated to the point where two books of his authorship—one being none other than his version of the events that covered the life of Christ—have been included within the biblical canon.

Missiological Implications

Dreachslin, Dansky, de Souza, Gatto, and Weech–Maldonado developed a conceptual framework that aided in understanding the impact of strategies and tactics that promote diverse leadership within healthcare organizations. While their framework was developed within the context of management of healthcare facilities, I believe its principles can be applied to the context of the church in Guatemala and its lack of a diverse leadership body. Their conceptual framework consists of five elements that will guide an institution to progressively create spaces for diversity: discovery, assessment, exploration, transformation, and revitalization (2002:113).

Since it has been proven that creating spaces for ethnically diverse leaders is structurally beneficial for organizations as well as biblically supported, this final section will be allocated to the analysis of how Dreachslin et al.'s 2002 conceptual framework can be applied to the context of the Adventist Church in Guatemala. Additionally, special attention will be given to the possible missiological implications the framework might have for the Adventist work in the region. It is my belief that if this framework is applied to the Guatemalan Adventist context, perhaps the effectiveness of the missionary work in the region can be positively influenced and more Maya people will get to know Jesus as a Savior that is personally interested in them, as a distinct people group, as much as he is interested in their eternal salvation.

Discovery

In the stage of discovery Dreachslin et al. recommend that organizations begin a process of becoming aware that racial and ethnic diversity is a significant issue (2002:113). Therefore, the Adventist Church in Guatemala must initiate a process where it helps its leaders, within the organization of the church structure and in local Adventist communities, realize that diversity matters. Church leaders and members need to become educated on the different issues of diversity that exist within the Guatemalan context. Moreover, it should be studied in the light of missiology and how important diversity is for the effectiveness of missionary work.

Assessment

When dealing with assessment, organizations should engage in systematically evaluating how the organizational climate and culture is related to racial and ethnic diversity in general (Dreachslin et al. 2002:113). This would mean that the Adventist Church in Guatemala needs, not only to become aware of the issue, but also analyze how this issue affects its organization. After analyzing the context, the Adventist Church needs to explore how these contextual issues of diversity have permeated into the Adventist Church and affected its polity. More importantly, attention should be placed on knowing how negating spaces for ethnic diversity among the church leaders has negatively affected the missionary work of the Adventist Church among Maya populations.

Exploration

After careful examination of the prevailing issues and how these have affected the work of the organization, Dreachslin et al. recommend an exploration. This phase guides organizations into constantly seeking training initiatives that can improve its ability to effectively manage its diversity (2002:113). Hence, after understanding the issue of diversity in the context of Guatemala and discovering the plethora of opportunities that have been missed by not having an ethnically diverse leadership body, this is the phase where the Guatemalan Adventist Church can actively begin a process of change. Here, specialists in the area of diversity must be invited to coach local church leaders, especially Ladinos, on how their possible biases affect the church structure and work. However, the focus should be placed on how to improve the current status so that more ethnic

Mayas can become empowered and given access to leadership positions.

Transformation

For Dreachslin et al., this stage is where fundamental changes in organizational practices, which will lead to a spirit of validating ethnic diversity, should occur (2002:113). Therefore, the training that has been received in the phase of exploration, should lead to changes in polity that can provide access for minority participation. In the context of the Adventist Church in Guatemala, this would preferably include: (1) providing access to education for Maya Adventist church members so that a considerable force of Maya Adventist church pastors can exist; (2) providing the necessary space so that Maya Adventist pastors can occupy positions of leadership in local missions and conferences and regional (union) branches of church administration, and (3) the creation of a special department within church administration, as is done in several Adventist unions around the world,[2] that can support ministries among the Maya people groups of Guatemala.

Revitalization

The final stage, known as revitalization, is where the cycle becomes complete through the continuation and expansion of these diversity initiatives, the rewarding of change agents, and the inclusion of minority groups in the organizational leadership workforce (Dreachslin et al. 2002:113). Within this stage, other than addressing in a deeper manner the different possibilities of polity change that can occur in the stage of Transformation, the Adventist Church in Guatemala could improve its ethnic diversity by committing itself to making its territory a permanently diverse one where people of all Mayan ethnicities can feel not only welcome, but that they belong. The continuation of a commitment to diversity will demonstrate that the Adventist Church in Guatemala belongs to the Maya people as much as it belongs to the Ladino.

In a more recent work, Dreachslin and Hobby comment that when seeking to fight ethnic inequalities within organizations, it is imperative not only to have culturally competent leaders, but also those who are able to create an organizational context in which being culturally proficient is enabled, cultivated, and reinforced (2008:8). Thus, I believe that *knowing* how important ethnic diversity is in leadership is not enough. Organizations, especially the Adventist Church in Guatemala, must move into *acting* upon the knowledge and creating spaces where minorities are empowered into occupying leadership positions within the church. Only then, when these stages are continually revised and applied, will the work

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among the Maya people begin to have true success because it will cease to be a foreign-led religious organization and become a truly Guatemalan Adventist religious community.

Conclusion

This article sought to explore the issue of ethnic diversity in leadership, especially in the context of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guatemala. The analysis has been initially guided by different conceptualizations which explain the possible contributions ethnic diversity in leadership can bring into an organization. Additionally, these have been combined with personal observations made from a fieldwork visit to Guatemala during the months of October and November 2017. Furthermore, it has been argued that, based on the observations made during that fieldwork, the Adventist Church in Guatemala has an issue of lack of diversity among its leaders despite its membership being almost entirely composed of people from different Maya ethnic backgrounds in some regions of Guatemala.

Apart from the contributions made by leadership scholars towards understanding the issue at hand, I explored what the biblical text has contributed, and some lessons that can be learned from Scriptures regarding ethnicity and the people of God, especially minorities in leadership positions. More specifically, I have considered examples from the Old and New Testaments that I believe are crucial in understanding how God is accepting of all, regardless of ethnic backgrounds, and uses these minorities to fulfill his purposes. From these biblical findings, I argued that it is not only imperative to treat people equally and without regard to their ethnic backgrounds, but that doing so and by placing them in leadership positions, the missional reach of the church can be furthered.

Finally, I considered the missional challenges and implications this issue has had over the mission work of the church by applying a conceptual framework, developed by Janice L. Dreachslin et al., that I believe aids in the understanding of how organizations can improve their equality in leadership positions. Along with the aforementioned conceptual framework, I have sought to include my own missiological reflections on how the issue that affects the church in Guatemala can be possibly ameliorated and ethnic minorities in the region provided with the necessary tools that will enable them to occupy leadership positions in the Guatemalan Adventist Church.

Endnotes

[1] This conceptualization refers to structurally and theologically rigorous organizations that have a strong framework that differentiates between those who are within the group and non-members. For additional information, see: Paul G. Hiebert, "Conversion, Culture, and Cognitive Categories," Gospel in Context 1 (October 1978):24-29 and Bruce L. Bauer, "Bounded and Centered Sets: Possible Applications for Adventist Mission," Journal of Adventist Mission Studies 3, no. 1 (2007): 59-78.

[2] In different organizational levels of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, a department called Native Ministries exists which seeks to support ministries that specially pertain to Native Americans and First Nations. For more information, see: https://www.nadadventist.org/departments/native-ministries.

Appendix

Health checklist for scientific societies aiming for gender equality.

Gender Equality checklist
Mission statement, vision statement or constitutional statement about inclusion and diversity
Administrative support in the form of a committee or member dedicated to diversity and equality
Written expectations for appropriate behaviour at meetings and conferences
Commitment to keeping demographic data
Commitment to keeping data on transgressions
Support systems for women in the form of formal or informal mentorship or references
Equitable distribution of resources
Gender neutral restrooms at conferences and meetings
Performance or other reviews that value inclusivity
Grievance policies and procedures
Response systems and processes for harassment or discrimination
Objective criteria and/or blind reviewing for conference papers and awards
Family-friendly policies during conferences and meetings
Commitment to identifying and rectifying societal-based intrinsic biases
Communication about inclusion, diversity and equity to wider membership and during recruitment
A knowledge base of feminist/social justice issues in the membership or through societal resources
Support for professional development or training in diversity
Safety considerations for online and conference interactions
Valuing scholarship on diversity issues within the society
Inclusivity as a step in decision-making processes by board members
Commitment to keeping a history of efforts for inclusivity and diversity by the society

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Figure I. Checklist for Gender Equality in Leadership Positions
Data taken from Potvin et al."Diversity Begets Diversity: A Global Perspective on Gender Equality in Scientific Society Leadership, 2018, 14.

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ANTHONY WAGENERSMITH

The Decline and Recovery of Apostolic Leadership in Adventist Ministry

Introduction

> It is a universal tendency in the Christian religion, as in many other religions, to give a theological interpretation to institutions which have developed gradually through a period of time for the sake of practical usefulness, and then read that interpretation back into the earliest periods and infancy of these institutions, attaching them to an age when in fact nobody imagined that they had such a meaning. (Richard Hanson, twentieth-century patristic scholar)

There are broad patterns of growth: plateau, decline, and ultimately renewal or death among Christian denominations and networks. One of the factors that catalyze movement dynamics early on—as well as their potential renewal—is the degree to which a church's founding leaders embody and transfer the apostolic function for future generations (cf. Saarinen 1994; Morgan 2017). This article traces the initial function and decline of apostolicity among Seventh-day Adventist ministers as a case study with implications for contemporary Adventism and beyond.

After providing an analysis of leadership in the New Testament—with particular emphasis on apostles, apostolicity, and their relationship with elders—an examination of early Adventism's attempt to implement this approach will be explored. Capacity-building practices that enabled itinerancy among ministers including the function of elders, member-ministry, and simple reproducible structures are also surveyed. The decline of apostolicity and transition into the modern notion of a "pastor" will be chronicled from early Adventist pioneer comments, as well as the development of key historical documents including official *Church Manuals* and

handbooks. Finally, a synthesis of the shifting function of apostolicity in Adventist ministry will be provided with recommendations for contemporary Adventism and other Christian churches.

Apostles and Apostolicity in the New Testament

In the synoptic gospels, Jesus' original twelve disciples were also identified as "apostles" either explicitly (Matt 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16) or functionally through being with him and sent out with divine authority to preach in his name (Mark 3:13-19). John's gospel simply mentions "the twelve" (John 6:70), and Acts names and identifies the remaining eleven disciples as apostles at the time of selecting Judas's replacement (Acts 1:13). The pre-resurrection function of these original twelve apostles—to be with Jesus then sent out on various missions within the "house of Israel" (Matt 10:5-12; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6) is repeated and expanded in the post-resurrection sending of the apostles as disciple-makers to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8; Matt 24:14, 28:16-20).

To expand the mission of Jesus beyond the original twelve—referred to as "super apostles" (2 Cor 11:5) and "apostles of the lamb" whom the New Jerusalem's twelve foundations are named after (Rev 21:14)—other apostles were added after the resurrection. Paul referred to himself as an apostle called by God (Rom 1:5, 11:13), Barnabas is referred to as an apostle to the Gentiles on par with Paul (Acts 14:14; 1 Cor 9:6; Gal 2:9), and Matthias replaced Judas (Acts 1:25-26). Other apostles included James the half-brother of Jesus (Gal 1:19, 29), Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25-30, 4:18), Apollos (1 Cor 4:6-9), and—depending upon interpretation— Silas and Timothy (1 Thess 1:1, 2:6; cf. Allison 2012:207), Andronicus and Junia (Rom 16:7; cf. Reeve et al. 2015:237-242), and two additional unnamed apostles (2 Cor 8:23).

The three biblical marks of apostles were direct selection and appointment by Jesus (Mark 3;14; Luke 6:13; Acts 1:2, 24, 10:41; Gal 1:1), personal post-resurrection witness of Christ (Acts 1:22, 10:39-41, 15:7-8), and divine confirmation of their mission through miraculous signs (Matt 10:1-2; Acts 1:5-8, 2:43, 4:33, 8:14; 2 Cor 12:12; Heb 2:3, 4). [1]

The apostles' important role did not make them infallible (i.e., Peter's hypocrisy in Gal 2:11-14), yet their significant influence "derives from a distinctive status as 'founders' of the communities and as trans-local overseers" (Allison 2012:208, 209). While no contemporary disciple of Jesus fits all three marks of a New Testament apostle today (particularly those aspects which require the physical presence of Jesus Christ),[2] the inclusion of apostles in gifting passages most certainly envisions the continued function of apostolicity beyond the New Testament era.

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Comparing apostle references in 1 Cor 12:28, 29 and Eph 4:11 in their larger context yields five foundational functions of apostolicity. First, the apostolic function is the primary catalyst that enables the other gifts to thrive. Both passages list it first and make additional comments to its foundational nature (1 Cor 12:28-29; Eph 4:11). Second, it comes directly from the Holy Spirit rather than through the church (it is a manifestation of the Spirit in 1 Cor 12:7, 11 and an expression of ascension gifting in Eph 4:8). Third, it is available to all baptized believers not a select group of leaders (1 Cor 12:13; Eph 4:7) and is therefore primarily a ministry text rather than a leadership text. Fourth, it brings unity and maturity when functioning in tandem with other gifts (1 Cor 12:25, 26; Eph 4:13, 16). And fifth, it will continue to function throughout all generations (context of Paul's prayer in Eph 3:21 and the gifts of 1 Cor 12 are placed in the context of a future love perfected when chapter 13 verse 12 says we shall see "face to face"). The New Testament describes both the unique early office of apostles as well as the ongoing function of apostolicity as foundational to God's mission and his church.

Apostles and Elders (and Pastors?) in the New Testament

While apostles can also be elders (1 Pet 5:1; 2 John 1:1) they were appointed directly by Jesus for an itinerant mission. Elders on the other hand were appointed by the apostles in newly established churches as the primary spiritual leaders (1 Tim 3:1-7; 1 Pet 5:1, 2; Titus 1:5-7) to do the shepherding (Acts 14:23, 20:28). While deacons were appointed later as a second leadership function within local expressions of the church (Acts 6:1-7), the primary leadership roles of apostles and elders formed a relationship characterized by a division in roles (apostles founded new churches and elders led them), symbiotic benefits (apostolicity created the need for more elders whose shepherding of these churches ensured the continued sent-ness of apostles), and collaborative leadership (both groups were listed as key decision-makers in the Jerusalem council in Acts 15:2, 6). This collaboration is also demonstrated in the nature of the New Testament, which according to my count, 21 of 27 of its letters were written by apostles to coach elders of newly planted churches. In other words, apostles and elders were the two primary leadership roles in the New Testament.

Interestingly, the New Testament provides no evidence of the office of "pastor" as distinct from that of elders or apostles. The three terms of elders (*presbuteroi*), overseers or bishops (*episkepoi*), and shepherds (*poimenoi*)—while loaded with different nuances of meaning—refer interchange-

ably to the same group of people. Elders are referred to as overseers (Titus 1:5-7; 1 Tim 3:1-7, 5:17) who also fulfill the pastoral or shepherding function (verbal form of *poimen*) within churches. Peter (both an apostle and elder) was charged by Jesus to "shepherd" the sheep (John 21:16), and in turn charged other elders to "shepherd" the sheep (1 Pet 5:1-2). Paul also described elders as overseers or bishops charged to "shepherd" the church of God (Acts 20:17, 28). These three-part references to elders and bishops/overseers as the same group of people who also do the shepherding, continued to be used interchangeably until the beginning of the second century (Mackinnon 2012:80-81; Ferguson 2002:169-173).

It is significant to note that the nominal form for shepherds or pastors (*poimen* or *poimenoi* in the plural) is used multiple times to describe divinity but only once to describe humanity. Jesus himself is the good shepherd (John 10:11, 14), the shepherd and overseer of our souls (1 Pet 2:25), the chief shepherd (1 Pet 5:4), and the great shepherd of the sheep (Heb 13:20). Yet outside of the verbal usages of shepherding by humans, the only single nominal usage of the term in the New Testament to describe a human being (Eph 4:11) is in the context of spiritual gifting (not a leadership office), which is available to all believers not just select leaders, and is used in the plural with no concept of a lone superstar.

> Pastor, then, is a metaphor to describe a particular function in the church. It is not an office or title. A first-century shepherd had nothing to do with the specialized and professional sense it has come to have in contemporary Christianity. Therefore, Ephesians 4:11 does not envision a pastoral office, but merely one of many functions in the church. Shepherds are those who naturally provide nurture and care for God's sheep. It is a profound error, therefore, to confuse shepherds with an office or title as is commonly conceived today. (Viola 2012:228)

In addition, there are no biblical qualifications for becoming a pastor as opposed to an elder, no example of pastoral ordination or laying on of hands (as is the case with apostles, elders, and deacons), and ultimately the notion of pastor as an overseer to the overseers would invalidate the work of both apostles (who functioned with trans-local oversight) and elders (who were the designated overseers of individual churches). Indeed, "it would seem strange to have a stand-alone, separate office, never before or after mentioned in the New Testament, whose job was to shepherd the church when the task of shepherding the church was elsewhere said to be the role of the elders" (Jones 2014:4).

Apostolicity in Early Adventist Ministry

Emerging out of the Second Great Awakening, the followers of the interdenominational Millerite movement—with its emphasis on the immediacy and nearness of the second coming of Christ—experienced a great disappointment on October 22, 1844, when Jesus did not return. One of the post-disappointment groups which eventually united through Bible study around several pillar doctrines, hunger for spiritual union with Christ and a global mission (Burrill 1998:161), became the Seventh-day Adventist Church (officially organized in 1863). One of the drivers for the Adventist movement, which has grown from 3,500 in 1863 to over 21.75 million members by the end of 2020 (adventiststatistics.org), was the founding emphasis on a sending model of ministers, adopted as a pragmatic approach to gospel expansion and not necessarily as a result of a significant biblical treatment of apostles and apostolicity.

Even during early Sabbatarian Adventism before the formal organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the function of itinerant, apostolic workers was the primary approach to Adventist leadership. James White (one of the three primary founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, along with Ellen White and Joseph Bates) noted in 1859 there were "no settled pastors over our churches," rather Adventist ministers were missionaries sent out into a cold world to "wear out their lives in preaching unpopular Bible truth" (White, J. 1859:21). He went on to note in 1862 that the ability under God's guidance to plant a church was viewed as validation that God had indeed called the minister:

> In no way can a preacher so well prove himself as in entering new fields. There he can see the fruits of his own labors. And if he be successful in raising up churches, and establishing them, so that they bear good fruits, he gives to his brethren the best proofs that he is sent of the Lord. . . . If they cannot raise up churches and friends to sustain them, then certainly the cause of truth has no need of them, and they have the best reasons for concluding that they made a sad mistake when they thought that God called them to teach the third angel's message. (White J. 1862:156)

The organization of the first statewide conferences starting in 1861 were for the express purpose of coordinating missionary assignments and preventing overlap in territory among early Adventist ministers (Loughborough 1907:116). These annual ministers' meetings often followed a four-fold approach to the coordination for apostolic placement (148). First, the prospective fields where new churches needed to be raised up were listed. Second, the ministers would spend time seeking God's will for their

next assignment. Third, they would then each relate experiences of where they believe the Lord was calling them to go. And finally, their assignments for the following year were given, often accompanied by a sense of God's leading among the entire assembly. This early understanding of an Adventist minister's role—as well as the function of annual conference meetings—was most certainly influenced by the Methodist pattern of itinerant circuit preachers and annual conference meetings (Loughborough 1907:1).[3]

A close reading of Scripture also influenced the early Adventist understanding and approach to apostolic leadership. Functioning somewhat as an unofficial, de-facto church manual for several years, J.N. Loughborough's *The Church: Its Organization, Order, and Discipline* (1907) articulates well the early Adventist understanding and interpretation of New Testament leadership. The modern notion of a bishop with oversight over a diocese of churches was viewed as a post-New Testament development (Loughborough 1907:68, 69; Viola 2012:230, 231). Rather, bishops, elders, and pastors were all understood as referring to the same role confined to a local church: "The term pastor is from *poimen*, and signifies literally a herdsman, a shepherd, especially a pastor, a teacher, a spiritual guide of a particular church. The definition of this term shows that it signifies the same office as *presbuteros* (elder), and *episcopos* (bishop), a local office confined to a particular church (Loughborough 1907:129).

Within the local church, elders and deacons were both volunteer leadership roles with the former looking after the spiritual affairs of the church, and the latter primarily the temporal affairs (132).

The New Testament distinction between apostles being called by God with a broader scope of authority and elders appointed in an individual church with local authority is affirmed but expanded as early Adventists also viewed "evangelists" as a "special" call from God for an itinerant function alongside apostles (127, 128). While this understanding of the evangelist as an itinerant church planter—"a preacher of the gospel not fixed in any place, but traveling as a missionary to preach the gospel and establish churches" (Loughborough 1907:127)—is used somewhat interchangeably with the term apostle rather than a distinct leadership position, while its itinerancy was not developed to the degree of the apostles' travels. While the concept of evangelism as sent-ness can be developed from Romans 10:13-15 (in reverse order salvation comes from calling, which comes from believing, derived from hearing gospel proclamation by those who are sent), the three Scriptures Loughborough referenced to connect these concepts do not thoroughly establish it, as Ephesians 4:11 simply mentions it in the context of gifting, 2 Timothy 4:5 includes the admonition to do the work of an evangelist with no concept of apostolicity,

and Acts 21:8 describes Philip as both an evangelist and one of the original seven deacons. In addition to Romans 10:13-15, the narrative of Philip could potentially include the notion of itinerancy as he was taken up and sent by God supernaturally to different places and evangelized in cultures other than his own (Acts 8:5, 26-40).

The two primary reasons given for the function of early apostles continuing beyond the original twelve were definitional—an apostle as one sent out by God on mission can happen in any age—and exegetical—Ephesians 4 envisions the continued need for apostles as a means of unity which the church has not yet fully realized.

The practice of paid ministers as apostolic church planters also figured prominently in the early Adventist understanding of ordination. There were four primary criteria for examination of a candidate to gospel ministry: a clear calling from God, intellectual and spiritual fitness, beliefs in harmony with the church, and evangelistic experience in new fields (Kaiser 2013:177-218). Kaiser synthesizes the practice and roots of itinerant evangelism before ordination:

> The most feasible way to prove one's calling was by entering new fields where the present truth was unknown, and thus a period of 'labor[ing] publicly in the cause of God.' . . . This period of labor, sometimes called a 'time of improving,' was usually marked by missionary activities in untrodden fields, often lasting one or two years, so that the church could recognize the candidate's calling and ordain him. Ellen White compared this time of 'improving' to the Waldensian practice of holding off on 'ordination to the sacred office' until the candidates had completed a three-year missionary experience in the outside world (185, 186).

While the granting of ordination credentials to church administrators by virtue of their position was discouraged by the General Conference, there were examples of administrators being granted a ministerial license in order to improve their skills before ordination (Krause 2013:203). Uriah Smith—although already having functioned as an editor of the *Review* and secretary of the General Conference—was granted a ministerial license to improve his gift of preaching (1868), and G. I. Butler—already serving as a conference president in 1865 only received a ministerial license and then ordination in 1867 (204).

Pioneers and key leaders also bore repeated witness to the importance of itinerant, apostolic work by paid ministers. In an 1875 California campmeeting discussion, recent general conference president G. I. Butler—now serving as a missionary to that state—was recorded as giving the following observation regarding local conferences and their relationship

to ministerial compensation: "Elder Butler spoke to the point, reciting the imperative necessity of more laborers in the field in order to spread these living but unpopular truths . . . that unless those who go out to labor in this direction do benefit the cause, the Conferences generally do not feel under obligation to pay them for their time and efforts" (California State Conference 1874).

Ellen White repeatedly highlighted the apostolic role of paid ministers planting member-led churches, then passing on to do it again:

> Our ministers are not to spend their time laboring for those who have already accepted the truth. With Christ's love burning in their hearts, they are to go forth to win sinners to the Saviour. Beside all waters they are to sow the seeds of truth. Place after place is to be visited; church after church is to be raised up. Those who take their stand for the truth are to be organized into churches, and then the minister is to pass on to other equally important fields. (2002d:18)

Her expectation for ministers included devising new methods of labor for raising up churches both domestically and internationally (White 1901d: para. 16; White 2002d:205), with the salvation of Christ as the gospel motivation for planting (White 1908). If the methods used by ministers were not resulting in new churches being organized, then they were to examine themselves spiritually, seek counsel from fellow ministers, and be willing to change their strategies. (White 1884:658) In Ellen White's view, the mentoring done by older ministers should include taking younger ministers with them into the harvest field to work new territories (White 2002b:683, 686). In this way, ministers could establish new groups with a church planting DNA where the burden of supporting apostolic work exists in all believers with new churches to be planted from among the ranks of new converts (White 2002d:205, 210; 2002f:20). Larger churches were also challenged to organize themselves to send missionary teams to plant in nearby cities and villages (White 1891:450). Churches that sent their members out to plant new churches were themselves strengthened and refreshed (White 2002d:204; White 1901d; White 1901c), and counseled to do so in tandem with medical missionary work where possible (White 1901a; White 1901b).

In publications outside Seventh-day Adventism, the apostolicity of ministers was also recognized as a significant cause for rapid growth. Interviews with Adventist leaders were conducted indicating the primary function of pastors was evangelizing in new fields (Star 1886:5), as well as the observation that "all Seventh-day Adventist clergyman are missionaries—not located pastors—and are busy preaching, teaching, and organizing the world over" (A Candid Reader 1909:11).

Apostolic Capacity in Early Adventism

Member-led ministries, elder-led churches, and a simple reproducible ecclesiology all created significant capacity for the function of apostolic leadership in early Adventism. Ellen White challenged ministers to "establish your churches with the understanding that they need not expect the minister to wait upon them. They have the truth; they know what truth is. They should have root in themselves"(*General Conference Bulletin* 1901:267). Based on the biblical paradigm of every-member ministry and the contemporary influence of John Wesley's three-part "method" of societies, classes, and bands,[4] the primary expression of early Adventist ministry was centered around group life in the "social meeting." A renamed and adapted form of the Methodist class meeting, social meetings were not designed around sharing doctrinal truths but instead sharing Christian life as participants testified of their experiences, confessed sins, offered prayers, sang together, and encouraged one another (White J. 1868:167; 1855:236). Uriah Smith captured the spirit of the social meeting gathering as "a meeting characterized by spirited and soul-cheering testimonies, the beaming eye, the voice of praise, the earnest and stirring exhortation, and often the falling tear-scenes in which faith and love flame up anew."(1865:196) These were non-programmed gatherings, and if people started preaching in social meetings they were instructed to keep it short as one particular meeting recorded 117 testimonies in 53 minutes (Loughborough 1987:88). While not a condition for membership, they were an expected duty for all true believers, (Nichol 7:1962:935) a helpful tool to train members and young ministers for ministry, sometimes practiced during devotional times at early General Conference sessions, (*General Conference Bulletin* 1897:144) and of much greater significance to church life than being "entertained by a preacher."

> Let every one consider the value of the social meetings, and let not large or small companies of believers think that they cannot have an enjoyable season unless they are entertained by a preacher. Where this dependence upon the minister exists, the people fail to obtain that vigorous religious experience which they so much need wherever their lot may be cast. If the minister alone does all the witnessing, then those who have newly come to the faith become dwarfed and sickly for lack of opportunity to use their spiritual muscle. They have need to learn how to testify, how to pray, how to sing, to the glory of God: but failing to do this, they have a one-sided experience. (White 1895:578)

Often after an evangelistic endeavor in a new territory, the best practice of immediately forming the new believers into a social meeting and

selecting a leader for them by the itinerant minister(s)—before officially organized them into a new church at a later date—provided three key benefits. The new believers could get better acquainted, they learn who they can trust and have full fellowship with, and can discern which roles each one may be best qualified or suited for.

> Where bodies of believers are brought out on the truth in new places, we would not recommend the immediate formation of a church. In such cases let a leader be appointed (this can perhaps best be done by the evangelist when he raises up the church), and let social meetings be continued till such time as the individuals become thoroughly acquainted with each other, and ascertain with whom they can have fellowship, and who are qualified for the important duties of officers of the church. As to the particular manner of organizing a church, when the proper time comes, we shall be allowed to avail ourselves of the experience of several ministers who have already adopted the following plan, and testify that it works well. (Loughborough 1907:125)

A second capacity-producing practice for apostolic leadership was elder-led churches. While the traits of biblical elders in the New Testament were seen as part of the assessment criteria for both local church elders and itinerant ministers,[5] the office of elder—the primary spiritual leader in a local church—was an unpaid position ordained by the itinerant minister after being selected through informal ballot by the members when the new church was organized (Loughborough 1907:131-132). Note that this typically included elders in the plural, but could also be a singular elder who may also function as a deacon in the smaller churches starting out. While itinerant ministers would come back to visit newly planted churches, the role of the volunteer elders created the ability for early Adventist ministers to invest the majority of their time and efforts in raising up new groups of believers. As the primary spiritual leaders of the church, early elders took on significant leadership roles, including functioning as the chairman of the church's business meetings, dealing with erring members, and taking the primary lead in organizing the church's various activities (Loughborough 1907:132, 162).

A third key practice that enabled apostolic leadership was a simple, reproducible ecclesiology. The church itself was viewed not as a human program but rather a spiritual organism. L. H. Christian's comments are representative of this view.

> Many have asked whether the Adventist worldwide church organization is congregational, presbyterian, or episcopal. . . . While it has similarities with other churches, it is really different and an organism by itself. It came as a fruitage of the creative ideas from the advent

> message guided by God and the Spirit of prophecy. The Adventist Church is a church with a task, and the Lord gave it a body to fit the task. (Douglass 1998:185)

This non-programmed view of church enabled the planting of simple, reproducible church units. Whether in large churches or regions with no church and no itinerant minister present, members were to organize themselves organically into basic church groups in order to fulfill mission.

> The formation of small groups as a basis of Christian effort is a plan that has been presented before me by One who cannot err. . . . If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small groups, to work not only for the church members but for unbelievers also. If in one place there are only two or three who know the truth, let them form themselves into a band of workers. (White 2002a:72)

The above quotation reveals five characteristics of missional group life[6] as a simple, reproducible expression of church. First, groups were the foundational expression of church—"a basis of Christian effort." Second, they are a divinely revealed strategy—"presented before me by One who cannot err." Third, they are member led—the members do the "work." Fourth, they are for both believers and non-believers—"not only for the church members but for unbelievers also." And finally, they are a pathway to church planting in unentered areas—"if in one place there are only two or three who know the truth." The planting of these simple reproducible church units was not simply a stopgap approach in unentered areas with no apostolic leader such as itinerant ministers, who—through engaging in evangelism in new fields—were to first establish social meetings as healthy group life with new converts before coming back to organize them into an official church (Loughborough 1907:125).

In regards to the church gathered, social meetings (along with Sabbath School) formed the primary expression of a Sabbath gathering (Hoffer and Holiday 1861:46, 47).[7] Even at the denomination's largest church–a unique exception with several ministers attached to it–the preachers themselves testified that frequently its richest Sabbath blessings happened when they were not there and the members held social meetings.

> The church at Battle Creek needs these preachers less than any church in the State, from the fact that it has more active members than any other church in the State, many of them of long experience and sound judgment. We sometimes preach to them, but often feel when done that a social meeting would have been better. And it is frequently the case that, when we return from spending a Sabbath with some other

> church, we are told that the brethren enjoyed an excellent meeting, the best in several Sabbaths. Now what is the use for us preachers to get in the way of these experienced, living members? (*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 1862:60)

As noted by Ellen White at the beginning of the 20th century, "our people should not be made to think that they need to listen to a sermon every Sabbath" (1902a:1-3). Elder-led churches, member-led ministries, and a simple and reproducible ecclesiology all contributed to the enablement of apostolic leadership among early Adventist ministers.

Decline of Apostolicity in Adventist Ministry

With this apostolic plan in place for the first four decades of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the annual ratio of the number of paid ministers per new church was never more than ten to one.[8] Unfortunately, the following 1912 statement by then General Conference President A. G. Daniells highlights the trends away from apostolic leadership as well as the prophetic implications of abandoning the early Adventist model:

> We have not settled our ministers over churches as pastors to any large extent. In some of the very large churches we have elected pastors, but as a rule we have held ourselves ready for field service, evangelistic work, and our brethren and sisters have held themselves ready to maintain their church services and carry forward their church work without settled pastors. And I hope this will never cease to be the order of affairs in this denomination; for when we cease our forward movement work and begin to settle over our churches, to stay by them, and do their thinking and their praying and their work that is to be done, then our churches will begin to weaken, and to lose their life and spirit, and become paralyzed and fossilized and our work will be on a retreat. (Daniells 1912)

The acknowledgment of this shifting reality was roundly rejected by other church administrators as well. In 1883, when a proposal was published to set up two classes of ministers—those who do itinerant apostolic work and those placed with existing churches—it was immediately rejected by then General Conference President G. I. Butler (Butler 1883a:618; 1883b:745-746).

Ellen White denounced the idea of extending calls for settled pastors over churches (White 1902a:1-3), with the accountability for the resulting mission loss shouldered by both the members—some of which should be rebaptized if unable to stand alone without a minister (White 2002b:381)—

and the ministers who had created "religious weaklings" by prioritizing nurture of members over evangelism with unbelievers:

> God has not given His ministers the work of setting the churches right. No sooner is this work done, apparently, then it has to be done over again. Church members that are thus looked after and labored for become religious weaklings. If nine tenths of the effort that has been put forth for those who know the truth had been put forth for those who have never heard the truth, how much greater would have been the advancement made! (White 2002f:18-19; 2002b:113)

Her strong warnings against the "hovering" model of ministers over existing churches highlighted three negative outcomes: it harms ministers by making them spiritually weak, it harms the churches by making them spiritually weak through over-dependence upon the ministers, and ultimately it harms the church's mission of saving the lost (Jones 2014:31-32).[9]

After Ellen White's death (1915) and the end of A. G. Daniell's presidency (1922), the shift in ministerial assignments from new fields to established churches resulted in an overemphasis on monological preaching for Sabbath services rather than dialogical sharing with the social meeting, which itself was replaced by the prayer meeting (a second, frequent opportunity for the minister to preach followed by a time of prayer) (Burrill 1998:210-220). Burrill goes on to describe the plan for assigning ministers to districts which began in the 1920s and was fully in place by the 1950s, a phenomenon which is predominantly in North American and other western and developed contexts where the primacy of pastoral care-giving is the norm (Burrill 1998:183-184). In the late 1950s, famed evangelist and radio ministry pioneer H. M. S. Richards—in a book published out of his lectures to Columbia Union pastors and theological seminary students at Takoma Park Church in Maryland—notes this significant shift he has personally observed through his own biographical account:

> When I was baptized, and later became a young preacher, we looked upon churches that had to have settled pastors over every flock as being decadent. Most of our preachers were out on the firing line, holding meetings, winning men to Christ, and raising up new churches. Then every few months they would come around and visit the churches that had already been established. This seemed to be, according to our view of it, the plan of the apostolic church. (Richards 2005:156,158)[10]

Over time, policy caught up with practice as the gradual removal of the apostolic function from Adventist ministers was reflected in the progression of key historical documents beginning with the formation of a church

manual. In 1883, a proposed church manual was considered by the General Conference Executive Committee (plus an additional group of ten) that contained a distinction between two classes of ministers, those who do itinerant apostolic work and those placed with existing churches.[11] In a written response by then General Conference President G. I. Butler to explain its unanimous rejection by the committee, three primary reasons were stated: the church had already navigated the greatest challenges around church organization without a manual, it would be viewed as a step towards a creed thus creating religious dependence upon a source other than the Bible, and ultimately it would position the denomination to embrace the formalism and spiritual feebleness experienced in other Christian groups that had adopted official manuals (Butler 1883b:745-746). Even the proposed church manual itself recognized that this two-tiered systems was a departure from the established practice at that time:

> At the present date, the work of Seventh-day Adventist Ministers is largely evangelistic in its character. Just enough labor is bestowed upon the older churches to keep them in good running order, the balance of the time being devoted to the proclamation of the present truth among those who have not yet heard the solemn message which relates to the near coming of Christ and the Judgment. (Butler 1883b:745-746)

While Loughborough's 1907 *The Church: Its Order, Organization, and Discipline* was functionally a de-facto reference point for a church manual—and it retained the apostolic function of paid ministers and local church pastoral function of volunteer elders—in 1932, the first church manual was officially voted. It stated that the paid minister—when assigned to a church—becomes the highest-ranking officer, the chairman of the church board, and the one responsible for the church's services, with the local elders (while still all members of the board) as his assistants (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 1932:26, 137).

In the 2000 update of this official *Church Manual*, while the minister continues as chair of the church board, his influence is expanded in the local church to also include *ex officio* chairperson of the nominating committee, chair of the board of elders—who are no longer all automatic members of the church board but rather a subcommittee of the board—and chairperson of the committee to select the nominating committee (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 2000:31, 137, 144).

In the 2016 *Church Manual*—the 19th edition and most recent update at the time of this article—the loss of apostolicity in the job description of the minister is maintained from the 2000 *Church Manual*. While the acknowledgment of "small groups," "house churches," or "church planting

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core group" as a multiplication method in a geographic area is inserted with the simple appointment by the district pastor of a "leader," (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 2016a:37-38) the overall emphasis of the minister as the key officer of the local church and elders as their assistants, is maintained. As illustrative of the highly complex and departmentally-driven eschatology in contemporary Adventism, the 2016 manual lists a total of 19 types of officers, departments, and auxiliary organizations in the local church[12]—several of which require multiple positions and their own respective sub-councils—all appointed through a detailed and lengthy yearly nominating committee process.

Synthesizing the most recent edition of the *Church Manual* with other official leadership handbooks, a consistent pattern emerges. While these documents serve a pragmatic rather than theological or historical function, as global sources for policy and recommended practices they have served to solidify the settled pastor paradigm. The current *Church Manual* (2016a), *Minister's Handbook* (2009), and *Elder's Handbook* (2016b), all exhibit a three-fold pattern around the decline of apostolic leadership in Adventist ministry. First, apostles and elders are affirmed in all three documents as the two primary leadership functions in the New Testament, with apostles as church-wide overseers and itinerant missionaries, and lay-elders as the shepherds of existing congregations (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 2016a:26, 29; 2009:16, 107; 2016b:24-26, 31). Second, all three documents assume the office of the modern-day pastor as distinct from apostles or elders without any biblical justification or relevant reference material from Adventist pioneers (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 2016a:31),[13] Third, these documents only allow for significant ministry responsibilities to be performed by elders when the pastor is unavailable or grants special permission.[14] Elders serve as special assistants to pastors[15] within the local church, composing their own board in an advisory relationship to the church board. This three-fold progression (or rather de-gression) as seen through the various editions of church manuals and handbooks firmly outlines both the removal of apostolic expectation among contemporary Adventist ministers and a demotion of local church elders as the primary spiritual leaders in local churches.

Just as the early church abandoned the apostolic approach to apostles and elders after the death of its prophetic visionary John and other key leaders, so the Adventist Church abandoned its apostolic design for leadership after the death of Ellen White and other pioneers. While the historical details are different, a similar impact from the decline of apostolicity in ministers has also been observed in the Methodist tradition after the death of John Wesley and his colleagues.[16]

To be concise—as shown in the *Apostolic Leadership in Adventist Ministry* matrix below—today's paid minister functions pragmatically as a paid head elder within the local church. The early Adventist apostolic expectation of paid ministers has been abandoned. Neither group of leaders in contemporary Adventism (pastors or elders) is officially tasked with the itinerant, missionary responsibility. Because the apostolic model of leadership has been largely abandoned and paid ministers often replace the shepherding functions designed for elders, the resulting paradigm in contemporary Adventism has in essence created apostles with no apostolicity (they spend most of their time in the local churches), and elders with no true eldership (they no longer pastor the congregations). The transference of the itinerant minister to the domain of the local church is now a matter of official policy. The fears among early Adventists around the settled-pastor modus operandi of other mainstream Christian denominations are now historical footnotes as the non-apostolic approach to ministry has been adopted and fully entrenched within many geographical regions of Seventh-day Adventism.

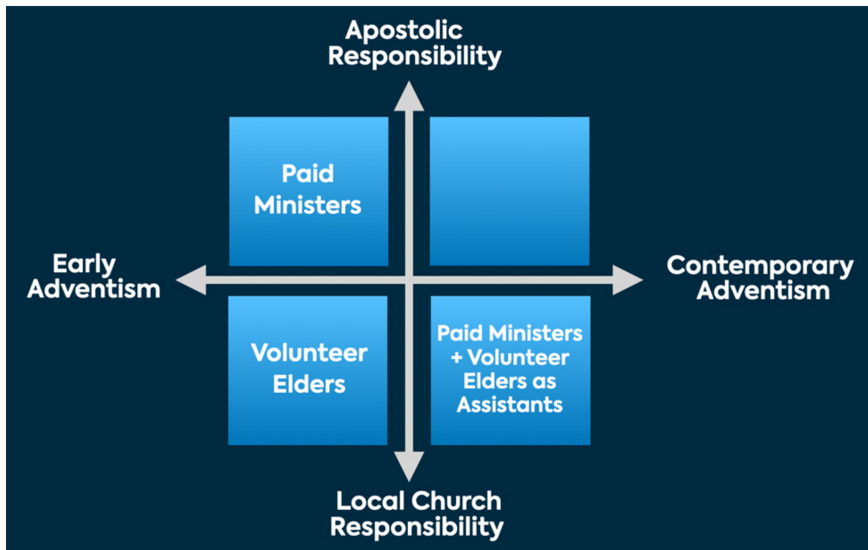

Figure 1: Adventist Leadership in Adventist Ministry

Recovery of Apostolicity in Adventist Ministry

The rapidly evolving cultural, societal, and technological changes of the 21st century have created immensely different conditions to those of the 19th century. Seeking to avoid both extremes of the idolatry of a bygone era

as well as the naïve judgment of its historical irrelevance for the future, the following five recommendations are humbly offered towards recovering an environment of apostolic leadership.

1. Recognize that there are no administrative solutions to spiritual problems. Because the church is in essence a spiritual organism rather than a human organization, both its challenges and solutions are fundamentally spiritual, not administrative, managerial, or strategic. By living out an atmosphere of transformative spiritual experience with Christ—which this paper notes was a foundational catalyst of the Advent movement—deeper issues are being addressed and the proper context for administration, management, and strategy is created. To add spiritual urgency, the 21st century pervasiveness of materialism in the global north and increasingly throughout all technologically-connected cultures has created variants of Christian consumerism that are fundamentally in opposition to apostolic movements. These empty calories of nominal Christianity will only be replaced by the pursuit of deep faith, personal conversion, and Spirit-led revival. Only through recognizing that our deeper challenges are spiritual and experiencing a vital faith in Christ, can the additional recommendations in this paper become a reality.

2. Embrace a minimum ecclesiology for maximum reproducibility. No matter how Christ-centered the biblical a message may be, you cannot easily multiply a church that requires a program-driven, highly-complex ecclesiology. The early Adventist example regarding what constituted a church assumed a small number of believers that witnessed daily, gathered weekly (through "social meetings" and Sabbath School, often without the sermonizing or the modern equivalent of a "worship service"), and started with a simple volunteer leadership team (an elder, a deacon, and a clerk) (Loughborough 1907:131-132).[17] Contrasted with the historical development of an increasingly complex ecclesiology as demonstrated in this paper, not only is this baseline approach more reproducible but also simple enough for members with full-time marketplace careers to facilitate. In order to experience a recovery of apostolicity in a sustainable way, the mere change in classification of congregational leaders from paid ministers to volunteer elders must be preceded by a paradigm change around the baseline requirements to start and become a church. And in cultures where the church building has ceased to be the primary space for evangelism, repositioning church around mission rather than a modern worship service creates space for deeper discipleship and engagement in mission. Without intentional effort to identify, empower, and affirm simpler and more reproducible forms of church, newly planted congregations will remain one-generation groups and rarely multiply regardless of whether they are led by paid professionals or volunteers.

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3. Restore elders as congregational leaders. Today's elders—particularly in the developed countries within the global north—are no longer the primary spiritual leaders of individual congregations but function rather as special assistants to the de-facto head eldership of paid ministers. Since this practice is now official (through manuals and handbooks), observable (in the everyday life of congregations), and often obligatory (as many constituents express entitlement for a paid minister because of returned tithe), members and elders must be re-educated on their biblical roles. Although planting new churches with an elder-pastored DNA is a more amenable environment than transitioning to the same paradigm within existing congregations, raising the level of engagement and responsibility within the latter group will also counterbalance the observation of Roland Allen: "Where churches are helped most, there they are weak, lifeless, and helpless. Nothing is so weakening as the habit of depending upon others for those things which we ought to supply for ourselves" (1962:35). While there will inevitably be a place for paid ministers assigned to local churches—particularly those too large to be led by volunteers—if the previous two recommendations are in place, the reconfiguring of elder training and their affirmation in the local conference and beyond can restore their biblical role as the primary shepherds of the local church. Viewed from the record of early Adventism and the lense of contemporary Adventism in developing contexts, the resulting growth rates demythologize the assumption that churches with their own pastor grow faster (www.adventiststatistics.org).[18]

4. Reposition ministers as missionaries. The realignment of ministers as catalysts for mission in new fields is in harmony with biblical design and the explosive growth rates of early Adventism and other Christian movements. Such a massive cultural shift is possible if and only if the previous three recommendations are intentionally pursued. One of the influence points for making micro-shifts in the role of ministers is through their educational formation and ministerial internship. How might increased apostolic competencies be integrated in the curriculum? What does ministerial formation look like that effectively creates leaders who self-identify as equippers rather than performers? As early Adventist ministers could not be ordained without raising up a new group, can pre-ordination church planting internships be piloted, or at least require interns to be exposed to working new fields before ordination?[19] Placing in tension the extra-biblical notion of the office of a pastor with the acknowledgement of current reality, is it possible or even desirable to have both district pastors (assigned to a church/es) and missionary pastors (organizing elder-led churches)? In early Adventism, paid leaders primarily planted while volunteer leaders were appointed to pastor. In contemporary Adventism, volunteer leaders primarily plant then over time paid leaders take over

the pastoring these churches. This observation is more about organizational prioritization and less about volunteer planters—many of who are and will continue to function as missionaries.

5. Increase the ratio of members to paid ministers. If the previous four recommendations ever become reality, the increase in the ratio of members to paid ministers will take place organically. Far from decreasing the number of paid ministers, this new reality would actually enable the hiring of more through the restoration of the biblical model and early Adventist approach that saw the rapid planting and multiplication of simple, elder-led churches.[20] If however the previous four recommendations are not implemented, the change process could foreseeably—and painfully—take place in reverse. Whether triggered by financial, medical, technological, or other global crises, an externally-forced reduction in paid ministers would in short order necessitate a response on the previous recommendations.

Endnotes

[1]The emphasis on selecting someone who had been with Jesus from the beginning of his earthly ministry (Acts 1:21-22) is not listed as a criterion as it did not apply to the Apostle Paul and others. A fifth possible criteria sometimes used by both cessationists and continuationists (while not listed as such by the New Testament writers themselves) is the writing of the canon. For representative examples of continuationists who believe the office of apostle has is no longer operative but the function of the apostolic gift is, see Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*. Zondervan Academic, 1994, 905-906, and Greg Alison who also notes that while others have referred to them as apostles, no major figure in Christian history has self-identified as an apostle. See *Sojourners and Strangers,* 210.

[2]Not only do contemporary disciples not fit these criteria, but even some of the above-named apostles in the New Testament are interestingly not recorded as fulfilling all three criteria such as Barnabas and Apollos.

[3]The four-question assessment process for the Methodist circuit rider included the following: "Is this man truly converted? Does he know and follow the Methodist rules? Does he do a good job preaching? Does he have a horse?" See Ludwig Charles *Francis Asbury: God's Circuit Rider*. Mott Media, 1984, 196. For a detailed treatment of the hardships and sacrifices of circuit riders in the context of the annual conference where overseeing bishops would assign the preacher to plant in a new circuit (today's charge) for typically two years maximum, see William Powell Jr's "Methodist Circuit Riders in America, 1766-1844" University of Richmond, VA. Master's Thesis, 1977.

[4]Wesley's formation of societies (larger groups for teaching, preaching, and teaching), classes (mandatory, diverse mixed-gender groups up to 20 for non-programmed discipleship), and bands (optional, smaller same-gender groups for following a set of questions for spiritual accountability) was an eclectic borrowing from both Anglicans and Moravians. See Andrew C. Thompson. "'To Stir Them Up to Believe, Love, and Obey'—Soteriological Dimensions of the Early Methodist Class Meeting". *Methodist History 48.3,* (2010). For a detailed treatment of the success and

declining influence of the class meetings as they became more regimented, programmed, and eventually replaced by Sunday School (with its emphasis on Bible instruction rather than the discipleship of persons), see Philip F. Hardt. "A Crown and a Cross: The Rise, Development, and Decline of the Methodist Class Meeting in Eighteenth Century England." *Methodist History 49.2* (2011), and David Lowes Watson's *The Early Methodist Class Meeting: It's Origins and Significance.* Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002.

[5]This view was expressed by James White—see "Gospel Order", *Review and Herald,* Dec. 6, 1853, p. 173—and Ellen White—see *Testimonies for the Church,* Volume 5, p.617 and *Testimonies,* Volume 2, p. 621—where she rebuked a paid minister named "Brother B" based upon the traits of elders even though he wasn't a local church elder.

[6]While the social meeting was the most organic and foundational expression of groups in early Adventism, I use this term here because there were other expressions that developed, including Sabbath School, and it is not clear that this quotation limits groups as a basis of Christian effort to the social meeting.

[7]Also note Ellen White's comment that "this is as it should be" in relation to when her son Edson—who was a minister—was at home and physically present with a local church group. See Ellen White, *Review and Herald.* October 14, 1884, p. 641.

[8]By the mid-1900's this ratio declined significantly until each new church planted annually within the North American Division took on average 122 paid ministers. See Russell Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church.* Hart Research Center, 1998, p. 191-192.

[9]See Blake Jones' synthesis of the 37 uses of this phrase (or similarly worded phrases) in "Apostle or Elder? The Critical Need to Define the Adventist Minister's Role" (Presentation at Adventist Theological Society, San Diego, 2014), 31-32., p.9.

[10]After recounting how a new church was started in the country of Czechoslovakia as a result of the president and treasurer being put in jail for faithfulness to the Bible, he goes on to says "maybe someday we will not have preachers over our churches. Many of us will be in jail. You know, if half of our preachers went to jail, we'd really have a revival in our denomination—that is, if they went to jail for principle."

[11]For the specific proposal around two classes of ministers, see "Church Manual." *Review and Herald*, September 25, 1883, p. 618. Note that in 1883, the idea of two distinct classes of ministers was rejected because it was viewed as too inward whereas in contemporary Adventism the idea would also be radical and face probable rejection as the settled pastor is now the default model. For fuller background information around the 1883 proposed church manual, see P. Gerard Damsteegt. "Have Adventists Abandoned the Biblical Model of Leadership of the Local Church?" Berrien Springs, MI (2005). Available at: http://works.bepress.com/p_gerard_damsteegt/55/.

[12]This current list includes: elders, deacons, deaconesses, clerk, treasurer, interest coordinator, children's ministry, communications, education, family ministry, health ministry, music, public affairs and religious liberty, publishing, Sabbath School, personal ministries, stewardship, women's ministry, and youth ministry. Identifying this list is not to minimize the importance of each function but rather to illustrate the difficulty in multiplying this model, particularly when many new churches start with only a small handful of leaders.

[13]Here the manual only gives two pieces of evidence. The first is the direct quotation of Ephesians 4:11-12 with no interpretive comment as to what was originally intended by the Apostle Paul's mention of the fivefold gifting or how the contemporary usage of the modern term "pastor" relates to any of these. The second is a quotation from Ellen White's *Testimonies to Ministers* (p.52-53) which states that God has appointed men to guard the church, without stating which of the Ephesians 4 fivefold giftings she

is referring to, or if she is even referring to them at all. *Seventh-day Adventist Minister's Handbook*, 15-16: Here the handbook simply recognizes that Paul was called by God to ministry (1 Tim. 1:2) and a reference to Aaron in the Old Testament being called to ministry as high priest (Hebrews 5:4), which contextually illustrates the high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ; in the *Seventh-day Adventist Elder's Handbook,* the only justification for the modern notion of a settled pastor is referencing 2 Timothy 4:1-5 on page 40, which is ironic as these qualifications of elders from 2 Timothy and other parallel passages are simultaneous used to highlight the traits of elders including their moral purity (37), age qualifications (16), supporting the pastor with oversight within the local church (25), being respectful (31), possessing spiritual leadership qualities (31), and others.

[14]In the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, the elder(s) can only perform the following nine ministry functions "in the absence of a [or the] pastor" or similar conditions including "in the pastor's absence", "when the assigned pastor is unavailable", or "in the absence of an ordained pastor" (or through permission from the conference president in many cases): preside over a business meeting (64, 74), become the "spiritual leaders of the church" (73), conduct church services, a marriage ceremony, or communion (74), oversee election of church delegates to a conference session (76), oversee the nominating committee process (110), minister in word and doctrine (73), and conduct a baptism (75). In the *Seventh-day Adventist Minister's Handbook*, the Acts 20:28 reference to elders as overseers is applied to pastors (51, 92), the work of visitation is squarely the responsibility of the pastor but elders can assist if the church is too large or spread out to make the pastor's personal presence impractical (130-134), the elder may officiate in a funeral in the absence of a pastor (196), and the overall purpose and suggested litany of the installation service—with the conference representative's prayer as the official recognition of the pastor as "congregational leader" rather than the elders (220-227). In the *Seventh-day Adventist Elder's Handbook,* the elder(s) can only perform the following fifteen functions "in the absence of the pastor" (or similarly worded phrases mentioned above, pp. 23, 39, 41, 46, 56, 129, 131, 149, 151): conduct the ordinances, become the primary spiritual leaders of the church, lead the Sabbath worship service, plan the preaching schedule, preach regularly, oversee guest speaker invitations, guard the pulpit, conduct a baptism, chair the church board and business meetings, officiate at an anointing, officiate at a funeral service (unless the bereaved family requests the elder instead of the pastor), lead out in a marriage ceremony, minister in word and doctrine, and conduct a child dedication.

[15]The language of elder as special assistants is in all three documents, with the *Seventh-day Adventist Elder's Handbook* providing the most significant usage of similarly worded phrases (29, 33, 40, 43, 44, 57).

[16]For a recent overview of the factors for the explosive growth and decline of the Methodist tradition—many of which are mirrored in the history of the Advent movement--see Winfield Bevins, *Marks of a Movement: What the Church Today can Learn From the Wesleyan Revival*. Zondervan, 2019. Additionally, as noted in the foreword through a per capita calculation according to Rodney Stark and Roger Finke's *The Churching of America, 1776-200: Winners and Losers in our Religious Economy* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Pres, 2005), two primary contributors to the immediate decline in Methodist growth rates were the 1850 decision to require all itinerant circuit riders and local ministers to complete four years of ordination studies, and the 1860 decision to no longer require participation in classes and bands which made discipleship optional.

[17]Note that this three-person team which was appointed through secret ballot and dedicated by an ordained minister was sometimes reduced to two in smaller congregations—a single elder-deacon plus a clerk.

[18]While there are of course multiple factors in these observations beyond simply the leadership expectations of the elder, this commonly held myth is seen in examples such as the Korean Union where although there are 859 ordained and licensed ministers to pastor and oversee 833 churches and companies, there has been a continuous 10-year growth rate decline down to 1.26% (2019). See www.adventiststatistics.org.

[19]A key aspect of ordination as practiced today is that it is an affirmation of what God is demonstrating through the workers ministry. If the demonstration of a minister's ministry is only within the operation and growth of existing churches, then the affirmation through ordination creates a self-perpetuating non-apostolic expectation in roles.

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EP

Mission Leadership Development in the Chinese Adventist Church: Reflections in the Light of Traditional Chinese Philosophies of Leadership

Introduction

Different schools of thought have emphasized multiples aspects of leadership, preeminently in the western hemisphere for the last decades (Bennis 1959; Greenleaf 1977; Malphus 2003). As China more decisively steps into the global arena through internationalization of its economy and political influence, scholars are only scratching the surface in exploring the pluralistic styles of Chinese indigenous leadership in both national and international organizations where the Chinese play significant leadership roles (Chen and Lee 2008: xv; Zhang, Chen, and Chen, and Ang 2014).

Contextual leadership is essential for the healthy development of any organization and that is equally true when it comes to leadership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in China. As Ma and Tsui denote, "traditional philosophical and cultural roots influence the thought patterns and behaviors of all citizens in a community including its leaders. Hence, leadership practices would reflect unique cultural idiosyncrasies even . . . in a rapidly changing context" such as contemporary China (2015:13).

Although western leadership schools of thought have increasingly been studied in Chinese academia and their models applied in organizational settings throughout China since the 1980s, there are still several cultural features from traditional Chinese leadership philosophies playing a significant role in the contemporary Chinese leadership landscape.

This article explores cultural leadership aspects among the Seventh-day Adventist Church in China, and how those traits impact the church missiologically, followed by a brief summary of strategies for effective mission leadership development.

Brief Historical Context of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in China

Historically, China has a long relationship with Christianity. The first historical records date back to the Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE) in the 7th century, when the Nestorians first arrived in the country, making converts for nearly two centuries but subsequently dying out, followed by Catholics and Protestants respectively in the 13th and 19th centuries (Pierson 2009:85, 273-276). Religious restrictions, persecution, and attachments of Christianity to colonial interest—particularly with early Protestant missions—all prevented the gospel from being deeply rooted in the country, although there are pockets of believers today that may represent as many as one hundred million Christians or 8% of the Chinese population (Aikman 2003:15; Rahn 2018).

The Adventist message first came to China in 1888 through the canvassing ministry of Abraham LaRue in Hong Kong (Trim 2015:1). For nearly 15 years he labored with little success until General Conference sponsored missionaries arrived in 1902. Through the following decades of mission effort, by 1950, the then organized China Division had ten Union Missions, "nineteen secondary or tertiary educational institutions, three publishing houses, seven sanitarian–hospitals, and nine clinics and dispensaries," with 23,516 members (10).

However, after 1949, the Adventist Church in China faced growing restrictions that completely changed the way it could operate in the country. The China Division was dissolved, foreign missionaries had to leave the country, and the properties of the Church were confiscated. The Chinese territory remained largely inaccessible, administratively unorganized, and membership statistics were unclear until recently (Trim 2015:17-19; Lee and Chow 2013:45-47).

In 1951 the Three Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM), a government office responsible for managing the Protestant churches under a non-denominational model, began to oversee Protestantism, and applied congregationalism to all Protestant churches.

The number of Christians during the years of 1949 to 1976 declined sharply; however, Christianity once again flourished in China after 1977. The decades of 1980-90 witnessed many church planting projects in both rural and urban areas of China and with a relaxation on regulations for

Christianity after 1977, many churches were opened (Hirsch 2009: 9-10; Aikman 2003).

Seventh-day Adventist membership also experienced significant growth since 1980. Its membership grew from 9,964 members in 1980 to an estimated 430,000 in 2014 (Trim 2015:28). Although the environmental restrictions hindered the church from an avenue for integral development, Chinese members found their own creative ways to share the gospel with their friends and neighbors. In fact, the quantitative growth was followed by several challenges. The Chinese Adventist Church still has administrative, theological, and leadership needs as consequences of this unique environment. These gaps have demanded creative strategic measures, particularly with regards to providing for theological education and leadership development.

Brief Overview of Traditional Chinese Leadership Philosophies

Traditional Chinese philosophies on leadership are vast, with multiple schools of thought having been developed over the almost 5,000 years of Chinese history. Nevertheless, five main traditional philosophies form the basis of most of the contemporary Chinese indigenous leadership styles: (1) Confucianism, (2) Daoism, (3) Legalism, (4) Strategic Situationalism from Sunzi's classic *Art of War*, and (5) Chinese Paternalism (Chen and Lee 2008; Ma and Tsui 2015).

The main ideas of these schools of thought concerning leadership often overlap with western leadership counterparts, and often they are not individually applied by Chinese leaders in general, but rather all five are combined to meet the needs of various circumstances in different Chinese leadership contexts.

Confucianism and Daoism are the basis of all the other subsequent philosophies. It is not precisely clear which one was developed first, though some scholars argue Daoism seem to have been developed as a response to Confucianism (Mark 2016).

Confucianism highlighted virtue (*yi*) over power, relationships (*guanxi*) over authoritarianism, and rituals (*li*) over rules (Watson 2007:20) by designing definite hierarchical roles and rituals for groups of individuals in the Chinese collective society of that time. Confucius' main concern was societal harmony / social order, needed to obtain the blessings of heaven (Chao 2006:102-103). He taught that leaders should be role models of morality for society. His writings aimed to provide leadership principles for the emperor and his officials, since it was an elite-oriented leadership philosophy.

According to Ma and Tsui, “Daoism argues that the leaders are most successful if they seem non-existent to their constituents” (2015:20), that is to say, it advocates for a loose form of leadership. Leaders should seek the middle ground, spend more time in reflection, and if possible avoid decision-making. These ideas are based on balancing Dao (道), an unclear concept related to truth, benevolence, righteousness, and harmony. Also, a holistic view of all contextual elements is strongly present in Daoist leadership thought.

Chinese legalism was developed by the Chinese philosopher Hanfei (c. 280–233 BCE). He “had no confidence in morality and did not care for rituals. Instead he believed in power, laws, and manipulation as major means of government and leadership” (Chen and Lee 2008:5). His leadership ideas encompassed strict rule of law, reward, and punishment, headed by a strong, autocratic leader. Secure control through fear and intimidation was also an important element in Legalism in order to obtain results from followers as well as maintain power and order (Ma and Tsui 2015:18).

Strategic Situationalism was developed by Sunzi in his book *Art of War* (孙子兵法 *Sunzi Bingfa*), translated into English in 1905. The book was intended to assist Chinese rulers and army officials of his time to succeed in warfare, which was of vital importance at that period of history. “Know yourself and know your enemy [and] you will be invincible” (Sun, Chen, and Zhang 2008:150) was the main thesis suggested by Sunzi. His leadership principles envisioned “(a) creating positional advantage in the environment, (b) creating organizational advantage within the organization, (c) building morale within the troops, and (d) leveraging and adapting to situations” (143). Strategic Situationalism upheld no orthodox method. Leadership was to happen according to the demands of the situation, preferably if the leader would maneuver to create advantages for success.

Chinese paternalistic leadership as a theory is a recent development, although this particular leadership style was already present in Chinese collective society for a considerable period of time. The theory was systematized from research on Chinese business owners overseas and in Mainland China (Farh, Liang, and Chou 2008:171). The works of R. I. Westwood (1997), one of the main authors on the theory, proposed a headship paternalism comprising nine stylistic elements: “didactic leadership, non-specific intentions, reputation-building, protection of dominance, political manipulation, patronage and nepotism, conflict diffusion, aloofness and social distance, and dialogue ideal, which exist in the general structural characteristics of centralization, low formalization, harmony-building, and personalism” (Farh et al. 2008:172).

As part of the Chinese cultural *milieu*, those five traditional leadership philosophies operate at a worldview level in much of Chinese society (Ma

and Tsui 2015:13). Consequently, they are not usually categorized by leaders who incorporate their principles as mere "Chinese traditions" and apply them in various leadership contexts including within the Adventist Church in China.

Cultural Leadership Features in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in China

Due to restrictions, the Adventist Church has not been able to re-establish the theological and leadership training centers it held in the early years. Such conditions have impacted the Seventh-day Adventist Church in China by limiting the opportunity church leaders have for optaining theological training in many cases. On the other hand, faithfulness, creativity, and the leadership of the Holy Spirit have allowed Adventist leaders to succeed in much of their efforts to maintain the faith and even propagate it among the Chinese people.

Inasmuch as the Chinese Adventist Church had been functioning since the second half of the XX century with a grassroots leadership style, it is expected that traditional leadership philosophies exist either as frameworks or utilitarian components in their leadership models.

This section describes leadership peculiarities within the Chinese Adventist Church in the light of the five Chinese leadership traditions previously presented, and how they impact the church missiologically. The Bible itself celebrates diversity of gifts, talents, and skills among the body of Christ (1 Cor 12; Eph 4:12-16). Ellen White (2010:137) correctly states that "there is no person, no nation, that is perfect in every habit and thought. One must learn of another. Therefore, God wants the different nationalities to mingle together, to be one in judgment, one in purpose. Then the union that there is in Christ will be exemplified." Therefore, as culture is not perfect nor are its features perfect, it is imperative to assess how cultural peculiarities relate with the church's identity, message, and mission, in order to provide leverage for positive change, leadership development, and church growth.

The empirical data presented in this section come from observation, dialog, and interaction during years of cross-cultural service in the region. Also, data from research by other Chinese Adventist scholars are mentioned in correlation with the subject. The data presented in this article provides grounds for further discussions and research concerning mission leadership development for the contemporary Chinese Adventist Church.

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Centralized Leadership

Chinese traditional society has a collective, communitarian orientation. Nevertheless, over the spam of almost 5,000 years it functioned largely under the government of centralized leadership (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, "China History"). As the country transitioned from imperial dynasties into a socialist republic, centralized leadership has remained preeminent.

This pattern seems to co-exist in many churches in the country (Jiao 2009:84-85). It is important to remember that the Adventist Church, due to religious restrictions, operates through a congregational model with no upper organizational levels allowed to fully function beyond the single local congregation. This model had highlighted the presence of centralized leadership in all the more or less independent Adventist congregations. Although some regions in the country have managed to organize informal fellowships of churches, there is a noticeable patter of centralized leadership, with one person normally ascribed to lead out for each congregation.

Adventist church leaders have made extensive use of this traditional Chinese leadership, building their roles on power-distance contexts. In churches where there is no pastor, elders are entrusted with a considerable amount of decision making power, similar to what a pastor would hold. Normally, those leaders have the final word in decision-making, are consistently consulted for their opinions, and are entrusted with the capacity to change plans previously laid. Moreover, although servant leadership is also a present component, there is a notable detachment between church leaders and the members of the congregation. Members confer honor (reputation 面子 *mianzi*) and status to the leader, while the leader accumulates management and decision-making powers (权力 *quanli*) (Jiao 2009:85, 86).

These are typical characteristics of Chinese legalism, in which its founder Hanfei "elaborated the concept of position power and argued that it is very difficult for a wise man without a high position to display his talents" (Hwang 2008:113). As Adventists apply this concept, one notices that leaders maintain *hierarchical* distance from the members of the congregation in order to be recognized as leaders, while also being *physically* near so they can genuinely serve, as imitators of Christ, thus leveraging morale—an important element in Chinese leadership.

Traditional Chinese leadership depends on much less team work or participation in final decision-making processes as compared to Western leadership counterparts. It is common for team members to share opinions, data, and ask certain key questions on most occasions, but in the end the leader in charge is still responsible of deciding the direction to move. There are clear demarcations and duties assigned for each person's role on each team led by centralized leaders; however, since most leaders are

"unwilling to delegate" power (Fahr et al. 2008:194), they maintain their central position of respect, a common cultural feature in many Eastern leadership styles.

Those examples echoed what Confucius said: "Don't comment on something that is not one's concern at a particular position" (Lau 1992:132). "In other words, he implied that only those who occupy a particular position have the right to make certain decisions" (Hwang 2008:113).

One side effect of centralized leadership might be the increase in conflict. Fahr correctly denotes that "employee responses to the leader's authoritarianism vary depending on the organizational context" (2008:192). There are organizations where leaders faced resistance against both authoritarianism and paternalistic leadership styles.

As Chow explains, when church "leaders debated about the best model of church governance—whether the church should be ruled by traditional Chinese paternalism and intra-church circle leadership, or whether the clerical authority should be defined by ordination and by one's moral courage to witness [for] God in times of difficulty—relational factors took precedence over religious considerations" (Chow 2015:70). Considering the above, I have visited some churches and companies in China that were birthed because they split off from larger churches when a group of members decided for other models than centralized leadership and paternalism, and decided to establish their own congregations.

This indicates how cultural traits can be present in church leadership, or even taken for granted.

There are many positive aspects on traditional and cultural leadership in each society, and when perceived through biblical lenses, they can also become positive tools for greater cooperation, unity and mission.

Micromanagement

Micromanagement is peculiar to some traditional Chinese leadership philosophies. The concept had evolved through different Chinese schools of thought, and is more evident in Chinese legalism and Sunzi's strategic situationalism.

Chinese legalism places a strong emphasis on clear rules, rewards, and punishment. It advocates that "a ruler with power should manipulate his subordinates by *fa* and *shu*. *Fa* means law or rules of regulation, while *shu* means skills of manipulation that can be used by the ruler to control subordinates to attain organizational goals" (Hwang 2008:116). In other words, rules should be clear and those who step outside the boundaries are to be punished as a means of controlling behavior and results. In this environment, followers are expected to receive clear and specific directions from

the leader, not to innovate for fear of breaking the rules (and consequently for fear of being punished), and are to obey the leader. Hence the term—micromanagement.

Strategic situationalism is centered on manipulating situations and leveraging advantages to achieve goals. It also affirms the need of the leader to master a number of variables so as to maintain morale, be knowledgeable, and have complete understanding of all circumstances (Sun et al. 2008:157, 158).

Much like business or politics, church leadership in China may also employ micromanagement to run the church's business. Micromanagement provides safety for both leaders and members in this context. Members feel safe as they receive very detailed directions on what, when, and how to perform their jobs, while leaders secure their power and control.

Nevertheless, one negative effect of micromanagement is that it tends to create over-dependency on the leader as well as limiting innovation and creativity among the team. In church leadership, one temptation might be micromanaging issues outside one leader's sphere. In a visit to one large Seventh-day Adventist church in Asia, I notice how everything functioned perfectly because of the pastor. Everyone looked to this leader for guidance and approval, meanwhile nothing was done outside of supervision. Once such a leader is gone, the team may find themselves lost until they get acquainted with all the details that the leader used to micromanage.

In this respect, Fahr stated that "the domain of authoritarian leadership includes powerfully subduing, referring to insisting on complete obedience from followers; authority and control, referring to having a final say on all key decisions in the workplace" (2008:176). Moreover, such a model creates a sense of pressure (压力 *yali*) among the team. In order to keep up with the pace of change, achieve goals, and show results, leaders often pressure their teams. The concept of Chinese *yali* is vast and infiltrates many aspects of society, which may include church life.

In general, micromanagement may affect the development of spiritual gifts, and skills the team workers may have, while consuming time and energy of those micromanaging.

Cultural Communication Patterns

Communication patterns vary from culture to culture as do effectiveness in regards to context, message, meaning, and purpose.

As far as Chinese philosophies are concerned, many authors made extensive use of "metaphors, analogies, and sometimes examples to support their arguments. Often their ideas have multiple interpretations and are quite difficult to decipher" (Ma and Tsui 2015:14). Contemporary Chinese

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interpersonal and work-setting communication may follow similar protocols; leaders use the minimum necessary to communicate and workers are expected to grasp the meaning through context and previous experience.

Such communication patterns are common in church leadership in China. Leaders tend to follow the culture of implying meaning through indirect communication in most circumstances, and so do their teams. This type of communication is effective for general goal achievement and ordinary tasks. Limitations, however, exist, particularly when such communications leave room for fuzzy and ambiguous interpretations. Mission leadership done in such a complex and restrictive environment has shown that this technique may be ambiguously efficient—by ensuring that sensitive information may remain in the smallest sphere possible—and also insufficient—by not delivering effective communication to those on the ministry team. Teams need clear-cut information and need to discuss issues openly; however, highly contextual and opaque communication technique may be inadequate for this purpose.

In light of traditional Chinese philosophy, those issues reveal mixed elements. In Daoism, leaders are encouraged to remain reflective and quiet, not actively engaged in the issues (Lynn 1999:94). Information secrecy and manipulation are present in Chinese Legalism, Paternalism, and Strategic Situationalism (Fahr et al. 2008:194; Chen and Lee 2008:12-13, 111).

A second issue related to this archetype is transparency in leadership. Interestingly, financial transparency is often preeminent in some churches, however, members are often not given a clear idea of what is happening and there may not be follow up of decisions made and plans implemented. It is common to hear about plans and projects that end up in silence and confidentiality, with no one hearing a word on how they have been developed.

A third issue concerns accountability in church leadership. That issue is also related to the fact the Adventist Church in China has no upper organizational structure officially operating in the country. With no upper organization allowed to provide general standards, cast a long-term vision for church growth and mission, or promote strategic unity in doctrines and efforts, church leaders may find themselves working autonomously. Although there is accountability for Adventist leaders within their church boards, it is still rather a private matter for each independent congregation. It is important to note that over the years, the Chinese Union Mission based in Hong Kong, has played a significant role in casting a collective long-term vision for mission, as well as designing creative ways for leadership unity, integration and shared participation, when it comes to church growth plans and accountability.

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In addition, other cultural leadership aspects such as high-power distance, paternalism, and authoritarianism may relate to the way church leaders perceive communication and accountability.

The Need for Discipleship

Imperial China made extensive use of hereditary rights to power and leadership. Ancient paternalism was a core value used to maintain dynastic linages for power (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, "China History"). This ancient cultural trait may be perceived also on the religious landscape in the country. In some churches, there is (1) a clear perception of the need for discipleship in the context of mission leadership development, while (2) clear mechanisms to develop good discipling programs may be missing.

Paternalism is commonly employed by many church leaders when they appoint their family members to occupy leadership positions in the churches. The Bible does not oppose engaging family in ministry, it endorses it (Deut 6:1-2, 5-9; Josh 24:15). Nevertheless, family involvement should spring from a free-will choice and recognition and acceptance of God's call to ministry (1 Tim 3:1-12; 2 Tim 1:6-8). In a number of churches across China, church leaders culturally perceive as their duty to train their own sons and daughters to take the lead (Aikman 2003:106-130; Chow 2015:74). Sometimes, they encounter reluctance from church members or even from their family members themselves.

Strong adherence to traditional paternalism can affected the church in at least two dimensions: (1) by being at the root of many internal conflicts when members perceive that appointees may not be ready for leadership; and (2) by depriving the church of biblical discipleship, hence limiting the church in engaging grassroots-emerging leaders in effective mission leadership. Adventist leadership development in China needs a strong focus in discipleship as opposed to paternalism.

Lack of discipleship underlines the fact that some contemporary churches are elderly-led with little participation by the youth, though the youth play an important role in many churches. Confucius attributed great importance to "social relations—a benevolent ruler with his loyal ministers, a kind father with his filial sons, a righteous husband with his submissive wife, a gentle elder brother with his obedient younger brother, and a kind elder with the deferent junior. Relational harmony is maintained when each party performs his/her roles dutifully" (Fahr et al. 2008:172). On the one hand, he delineated clear hierarchical social roles in collective China and on the other insisted on submission to those above in the hierarchy (*leaders and seniors*). Although this concept is not always followed in work settings as young people are achieving a fair amount of

autonomy in China, it still is widely practiced when it comes to the many Christian circles.

A common outcome of paternalism in leadership can be the lack of creative, well-trained, inspiring, contextualized youth in leadership.

In summary, the cultural hereditary nature of Chinese church leadership highlights the need for strategic implementation of grassroots discipleship training so to improve future church governance and growth.

Mission Leadership Development for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in China

As mentioned, Adventism in China has thrived and experienced good quantitative growth over the last four decades, but due to a number of restrictions, there are yet areas to be developed in terms of church organization, theological education, mission leadership development, and balanced church growth—areas the Chinese Union Mission has focused on over the years.

In this scenario, there are at least four main areas needed in mission leadership development for the Chinese Adventist Church: (1) strengthen and multiply Adventist theological and leadership training centers, (2) develop a nationwide collective vision for Adventist mission in China, (3) design a paradigm for discipleship of grassroots emerging leaders, and finally (4) develop contextualized team work models for urban mission.

Conclusions

This article analyzed the impact of cultural elements on mission leadership among the contemporary Adventist Church in China in the light of traditional Chinese leadership philosophies.

Cultural-traditional elements play a significant role in contemporary Chinese Adventist leadership and are highlighted by environmental challenges.

Those cultural elements have impacted the church leadership in multiple ways, highlighting the growing need for contextual mission leadership development. As proposed in the article, this requires strategies that contemplate (1) leadership education, (2) building a collective vision for mission, (3) developing a paradigm for discipleship, and (3) creating models for contextual mission team work.

Even though the Chinese worldview is pragmatic, experiential knowledge combined with real-time education is key to producing change when developing Chinese emerging leaders for mission. Above all, character, faithfulness and dependence on the leadership of the Holy Spirit are central, as the Chinese Adventist Church lives out its prophetic calling to "make disciples of all the nations" (Matt 28:18, NKJV).

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Adventist Church Leadership and Religious Liberty in India: Impact on Mission and Ministry

Introduction

India, consisting of several diverse communities, operates on various religious sentiments, norms, expectations, cultures, and worldviews. Each culture and worldview developed, nurtured, and was organized in a community that recognized the importance of religious tolerance—tolerances that keep India united and yet diverse. Religious tolerance in India respects and allows the various religions to exist and practice within the same community.[1] However, if this norm is broken, the resulting actions can result in unexpected consequences. There are several cases where tolerance was breached due to religious standards, views, or beliefs, causing chaos in a community.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has become a center of influence for many communities around the country. The Church's outreach includes education, healthcare, and training schools, among other services. Such services respect religious sentiments and provide room for people from every religious background to be nurtured and feel accepted. However, the Seventh-day Adventist Church remains careful not to compromise its values and fundamental beliefs. In this manner, it provides education in a Christian context in hundreds of schools in India. Through its schools and medical institutions, the Church reaches out to people of other religions, offering acceptance, compassion, and love (personal communication, September 7, 2020).

This study looks at religious liberty in the outreach of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in India. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic's restriction and limitation, this study is limited to using a descriptive methodology,

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exploring selected literature to discuss the norms to follow, adhering to the government's laws, and being true to the functional beliefs operative in the outreach and services of the Adventist Church.

Religious Liberty—Perspective and Importance

The usage of the term "Religious Liberty" has been widely used in the West; however, globalization has facilitated the term to have a worldwide usage. To understand religious liberty, it is important to understand what the term "secular state" means. A secular state can be a state without any official or state religion or a country that is entirely secular. For example, Afghanistan is a religious state where the official state religion is Islam with approximately 99.7% of the population as Muslim (Pew Research Center 2012). In contrast, India is a secular state due to its diverse religious beliefs and practices. The Indian constitution's preamble declares India to be a secular state, and promises to protect and secure liberty, equality, and justice for all citizens (Madan 1983:11; Legal Services India). Hence, India as a secular state, promises religious liberty to every citizen of the country.

Donald E. Smith (1963) states that the concept of the secular state itself is a Western liberal democratic tradition. He further proposes a definition for a secular state, stating, it is a state that guarantees individuals and corporate freedom of religion and considers each citizen equal irrespective of their religion. It is a state not constitutionally attached or inclined to a particular religion (963:3, 4). Religious liberty is a practice found most often in a secular nation or state.

To create a clear and significant idea about "Secularism" and "Religious Liberty" in India, this paper briefly surveys the historical significance of secularism in the country. It is noteworthy that secularism in India does not mean the abolition of religion but only a separation of religion from state affairs (Madan 1983:11). G. M. Banatwalla states, "A pattern of religiopolitical relationship in a country cannot be shaped in a vacuum; it is designed by the native thoughts and woven in the total fabric of the life of the society. *Sarvadharmasamabhava* or respect for all religions in an attitude shaped by a belief in the truth of all religions, for untruth does not inspire respect" (1992:1). He further states that such ideas led the country towards the concept of equal treatment, and "no religion receives a preferential treatment" (2). Hence, the constitution of India does not favor any religious community. Instead, it expects all to abide by the constitutional laws. Milton Konvitz mentions that if the constitution is not interested in a religion's authenticity, then all must be treated equally and protected without partiality (1968:68). Prior to India's independence, prominent political personalities used religious symbols and feelings to organize the people of

India against the British East India Company[2] before the partition (Kumar 2019:4). After the partition, India remained a secular state, while Pakistan became a country with a state religion; however, religion continues to have a significant influence in Indian politics (Madan 1983:12).

Religious liberty or freedom of religion is the right given to a country's people, allowing them to freely practice their beliefs. Religious freedom is more than just being a believer of a religion, or following certain practices or beliefs. It also means that individuals are not forced to go against their core values and beliefs (Sharma 2011:73, 74). Religious liberty is also an essential socio-political concern that assures citizens of both major and minor religions that they can live with equal privileges without either being forced to join the predominant religion. It also means that none should feel superior to others or misuse their constitutional rights in any form. John Corvino cites several examples in stressing that religious liberty must not be misunderstood as a privilege given by the state. "Religion is not an absolute out-of-law free card: You may not slaughter infidels, throw virgins into volcanoes, or withhold life-saving medical treatment from your children, no matter what your religion teaches" (Corvino, Anderson, and Girgis 2017:24).

Religious liberty is vital for any nation as it facilitates society's primary need—freedom to live. Secular states provide the opportunity for everyone to function within their community, practice their religious beliefs, and follow their customs without any pressure to change. Thomas Farr states that in every nation with religious communities that are robust and significant, religious freedom is the cohesive source of stability, and without it, the result is religious violence and conflict (2008:19). Quoting an essay published in 2005 by Human Rights Watch (HRW), Farr mentions that any discrepancy between such freedom for religious communities leads to human rights abuses by both government and the religious groups influenced by judgemental attitudes—the very thing that handicaps the importance of religious freedom (2008:65).

The move towards religious freedom in the world did not occur in a vacuum, but out of a rich historical context. Smith briefly discusses the history of secular states and their formation. He mentions that the concept of Christendom led to major problems between church and state, with a recognition that spiritual and temporal allegiances needed to be separate (1963:9). Marsiglio of Padua became one of the most influential contributor to the idea of a secular state through his work *Defensor Pacis* in 1324. Marsiglio concluded his statement about the secular state, stating, "The right of citizens are independent of the faith they profess; and no man may be punished for his religion" (in Smith 1963:11, 12). David S. Dockery says that there was a forced religious uniformity in England between the

16th to 18th centuries with no tolerance for any sort of personal freedoms. Such religious coercion led to “the demand for freedom among people who wanted to think, speak, and believe for themselves as informed by their reading of the Word of God” (Farris 2019). Abraham V. Thomas comments that when religion is not a personal affair, it becomes social and institutional, hence, the need for religious liberty. He quotes Carrillo de Albornoz, stating, “religious liberty presupposes the exercise of other human rights” (in Thomas 1974:212). Further, he states, “Freedom of conscience is related to ‘freedom of thought,’ and freedom of religious witness to the right of ‘free expression.’ So also, Freedom of public worship is closely related to . . . ‘freedom of association.’ When the former right in each of these pairs is violated, the latter more general freedom is also in jeopardy” (212).

Indian Constitution on Religious Liberty

The history of the emergence of religious freedom and liberty in other nations provides a context for a discussion on the historical events that led India to become a secular state. Several world religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism, originated in India, and India is also home for Muslim, Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Christian communities. The nation has also faced several religious conflicts due to invaders, who also brought their religious beliefs (Sharma and Pardasani 2016:224). These events shaped India to become a culturally and religiously diverse country.

Smith quotes Panikkar stating that the modern-day secularized India is not founded on ancient India or Hindu thought. Instead, the roots of modern-India are rooted in the European traditions of about 150 years ago. Ancient India was prominently influenced by *dharma*[3] and was the primary focus and concern of the state. The rulers provided aid to the religious institution, promote building temples with grand large donations (Smith 1963:57). In ancient Indian polity, the traditional societies displayed interdependency between religious and political authority, maintaining distinctive identity, respectively, even with the differences in the societies (Banatwalla 1992:25). The cultural differences transformed into political differences when the tradition was broken due to the Muslim ruler’s viewing differences between the rights and obligations of Muslim and non-Muslim subjects (Madan 1983:13). However, Emperor Akbar was an exception who, in fact, promoted equality of religion and freedom to worship during his reign. He even built several temples for the Hindus. Madan further mentions several historical events exhibiting the emergence of secularism rooted in nationalism and communalism (14).

The Constitution of India (the longest in the world) came into effect in 1950, attempting to neutralize any biases by declaring India as a secular state and promoting religious freedom as a vital ingredient of democratic India. In India's constitution, article 25-28 is entitled "Right to Freedom of Religion," assuring non-discriminatory freedom of conscience to profess, practice freely, and propagate religion (Thiruvengadam 2017:170). On the one hand, constitutional rights provide religious "freedom" not "privilege" to India's citizens. Rohit De suggests the "religious freedom" articles have been manipulated, restructured, or reinterpreted for some sort of bias towards Hinduism. It is crucial to understand that India's constitution is above and beyond any judicial or parliamentary body, and therefore, no changes can be made but only amendments are allowed. However, a visible tilt and religious privilege towards Hinduism is quite evident (2020:20).

On several occasions, the constitutional laws on freedom have been undermined due to the pre-existent Hindu mindset, which influences individuals. However, the judicial body rules out any such propaganda to maintain the community's harmony and diversity, such as the Ayodhya verdict (Padmavathi and Prasath 2020).[4]

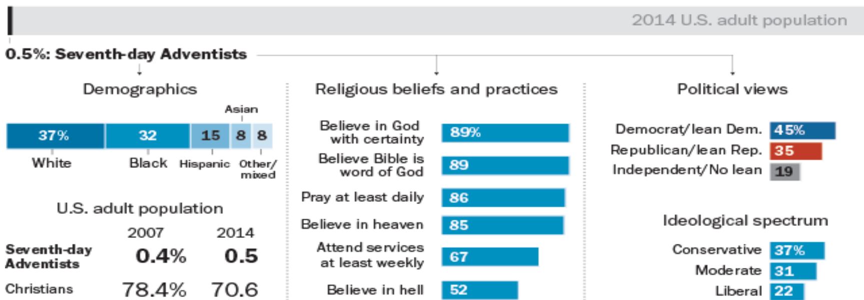
Seventh-day Adventist Church Leadership on Religious Liberty

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was established on the foundational doctrines to prepare people for this world and the world to come. It has impacted the world with its unique approach to humankind. I use the expression "unique" because of the missional approach that the Adventist Church has manifested to reach the world through education, healthcare, literature, healthy living, Sabbath rest, and its end-time message. Since its formation as a church, it has promoted the life and teaching of Jesus Christ among communities worldwide, even though James White, in 1856 wrote "not to send the gospel to the heathens; but to extend the warning throughout the realms of corrupted Christianity" (Krause 2010:93). In 1863, a debate arose over the meaning of "Go into all the world" in Mark's gospel, believing that reaching the diverse immigrant community within America would be sufficient, as their conversion would lead their families and friends to Christ as well (see Works Cited: Ironically, Early Adventists). However, the advent movement and the end-time message has been preached to the "ends of the world."

Interestingly, a few prominent early Adventist leaders helped grow and expand Adventist mission into a global enterprise. With its impact on healthcare, providing health benefits, and ministering to the sick, the

church was unique in its stress on healthy living. It also focused its ministry in the education sector. Several schools and colleges were founded to promote the Adventist philosophy of education to "educating for eternity." Healthcare and education have been key factors allowing Adventism to expand dramatically around the world and have an influence on the masses from diverse cultural, racial, and religious backgrounds.

According to Pew Research Center's 2014 Religious Landscape Study, though low in percentage of the total adult population, Michael Lipka states, the SDA Church is the most racially and ethnically diverse religious group in America (Michael Lipka 2015; McChesney and Paseggi 2015).



Catalin Ionete in another study reported that the SDA Church community in Romania, while existing in an orthodox-dominated area is more active than the orthodox majority. It is seen as a hardworking and growing segment in society with their religious beliefs and practices. Despite the difference between the villagers, there are significant interactions taking place, a good illustration of religious tolerance (Simons and Westerlund 2015:203). In the past few decades, several such cases showcase the Adventist Church's impact in religiously diverse communities, by ministering to all, respecting religious conscience, and promoting religious freedom.

In 1901, the General Conference created the Religious Liberty Department, and has actively participating in promoting non-combatancy and helping Adventist members who have lost their employment because of their refusal to work on Sabbath (Land 2005:245). In 1959 the name of the department was changed to Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department (PARL), with the following description of its purpose.

The Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department (PARL) promotes and maintains religious liberty, with particular emphasis upon the liberty of conscience. Religious liberty includes the human right to have or adopt the religion of one's choice; to change religious belief according to conscience; to manifest one's religion individually or in community with fellow believers, in worship, observance, practice, witness, and teaching, subject to respect for the equivalent rights of others. (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 2005:129, 130)

It further states that every church member is a member of the association, maintaining and safeguarding religious liberty, encouraging the separation of church and state, where possible (130). The religious liberty leader's duties are to interact with PARL officials, promote religious liberty magazines, and organize meetings, seminars, programs, and activities depending on the situation (144).

SDA Mission Leadership in India

The Seventh-day Adventist mission in India started a century ago, with a few visionary missionaries who desired to spread the Adventist message. Early mission work among the socially oppressed, women, and children were the most crucial initiatives. Early outreach included schools and training centers throughout the country. Georgia Burrus came to Calcutta (now Kolkata) in 1895 as a self-supporting missionary, and later, Dores A. Robinson and Martha May Taylor joined the mission field in India. In 1896, Burrus anlapud Taylor opened a school for Hindu girls. Soon, many other missionaries joined and establishing a Sanitarium, an orphanage, and another school (Horro and Kara 2014:207; Land 2005, 142). Later, the Adventists moved to various parts of the country, establishing schools, colleges, and hospitals. At present, the Southern Asia Division of Seventh-day Adventists in India has 12 hospitals, 118 secondary schools, nine colleges, and a university.

Adventist mission has developed a remarkable reputation among the non-Christians. In a conversation with Irene Moses (personal communication September 6, 2020) a former school principal's wife, she expressed how their absence is felt at their previous mission field. On almost every school occasion or festival, the couples are loaded with wishes, messages, and emails expressing their impact on their lives (I had the opportunity to read a few messages of the students who had different religious backgrounds). My experience working in a secondary school confirms the same level of appreciation as I had similar experiences with the students. Similarly, the hospitals, university, and colleges provided service to all regardless of religious differences.

Potential Impact of Religious Liberty on Mission and Ministry

A church amidst a diverse community stands as a “light of the world” (Matt 5:14). Light illuminates a path forward and encourages people to move in a certain direction. In India, Seventh-day Adventist mission has been a light that has inspired communities to work together regardless of religious affiliation. Adventist education has prepared thousands of young men and women without discrimination to contribute to the country’s development. In doing so, the church leaders often faced challenges that have impacted both those within and without the Adventist faith community. Two cases of rather “challenging situations” are discussed to illustrate India’s present leadership challenges and provide the basis for recommendations to overcome those challenges.

Case Study 1

Unlike western countries such as the USA, India has a firm approach towards their views about the Indian flag. At any point, in any situation, every citizen of India must strictly abide by the laws to respect, salute, and honor the flag. In India, the country flag cannot and should not be seen outside a residential home, especially in the government sector. The Indian flag must not be replicated and used for garments, decoration, etc. Such is the view of Indians towards their flag, which is strictly taught both at home and at school, teaching deep respect for the flag. In India, flags are mainly hoisted on two occasions—on Republic Day (January 26) and Independence Day (August 15). On those two occasions, educational institutions, the working sector (government or private), and hospitals are obliged to hoist the flag. Everyone working in the organization is expected to attend the flag-raising ceremony, to show reverence and respect to the flag and the national anthem. There have been some cases when intentional or unintentional disrespect towards the national flag has resulted in prosecution and severe punishment, with those involved labeled as anti-nationals. The respect for the national flag is described under Act no. 69, 1971, as “Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971” (archive.org 2017). Several cases have been registered against those who, in any way, disrespected the flag. Such incidents are heavily politicized and receive negative press in the media (*The Times of India* 2020). A recent incident took place in Coimbatore, a city in south India, where a ruling government political leader has been booked on charges for disrespecting the national flag (PTI 2020). Such is the position of flag in India, which cannot and

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should not be criticized because respect for the nation and national honor is a fundamental duty of every citizen of India, as the constitution directs.

However, such constitutional laws have also challenged various denominations, especially the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which has strong Sabbath-keeping traditions, which avoids work and other secular activities on that day. There have been incidences when both Republic Day and Independence Day fall on the Sabbath, creating an issue of consciences on whether to follow the state or the church. The Adventist leaders are placed in a dilemma, whether to abide by God's laws or follow the state's laws. In such situations, there have been instructions to attend the flag hoisting ceremony before attending the church for Sabbath worship, especially in Adventist educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities.

Recommendation

To deal with such a situation and stand firm in faith in God and respect for the nation, Adventist leaders needs to develop a sense of responsibility towards both the church and the state. Sabbath activities must follow biblical principles and Scripture teaches to follow the state's laws and requirements as long as they are not counter to God's Word. Romans 13:1-2 advises, "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves." In Matthew 22:40, Jesus says, "And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Hence, it is evident that God instructs us to balance our approach to both state and church. It is essential that as leaders in a diverse community, one must exemplify their faith by obeying the laws of the land while also obeying God's law. Church leaders, on the other hand, must also respect believers' conscience who may or may not want to attend such ceremonies on the Sabbath. It is noteworthy that India's Constitution gives freedom of conscience to its citizen, and therefore, there is no room for any compulsive force against an individual's conscience. In a situation where flag raising falls on Sabbath, Adventist leaders must encourage its members and employees to understand the biblical approach towards the nation and the community. The Bible clearly states in Mark 12:31, "And the second, like it, is this: you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." There needs to be a consensual agreement that the flag raising ceremony must be held during the early hours on the Sabbath day, followed by the regular church activities.

For example, in such situations, Spicer Adventist University conducted the required ceremony early Sabbath morning to allow for the normal Sabbath activities of Sabbath School and church. Doing so demonstrates commitment to biblical principles of Sabbath keeping and respect for the nation. This balanced approach also has a positive impact on the hearts and minds of those in the community who do not share an understanding of biblical principles for God's holy Sabbath day.

Case Study 2

Yoga is a new lifestyle that is extremely popular in almost every part of the world. From celebrities to sports personalities, they are seen practicing it to prolong aging and improving health benefits. *Yoga se hi Hoga* (it will only happen with Yoga) is a new slogan in present-day India. Although Yoga is not new to the people as it originated in India, it has gained popularity in the country's modern and educated communities. Yoga's origin and root can be traced back to the Indic religions, way before the formation of present-day Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Geoffrey Samuel states that the modern western term does not relate closely to the indigenous term. However, the practices that involve mental and physical cultivation towards some sort of liberating insights are found in the major religions of the sub-continent (2008:1). Elizabeth De Michelis suggests that the roots of Yoga is found in Hinduism influenced by esoteric philosophies (2005:40).[5] Because of this religious background, many Christians have a negative and skeptical view of Yoga. However, not all Christians care about its root or prior existence; instead, the term "Christian Yoga" has gained popularity in modern times "in the church." Edwin Noyes (2018) describes several author's perspectives on the definition of Yoga. He defines Yoga is a physical practice to establish a union between the mind, body, and spirit (2018:121). Since yoga's roots are in Hindu scriptures—*Veda* and *Bhagwat Gita*—the Adventist Church believes that yoga and Christianity are diametrically opposed to each other (*Adventist Voice* 2013). Adventists believe they must give undivided allegiance to their Creator God and not participate in practices that might compromise their faith.

June 21 is celebrated as the International Day of Yoga after it was so honored in the United Nations General Assembly in 2014. India's government (both national and state governments) advocated the day to be observed in every institution, schools, and colleges (Borwankar 2015; *India Today* Web 2016; *ThePrint* 2019). Due to this recent ruling, Adventist institutions across India face a dilemma of whether and how to observe the day.

Recommendation

It is noteworthy that yoga's popularity is unstoppable, especially in the present-day world, where life is stressful and constrained with life-threatening situations. Yoga has been hyped to be ideal for such situations to avoid health risks and provide a better quality of life. It is arguable whether there are health benefits are found only in yoga. This is one area where the Adventist Church needs to stand for its values without compromising biblical and religious principles.

India's constitution gives its Christian minority the privilege to exercise their fundamental rights. Since yoga is associated with Hinduism, Adventist members have the right to practice "freedom of conscience" when deciding whether or not to participate in yoga day activities. The bigger challenge comes for Adventist educational institutions. Some aspects of yoga emphasize relaxing and breathing exercises that have no religious connotation; however, yoga also has very definite spiritual aspects that go against biblical principles. Adventist schools are challenged to balance respect for the government and the non-Christian community who would be interested in having their children participate in Yoga Day activities. This is where serious discussions among Adventist educational leaders are needed to develop biblically appropriate functional substitutes for mandated government activities.

Conclusion

Adventist leaders in India must be complimented. Unlike in many other countries, the Indian church is established in a religion-sensitive community. A balanced approach to matters of conscience protects religious liberty not only for the Adventist community but also for adherents of other religions. Interestingly, the Adventist Church has never been charged with breaking the laws in the areas discussed above. By practicing and allowing others to practice freedom of religion and conscience, the Adventist Church has enhanced God's mission in India. I conclude with a few suggestions that would add values to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church based on this study.

1. *Establish a Department of Religious Liberty.* As per the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, it is recommended that every local church have a Department of Religious Liberty (PARL). Every church must be well-informed of the duties and responsibilities of PARL and render services towards the betterment of church and society. This is especially important for churches in communities where Adventist educational institutions are located. PARL departments at the local church and institutional level can assess and identify issues and challenges that need to be dealt with.

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2. *Engage in Research Related to Religious Liberty.* A well-known phrase, "Action speaks louder than words," is commonly used. Action is required in the present context of religious liberty in India. Adventist mission can benefit from church and school leaders interacting with scholars, who working together can contribute towards developing and proposing quality approaches to church and society problems in the area of religious liberty.

3. *Develop Statements Clarifying Adventist Positions.* Publishing statements that clarify the church's stand on issues dealing with religious liberty is crucial. A well-researched statement dealing with issues of conscience and religion would be extremely important for educating church members. Since India's constitution provides fundamental rights to protect religious sentiments, it is prudent to utilize those guaranteed rights for the church's benefits and protection.

4. *Hold Leadership workshops to Address Religious Liberty Issues.* Many workshops have been held to strengthen leadership in the churches of India; however, more emphasis must be given to religious liberty and the rights of minorities. Annual or bi-annual workshops could be conducted at the local and national levels to broaden the exposure to SUD leaders to the challenges and possible solutions to religious liberty issues.

5. *Maintain Balance in Religious Liberty Areas.* The Adventist Church in India must work hard to strike a balance between obedience to the state and obedience to God. Such a balance is biblical and needs to be practiced.[6] Practicing love, compassion, and acceptance to all in the community also provides opportunity to exemplify the true God.

Endnotes

[1]One example is the existence of two religious centers (Temple and a Mosque) side by side with one wall separating them in the city of Patna, Bihar. I grew up seeing these two religious community worshipping in harmony. On several occasions they even help each other in successfully conducting special services or festivals.

[2]The British East India Company (EIC) founded by an English merchant John Watts, was a trading company formed to trade in the Indian Ocean region. The company ended up conquering a large part of the Indian subcontinent. See, Chaudhuri 2006. *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company: 1660-1760.*

[3]*Dharma* is an important concept in Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. The concept is originally rooted in traditional Hindu doctrines, but largely accepted by other religions of Indian-origin due to their connection with Hinduism. The basic understanding of *dharma* is law, duty, morality, and religion. While its interpretation varies in some Indian religions, its central theme is the "right way of living."

[4]One such example is the “2019 Supreme Court Verdict on Ayodhya dispute” where a disputed land was in controversy due to its proprietorial right among Hindus and Muslims in India. This dispute caused a lot of chaos to the community among both religious groups. Finally, the verdict was given to rebuilt the Ram temple on 2.77 acres of the disputed land and provide 5 acres of land in another place for the Muslims to build another mosque. Such verdict may not be acceptable for some but it was an intentional decision to benefit both parties to settle the dispute and maintain the unity and integrity of the country.

[5]Elizabeth quotes Wouter J. Hanegraaff defining the characteristics in western worldviews (Michelis 2005, 40). Also, See, Hanegraaff, Wouter J. 1996. *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Pres

[6]The story of Naaman and his final conversation with Elisha is an example of respecting religious sentiments and allowing some space for personal conscience issues. Elisha response—“Go in peace.” Similar balance can be seen in the life of Jesus Christ who on several occasions did not rebuke people, but showed compassion and love.

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CLIFMOND L. SHAMEERUDEEN

A Mentoring Model: A Leadership Style for Seventh-day Adventists in Southern Asia

Description of the Issue

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in India has been commissioned by God to be a witness to the 1.3 billion people in India of whom 80% are from a Hindu background. After a hundred years, the Southern Asian Division has a membership of 1.5 million people. There are many reasons to celebrate the success of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in India, particularly the success of the Adventist school system and the health care provided by the health institutions. However, the organization that is responsible for leading South Asians to Jesus Christ may not be able to celebrate the same success as the schools and hospitals.

An evaluation of leadership practices in the Southern Asian Division is a logical place to begin. The Seventh-day Adventist model of leadership is followed to various degrees by its entities worldwide, including India. Research shows that organizations in India struggle when trying to follow Western leadership styles because Indian society is autocratic (Mehrotra and Sinha 2017:835). Researchers are convinced from years of research that a leadership style from the West is not effective when "transplanted" to India (835). This could be one of the reasons for the failure of the typical Adventist model of leadership in India. However, researchers agree that a model of leadership from within the Indian context is a possible solution because it is part of the cultural context unlike Western models that fail to consider the Indian culture and worldview.

Studies show that two styles of leadership originate from Indian culture: autocratic and mentoring. The autocratic leadership style is the

most prevalent because it closely follows the Indian family system. The family leader is called the *karta* and is an autocratic leader who leads from a "high-power distance, hierarchical and dependency prone" culture (Mehrotra and Sinha 2017, 840). The mentoring or guru style is connected to the religious heart of India. Under this model, a master leads with the goal of preparing subordinates to replace himself, perhaps becoming even better leaders than the master (Gayen 2018).

The central issue in India is that the leaders of the Southern Asian Division subscribe to the autocratic style of leadership found in the Indian *karta* family system. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is like an extension of the Indian family. This model of leadership is contrary to the model of leadership suggested in the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* and the Bible. Jesus' model of leadership is very similar to the mentoring or guru model of leadership.

South Asian Leadership Styles

Indian civilization is one of oldest in the world with a population of 1.3 billion. The type of leaders that are birthed in India have received the attention of many researchers, especially those from Western countries since the 19th century. World-renowned leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Netaji Subash Chandra Bose are leadership icons in the 21st century (Nagaraju 2006:94). According to Nagaraju, leadership styles change overtime, which "reflects people's concerns at a particular point of time" (98). To understand the leadership style of India one must become familiar with the leaders' environment (Singh and Khrishnan 2007:220).

A leader is defined as "the person who leads or commands a group, organization, or country" (*Oxford Dictionary*) and leadership is "the action of leading a group of people or an organization" (*Online Dictionary*). Leadership style is defined as "the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people" (Newstrom and Davis 1993). Leaders follow a certain style or a combination of leadership styles. Nagaraju (2006) adds that leadership styles represent the patterns of behavior in the society or organization (113). Indian leadership styles are unique for a number of reasons but especially because of respect for authority, the caste system, and the religious lifestyle of most Indians (134).

The leadership styles of India can be classified under two broad categories: (1) autocratic or *karta* and (2) nurturant or guru. These two styles of leadership were present in India long before India experienced the influence of the Western world. The leadership styles in Indian society are influenced by three things: the joint-family, the caste system, and

ritualism (Nagaraju 2006:134). The joint-family is the social structure that gives birth to the nation of leaders. The caste system maintains the hierarchical structure of South Asian society, especially among Hindus. Ritualism is the keeper of traditions, religions, and way of life (Mohan 2005:120).

Autocratic Leadership Style

The autocratic leadership style centers around the leader. Leaders that follow this style generally perceive themselves as experts who give advice and instructions to their subordinates (Mehrotra and Sinha 2017:833). Leaders who lead by the autocratic style tend to lead by strict rules, have total control over their subordinates, expect strict obedience from everyone below them, and are authority driven persons (Bass, Bass, and Bass 2008:728). Smither (1991) agrees with Bass. He states that autocratic leaders prefer strict obedience to rules and roles which they make and enforce (40). The autocratic leader leads by power distance and relies on authority to accomplish the goals of the organization. They have less "confidence in others" and "assume full responsibility for decision making" (Limbare 2012:173).

Scholars are in agreement that leaders in India generally lead from an autocratic style of leadership (Nagaraju 2006:134). This reality is linked to the fact that Indian society is hierarchal. Both the caste system and family system undergird this hierarchy (Mehrotra and Sinha 2017:528). The dominant family system on the sub-continent of India is the joint-family, which governs the social structure of South Asian society regardless of caste or religion. The Indian joint-family traditionally is a "patrilineal, patrilocal, and patriarchal" family system (Upadhyaya 1967:115). The joint family is composed of three to four generations under one roof including uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, and grandparents. The living arrangement is subdivided based on family units that live in separate rooms. They all share cooking, income, property, taking care of widows, "never-married adults" and the "disabled," and also worship the same gods (Siva 2013:22). The gender roles and functions are clearly defined in the joint family. A male is the head of the home, usually the father, although another male may be assigned; and this role is passed down from one male to another. The wife serves the husband; the children serve the father and mother (Meena 2012). The joint-family is the school where the *karta* or autocratic leadership style of India develops and matures. The members of the joint-family system are responsible to teach the next generation, beginning from birth, their roles and function in the *karta* system.

Karta of the South Asian Joint Family

The leader of the joint-family is known as the "*karta* of the family" (Mehrotra and Sinha 2017:836), and is the oldest or most influential male in the joint-family. He is both loved and feared; and at the same time, he is a father figure that could be the father or grandfather or father-in-law or uncle (Sinha 1995:77). In modern times, the court has ruled that women can fullfil the role of a *karta* with some limitations (Bhasin 2016). The *karta* has unchecked authority and typically demands rather than earns the respect of all family members (Mehrotra and Sinha 2017:836). The respect given to the *karta* is both prescribed and earned through "age, seniority and experience" (836). Even though the *karta* may exhibit qualities such as caring, nurturing, dependability, and self-sacrifice, he still leads from an autocratic style of leadership (836). The autocratic and *karta* leadership style are very similar except for the cultural and religious elements that are unique to India.

Characteristics of the Autocratic Leadership Style

In the Indian context, the autocratic style of leadership is the most prevalent and accepted by the society (Kalra 1988:30). As pointed out above, *karta* leadership is formed through the family system and is a reflection of the cultural and sociological values of South Asians (Sinha 1995:77). Researchers are in agreement that the Indian family system reinforces the "*karta* psyche" and the development of autocratic leaders (Mehrotra and Sinha 2017:837).

The autocratic style of leadership has advantages and disadvantages like any other style of leadership. Sinha (2001) observes that the Indian autocratic leadership style does affect organizational growth and employee development (438). He argues that Indian leadership style is not authoritarian, but the leaders do exhibit characteristics of authoritarianism. For example, Indian leaders adopt the norms of society which are "hierarchy, discipline, obedience, power, structured relationships" (Sinda 1984:89).

Historically, autocratic leaders were viewed as successful leaders; however, the change of values in society has given birth to new forms of leadership. In many societies, autocratic leaders are no longer seen as the best examples of a leader. However, in the area of sports, autocratic leaders are still sought after (Bass et al. 2008:730). Limbare points out that autocratic leadership is needed in the following circumstances: (1) when the organization has new and untrained employees; (2) when effective supervision is needed and when specific instructions or detailed order is needed such as in the military when lives are at risk; (3) when certain

types of employees only respond to an autocratic style of leadership; (4) when working in a high demand work environment, production volume may depend on employees following orders and instructions; and (5) when in a conflict work environment, employees challenge the manager's power to lead (2012:87).

Some disadvantages of having an autocratic leader is when an organization has a high turnover of human resources and unstable growth among their employees. The leader focuses on control to keep the subordinates in line instead of spending time working on the organization's goals. Subordinates' work environment is filled with uncertainty from day to day on the job. They do not know the plans or goals of the autocratic leader because they are not revealed and could change instantly. For example, the job security of the subordinates is always at risk. There is a lack of trust between the subordinates and the leader. The leader has little or no interest in developing or mentoring followers to become leaders. The leader keeps subordinates at a safe distance to avoid power struggles over ideas or criticism. It is a standard practice that input from subordinates is not welcomed or permitted. Respect and discipline are paramount in the organization, but respect extends only to the leader not to the employees. Independent voices or feedback is not valued and is perceived as a threat to the leader (Lambre 2012:88).

Researchers reject any notion that autocratic leaders are abusers of people, yet they agree that autocratic leaders have a tendency to misuse their authority. The relationship between a leader and followers could be described as a master/servant relationship. Bass notes that autocratic leaders could be abusive both verbally and non-verbally, suppress employees, refuse to develop employees, and treat employees as a threat instead of a blessing (2008:728).

Autocratic leaders usually work in an environment where getting the job done is preferred over the leader developing other leaders. Bass notes that autocratic leaders have a good sense of the task and are not distracted by others in the organization (2008:88). The leader leads his subordinates as a father figure but from within a hierarchical system (Sinha 1995:77).

The autocratic leader is the decision maker; subordinates are denied decision-making opportunities. Subordinates are given instructions to follow without a choice of saying no or giving input. This principle is embedded in the *karta* model of leadership. The *karta* of the Indian family typically gives orders to his wife or sons. A father tells his son to go and get the newspaper. There is no space for questions or negotiation or even a chance to respond. This may seem like a normal way of life but when the situation is reversed it is better understood. Suppose the son or wife needs something. Could they use the same language to ask the father to go and

bring the groceries from the car? In the Indian context this is not allowed or permitted. Wives or children cannot speak to or expect to make such a request of the father. Some argue that speaking like that is not giving due respect to the *karta* of the family. The argument is when choice is taken away from those below the autocratic leaders, the subordinates are not given any say in the organization or family system.

The dark side of autocratic leadership is the removal of choice from subordinates. Autocratic or *karta* leaders can be tyrants who boss everyone below them and do not care about subordinates' development as leaders. The autocrat may become so self-focused that moving up the wealth and leadership ladder with no regard to others may be his/her major goal. History has recorded some of those leaders: Hitler of Germany, Linn from Russia, Alexander the Great, Henry Ford (Shaffer 2014).

Mentoring Leadership Style

The second leadership style is best described as the mentoring style. Researchers have coined other names that have similar meanings such as nurturant (Mehrotra and Sinha 2007:832). Researchers agree that the mentoring leadership style that originated in India is better than importing a leadership style that does not fit the cultural context (Singh and Krishnan 2007:220). The *Gita*, the popular Hindu Scripture, proposes a mentoring leadership style called guru leadership. The Sanskrit word guru means "teacher and from whom to get help" (Sekhar 2001:361). Teachers or gurus have been highly respected and valued in India for centuries, so this mentoring leadership style is best suited for the Indian context for the following reasons: (1) it is built on the values of the Indian family system (Mehrotra and Sinha 2017:838); (2) it uses cultural forms that originated within the South Asian worldview, such as how seniority is valued and respected within the society (836); and (3) views leaders in the Indian context as also spiritual leaders who are expected to provide guidance in spiritual and social life situations like marriage and raising of children.

There is a process for becoming a mentoring leader in the Indian context unlike the *karta* leader who inherits or is assigned the position of power and authority. In Hinduism, life is divided into four stages. A person must go through the first two prior to becoming a guru. The first stage is known as the *brahmacarya*, during which a young person is mentored by a guru while completing their schooling (Klostermaier 2007:298). In the modern age, the young person is free to choose a guru to provide guidance. The second stage is the *garhastya*. This is the period of starting a family and doing the duties of a family leader while pursuing one's career. The third

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stage is the *vanaprastha,* a period of self-reflection and passing the torch to the eldest son. This period is where the individual spends a lot of time meditating about life and its meaning. The fourth stage is the *samnyasi,* which is the period where the individual retires from worldly things and expectations. It is a time when the individual has nothing to lose or gain from the world. They have reached the stage in life when it is time to give to the world. They look forward to mentoring and helping many to come out of darkness. At this stage the guru is totally dependent on those they serve; however, those being served are not obligated to give to the guru or *samnyasi* (Palaniswami 2007:101).

In recent times, researchers have tried to import leadership styles to India from the West such as transformational and servant leadership. The challenge is that while the principles of Western leadership styles are important, practitioners have mostly failed to take into consideration the sociological makeup of Indian society (Singh and Krishnan 2007:220). Mehrotra and Sinha observe that the modern leadership styles have their limitations in the Indian context because of the power distance and hierarchical dependency in the culture (2017:840). Singh and Krishnan agree with Mehrotra and Sinha when they say that many "leadership characteristics are universally endorsed, where many others are culture bound" (2007:222).

Characteristics of the Mentoring Leadership Style

The mentoring leadership style is based on a relationship that is established between the leader and the subordinate. The relationship evolves around the task at hand and the process of nurturing the subordinate (Mehrotra and Sinha 2017:838). The first principle of the mentoring leadership style is that a leader is a teacher. The understanding of a teacher follows the ancient practice rather than the modern understanding. The relationship is still hierarchical just like in Indian society, and thus it maintains the superior/subordinate relationship. The mentoring leader is at a stage of giving back to society. It is all about developing others without expecting any reward other than that the subordinate becomes successful.

The roles and responsibilities of a mentoring leader are found in Indian mythology and religious texts. According to Shekar, a mentoring leader is a caring person like the Hindu deity Rama. Mahatma Gandhi's life reflects the caring quality of the Hindu sacred text. His last words before dying by a bullet from his assassin was Ram (2001:362). Those outside the Indian context may not have the full picture of what it means to be a caring person in the South Asian context. The mentoring leader takes on the responsibility to guide a subordinate to be successful and to help them become compassionate and sensitive to people's needs.

The *Bhagavad Gita* shares an important quality that a mentoring leader should possess. Krishna tells Arjuna that one must do "good" without the intention of reaping any benefits. This teaching states that Hindus should not live a good life with the intention of benefiting, but rather they should live a life of selflessness, not grasping for rewards (Achari 2013:28). As noted above the last stage of life is the stage where a person expects nothing from the world and owes the world nothing. This phase of life empowers the mentoring leader to give unconditional support and guidance to those that are under his or her care.

The mentoring leader has the responsibility to empower his subordinate. The application of this principle is applied differently in India than in the West. In the Western world, empowerment is measured by trust, sharing the vision, self-improvement, encouraging input, supporting vacation time, allowing a subordinate to lead, flexibility, inspiring "creative thinking," and showing appreciation (Daisyme 2017). Indian leaders agree that "leading the India way" is a business strategy that maintains the organizational culture, gives guidance to subordinates, provides a role model, and represents owner and investor interests. In India the investors are at the bottom of importance while in the USA investors are the top priority (Cappelli, Singh, Singh, and Useem 2010). The way a mentoring leader empowers a subordinate is also restricted by Indian culture. Subordinates are mentored yet are not allowed to violate the core principle of society—they must show respect for authority, seniority, and experience.

Comparing Autocratic and Mentoring Leadership Styles

Autocratic and mentoring leadership styles have been effective in preparing leaders in India for centuries and continue to do so in the 21st century. However, there is a key difference between the two styles. Autocratic leaders focus on the development of themselves and the organization. Mentoring leaders create a space for subordinates to become part of the success of the organization and their individual futures.

Mehrotra and Sinha observe that most of the leadership styles in India fail to empower subordinates to the level that benefits the organization and the subordinate at the same time. They propose a consultative style of leadership for the Indian context. They argue that this does not mean the same thing as in the Western world. For example, in the Indian context having subordinates share their ideas without feeling they are violating the cultural expectation is a measure of success. This principle is not new to India (2017:838). Village leaders function in this manner utilizing the *panchayat* system of five wise men consulting each other, with the leader making the final decision (839).

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The hierarchical culture of India limits how much a subordinate can be included in the decision making of the organization. Mehrotra and Sinha observe that society judges a leader who gives full participation and input in the decision-making process to subordinates as a weak leader who depends on the subordinate to do the work and as a manipulative individual who seeks to get less qualified subordinates do to the work of the leader in the organization. This style of leadership is known as participatory leadership (838).

The role of subordinates and how they are mentored is the primary focus of the mentoring leadership style. It is patterned after the guru system of India. A subordinate is a future leader that needs to be mentored and guided in the best way possible in order to be qualified to lead in the future. This intentional process of empowering a subordinate and involving them in the organization creates a win-win situation.

Research observes that the dark side of autocratic leadership is the abuse of power and suppression of the next generation of leaders. This weakness is addressed by the mentorship-leadership style when subordinates are given a place in the organization to grow and develop. The process of developing subordinates is native to the Indian context and helps leaders become accountable to the organization and to their subordinates. The leader's role is not only to build a successful organization but also to raise up new leaders through the guru system that has worked for centuries in India.

Southern Asian Adventist Church

The Seventh-day Adventist message has been in India since 1893. After more than 100 years, the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has grown moderately with 1.5 million members, the majority of whom are from the southern state of Andra Pradesh. The Southern Asian Division (SUD) oversees the operations of the mission work for the Seventh-day Adventist Church on the Indian subcontinent including Nepal. The SUD is divided into ten unions with each union having their own sub-fields. The SUD has many schools, a few hospitals, and one university that trains its workers. The SUD was organized in 1919 and reorganized in 1986. The first indigenous Indian leader was elected as president in 2010.

The organizational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in India and of all the entities of the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide is found in the working policies, *Church Manual* and *Minister's Manual*. The model adopted for all its entities worldwide is the representative system of governance. This is a bottom up system of governance that begins with the local church. The local church is governed by a board that

is elected to serve 1 to 2 years by a nominating committee selected by the church-at-large to be its representative. The board members govern the day-to-day activities of the church. Major decisions are recommended by the church board but must be approved by the entire church body at a business meeting. The leader of the local church, called an elder, is nominated by the members of the local church through the nominating committee. New members are voted into membership by the local church body. This model is also the system of governance for all other entities in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The next higher level of organization is known as a conference. This body is the governing body for all the local churches in a particular country or territory. It is the legal body for the churches in that region. The local conference is responsible to hire pastors and assign them to the local churches as overseers. The local conference leaders are elected or appointed by the representatives from all the churches in the region. Every four years each church sends delegates to a constituency meeting to elect conference leaders. The leaders are chosen using the nominating committee system. Conferences are overseen by union conferences. The goal of the union conference is to assist the local conferences with the mission in that region. As the Seventh-day Adventist Church grew in many places around the world the need for a division of the General Conference (GC) was established. The General Conference as the highest level of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is authorized to lead the church every five years at a General Conference Session.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is well-structured and organized. The entire body is expected to follow the policies of the General Conference. The Divisions are part of the General Conference, and the unions are independent bodies that were created to balance the power of the organization and are the representatives of the local conference and local churches. The Southern Asian Division follows the same model as outlined above with some exceptions to facilitate the uniqueness in the country of India.

Leadership Style of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern Asia

The Seventh-day Adventist Church uses a representative system of governance (General Conference). This means decisions are made by a committee, and leaders are held accountable to the church body through the policies and constitution found in the working policy document. During the reorganization in 1901, the Seventh-day Adventist Church developed constitutions, policies, and organizational practices for the purpose of expanding the mission of God (Oliver 2007:10).

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In the 21st century the Seventh-day Adventist Church is present in 213 countries. Most of the entities of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are currently led by indigenous leaders. These leaders are elected to serve by their local constituency and confirmed by the General Conference executive committee if required by policy. Despite the unifying working policy, leadership styles vary from culture to culture; however, the Seventh-day Adventist Church governance system assumes that the leader is subject to the policies of the organization.

Although academic research has not yet been conducted on leadership styles of the Southern Asia Adventist Church, numerous articles and interviews from the Southern Asia context give insight into the leadership practices being used. Leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in India typically do not follow the traditional process of decision making that is practiced worldwide. The leader acts like the *karta* leader, and the subordinates are like the family in the system. For example, a secretary or treasurer is only expected to honor the commands of the president. The president makes unilateral decisions and may or may not inform the other two officers or consult the committee set up to govern the organization. This practice has been observed and documented by the author over the period from 2011-2018 with many articles published in *Adventist Today*. In 2018, an independent online news agency, reported that leaders in the Southern Asia Division used unethical leadership practices that violated church policies and the model of leadership given by Jesus Christ. Some of the stories shared from donors, employees, and members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church suggest the leaders in the Southern Asia Division have less accountability than leaders in the Western World (*Adventist Today* 2018).

Interviews conducted among South Asian leaders and church members as well as GC leaders who work closely with South Asians reveal that South Asian leaders generally fail to follow the representative system outlined in the General Conference Working Policy. According to a GC leader who oversees many divisions of the World Church, many leaders in the Southern Asia Division follow an autocratic leadership style.

Reflections on Leadership Style in the Southern Asia Division

The majority of the Adventist members in South Asia come from the Dalit group, which is considered the lowest caste. In the days when Christianity first came to India, many sought refuge in Christianity, especially Dalits. Christianity brought status and freedom to Dalits from the oppression of the caste system (Natarajan 2010). Today, many leaders

in the Adventist Church trace their roots back to the Dalit group. The style of leadership adopted by Dalits is the *karta* family system of leadership.

It is no surprise that the imported system of leadership style of the Adventist Church has not transferred smoothly to the Indian society as noted above. As foreign missionaries transferred leadership to the indigenous leaders, a change took place in the leadership style practiced. Indigenous people saw the hierarchical structure in the governance policy as a confirmation of their indigenous *karta* leadership style, with the result that the indigenous leader became the *karta* of the Adventist Church and the members became the joint-family.

The *karta* leadership style stipulates that a leader must be respected. The position of leader is both prescribed and earned through "age, seniority and experience" (Mehrotra and Sinha 2017:836). In the Indian Adventist leadership structure, only individuals meeting the above criteria are allowed to lead in the organization. Out of the three qualities, only one, age, has become a hindrance to the development of leaders. The oldest and most respected individuals are chosen to lead even though they may not be the best leaders. This trend became part of the culture and eventually was accepted as the norm. For example, at the SUD office, which is the highest level of leadership in the Southern Asian context, most of the leaders are a few years from retirement. The age of leaders is chosen over experience and qualifications for a particular job requirement.

The *karta* leadership model as practiced in the South Asian Adventist Church is based on the family model. This means that leaders choose their own replacement and manipulate the representative system so as to only have subordinates that support their leadership style and/or to ensure their friends or relatives are elected to serve under them. This manipulation of the system assures them that they will continue to lead in that position. The practice of choosing leaders from the same language and caste is a common practice among Indian leaders both in the church and outside.

The *karta* leader leads from a high power distance model where subordinates are not allowed to compete with or even question any of the decisions of the leader. The indigenous leaders subscribe to this practice throughout their leadership tenure. This limits the development of subordinates as leaders. The leader decides on the next leader rather than the system choosing the best leader for the job at hand.

A few interviews with senior Adventist leaders suggest that some Indian leaders have a preference of transferring leaders who has violated policies to another job somewhere else in the division instead of holding them accountable for their actions. This practice baffles many outsiders, especially if the leader has committed serious wrongdoing that would involve legal action or would have resulted in being fired in another part of

the world. Some think that relationships are more important than accountability or performance. Others think that it is a classic example of Indians favoring friends and colleagues who are part of the system of controlling and continuing the autocratic form of leadership. The answers may not be fully known; however, it is a clear violation of biblical principles and the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In the *karta* leadership model, the autocratic leader's goals come first before the success of the organization or the subordinates. This may seem simple, but it is a complex issue that exists in the leadership dynamics in the South Asian context. For example, when a union leader receives funds from an overseas donor for a specific project in a local field, it is customary for the union leader to get a portion of the donated funds. The local conference leader also takes his portion and only what is remaining goes to the project. Some ask how this is possible when the Adventist Church has an audit system that audits the division regularly. The leaders know the accountability system well. According to Southern Asian whistleblowers, the leaders use a cash system to avoid leaving any paper trail. This malpractice led the General Conference Office of Adventist Mission to suspend Global Mission Pioneer projects for many years.

Mentoring Leadership for the South Asian Adventist Church

The style of leadership in India is mostly an autocratic style as shown above in research done in India (Natarajan 2010:135). Mehrotra and Sinha agree with Mohan when they say that in the Indian context, "high power distance, hierarchy and dependency prone culture" is ingrained in the worldview and not easily changed; therefore, the mentoring style of leadership is a better option than the participative style of leadership (2017:840). This mentoring leadership style comes from the guru system that espouses the leader as a teacher. In the mentoring leadership style, the leader's success is measured by the job description plus the ability to mentor new leaders and serve the constituency without expectation of reward or fear of loss. He or she is a selfless leader according to the Indian understanding of the fourth stage of life.

Another term that expresses the values of the mentoring leader style is servant-leadership. The focus is on the leader becoming a servant first by serving others. They are seven characteristics a servant-leader should have: "*agápao* love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment and service" (Carroll and Patterson 2014:16). These principles are found in the biblical narrative such as in the story when God replaced Saul, a failed leader (1 Sam 16:7-12).

The Bible is the source for all guidance on all matters of life including spiritual and organizational leadership for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Bible is a manual for Christians in all ages and in all times of earth's history. There are two examples that are helpful to the South Asian context: first, the leadership of King Saul and second, the leadership style of Jesus Christ.

God was the leader of his people, but the people of God complained that they wanted a leader like them. King Saul was anointed as the earthly leader of Israel. Choi's study suggests the following lessons on leadership styles in the Old Testament. A Christian is a servant first and remains a servant after becoming a leader. Second, Christian leadership is about spiritual leadership which means there is a high expectation for a spiritual leader to be morally and spiritually grounded in all aspects of life and leadership. Third, a leader of God's church is required to meet the needs of people and put one's self and desires aside. Fourth, leaders of God should obey the voice of God as found in Scripture (2014:13, 14).

Jesus Christ addressed the issue of leadership and left a model for his followers. In Luke 22:25-26, Jesus gave his disciples the kingdom's definition of leadership. The disciples were told that politicians, government, and society exercise control and seeks personal benefit. As followers of Jesus Christ, that is not God's model of leadership. According to the New Testament, Christians are spiritual leaders and are representatives of Jesus Christ. This description requires a Christian to serve others. To be a great leader one must serve because becoming great in the eyes of God is not measured by power and authority but by service to God and to humanity. Jesus' model of leadership was demonstrated in many situations, especially when he took a basin of water to wash his disciple's feet. This demonstration of leading by example is a leadership style that encompasses mentoring leadership. To be a mentoring leader one must serve others and empower one's subordinates.

The mentoring leader cannot be a *karta* leader at the same time. The principles laid down by Jesus Christ state that a leader serves others unlike the way the world serves people. Jesus sent out seventy disciples into the world and gave specific instructions on how they were to witness in their cultural context. They were told to accept the blessings given to them but not to ask for anything. This principle follows the guru principle in India. A guru depends on his followers to survive but is not permitted to ask for anything. The guru is required to serve as a spiritual leader no matter the treatment received from those benefiting from his mentoring. This style of leadership is the model Jesus practiced and a model for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Another important principle of mentoring leadership is the empowerment of the next generation of leaders. The young people of the Seventh-day Adventist Church have been complaining for years that the senior leaders of the Church refuse to mentor them and empower them to lead. This fact is known by most leaders, including those in the South Asian context. On November 10th, 2018, four hundred young people came together from across India to talk about the mission God had given them. Many expressed the sentiments that the organized church had little interest in empowering them. There is not sufficient space to describe all the reasons behind the problems. The mentoring leadership style could be an avenue for the next generation of leaders to be trained to lead in the South Asian Church. Credit must be given to South Asian leaders for making changes to the *karta* leadership style that is so ingrained in the psyche of South Asians such as electing leaders that breaks the status quo of the *karta* system.

The mentoring model parts ways with the *karta* model in another area—the motive of ones' actions. This leadership quality is noted in Hindu sacred writings. The *Bhagavad Gita* states that Krishna tells Arjuna that one must not do "good" with the intention of reaping the benefits. This teaching states that South Asians should not live a good life with the intention of reaping its benefits but rather they should live a life of selflessness, not grasping for a reward (Achari 2013:28). The mentoring leader's motive of leading and preparing leaders can only be judged by God; however, a mentoring leader's fruits will be evidence of their motive. In many South Asian contexts, members fight to keep their leadership positions for many reasons and are willing to go to whatever it takes to hold on to the power of leadership. There are many documented accounts where South Asians have physically assaulted pastors or other leaders who tried to replace them with other leaders.

Recommendations

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern Asia has contributed to the development and expansion of the worldwide Adventist Church. The following recommendations are only intended to strengthen the mission of Seventh-day Adventists in the Southern Asian context.

Many studies done on leadership styles in various parts of the world could help strengthen the mission of the Adventist Church in that region. It is recommended that a study on leadership styles in the Southern Asia Division and all its entities be conducted. This study will provide a framework to inform stakeholders in developing the best approaches to assist the Southern Asia Adventist Church to embrace the biblical mentorship model of leadership.

Training needs to be provided to the constituency at all levels of the organization on the two indigenous leadership models from India and how they relate to the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Bible. This training should include worldview change and strategies to empower the members of the Southern Asia Church.

A study should also be conducted to look at the impact of the caste system and the honor/shame culture of India. Questions to ask: How does the caste system affect the choosing of leaders? What impact does the caste system have on witnessing to the different people groups of India? How does the honor/shame culture of the Indian society impact the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in India?

Conclusion

The analysis done on leadership styles in India reveals that the mentoring model is a better fit than other models for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern Asia. One of the main reasons is that the model was birthed in the South Asian context under the name of guru leadership, which follows the ancient practice of a teacher. Jesus Christ followed this practice with his disciples. He was their teacher, master, or guru. He mentored them individually and collectively. He demonstrated servant leadership, which is a leadership style needed in the South Asian context.

The research and the current status of the Southern Asia Adventist Church in India is a reminder that the present model of *karta* or autocratic leadership is not supported in Jesus' model of spiritual leadership. The failure to empower the next generation of leaders while serving self, seeking control, suppressing subordinates, and seeking to manipulate the policies and constituency is against the leadership style of Jesus Christ and as outlined by policy in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

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Intercultural Mentorship as a Leadership Role

Introduction

Intercultural mentorship requires special knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Osula and Irvin 2009; Dominguez Garcia 2012:109-116; Crutcher 2006:67-74). Leader mentoring in intercultural contexts entails a way of living that inspires the mentee to develop a "similar mentoring mindset" (Rayford 2014:15). This article describes the importance of intercultural mentoring as a leadership role. The study starts with an evaluation of Osuna and Irvin's model of cultural awareness. Then, it explores the concept of intercultural competence in mentoring, describes and illustrates the leader mentoring relationship in an intercultural context, and applies the concept to a university setting.

Evaluation

Osula and Irvin employ a conceptual model of cultural awareness to describe how a third culture perspective could generate culturally appropriate behavior and meaningful intercultural mentoring relationships (2009:47). In the first part of their article, the authors define intercultural mentoring as the interactive relationship between a mentor and a mentee who comes from a different culture. Then, they present three key elements of their conceptual model: culturally appropriate behavior, a meaningful mentoring relationship, and specific mentoring outcomes. They affirm that the constructs of cultural sensitivity, cultural empathy, and cultural competence establish "a framework for understanding what is considered

culturally appropriate behavior in an intercultural context" (38). In the section that describes meaningful mentoring relationships and specific mentoring outcomes, based on the findings of the GLOBE project, the authors illustrate how a mentor should have a people oriented or a task focused approach. They point out that the chosen approach depends on the mentee' individualistic or collectivist culture, building or preservation of harmony in a collectivist society, and the effect that power distance has on communication between the mentor and the protégé.

In the second part of the article, the authors focus on the main construct of their conceptual model: cultural awareness. They discern three levels of analysis of cultural awareness: general cultural awareness, cultural self-awareness, and situation-specific awareness. They assert that expertise in these three areas will lead a mentor to develop an "etic perspective, or *metacultural grid,* [that] corresponds to an analytical framework outside of any specific culture" (Osula and Irvin 2009:44). They employ a "third-culture perspective" to expand on this ability to transcend the individual perspective of the actors engaged in an intercultural relationship. According to Hammer, Gudykunst, and Wiseman, this

> third-culture perspective is neither from the sojourner's own culture nor from the host culture. Rather it is a frame of reference for understanding intercultural interactions in general. The third-culture perspective acts as a psychological link between the sojourner's own cultural perspective (i.e., assumptions, values, learned behaviors, etc.) and the perspective of another culture. (1978:384)

In the third part of the article, the authors apply the implications of their model of cultural awareness to the field of mentorship as a leadership role. They consider that "as cultural awareness in the mentoring relationship increases, the relationship is enhanced as the mentor and mentee engage in culturally appropriate behavior that affects the mentoring outcomes" (Osula and Irvin 2009:45). In the fourth part of their article, they analyze from the perspective of their conceptual model the five phases of the intercultural mentoring process, as outlined by Murphy and Ensher (1997:212-233). In the conclusion, the authors confirm that "leaders who desire to incorporate mentoring into their own leadership repertoire should take into account the cultural nuances that mentees bring to mentoring relationships and capitalize upon this awareness in order to improve interactions with mentees" (Osula and Irvin 2009:47). They recommend that future research should include case studies, the search for emic mentoring practices and etic mentoring models, and assessments of cultural awareness (Osula and Irvin 2009:47, 48).

Their article is well written and introduces a conceptual model of the relationship between cultural awareness and intercultural mentorship that could apply to different domains, such as missions and education. The authors present a logical sequence of how a culturally aware mentor may adopt a third-culture perspective that results in culturally appropriate behavior, and how, in turn, that enhances meaningful mentoring relationships that will generate specific mentoring outcomes. This proposed sequence is reinforced with good definitions and explanations of the key terms and with relevant illustrations that support how the relationship between a mentor and a mentee may work well when they come from different cultural settings.

Osula and Irvin decided to employ the concept of cultural awareness as the foundation of their model although they recognize that the term is not "easily defined and is often employed analogously in the literature with constructs such as cultural sensitivity, cross-cultural competence, and cross-cultural effectiveness" (41). They define cultural awareness as "the ability to adopt a third-culture perspective in intercultural interactions in order to enact culturally appropriate behavior and to establish meaningful relationships with individuals from cultures different from one's own" (44).

I consider that cultural awareness as defined by Osula and Irvin describes a limited engagement with another culture. To participate in meaningful cross-cultural relationships, a mentor needs to "*adopt* a third-culture perspective" that will "*enact* culturally appropriate behavior" (41; emphasis added). I believe that while their proposed approach has theoretical value shown through a clear differentiation between its elements, it also has limitations. First, the authors do not clearly distinguish between "meaningful" or "effective" relationships and specific mentoring outcomes. Second, in their proposed model, the mentor only adopts a third-culture perspective as an incidental or accessory competence. It could be argued that their view on adopting a third-culture perspective seems more of an activity rather than adopting a new way of living.

Intercultural Competence

According to the literature research I conducted for this article, intercultural competence is a better construct that will have the same explanatory power as cultural awareness as used by Osula and Irvin and surpass the limitations of their term. While some definitions of intercultural competence found in literature are analogous to Osula and Irvin's construct of cultural awareness, other authors add elements that make the concept richer and more comprehensive.

A similar and general definition of intercultural competence is the ability "to work and develop primary relationships with individuals from distinct cultures" (Yancey 2009:377). According to Janet Bennett, there is "a fair consensus that we are describing the capacity to interact effectively and appropriately across cultures" (2014:157). There is a similarity even with Osula and Irvin's idea that bridging cultures requires the capacity to adopt or enact culturally appropriate behaviors. For instance, Christina Collins defines intercultural competence as the "*adaptation* of cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to persons of diverse cultures with the objective of maintaining and developing relationships regardless of ethnic, racial, religious, or cultural differences" (2013:16; emphasis added).

Intercultural competence is indeed the ability "to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways" (Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman 2003:422). The literature identifies skills, knowledge, and attitudes as the key components of intercultural competence (Shah-Gordon 2016:10). Darla Deardorff states, "Intercultural competence involves the development of one's skills and attitudes in successfully interacting with persons of diverse backgrounds" (2004:14). Later, she refines her definition as "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (2008:33).

A significant number of researchers considers cultural awareness a component of intercultural competence (Byram 1997:63; Collins 2013:14; Deardorff 2006:254; Fantini 2009:457; Paige 2004:87). For example, Maureen Cuevas defines intercultural competence as

> having attained a repertoire of tools that allows the practitioner to engage and work with multicultural clients (cross-cultural skills), having developed specific insight and information about diverse groups (cross-cultural knowledge), and possessing positive attitudes and beliefs about diverse populations and cross-cultural practice in general (cross-cultural awareness); a long-term, ongoing process of development. (2002:14, 15)

Brian Spitzberg and Gabriella Changnon propose five categories of contemporary models of intercultural competence: compositional, co-orientational, developmental, adaptational, and causal path process. They recognize that the categories are "purely subjective" (2009:10), but they represent an attempt to review the rich palette of theories, constructs, and conceptualizations in the field of intercultural competence. Compositional models single out hypothesized elements of cultural competence without indicating the relationship between these elements. The compositional models simply list attitudes and skills, such as motivation and self-reflection, with the expectation that they will reverberate into the behavior

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sphere when the intercultural interactions take place. Examples of compositional models are the *Intercultural Competence Components Model* (Howard-Hamilton, Richardson, and Shuford 1998) and Deardorff's *Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence* (2006). Deardorff redesigned this model to indicate causal relationships between the components, however the attitudes serve as a basis of both models she created to illustrate the acquisition of intercultural competence (2008:479).

Co-orientational Models focus on the interactional process that naturally occurs when people engage another culture with the hope to improve their level of intercultural competence. According to Spitzberg and Changnon, the "subsequent progress in interaction seems logically predicated upon the achievement of some base level of co-orientation toward the common referential world" (2009:15). Examples of co-orientational models are the *Intercultural Interlocutor Competence Model* (Fantini 1995) and *Intercultural Competence Model* (Byram 1997).

Developmental models draw attention to the progressive nature of human interactions and relationships that build superior levels of intercultural competence over a significant period of time. Spitzberg and Changnon comment that "just as adults are generally considered more interactionally competent than infants, due largely to the learning process that provides for stages of growth to build sequentially upon one another, developmental models often attempt to identify the stages of progression that would mark the achievement of more competent levels of interactions" (2009:21). Influential models in this category include the *Developmental Intercultural Competence Model* (Bennett 1986) and the *U-Curve Model of Intercultural Adjustment* (Gullahorn and Gullahorn 1963).

Adaptational models underline the interdependence of multiple interactants that shape the process of mutual adjustment. "To a large extend, the process of adaptation is a *prima facie* of competence by demonstrating the movement from an ethnocentric perspective in which adaptation is not seen as important to a more ethnorelative perspective in which adaptation is the *sine qua non* of intercultural interaction" (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:24). The *Intercultural Communicative Competence Model* (Kim 1988) and the *Intercultural Communicative Accommodation Model* (Gallois et al. 1988) are examples of adaptational models.

Causal process models "typically take a form similar to a path model, with an identifiable set of distal-to-proximal concepts leading to a downstream set of outcomes that mark or provide a criterion for competence" (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:10). One characteristic of causal path models is that upstream and downstream variables influence each other (29). The *Multilevel Process Change Model of Intercultural Competence* (Ting-Toomey 1999) and the *Model of Intercultural Communication Competence* (Arasaratnam 2007) are notable causal path models.

These five models of intercultural competence are not mutually exclusive, but rather complement each other. The models represent contemporary attempts to simplify the extraordinary complex reality of interpersonal, communicative, and intercultural competence that are associated with more than three hundred concepts and factors. Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) remark that most models have in common at least five elements: attitudes, knowledge, skills, context, and outcomes. The authors argue that any comprehensive model will need to incorporate these categories.

Compared to cultural awareness, intercultural competence offers a more comprehensive and integrative description of the ability to act in a culturally appropriate way. Intercultural competence entails more than performing a significant intercultural activity or enacting culturally appropriate behavior. An intercultural competent individual switches from knowing and doing, to actually being in the process of developing the capacity to interact across cultures.

Mentorship as a Leadership Role

The term "mentor" and its related derivates come from Greek mythology. When Odysseus, the king of Ithaca, embarked on an odyssey to fight in the Trojan War, he entrusted his friend Mentor with the care of his son, Telemachus. The earliest evidence of an actual mentor is that of Imhotep, the great vizer of Pharaoh Djoser, who ruled during the Third Dynasty (Loue 2011:1). Nowadays, the word "mentor" typically "refers to a senior individual who provides guidance and assistance to a more junior individual, typically referred to as a protégé (or mentee)" (Dougherty, Turban, and Haggard 2011:140).

Mentoring is the "process whereby one guides, leads, supports, teaches, and challenges other individuals to facilitate their personal, educational, and professional growth and development through mutual respect and trust" (Wright-Harp and Cole 2008:8). Mentoring includes characteristics of other major relationships such as parenting, friendship, counseling, and coaching because a mentor offers "multiple forms of guidance and support and must assume a range of different roles throughout all phases of the relationship" (Crutcher 2006:59).

Mentoring as a leadership role represents "a high level advisory and transformational service to those who we perceive will one day become our future leaders" (Shenkman 2008:xvi). There is an important difference between traditional mentoring and leader mentoring. Initially, a mentor was an adult male who assumed the crucial job of protecting and instructing a boy during his critical years of growth (Griffith 2001:35). Later, a mentor became an adviser and a guide who assists and inspires a young

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adult to find meaning in life and attain success. This type of mentoring is common in fields like medicine, the arts, and business (Edmondson Bell-Smith and Nkomo 2017:238). Mentoring as a leadership role aims higher than assisting a mentee to acquire competence in a certain professional field. A mentor leader measures success by different standards than those commonly accepted in the contemporary culture. Dungy states, "Mentor leadership is all about shaping, nurturing, empowering, and growing. It's all about relationships, integrity, and perpetual learning. Success is measured in changed lives, strong character, and eternal values rather than material gain, temporal achievement, and status" (2010:xviii).

Both competence and character are essential in defining success. An organization risks its own mission if incompetent people occupy key positions. On the other side, most people do not recognize competence without morality (Rae 2018:11). Competence without character may temporarily advance the agenda of an institution, however, it is inconceivable to consider leader mentoring without a harmonious development of both character and competence, especially since a mentee needs to trust mentor leaders to follow them (Covey 2018:30-31). There is a large array of characteristics that specifically describe competence and character in mentoring, in general, and key traits that are *sine qua non* in cross-cultural leader mentoring.

Based on a systematic review of the literature on mentoring that covered more than thirty years, Dominguez Garcia highlights clusters of characteristics that fall under the broad categories of competence and character, and offers a list of the most cited mentor qualifications (2012:109-116). For instance, he mentions eight mentoring dimensions that, according to Darwin, group together characteristics the mentees ascribe to their mentors (2004:29-41). The authentic dimension includes character traits, such as being honest, loyal, and fair, and the competent dimension identifies mentors who are knowledgeable, professional, and experienced, among other qualities (Dominguez Garcia 2012:110-111).

In interviews with successful cross-cultural mentors, Crutcher identified several key traits that are critical in intercultural relationships: selflessness, listening, honesty and acceptance, patience and persistence, and vision (2006:67-74). The author remarks that most of the mentors in her study possessed what she refers to as the three Vs: "value, virtues, and vision. They have a clear belief system (values), a good knowledge of their own strengths and limitations (virtues), and a defined aspiration for the future (vision) of themselves and of society" (125).

Cross-cultural mentor leaders integrate attitudes, beliefs, values, commitments, skills, and culturally appropriate behaviors into what James Olthius (1985) calls a "vision of life," a worldview that they

intentionally share with their mentees. Citing Crow and Matthews (1988), Sherrill Rayford affirms that mentoring as a leadership role is "the process whereby an individual is informed, involved, and dedicated to the coaching of a mentee who will ultimately be inspired to develop a similar mentoring *mindset*" (2014:15, emphasis added). In this process, the mentor's worldview will progressively overlap with the worldview of the protegés in such a way that they will share common values and goals but none of them will lose their identity (Fantini 1995:151).

A cross-cultural mentor leader will have the ability "to understand other worldviews" (Anderson 2016:39), and will be able to *adopt* a third view perspective, as Osula and Irwin describes it in their model. However, as a successful cross-cultural mentor moves to a higher level of intercultural competence, they *possess* a third culture perspective because it is an essential part of their "third culture worldview." Based on their studies in India in the 1950s, Ruth Hill Useem and John Useem, two social scientists, coined the terms "third culture" (Useem, Useem, and Donoghue 1963:169) and "third culture kids" (Useem and Downie 1976). David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken (1999) use the expression "third culture kids" to describe children who grow up multiculturally and develop an interstitial or third culture identity. Building on this concept, Yang et al. wrote about Chinese international students who spent their university years in the USA and worked "to develop a third culture worldview system whereby they [could] integrate and transcend worldviews deriving from both Chinese and American Cultures" (2006:35). With the presupposition that a mentor leader will assist a mentee in the process of this integration, I will employ the term "third culture worldview" to depict an enhanced model of leader mentoring.

A third culture worldview represents the intersection of attitudes, beliefs, values, commitments, skills, and behaviors that come from different cultural perspectives and form a new *modus vivendi* that inspires transformation. I agree with Osuna and Irwin that cultural awareness is important in mentoring as a leadership role, however I consider that intercultural competence incorporates cultural awareness and fosters a better mediation between the culture of the mentor and that of the mentee. In my understanding, moving from cultural awareness to intercultural competence is similar to escaping the tension of being "bicultural" and becoming "intercultural" (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:18). When the leader mentor is a third culture individual and the mentee identifies with one of the multiple cultures that fuse into the interstitial culture of the mentor, the process of leader mentoring has a higher chance of generating successful mentoring outcomes. I will illustrate this process in the next section, where I will present a biblical case study. Meanwhile, I want

to also introduce the concept of spiritual intelligence from a Christian perspective. I disagree with Zohar and Marshal who affirm that spiritual intelligence "is not about being religious" (2001:8). For me, spiritual intelligence is not a natural but a supernatural endowment, a divine insight that bestows value and purpose to human beings, reconciles cultures, and boosts the process of leader mentoring. A third culture worldview that invites both intercultural competence and spiritual intelligence facilitates the transforming imitation that is called discipleship in a religious setting.

Paul the Mentor-Discipler

While the term "mentor" does not appear in the Bible, the concept surely exists and there are several biblical relationships that contemporary readers of the Scripture can easily identify as mentor-mentee rapports, such as Moses-Joshua, Eli-Samuel, Elijah-Elisha, and Paul-Timothy. A biblical mentorship relationship may be a part of a mentoring chain. In the Old Testament, Jethro advised Moses, Moses tutored Joshua, and Joshua trained the leaders of Israel's army. In the New Testament, "Barnabas mentored Paul and brought him to Antioch; Paul mentored Timothy in Antioch whom Paul left in Ephesus to train faithful men; Timothy helped train Epaphras who worked in Collose; and Epaphras trained others also in Hierapolis and Laodicea" (Appollis 2010:13). In this section, I employ the mentoring relationship between Paul and Timothy to illustrate intercultural mentorship as a leadership role.

The apostle Paul remarkably fits the description of a mentor leader that is "*informed, involved, and dedicated* to the coaching of a mentee who will ultimately be inspired to develop a *similar mentoring mindset*" (Rayford 2014:15, emphasis added). A complex personality with a multifaceted background, Paul is a powerful exponent of multilingualism and multiculturalism. Being reared in Tarsus of Cilicia, a Greek learning center with educational and philosophical traditions, granted Paul, a diaspora Jew, the opportunity to feel at home in the Greco-Roman world (Porter 2008:2, 3). Considerable evidence suggests that

> Paul had a good broad Greek education up to at least "secondary" level, and at least some real exposure to a rhetorical curriculum. Further, he had at least an intelligent layman's interest in and some knowledge of the terminology and concepts of several "schools" of philosophy. It is therefore most reasonable to argue that Paul could have had quite a degree of both Greek and Jewish education before coming to Jerusalem, both most probably conducted in Greek. (Forbes 2013:135)

The Roman layer of Paul's socio-cultural background also informs his remarkable profile. As a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37; 22:25-28), he probably learned Latin (Moyise 2010:4) and he knew his legal rights (Acts 25:10-12). His frequent use of athletic and legal terminology, his extensive travels in the Roman Empire, and different contacts with Roman officials, conferred on Paul not only familiarity but also expertise in the Greco-Roman world (Porter 2008:5, 6). However, in spite of a solid cultural and social location in the Greco-Roman sphere of influence, Paul made little attempt to accommodate himself or the people of God within the Hellenistic worldview. "To turn to Paul after reading most other Diaspora literature is to be struck by his minimal use of Hellenistic theology, anthropology, and ethics" (Barclay 1996:390).

Paul constantly and resolutely identifies himself as a Jew (Rom 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22; Phil 3:5, 6). Using Phil 3:5, 6 as a framework, Porter mentions that Paul considered himself Jewish by birth and circumcision, a descendant of the patriarchs, belonging to the tribe of Judah that has its political and religious center in Jerusalem, a native speaker of Aramaic, and a committed Pharisee, full of zeal and self-righteousness (2016:27-30). Paul received his rabbinic education from Gamaliel, a grandson of Hillel, the founder of one major Jewish schools of thought (Acts 22:3; McKechnie 2013:108). In his letter to the Galatians, Paul states, "I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers" (Gal 1:14). He did not brag about his remarkable progress in the knowledge and practice of the core values of Judaism because his zeal for its ancestral traditions led him to persecute the people of God (Oakes 2015:54). In first century Judaism, "zeal" not only described "strict adherence to God's laws but violent opposition to those who broke them or caused others to break them" (Moyise 2010:3).

Paul's dramatic conversion initiated a radical worldview transformation in his life that had an enduring impact on the development of the Christian church and on the people he served. The revelation of Jesus challenged his impressive religious education with the knowledge of Christ crucified (1 Cor 2:2), enhanced his multicultural identity to the supreme privilege of being "one in Christ" (Gal 3:28), and channeled his fiery zeal into a passionate, self-sacrificing service to humanity, following the model of his Savior and Lord (Phil 2:5).

Paul powerfully illustrates the concept of a "third culture worldview." A third culture worldview represents more than the fusion of two distinct cultures into a third one or that can successfully mediate between two cultures. As I previously mentioned, a third culture worldview represents the unique blending of different cultural perspectives that creates a new way of life, which inspires in other people the desire to experience a similar

transformation. After his conversion, Paul does not emphasize a certain cultural dimension, except for the purpose of defending his apostleship or defining his mission. He does not describe the identity of someone who knows Jesus as a person possessing "cultural fluidity" (Cronin 2016:63), but he introduces the transformed person as a "new creature" in Christ (2 Cor 5:17).

Paul's third culture worldview brought together new attitudes, beliefs, values, skills, commitments, and actions. His new *modus vivendi* incorporated both intercultural competence and spiritual intelligence that enabled him to embark on meaningful mentoring relationships that inspired his mentees to experience a similar worldview transformation. For Paul, intercultural competence or intercultural proficiency is more than "tactical adaptability," the ability to interact with people from different ethnic and religious background. It was the ability to win people to Christ (1 Cor 9:19-23). Spiritual intelligence is a *sine qua non* condition of possessing a Christian third culture worldview. A natural person becomes spiritual when the Holy Spirit enlightens the darkness of their common way of thinking and brings the revelation of Christ and him crucified to the center of their worldview (Nae 2003:305, 306). Possessing the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:16), enables the spiritual person to clearly grasp the reality of the great controversy, to accept the mission of God as their highest honor and priority, and to act in a spiritually appropriate way.

Spiritual intelligence represented for the apostle Paul more than sporadic moments of divine inspiration. While it is true that Paul received many visions, especially in the crucial moments of his life (Acts 9:10.12, 16:9; 2 Cor 12:1), he also was led by the Holy Spirit at different stages of his ministry (Acts 13:9). When he acted in a culturally appropriate way, accepting the suggestion of the leaders of the church in Jerusalem to undertake a rite of purification (Acts 21:23-26), he practically cut short his ministry and his life. However, I will focus on a segment of his ministry when he acted in both culturally and spiritually appropriate ways: during his mentoring relationship with Timothy.

Paul met Timothy in Lystra, during his first missionary journey. Timothy's mother was a believer of Jewish descend and his father was a Greek (Acts 16:1). Timothy grew up under the genuine spiritual influence of his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice and developed a "sincere faith" (2 Tim 1:5). The community of believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of Timothy (Acts 16:2). Paul saw leadership potential in Timothy and invited him to join a small group of missionaries the apostle led with the ambitious goal "to preach the gospel where Christ was not known (Rom 15:20). Paul initiated a remarkable mentoring relationship and he approached leader mentoring with the best information available, the knowledge of

Jesus Christ crucified, with a genuine total involvement, a day and night interest and disposition to serve, with unreserved dedication, and an inspiring spirit of sacrifice. The apostle channeled everything he was and had into the relationship with the purpose of inspiring a similar way of thinking and living. In a final charge to Timothy, Paul testifies, "You . . . know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings" (2 Tim 3:10-11).

Paul's relationship with Timothy reveals several key characteristics of mentorship as a leadership role. First, a leader mentor or a discipler is intentional. The invitation Paul addressed to Timothy to join him in preaching the gospel was not accidental. The apostle saw in Timothy a noble character and someone with the potential to grow. Paul's loving mentor relationship with Timothy began with choosing Timothy as the right person to accompany him in serving the gospel. From that point forward, Paul mentored Timothy by equipping him for the tasks of ministry, empowering him for success, employing him for effectiveness at the church in Ephesus, and by communicating his love, respect, and appreciation for Timothy as a son, brother, and messenger of Christ (Hoehl 2011:41). This chain of actions clearly indicates intentionality.

Second, a discipler has the courage to recognize his sinfulness and vulnerability. In his first letter to Timothy, Paul wrote: "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst" (1 Tim 1:15). A converted mentor will have the moral authority to encourage or confront a mentee only if he/she regards his/her mentee as a forgiven companion. "When confronting the mentee, the mentor speaks as a sinner, and when receiving hard counsel, the mentee hears as a sinner" (Williams 2005:103).

Third, a leader mentor invites the mentee to be a partner. David Bartlett mentions that partnership and interdependence are clues to "strong mentorship like relationships" (2018:24). Paul sent Timothy to the church in Thessalonica as a "brother and co-worker in God's service in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, so that no one would be unsettled by these trials" (1 Thess 3:2, 3). There are other occasions when Paul treated his mentees as partners and co-workers (Rom 16:21; 2 Cor 8:23).

Fourth, a true mentor is supportive. According to Stacy Hoehl, "Paul encouraged Timothy to focus on three spiritual priorities of the ministry, including nourishment from God's Word, training in godliness, and a mission-minded approach to ministry" (2011:41). In his second letter to Timothy, Paul exhorted him to be strong in his relationship with God and to face hardships in ministry with courage and perseverance (2 Tim 2:1, 3-6).

Fifth, a mentor leader initiates a chain of leadership. "And the things

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you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Tim 2:2).

Sixth, a discipler develops a strong relationship with their mentee. For Paul, Timothy was his "beloved and faithful child in the Lord" (1 Cor 4:17). Writing to the Philippians, Paul says, "I have no one *like-minded*, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel" (Phil 2:20–22).

Application to a University Setting

There are three major educational agencies: the family, the church, and the school (Knight 1998:205). Each educational agency provides a natural setting for mentorship in which the mentor, the parent, the pastor, or the teacher has the privilege and the responsibility to engage the mentee, the child, the church member, or the student, in a loving relationship that will expand their understanding of life and its purpose. Educators have underlined the role of educational agencies and stressed the importance of an intentional and sustained cooperation between them in reaching the goal of developing the character of children and young adults for this life and for eternity. In the last part of this article, I will apply the concept of mentorship as a leadership role to a university context.

Forming leaders through mentorship is a process of assisting the worldview transformation of disciples who will be equipped, empowered, and motivated to assist others in making disciples. It is an ongoing discipleship process or a continuous chain of mentorship. A university provides an ideal setting for mentorship both in terms of time and proximity. The students spend about four years on campus during their university studies and this period represents an exposure to the discipleship process similar to that of the disciples of Jesus. During the university years, a teacher has more time to interact with a student than their own family or pastor, and the frequency of interactions naturally increases as many students live on campus and are engaged together with their mentors in a significant number of curricular and co-curricular activities.

I have spent more than twenty years in three Adventist universities, working as chaplain, administrator, or teacher, and I have had the privilege to mentor several students that are now occupying positions of leadership in the Adventist Church. It is their gracious recognition of the importance of finding a mentor during the university years that encourages me to share my experience as a mentor leader. I have always worked with the full awareness that the university years are crucial for the personal development of a young adult before he or she starts working and founding

a family. Speaking about university students, Garber remarks that "it is those who develop a worldview that can address the challenges of coherence and truth in a pluralistic society . . . who find a relationship with a mentor who incarnates that worldview . . . and who choose to live among others whose common life is an embodiment of that worldview . . . who continue on with integrity into adulthood" (2007:34).

Only God can value our integrity, however I can affirm that I myself have experienced the powerful impact of Garber's worldview-mentor-community sequence before I engaged in assisting students that were searching for meaning in life. I lived my formative years in an atheistic society; however, I developed a theistic worldview that helped me face my own life challenges with a precious sense of God's leading presence. I had the privilege of meeting mentors who illustrated to me Christ's humility, spirit of sacrifice, dignity, and vision, and I have belonged for many years to a small group of friends that have provided unconditional support, gentle correction, and constant encouragement. What I have received, I try to pass on.

To assist students in shaping a biblically-informed worldview, I designed a course that deals with the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, the devotional principles that guide the spiritual life, and the means of grace that foster growth in Christ. The course has been created to facilitate, in the setting of the great controversy, a discovery of God, our holy and loving heavenly Father, a saving encounter with Jesus Christ, our mighty Redeemer and perfect Example, and an experimentation of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, our reliable Comforter and trusting Counselor. The guiding thread of the course is the progressive, redemptive, and transforming work of the Holy Spirit as he attracts, convicts, renews, and transforms lives that respond to his intervention. The academic and practical journey begins with the revelation of a spiritual worldview, then opens to knowledge and experimentation of the themes of conversion, transformation, consecration, empowerment, guidance, and motivation. The course concludes with a demonstration of the divine power in selfless service. The basic presupposition of this course is that human beings cannot produce a genuine biblical spirituality, but that it is rather the result of the progressive, continuous work of the Holy Spirit in people's lives. It is "Holy Spirit-uality" (Wade 1995:1109). A crucial component of this course is to encourage students to allow the Holy Spirit to penetrate the darkness of their natural self-centered worldview, defined by the "wisdom of this world," and let Christ crucified shape a new "vision of life" based on the "wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1:20-21).

It is my constant desire and effort to illustrate to my mentees a Christocentric third culture worldview, which is a unique blending of

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intercultural competence and spiritual intelligence that empowers a leader mentor to serve in an intercultural setting. I have lived in four distinct cultures and my cultural awareness developed by reading, observing, and unfortunately, learning from mistakes. My observations and experiences have led me to conclude that there are two basic types of cultures: the dominant, and the submissive. Long processes of political dominance and cultural imperialism have shaped both the dominant and the submissive cultures in different ways. According to my observations, the people in submissive cultures are humble, compliant, and have limited confidence. These are the kind of people that are usually ready to learn and follow. On the other hand, the people who belong to an dominant culture are proud, overconfident, and demanding. They are the people that are always ready to teach, and to lead.

I was born in Romania, a country that was under the dominance and influence of the Otoman Empire for centuries, and I served for seven years in Mexico, a colony of the Spanish Empire for a long period of time. As I come from a submissive culture, I do not struggle at all to be a leader mentor when I served in similar cultures to mine. However, when I served in an dominant culture, it took more time, difficulty, and effort to mentor students. Developing intercultural competence has been a painful process. I discovered that good intentions do not prevent a mentor serving in an intercultural context from making mistakes. I believe that with time, accumulated knowledge, improved skills, and changed attitudes, I can think and act in more interculturally appropriate ways. I also pray for the wisdom that comes from above (James 3:17), for it illuminates and inspires even the most experienced individuals who serve in an intercultural context.

I exercise my mentoring call in the field of ministerial and theological education. According to Williams, there are two enduring characteristics that define mentoring for pastoral formation, "the gift of place and the gift of space" (2005:59) The author comments that the "student-pastor is given a *place* to participate in the ongoing ministry of localized community, and they are given *space* to reflect on their ministry in regular conversations with a mentor-pastor and with other persons in the community" (59, 60). As the coordinator of the ministerial praxis, I facilitate both the connection of the student-pastor with a local community and I provide the proper time for theological reflection and debriefing.

Successful leader mentoring requires a patient, long-term commitment. Moses mentored Joshua for forty years and Paul engaged Timothy in a mentoring relationship that lasted about twenty years (Oden 1989:5). Even Jesus did not interrupt his divine mentoring when he ascended to heaven. He continued to assist his disciples through the presence of the

Holy Spirit. A leader mentor that serves in a university setting needs to understand that the discipleship process does not end when a student graduates. In fact, the mentor will continue to provide advice, encouragement, and spiritual support as long as they live.

Conclusion

Contemporary mentoring has changed in significant ways. Edmondson Bell-Smith and Nkomo describe six major characteristics of mentoring in the twenty-first century: (1) both mentors and mentee will no longer be homogenous; (2) mentoring has moved beyond the business world; (3) the forms and usage of mentoring will be as diverse as the individuals in mentoring relationships; (4) communication technology will continue to impact the power of mentoring and also will facilitate global mentoring; (5) individuals and organizations will pay greater attention to mentoring as a constellation of helping relationships, connecting a diverse cross-section of people across time, space, and disciplines; and (6) there will be an increasing use of peer mentoring and mentee upward mentoring—where the mentee is the wise sage (2017:238, 239).

Leader mentors who serve in an intercultural setting should not only "adopt a third culture perspective" that will "enact culturally appropriate behavior" (Osula and Irwin 2009:1), but share an authentic new way of life, a *modus vivendi* that is informed by a high level of cultural competence and transformed by the constant presence of the Holy Spirit. The process of intercultural discipleship requires leader mentors who are intentional, honest and vulnerable, humble, supportive, visionary, and caring because they have experienced the worldview transformation they want to inspire in their mentees as they will also serve in different intercultural settings.

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Prolegomena to a Theology of Eschatological Leadership: 13 Leadership Principles for the End Time Gleaned from the Book of Revelation

Introduction

> And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt 28:18-20 NKJV).

Jesus entrusted his disciples with leadership. That leadership was to be exercised on behalf of his mission to seek and save the lost in all the world before his return. This mission work will reach a climax during the time of the end before Christ's promised return. This article explores the book of Revelation for clues concerning leadership qualities required for this task. The article will support the discussion of these leadership qualities with contributions from contemporary authors on the topic.

The question might arise: What is the relevance of research leadership in the context of the end in Bible prophecy? Seventh-day Adventist self-identity is focused on being a people who are partnering with God to complete the mission that Jesus commenced in the first century A.D. Specifically, the Adventist Church identifies itself as a remnant movement of people who place their faith in Jesus' salvation, keep God's

commandments, and proclaim the eternal gospel and Three Angels' Messages to prepare for and hasten Christ's return. In other words, the Seventh-day Adventist Church takes its apocalyptic role very seriously. Therefore, it is advisable that thought be given to the specific demands of God's people for leadership in the last days?

According to the General Conference 2019 *Annual Statistical Report*, the Adventist Church, in addition to the General Conference and its 13 divisions, has 96,718 organizations worldwide. These organizations include local churches, primary schools, secondary schools, universities, clinics and hospitals, publishing houses, television and radio outlets, missions and conferences, unions, and more. In each of these organizations, there is a team of elected or appointed leaders to guide the mission of the Church. Each of these bodies should have a leadership team that understands how it fits into God's bigger mission and its particular contribution to completing the mission in the time of the end.

Developing a theology of eschatological leadership is a daunting task and will require a broader discussion than what one author can contribute. This article consists of three parts. The first part proposes a working definition of the time of the end—the eschatological period that will couch the specialized focus of this article. A survey of selected eschatological passages in Revelation will follow. The purpose of this survey is to identify the nature of the events and themes focusing on the period of time, technically defined as "the time of the end," and then to extrapolate leadership implications from these passages. In the final section, the identified leadership implications will be further discussed and compared with contemporary literature on leadership principles to propose a theology of eschatological leadership.

A Working Definition of "the Time of the End"

The concept of the time of the end is not a concept first developed in the New Testament. Rather, it is a significant focus in the book of Daniel and provides the framework for the authors of the New Testament.

Hans LaRondelle, in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, states,

> [The apocalyptic phrase 'time of the end'] is found only in Daniels' visions concerned the 'distant future' (five times mentioned in Daniel 8-12). It is not completely identical to the familiar phrase, 'the last days' or 'days to come,' as used 14 times by the OT prophets. While the classical prophets combine God's judgments in their own time *directly* with the final judgment, Daniel leads his readers from his own time down through the ages of redemptive history. His time frame extends beyond the violent death of the Messiah (Dan. 9:26) to the emergence of the anti-Messiah or antichrist (Dan. 7:8, 24, 25). (2000:871)

In his 1991 article in the *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* on the same topic, LaRondelle points out, "The phrase, 'the time of the end,' is found only in the Old Testament, exclusively in Daniel 8-12" (28). The phrase is used only five times in those chapters. The usage focuses on a particular time associated with the end of earth's history and when Daniel's prophecies will be understood (Dan 12:4, 9) (29, 30).

Traditionally, Adventist theologians understand that "the time of the end" is a technical eschatological term (Pfandl 1991:152) used to refer to a final or apocalyptic period before Christ returns. Adventist interpreters associate this period with the time that begins with the end of the symbolic three-and-half year prophecy and 1,260-day prophecy found in the apocalyptic books of Daniel and Revelation. They interpret the ending date to be 1798, when the pope was arrested by General Berthier and exiled in France. The time of the end is associated with the 2,300-day prophecy of Daniel 8:14, which points to 1844 when the investigative judgment, or the cleansing of the temple would begin. In referring to this prophecy, Gabriel clarifies for John that "the vision refers to the time of the end" (v. 17). It is beyond the scope of this article to study in-depth the interpretation of this phrase. This article accepts the traditional Adventist understanding regarding this phrase.

Survey of the Book of Revelation

Revelation is the capstone of Scripture explaining the march of history from Christ's victory on the cross until the new age when he will reign for eternity from his throne room in the new heaven and new earth. For many readers, Revelation has become associated with dragons, beasts, and fear of persecution. However, the opening lines clearly state that the fundamental objective is to reveal Jesus Christ (Rev 1:1). Those who read and keep the words written in this book are called blessed (v. 3).

Because this article is interested primarily in exploring the leadership implications related to the time of the end, it is crucial to identify the relevant portions of Revelation. Ranko Stefanovic, a New Testament scholar and author of *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, proposes a structure of Revelation that is helpful for our purposes. Stefanovich builds on E. Schüssler Fiorenza's sevenfold chiastic structure and Kenneth A. Strand's two-part structure of Revelation, which identifies chapter 14 as the dividing line between the historical and eschatological parts of the book. Stefanovic's suggested outline is in figure 1 (2002:36-37).

The chiastic design of Revelation shows parallel passages in the two halves of Revelation. It draws the reader to the book's center, which begins with the sanctuary scene of the Ark of the Covenant in heaven. John records the great controversy vision of the birth of the Messiah and His victory and casting of the dragon (Satan) out of heaven (Rev 12:1-9). Satan's loss does not portend the end of the war; Satan pursues the woman, symbolizing the Church and her offspring (vv.13-17) employing legal prosecution in the heavenly courts (12:10), persecution (12:13), and deception (13:14). The devil strengthens his strategy by forming a religio-political power in his image, a sea beast rising out of the populated lands with seven heads and ten horns (13:1). Next, he raises a second religio-political power from the unpopulated lands that mimics the Lamb at first but then compels people to give homage to the sea beast by performing signs and wonders and threats (13:11-17).

A. Prologue (1:1-8)
- **B.** Promises to the overcomer (1:9-3:22)
  - **C.** God's work for humanity's salvation (4:1-8:1)
    - **D.** God's wrath mixed with mercy (8:2-9:21)
      - **E.** Commissioning John to prophesy (10:1-11:18)
        - **F.** Great Controversy between Christ and Satan (11:19-13:18)
      - **E'.** Church proclaims the end-time gospel (14:1-20)
    - **D'.** God's final wrath unmixed with mercy—7 Bowls (15:1-18:24)
  - **C'.** God's work for humanity's salvation completed (19:1-21:4)
- **B'.** Fulfillment of the promises to the overcomer (21:5-22:5)

A'. Epilogue (22:6-21)

Figure 1. Stefanovic's Structure of Revelation

In Adventist eschatology, Revelation 12 is associated with the period of history that concludes with the time of the end. The 1,260 prophetic days and the three-and-a-half prophetic years of Revelation 12 combined with the 42 prophetic months that the sea beast rules over God's people in Revelation 13:5 point to the 1,260 years when the Holy Roman Empire ruled over the Christian scene. This period is marked as beginning in 538 with Justinian I's efforts to make Byzantium a Christian religious power and the uprooting of the three tribes in Italy that sought to assert their independence and control over the city of Rome. The period ends in 1798 when General Berthier captured Pope Pius VI and exiled him to Napoleon's France when Pius VI refused to renunciate his temporal power.

In the book of Revelation, the time of the end is emphasized in the following section of Revelation, according to Stefanovic's structure. That is, the following section covers 14:1 to 18:24. Chapters 19:1-22:21 depicts the events associated with the day of the Lord when Jesus establishes his

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physical kingdom by returning to earth to deliver his loyal followers, the 1,000 years in heaven, the return to earth to destroy Satan and the wicked, and God creating the new heaven and new earth.

Based on this outline, the focus of this survey in Revelation will be two passages selected from Revelation 14:1 to 18:24. Those passages are Revelation 14:1-13 and Revelation 18:1-4.

Revelation 14:1-13

Appointed by God

Revelation 14:1 depicts the 144,000 standing alongside Jesus, the Lamb of God, having God's seal upon their foreheads. This seal has the Father's name written on it. These individuals are favored and appointed by God. Their description stands out in distinct contrast to what is written two sentences earlier in 13:16-17. The Lamblike Beast has enforced all human beings across the face of the globe to submit to the authority of the Sea Beast. These have a mark of the beast either on their foreheads or right hands (v. 16). The significance of having the mark of the beast in one's forehead is that they are willingly uniting with Satan's agencies—the Sea Beast and Lamblike Beast. Those having the mark of the beast in their right hand signify those who submissively comply with Satan's agencies. In contrast to the seal of God that has the Father's name written on it, the mark of the beast has the name and number of the Sea Beast (vv. 17, 18), exhibited by the prostitute who has the name Babylon inscribed on her forehead (17:5).

There is also significance to the timing of God's sealing of his people. The rhetorical question is asked at the close of the sixth seal, "the great day of [God's] wrath has come and who is able to stand?" (Rev 6:17). Then in the following few verses, John is shown the 144,000 whom God seals before the judgment plagues fall upon the wicked (7:1-4). The significance is that God will have already sealed the ones he knows will be faithful during the great tribulation. In other words, the sealing of God is *predictive*, identifying beforehand those who will be faithful and not succumb to Babylon's persecuting threats. In a sense, the sealing of God is like God's appointment of Joshua as leader of Israel, saying, "Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Josh 1:9). The 144,000, the countless multitude of every nation, tribe, people, and language who have passed through the great tribulation (7:4, 9, 14), are not superheroes who earn their right to honorable status with God. They are pre-appointed by God as those whose hearts God knows and identifies them as loyal partners in His mission and kingdom.

The implication for all leaders and end-time leaders in this passage is that God is the one who appoints and calls his leaders. End-time leaders are not self-appointed or motivated by recognition. They are motivated by their identity in God's estimation of them.

David Benner discusses the various ways Christians answer the question, "What would you identify as the most important thing for your existence and well-being?" They suggest finding God, knowing or loving God, serving God, and so forth (2015:21). Notice that in each of these, the one speaking only mentions God but the one doing all the action is the one speaking—self. Quite commonly, one's perception is based on the "childhood discovery that we can *secure love* by presenting ourselves in the most flattering light" (55, emphasis mine). The sealing of the 144,000 implies that end-time leaders will have a self-identity that Christ defines. Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, in their bestseller, *Lead Like Jesus*, write, "The persistent barrier to leading like Jesus is a heart motivated by self-interest" (2005:39). Only when a leader recognizes that God has made one what they are can they forget themselves and become good stewards, focusing on what God is calling them to do (43).

Exclusive Intimacy with God

In Revelation 14:4, 5, the text identifies the characteristics of God's people. First, the text states that they are virgins "not defiled with women." This indicates their moral purity and, more importantly, it symbolizes their undivided loyalty to Jesus Christ. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 11:2, "For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." The 144,000 are people who remember their betrothed. They remember their first love, unlike the Ephesians in Revelation 2:4, who had forgotten their first love.

This second implication for leadership is that leaders operate from undivided loyalty to Jesus and his authority over them. The most extraordinary duplicity of a Christian leader is the struggle to allow God to remain on the throne of one's will and not mounting one's own throne.

Blanchard and Hodges write about the struggle with self in one's leadership. They use the acronym EGO to describe both the negative and positive role of self in leadership. The negative EGO is "Edging God Out," while the positive EGO is "Exalting God Only" (2005:42). By promoting self, one forms the most insidious and persistent of all idolatries.

Knowledge of God's Voice

Verse 4 continues by stating that the 144,000 "follow the Lamb wherever He goes." When the rich young ruler asked what good thing he could do to have eternal life, Jesus invited him to keep the commandments which led the self-confident young man to say he had already done so. In order to open the man's eyes to his self-reality, Jesus then instructed him to sell his riches, distribute the proceeds to those in need, and follow him. In response, the man sorrowfully retreats from Jesus' presence. The principle at work is that true righteousness is being an obedient follower of Jesus Christ and investing in those things that matter most to the Master.

Another truth associated with the concept of following Jesus is in John 10. Jesus explains that Satan is a thief who seeks to destroy human beings, but Jesus is a shepherd who offers an abundant life (v. 10). Then in verse 27, Jesus says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow me." The Psalmist writes,

> He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today, if you will *hear* His voice: 'Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, as in the day of trial in the wilderness, when your fathers tested Me; they tried Me though they saw My work. For forty years, I was grieved with that generation, and said, "It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they do not know My ways." (Ps 95:7-10)

While God and his angels have spoken in audible tones or through visions, he does not only rely on these means to communicate with us. God can impress our hearts. The prophet Isaiah relays God's promise to lead his people. "Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it,' whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left" (Isa 30:21). However, lest one become unbalanced, one must be careful. John writes, "Do not believe every spirit, but tests the spirits, whether they are of God" (1 John 4:1). Paul says, "do not despise the prophets; test all things" (1 Thess 5:20-21). Jesus said, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me" (John 5:39), and Luke records an example of the people who feared God in Berea, "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore, many of them believed" (Acts 17:11-12a).

Where does the Lamb lead the 144,000? The answer to this question can be many. The leading will be to follow our Lord into all truth (John 16:12-13a) and follow our Master into mission to find lost sheep (Luke 15:1-7).

One must receive the promptings of the Holy Spirit willingly, with a desire to know God's will, yet with cautiousness and reliance on Scripture to ascertain whether the message is from God or not.

The third implication for leadership is a leader's connection with God, resulting in a passionate interest in listening for God's guidance in daily matters. Following the Lamb is not a one-off encounter related to one's pivotal conversion story but should be an ongoing experience in life.

> Some Christians speak of a personal encounter with Jesus as if this were a one-time matter—something that happens at conversion. This is a tragic confusion of an introduction and relationship. A first encounter is just that—a first encounter. God longs for us to experience intimate knowledge that comes through an ongoing relationship. (Benner 2015:35)

Frank Buchman, a Lutheran clergyman and native of Allentown, Pennsylvania (1878-1961), was a charismatic Christian who influenced many through a Bible study group in England called the Oxford Group. He taught that God desires to speak directly to each person's heart, and he modeled a life where people saw the evidence of a man whom God led. Buchman described his relationship with God by simply calling it a relationship of "Speaker and listener." He said, "I came to know the Holy Spirit as the light, guide, teacher, and power. What I am able to do, I do through the power that comes in the early hours of morning quiet" (in Lean1988:171). And yet, "Buchman was aware that people who tried to listen to God needed safeguards" because humans have "an infinite capacity for self-deception." Some even try to associate "their will as synonymous with God's." Therefore Buchman offered six tests against self-deception: (1) willingness to obey, without self-interested editing; (2) watch for intervening circumstances that altered the circumstances which make the presumed instruction from God irrelevant; (3) compare the thought to the highest moral standards—particularly the so-called "absolutes"—honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love; (4) harmony with the teachings of Scripture; (5) harmony with advice from godly friends who were also conscientiously following God's guidance; and (6) the experience and teaching of the Church (76).

End-time leaders will not be satisfied with merely God's leading into propositional truth of doctrines and fundamental beliefs, but also into an experience of absolute willingness to have God's will done in their lives even as it is done in heaven (Matt 6:10).

Saved for Spiritual Leadership

The last characteristic of the 144,000 found in verse 4 is that these are "redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb." The idea of firstfruits suggests two things. On the one hand, it suggests the 144,000 are the profits of the capital investment God has made by giving his Son to die on their behalf. On the other hand, sacrificial laws stipulated that the male firstfruits in each family were to be redeemed from the priest as a sign of God's ownership and remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt and the tenth plague (Exod 13:13-16; Num 18:16). In addition, the firstborn male served as the primary heir and spiritual leader. The famous conflicts between Jacob and Esau and the succession of kings demonstrate these facts.

The significance of the 144,000 being the firstfruits is that they are to play a sacred role of leadership in the time of the end. Furthermore, the 144,000 are not spiritual superheroes but the entire community of believers who have been redeemed by Jesus and are faithful to him. Therefore, although the Seventh-day Adventist Church has tens of thousands of organizations and many more elected and appointed leaders, every member is a leader. They are all kings and priests, a royal priesthood (Rev 1:6; 1 Pet 2:9).

The fourth leadership implication is that leaders empower those around them because they know that all believers are spiritual leaders. Many mistake leadership as the opportunity to dictate to others what they will do. However, a leader who dictates to others attempts to adopt the prerogative of God. Another mistake is when followers of God believe that elected and appointed leaders who are paid to do God's work are the ones who should do the work of mission and ministry and not themselves. The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers corrects this perspective. The biblical concept of leadership is that all of the redeemed are now leaders. Russell Burrill writes, "In the New Testament, the clergy were lay people who devoted full time to directing gospel work. The laity was seen as the performers of ministry and the clergy as the trainers and equippers of ministry. However, as part of the laity, the clergy also performed ministry" (1993:30). Who are the laity? The Greek word is *ho laos*, which means "the people" and is used in the New Testament to refer to "the people of God" (33). Since ordained and licensed ministers are also the people of God, they should also be called laity.

Integrity and Self-Awareness

Revelation 14:5 states that the 144,000 have no deception in their mouths. Deception is an eschatological theme in Scripture. In Revelation 12 and 13, we find that Satan first is our accuser attempting to use legal arguments to prevent God from saving us (12:10). When Jesus won the legal battle with Satan on the cross, Satan switched tactics and persecuted those who follow God (v. 13). Finally, in the last days, Satan seeks to deceive the earth's inhabitants to prevent them from discovering the truth about God and his authority (13:14; 2 Thess 2:9-12).

It is the habit of Satan and among corrupt leaders to deceive those they seek to influence for personal gain. God's leaders maintain their integrity even if it disadvantages them. One of the curses of having experience, wisdom, and a leadership position is that human beings grow self-deceived to see themselves as wiser than they are. They begin resisting council, help, and correction. This is not only true in practical matters but also in spiritual. 1 John 1:8 warns, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The epistle to the Hebrews states, "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (3:12-13). How often are fellow pilgrims of the faith able to share a concern with a brother or sister and not fall into conflict? It is rare to have a congregation whose members enjoy the freedom of openness and mutual vulnerability that allows for encouraging and instructing each other in particular matters. When one forgets that they are sinners in remission—people who are still growing in God's grace—they can become blinded by self-deception. The 144,000 recognize that their righteousness is not their own but from their Redeemer. Without Jesus, their righteousness is as filthy rags (Isa 64:6).

The implication for leadership is that godly leaders have integrity in identifying and communicating truth and self-awareness, recognizing their need for growth and accepting honest feedback from others.

Paul Hill writes about the importance of honesty and having "technical truth," which he identifies as "what is *really* happening, not what we had planned or what we hope or wish was happening." (2017:63). Leadership in the last days requires the ability to speak honstly in all contexts and this requires courage. Later Hill writes poignantly about the type of self-awareness that leaders and leadership teams need. He suggests that self-aware leaders will be able to say, "We're not as unique as we think we are. . . . We're not as good as we think we are. . . . We can learn from others and continuously improve" (211).

Blanchard and Hodges suggest that "self-serving leaders spend most of their time protecting or promoting the things in which they have invested their self-worth and security, such as their public image, their reputation, their competitive performance, their position, their possessions, or their personal fulfillment in their intimate relationships" (2005:44). Protecting oneself is an outgrowth of fear. Promoting oneself is the result of pride. A leader who is grounded in God and who receives constructive criticism may still feel hurt at times, but they will respond courageously and in humility mingle with healthy confidence (66).

Success as Transformation

The next characteristic of the 144,000 is "they are without fault before the throne" (v. 5b). Through their association with Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their faith (Heb 12:2), their robes are purified by Jesus' blood (Rev 7:14). They are transformed as a people with only righteous acts (Rev 19:8) who embody James' definition of "pure and undefiled religion," which is "to visit orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (Jas 1:27).

The leadership implication is that leaders are not merely declared righteous and in need of correction; they exhibit a transformation into God's character. Peter Scazzero defines success as "radically doing God's will" (2015:188), which harmonizes with Buchman's precondition for receiving God's direct guidance regarding whichever situation a Christian seeks His direction. Scazzero realized as he began a new emotionally healthy journey with God in 1996 that he "had missed or outright ignored" God's will up to that point in his spirituality. Later, in 2003 and 2004, he began to alter the way he approached planning and decision-making. He wrote a new definition of success for his life, "to become what God had called us to become, and to do what God had called us to do—regardless of where any of that might lead us" (189).

By focusing on being what God wanted him to be and doing what God directed him to do, Scazzero was transformed into someone God could have freedom in leading. How can God fault one in that situation? So often, people associate character perfection or completeness as a position of absolute sinlessness. If that were the definition of spiritual perfection, would it also be true that a dead man is righteous because he is not thinking, speaking, or doing anything evil? Many favor only one definition of sin, "sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4). However, sin is also defined as, "to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin" (Jas 4:17). Paul writes, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything nor he who waters, but God who

gives the increase . . . each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor" (1 Cor 3:6-8). Paul adds, "Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards. . . . Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful" (4:1-2). In other words, Christian success has less to do with the returns on investment and accomplishments and more to do with knowing and obeying God's will. For a sinner to achieve this objective, surely indicates transformation. A sinful person is controlled by the law of sin in one's members and cannot fulfill the law of God in which one delights (Rom 7:19-23). Contrastingly, a Christian leader has offered himself to God as a living sacrifice and now counts success in terms of the transformation and renewing of one's mind according to God's perfect will (Rom 12:1-2).

Sense of Urgency

Revelation 14:6 begins a discussion about the Three Angels' Messages. It is not the purpose of this article to comprehensively discuss the eschatological interpretations of these messages. Instead, the focus will be on the general picture and specific implications for leadership in the end time. These angels, called *aggelos* in Greek, can also be called messengers. The book of Revelation is a book of symbols that needs interpretation. Scholarship has long associated these angels as human messengers. The context suggests that these messengers are the 144,000, and this is their end-time mission mandate.

The first angel is depicted as "flying in the midst is heaven," who has the everlasting gospel for the world, and who is proclaiming "fear God . . . for the hour of His judgment has come" (vv. 6-7). The tone of this message is an urgent one. The angel is noticeable flying in heaven and it has a message to fear God and draw attention to the start of a special event. Peter exhorts people who are longing for Christ's return to "be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God" (2 Pet 3:11-12a). This demonstrates our first leadership implication. End-time leaders must have a sense of urgency, knowing that their time is short.

However, it is important to note that the urgency emphasized is not based on external motivators. It is the urgency exhibited by the prophet Noah. Noah spent 120 years constructing a ship and warning his generation of the coming flood. He worked with urgency even though there were no clouds in the sky. Rather, he sensed the importance of God's instruction and had faith in the certainty of the coming deluge.

External factors that motivate urgency can deceptively distract a leader. A phone can ring during family dinner only to turn out to be a wrong

number. In the church, committees can spend large amounts of time discussing church construction projects, fundraising needs, and personality conflicts. Meanwhile, the mission of God to the unreached is hardly discussed or funded. Leaders can become focused on solving all types of problems that have very little importance in the scope of eternity. However, accomplishing these matters gives the church and its leaders a sense of self-importance by addressing these short-term issues. Stephen Covey, Robert Merrill, and Rebecca Merrill write in *First Things First*, "Anything less than a conscious commitment to the important is an unconscious commitment to the unimportant" (1994:32). And later, "Urgency addiction is a self-destructive behavior that temporarily fills the void created by unmet needs" (35).

The urgency possessed by eschatological leaders will be related to the undeterred focus on the coming of Christ and the mission to proclaim it to the world.

Strategic Focus on Unbelievers

Revelation 14:6 makes it very clear that the end-time mission is to take this message to everyone. This mission is to believers and unbelievers, not only to Western Christians but Asian Buddhists and African Muslims. No people group, language, or class should be left out of God's end-time mission. Why is this important to God?

There are two reasons why God will not rest until all people groups have been reached. Peter writes, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, . . . but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet 3:9). Another reason is found in Genesis 11. When the human family began to rebel after the flood, God confused communication by creating new languages. God's objective was to save people from colluding and self-destructing. However, in the very next chapter, it is recorded that God called Abram, promising that "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen 12:4b). The first message clearly shows that God has not forgotten his promise to the scattered families and people groups around the globe.

Frontier Ventures, founded by the late missiologist Ralph Winter and his wife, Roberta, operates a ministry called the Joshua Project. This ministry tracks and monitors the unreached people groups around the world. They define people groups based on language, culture, religion, geography, or a combination of these (*Joshua Project* 2019b). For example, the Thai Deng people in Laos will be counted as a different people group from the same ethnicity in Vietnam. According to their online database, there are 17,094 people groups globally, and 7,165 of these, 41.9%, are designated as unreached by Protestant missions (*Joshua Project* 2019a).

The General Conference does not keep a record of people groups but does have a list of living languages in which it is operating. According to the Department of Archives, Statistics, and Research's *2019 Annual Statistical Report*, the church publishes in 234 languages, broadcasts in 239 languages, and conducts oral work such as preaching and witnessing in 415 languages. The report states that the 2015 *Ethnologue Languages of the World* identifies 7,097 living languages in the world today. This means that Adventists are only working in 5.8% of these languages (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research [GCASTR] 2019:73, 74). However, the actual picture is better than this because several countries did not submit a report. Only 155 reports out of 212 countries and territories where the Adventist Church operates have submitted reports. The report shows that even of the countries that did report, not all languages were included (67). It appears that the tracking of these types of details is very inadequate, and therefore reports such as these are not reliable.

In 2016, the General Conference Mission Board approved a document from the Global Mission Issues Committee to define people groups and identify the difference between those the Church will consider reached or unreached. In brief, a reached people group has the following four characteristics: (1) there are adequate numbers and resources to effectively witness to the rest of the group without requiring outside assistance; (2) they have the option to worship corporately in their first language or "heart language"; (3) they have Bibles and other key literature in their first language; and (4) they have indigenous church leaders who can witness to the rest of the people group without working through a translator. On the other hand, an unreached people group does not have these features (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Mission Board [GCMB] 2016:3-6).

The Scriptures, particularly the apocalyptic literature, emphasize the importance of proclaiming the message not to all geographical areas of the world but among all cultures, languages, and social classes. This should be a metric tracked by the Church's administrators, statisticians, and missiologists. The implication for spiritual leaders is that they have a strategic focus on all unbelievers.

Clarity of Message

The three messages of God's people in the end time is the everlasting gospel, a call to submit to God's authority, and to recognize that his work of judging the earth has begun. It is an uncompromising warning of the corrupted message and systems of the world's corrupt moral authorities

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and God's plan to destroy them and their followers. These are messages of warning mixed with mercy. The implication is that God's end-time leaders need to proclaim this message with clarity and not seek to alter the message that God would have them communicate, even despite the inherent risks.

Radical Keepers of Sabbath

Revelation 14:12-13 identifies that the end-time people of God keep God's commandments, which includes obeying the ten commandments and keeping the seventh day as a day of sabbath rest. The Sea Beast of Revelation 13 and the Little Horn of Daniel 7 are identified as the same entity that seeks to change "times and law" (Dan 7:25). End-time leaders will be sabbath-keepers.

What is the importance of Sabbath-keeping? Is this merely an arbitrary token that reminds human beings to give homage to their Creator and Savior? Robert Fryling states that "Sabbath keeping is countercultural in our 24/7 world. But it is a practice that weans us from our infantile need for immediate gratification and allows for a deeper contentment of our souls" (2010:41). Scazzero reflects on Sabbath with these words, "Once we stop and rest, we also discover that God is speaking—a lot. There are things he wants to reveal to us that we will never be able to hear, much less attend to, unless we are in a place of rest." Scazzero was "amazed how often God uses Sabbath to deepen in us crucially important truths" and mentions how he had learned on Sabbath that "God is not in a rush" and "God's primary work" for him as a leader "is to trust in Jesus" (2015:164).

Earlier in this article, I discussed the importance of taking time to listen to God's voice. Of course, this is done through meditative reading of Scripture and listening for the still, small voice of God. Sabbath provides this opportunity. And yet, so many Christians who go to church on Saturday and refrain from work and commerce on the holy day fail to rest and fully hear God's voice on the Sabbath. Connecting with God is the purpose of sabbath-ing! Scazzero defines success as "an act of radical obedience to God" (2015:188). In this sense, Sabbath is a microcosm of Christian success because, if obeyed, it proves to be radical obedience.

Takers of Measured Risk

Within a context of freedom and plurality, being a social non-conformist and an advocate for a quaint cause seems plausible. However, the context of taking a stand for God's commands and the truth is in the time of the end. This is a time when it is risky to stand against the tide of human

will. How are the 144,000 able to do this? Their risk-taking is made possible only because they focus on the present task of exalting God in their lives, and they do not have their well-being as their central concern. They have the faith of Jesus. End-time leadership implies that these must also have a self-disinterested, risk-taking spirit focused on God's will. In these end times, legal and social pressures seek to silence the message and stop the 144,000 from completing the mission of God. Courage is required to remain focused on the core purpose for the existence of the Church, which is to complete God's mission. While it may feel scary, to not move forward would be to fail.

Paul Sean Hill and his leadership team at NASA Mission Control recognized that their mission was high risk. In the wake of the space shuttle Columbia breaking up upon re-entry into earth's atmosphere and killing all seven astronauts on board, how could NASA dare risk more lives by sending them up to space?

Hill writes, "Make no mistake; in the control room, it *is* a morality. . . . Real people trust us with their lives in these spacecrafts." Hill then describes that to succeed under these high stakes, Mission Control needed to have "real-time morality," which Hill defines as "unyielding alignment to purpose and deliberately applying the Mission Control trust elements of technical truth, integrity, and courage in all decision-making." Their purpose was to "protect the astronauts, protect the spacecraft, and then accomplish the mission" (2017:78, 79).

The concept Hill calls "technical truth" is an important aspect of risk-taking because it stays grounded in reality. The end-time mission is a life-and-death cause. Making decisions based on guesses, overconfidence, intuition, personal preference, tradition, or hope that it will work are lazy decisions that take an uncalculated risk (65). There may be times when making decisions in this way appears correct because the results feel like they are a success when they are lucky.

God's end-time leaders do not assume that a running translation will be sufficient to bridge the cultural barriers to understanding the gospel. They do not take uncalculated risks, nor do they stoke people's prejudices or ignore the laws of the land. Rather, godly end-time leaders will only take risks after understanding the context and recognizing God's leading. Once they have done this, they will be willing to pay the ultimate price, courageously knowing that this is moral risk-taking.

Revelation 18:1-4

Synergistic Ministry

Revelation 15 and 16 depict God sending out the end-time plagues upon the wicked, while Revelation 17 depicts a prostitute located in the place where God's bride fled—the wilderness. John is shocked by the scene of debauchery and utter violence against God's faithful followers. Revelation 18 describes a fourth angel-messenger who repeats the Three Angels' Messages with these scenes as background. This time the messenger, the Church of God, has "great authority," "the earth [is] illumined with his glory," and "cries mightily with a loud voice" (18:1-2).

What is it that provides this level of power in ministry? The answer is in the book of Acts. First, the believers were united in their care for each other and their desire to follow God (Acts 1:14). Second, the early Christians were given a special gift in the direct outpouring of the Holy Spirit to empower and enable their God-given mission (2:2-4). In Revelation 18:4, there is also a personal invitation, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues" (v. 4). Only the Creator and Savior of this world has a right to claim the faithful followers of God as his own.

As the judgments of God fall upon the wicked, God empowers his church with a final missional push. The ability for end-time leaders to achieve and maintain unity by God's grace is mission essential. Patrick Lencioni points out that leaders who can lead organizations to sustained success place primary importance on the commodity of trust in the leadership team. Trust, he points out, "is marked by an absence of politics, unnecessary anxiety, and wasted energy" but the most damaging are leaders who cannot overcome politics. . . . Politics is the result of unresolved issues . . . and trying to curb politics without addressing issues" (2000:143).

Lencioni describes a healthy team as being able to make decisions quickly, all members have buy-in, hold each other accountable, and fight. By fight, Lencioni means that they "fight about issues, not personalities" (144, 145). End-time leaders will be adept at coming into unity with each other and God, resulting in a greater synergy than the individuals working independently.

Builders of Healthy Community

The question naturally follows: Where does God call his people when he cries, "come out?" The New Testament word for church is *ekklesia*, meaning the ones called out. This is not a geographical coming out but

exiting from social inclusion with Babylon and her daughters. Those who leave are the ones being separated and sanctified by God. These *ekklesiae* are not now in social isolation but are gathering into communities of faith. Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Matt 18:20).

The new communities of faith do not just passively exist in exclusion from Babylon. The community of faith in the end time, like God's faithful in all ages, will be a people who commune together to build up each other. The letter to the Hebrews emphasizes how the community of faith should behave, "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (Heb 10:24, 25). Christian community is not only important; it is essential for holiness and missional synergy. This will be even more true in these last days when the latter rain of the Holy Spirit is poured out.

End-time leaders understand that the biblical community of faith is not simply a respectful gathering of strangers but a place where relationships are based on trust and where interaction between members is vigorous—yes even in their disagreements.

William Ury, the cofounder of Harvard University's Program on Negotiation, writes about the importance of saying no and how to say it positively. Quoting British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Ury writes, "The art of leadership is not saying Yes, it's saying No" (2008:4). And quoting Mahatma Gandhi, Uri writes, "A 'No' uttered from deepest conviction is better and greater than a 'Yes' uttered to please, or what is worse, to avoid trouble" (7). Continuing, Ury notes three mistakes people make: they accommodate others with a Yes when they fear conflict, attack with a No when they are angry, or avoid others by saying nothing at all. Ury's thesis is that people must find a way out of the dilemma by learning how to offer a "positive No." Ury illustrates a positive No with a description of a tree with three parts—roots, a trunk, and branches. Here is how it works. People should always say Yes to their values—the roots. They should always say No to anything that compromises their values—the unbending trunk. Because saying No to compromise is being vocal to the person you are negotiating with, the conversation must return to saying Yes to your relationship with that person—represented by the branches that bend and flex in the wind. End-time leaders will form a trusting community that knows how to negotiate between themselves and thrive. This end-time community can say No to that which compromises their commitments but say Yes to their relationships.

How does this work in real life? For example, the prayer coordinator for Barnston Church has announced a Sabbath of fasting and prayer next month and is requesting everyone's participation. However, the head elder is conflicted because he has planned a special picnic with the Primary Sabbath School class teacher. On this occasion, the elder's next-door neighbor, a non-Christian divorced mother of two primary-aged children, has planned to come to church and go on the picnic. The elder recognizes that mission is a high priority of the church, and his neighbor is coming to church for the first time. He is unwilling to change this first-time opportunity to bring his neighbor's family to church and fellowship with them afterward. He communicates the predicament to the prayer coordinator and negotiates an agreement that the elder will commit to fasting and praying on Friday instead.

End-time leaders do not strive to build communities that are sterile and impersonal. Instead, the communities they seek are diverse and open with each other, supporting the mutual growth and transformation to becoming like Jesus.

Conclusion

This article has explored leadership from the perspective of the time of the end. This is a period of time that heightens the missional urgency of the church before the second coming of Christ. Based on the prophecy of Scripture, the time of the end is today. Revelation 11:19 to 18:24 is the section that deals particularly with the events during this period.

Revelation 14:1-13 and Revelation 18:1-4 speaks directly about the qualities and vocation of the 144,000, the people of God in the time of the end. Thirteen characteristics of eschatological leadership are: (1) appointed by God rather than achieved by people; (2) have exclusive intimacy with God; (3) have a knowledge of God's voice and follow him; (4) saved for spiritual leadership; (5) have integrity and self-awareness; (6) success as transformation; (7) sense of urgency; (8) have a strategic focus on unbelievers; (9) have clarity of message; (10) radically keep the Sabbath; (11) take measured risks; (12); have a synergistic ministry; and (13) are builders of a healthy community.

This unusual framework for developing a theology of eschatological leadership is intended to get missiologists and the wider church thinking. This list is by no means an exhaustive one. Nor could it be said that these leadership qualities only apply to the end of time. The objective of this article is to reflect on the fact that the apocalyptic context offers clues regarding leadership principles that are essential for success in the days leading up to Christ's return.

Peter exhorts, "What manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God" (2 Pet 3:11, 12a). The church of God needs leaders who will keep this vision before the people, empower the people, and model the way.

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ANDREW TOMPKINS

Adventist Use of the Qur'an: An Old Debate

In recent decades, Seventh-day Adventists have had several interactions discussing the use of the Qur'an for mission. Some Adventist ministers and workers have used the Qur'an as a tool to draw people into a discussion of faith and to guide people into an understanding of God that fits with the biblical portrayal. This has not been without controversy, and debate has taken place in formal and informal ways. This issue is often described as though it was a new form of mission Adventists are utilizing on the cutting edge of mission (Diop 2005; Maberly 2006).[1] What this article demonstrates is that there have been Adventists who used the Qur'an in their discussions of faith with Muslims for nearly 100 years, if not more. The debate may feel fresh, but it is not a new debate. This article focuses on several examples from the 1920s through 1963.[2]

Early Examples

From the 1890s to the 1920s, there was a large movement of Muslims in Ethiopia who shifted towards Christianity, primarily through the influence of Aleka Zekarias. Zekarias was a well-educated Muslim who claimed to have had dreams leading him to see Christ in the Qur'an and to read the Bible (WoldeSelassie 2005:59-60). He spent his life demonstrating how the Qur'an and the Bible agreed on many theological points (34, 35). Those who followed him were labeled "Mohammedan Christians" or "new Christians" to differentiate them from their Muslim background and Orthodox Christians around them (35).

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Zekarias, through his study of the Qur'an and Bible, concluded that baptism should be performed through immersion and that Sunday was not a valid day of worship (163). He emphasized the Sabbath and also spoke out against praying through the saints and Mary. At the same time, many Muslim leaders were upset with him and took him to court claiming he was teaching the Qur'an inaccurately (43). He was acquitted on several different occasions and eventually was dragged before the Emperor Menelik II. Menelik also acquitted Zekarias, which put an end to the lawsuits (45-48, 91-92, 100-101).

There were several Christian mission agencies that knew about and interacted with Zekarias, most prominently the Swedish Mission of Asmara in modern day Eritrea. Zekarias never met a Seventh-day Adventist but one of his disciples, Aleka Motbainor, after hearing of Adventists, met some in Addis Ababa in 1920 or 1921 (160, 162). Motbainor was impressed by the Adventist message and shared it with some of the disciples of Zekarias.[3] As a result, a significant number became Adventists. According to interviews with Montbainor, he and others continued to have a high view of the Qur'an and the Arabic language.

Truneh WoldeSelassie, in his history of Seventh-day Adventists in Ethiopia, gives the most complete details of this Adventist connection. While some of the details are difficult to verify, overall, WoldeSelassie provides ample evidence for this history.[4] This is one of the earliest extant examples of a Seventh-day Adventist who used the Qur'an in their faith journey and saw it as a valid source of knowledge about God.

There are a few other intriguing, though obscure, references to Seventh-day Adventists advocating use of the Qur'an in the 1930s. In the December issue of *Ministry* magazine of 1937, J. F. Huenergardt wrote:

> The missionary to the Moslems, by carefully studying the Koran and comparing it with the Bible, will soon discover that many passages in it are similar to passages of Scripture. There are many places in the Koran which refer to the Scriptures. This affords ample opportunity for the missionary worker to prepare his studies on topics familiar to the Moslem mind, and to use passages which are contained in both the Koran and the Bible. The faithful and patient presentation of these in the spirit of kindness and love will not fail to win the heart of the Moslem and arouse his desire for further knowledge. (1937:10)

Huenergardt does not clarify if he knew Muslims personally and followed his own advice. Little is known about Huenergardt beyond the fact that he served as editor for the German magazine *Christlicher Hausfreund*, an Adventist publication that came out of Brookfield, Illinois. It is hard to imagine Huenergardt giving this advice if he had no personal experience

with Muslims. Yet, at the same time, unless it is discovered that he had served as a missionary outside the United States, it is unlikely that he had Muslim contacts in America, as there were very few living in the United States at this time. Nevertheless, Huenergardt, for whatever reason, advocated using passages from the Qur'an that agreed with the Bible as a way to engage with Muslims and try to "win" their hearts.

In 1939, V. E. Toppenberg reported on Zakaria Mulindwa in Uganda becoming an Adventist. Mulindwa grew up in a Muslim home, studied, and became a leading "sheik" in the community. He built a mosque and was known for his ability to teach Islam in the village. Frequently Mulindwa debated with Christians, often defeating them with his arguments. However, through the work of an unnamed colporteur, he was exposed to Adventist literature, which he compared with the Qur'an. Through the process, the article claims that "in the Bible and the Koran he found more and more proofs substantiating what he had read in our books, and having become thoroughly convinced of the importance of the message, he fearlessly began to present the truth to his Mohammedan congregation" (1939:15). Mulindwa found proof for his newfound faith in both the Bible and the Qur'an. I have not been able to find much else on Mulindwa, and thus am unable to comment on whether or not he used the Qur'an in sharing his faith after this point.

These two examples are admittedly obscure. Scant evidence does not allow for detailed speculation regarding the use of the Qur'an by the individuals discussed above. One wonders how these articles were accepted and discussed by readers at the time. Needless to say, the Qur'an, as early as the 1930s, was seen by at least a few Adventists as a valid source to engage with, and their views were deemed worthy of publishing.

Erich Bethmann, who became the foremost expert on Islam among Adventists by the 1950s, advocated "explaining the Koran" to Muslims as an appropriate form of mission work (1947:16). Bethmann did not have much experience directly doing this himself, but he was convinced this was an appropriate and necessary part of mission among Muslims through his time in the Middle East.[5] What this, and the examples above demonstrate, is that some Adventists were acquainted with the Qur'an and regarded it as a source that could be used when interacting with Muslims.

North African Usage

J. Reynaud, a pastor in the Mostaganem Seventh-day Adventist Church, located in present-day Algeria, strongly advocated the use of the Qur'an for mission purposes. He wrote:

> Before we can sow, we must break the ground. This work should be undertaken in humility and without prejudice. We must learn how to lead to the Bible by means of the Koran. For Islam—not as it is practiced by the ignorant masses, but as taught by the Koran—is nearer to the truth than many so-called Christian churches today. A celebrated theologian has defined it as a sect of Christianity. According to the Koran, Christ is living, He is the Creator, He is holy, His birth was supernatural, He was to die and rise again. . . . We must approach the Mohammedan from the viewpoint of the many doctrines which unite us, rather than offending him by denouncing his false beliefs. We must avoid wounding delicate sensibilities. Our work is not to judge but to save. (1953:10, 11)

It is not stated explicitly in the article that Reynaud had used the Qur'an in the way he advises, but he may have tested this in the local context where he lived. He wrote in a tone of certainty that hints this was a tested method. By the time Reynaud wrote the article, he had several years of experience in North Africa, including several public meetings, which had more success among Europeans living in North Africa than among Muslims, which probably led him to rethink his approach (Benitez and Wixwat 2020).

As with the examples found in the previous section, evidence is lacking as to the actual use or impact directly with Muslims. Today there are very few Adventists in this region, and the long-term impact of Adventists has been minimal. Nonetheless, Reynaud, through his experience in the North African context, felt it necessary to advise, in print, the usage of the Qur'an for mission purposes.

Indonesia and Rifai Burhanu'ddin

The most prominent case of an Adventist using the Qur'an for missional purposes is found in Indonesia starting in the 1950s and going into the 1960s. Rifai Burhanu'ddin was a Muslim who became an active Adventist worker among Muslims in Indonesia. Several articles in Adventist periodicals tell of his conversion and describe his work for the church. Other articles record stories of Muslims who became more open to Christ or joined the church as a result of interactions with Burhanu'ddin or his writings.

Burhanu'ddin, through his knowledge of the Qur'an and his experience of sharing it with others, was convinced that much biblical truth could be demonstrated directly from the Qur'an. As a result, he wrote a book in Bahasa Indonesian that is titled *Jesus Christ in the Koran* when translated. The Center for Adventist Research at Andrews University

holds an English translation of this book. The book's publication date is 1955, which predates the first mentions of Burhanu'ddin in extant English Adventist periodicals.[6]

Burhanu'ddin's book was written to share with Muslims. It is somewhat apologetic in tone. It could be argued that the Bible is portrayed so that the reader would believe it was the final arbiter of truth. At the same time, the Qur'an is never denigrated and is quoted from and put into dialogue with the Bible so that it comes across as a valid source of knowledge and information about God.[7] It is difficult to ascertain his exact view on the relationship between the Bible and the Qur'an (1955). What can be deduced is that Burhanu'ddin was sharing about God with Muslims using the Bible and the Qur'an, and this drew some Muslims to reconsider their approach to faith and, in a few cases, they joined the Adventist Church.

The first reference to Burhanu'ddin in an English periodical is an article written by Burhanu'ddin for the *Far Eastern Division Outlook* in 1958.[8] Burhanu'ddin mentions that he and his wife had experienced "much abuse and endured much jesting" since being baptized into the Adventist Church (1958:14). This experience, he claims, led him to write the book *Isa Didalam Al Qur'an*. The impression given here is that Burhanu'ddin felt he and his wife had experienced undue hardship due to the way Muslims and Adventists understood each other. He claimed that after writing and sharing the book, it has "been easier for me to save souls" (1958:15). In the article, Burhanu'ddin goes on to relay that colporteurs were selling his book and that he was studying with "20 students of the Islam faith" (1958:15). Burhanu'ddin also states that on February 27, 1958, he officially resigned from his post as a government schoolteacher to work full time for the Adventist Church (1958). This means, for several years, Burhanu'ddin was working for the government of Indonesia and sharing his faith at the same time. One wonders how many contacts and how much influence he left behind by leaving his post with the government to work for the education department of the Church.

Interdivision Islamic Institute 1963

The wider Adventist world came to know about Burhanu'ddin, and he was invited to be a presenter at the Interdivision Islamic Institute held in Beirut, Lebanon, from September 6-19, 1963. This was one of the earliest instances when several church leaders gathered to discuss Adventist work among Muslims. Within this interaction, there was an extended debate on the appropriateness of using the Qur'an as a mission method. The discussion stemmed primarily from two presentations that Burhanu'ddin gave entitled "The Bible in Muslim Thought," and "Christ in Muslim Thought."

Burhanu'ddin explained that he was able to demonstrate the reality of the Holy Spirit from the Qur'an and that the purpose of the Qur'an was to confirm the Bible (Burhanu'ddin 1963:51-52). These ideas are found in his first presentation; however, it was his second presentation that went even further into Qur'an usage. Burhanu'ddin maintained that there were several ideas he was able to show Muslims from the Qur'an, including the Only Begotten Son of God, the Trinity, how Jesus is Lord and God, Jesus dying for sinners, and the Second Coming (53-57).

As a result, an entire session of the conference was devoted to questions and answers on the use of the Qur'an. Burhanu'ddin was not the only participant to state that they used the Qur'an according to the typed-up report of the session. Others, such as Esaie Pellicer, also answered questions on how they used the Qur'an. However, Pellicer's answers reveal that his use of the Qur'an was more simplistic and done with the desire of immediately transition from the Qur'an to the Old Testament (1963:162). Pellicer agreed with Burhanu'ddin that the best approach to Muslims was through the Qur'an, but Salim Elias, another participant, is recorded as disagreeing with both of them. When asked why he was opposed, Elias claimed that the Qur'an was too difficult to understand and that Muslims too easily explained contradictions by asserting abrogation. Pellicer answered this challenge by claiming that a good Muslim would only accept what was in the Qur'an, and so it was logical to start from there. Pellicer made sure to add that the Bible was introduced "as soon as possible" (1963:163).

There was disagreement among the participants, though the extent is hard to gauge, as the recording of the meeting is a summary that lacks detail. The typed record does state, in regards to the use of the Qur'an that "it was the consensus of opinion that the worker was to use the method he considered best in his area" (1963:164). While this does not appear to have been voted it indicates that there was some sense of agreement on the need for flexibility.

The final section of the typed report on this session is a copy of a small-translated booklet provided by Burhanu'ddin. He had written it for sharing with "fanatical" Muslims in Indonesian villages. He desired that the booklet be printed outside of Indonesia as he did not believe he would be allowed to print it inside Indonesia. The booklet contained several *surahs* from the Qur'an, copied to demonstrate the similarity between the message of the Qur'an passages chosen with the Bible (1963:164-166). Further research is needed to find out whether this booklet was printed and distributed as hoped.

Conclusion

This article does not clarify whether or not the use of the Qur'an is appropriate or inappropriate for mission engagement. Rather, it is meant to demonstrate that usage of the Qur'an has been a part of some Adventist's engagement with Islam for decades. This is much earlier than many assume. Not only was it used, but some Adventists strongly advocated its use after experiencing positive interactions through qur'anic use among Muslims in the field. This usage led to a significant discussion of the issue among several prominent church leaders in 1963 in Beirut, Lebanon. At this meeting, a consensus was agreed upon to use what methods they felt best within their ministry contexts. More research is needed to evaluate and uncover more on this topic that has repeatedly come to the forefront in Adventist discussions on Islam.

Endnotes

[1]Diop does not demonstrate any knowledge of the earlier Adventist discussions on the use of the Qur'an in his chapter in *Faith Development in Context,* which was originally a presentation at a major conference on Adventists mission among Muslims which took place at Andrews University. He attempts to come at the discussion as though this is new to Adventists when it had been discussed for decades, as this article demonstrates. Clifton Maberly presented a paper for the General Conference Issues Committee that was subsequently published in 2006 on the Adventist use of non-Christian Scriptures. He also does not demonstrate any knowledge of the prior Adventist discussions on Qur'an usage.

[2]There are plenty of examples of Adventists discussing and using the Qur'an after 1963. This article focuses on the earlier period to demonstrate how old the discussion actually is.

[3]At this point Zekarias had passed away.

[4]WoldeSelassie's sources include interviews of key pastors who were alive in the 1920s in Ethiopia, including Motbainor. Motbainor also gave WoldeSelassie access to several written works of Zekarias that were written in Arabic and translated into Amharic (2005:35). Some of those are then translated into English by WoldeSelassie and included in his book on the history of Seventh-day Adventists in Ethiopia (118-155). Beyond these sources he includes several non-Adventist witnesses along with references to journal articles that discussed the movement surrounding Zekarias. See Iwarsson 1924; Crummey 1972. Crummey's article contains a number of valuable references in his footnotes and also Crummey briefly mentions the Adventist connection (66).

[5]In Bethmann's groundbreaking book *Bridge to Islam*, published in 1950, he does not explicitly discuss using the Qur'an in mission. However, he demonstrates an in-depth working knowledge of the Qur'an and compares Qur'anic teachings with the Bible. For more on Bethmann, see Tompkins 2017: 111-114.

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[6]Further research in periodicals written in Indonesian might uncover earlier references to Burhanu'ddin. Considering the English version of the book was probably translated sometime after the original was written in Indonesia, it is safe to assume that Burhanu'ddin had written the book even earlier than 1955.

[7]One of the more fascinating chapters in the book is on whether or not Muhammad could be considered a true prophet of God. The chapter implies that Muhammad is a true prophet using a conceptual theological framework incorporating the pouring out of the Holy Spirit spoken of by Jesus in the book of John. Burhanu'ddin reasons that since the Spirit was poured out on many people, then it is plausible the Spirit was poured out on Muhammad and that his teachings come from God.

[8]The author's name listed for this article is spelled Rifai Boerhanoe'ddin. In most subsequent references and the previous reference found in the 1955 book, the spelling is Burhanu'ddin. There is no doubt these names are the same person. I have chosen to use the latter spelling in this article.

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Worship Contextualization in Seventh-day Adventist Ethnic Congregations in São Paulo

The globalized and dynamic world of constant change and transformation, wide access to information, international migratory movements, and rapid technological development have led to the breakdown of the barriers of geographical distance, language, time zones, and walls separating ethnic groups, and no longer necessarily represent obstacles to contact, relationships, and communication between very different people group (Doss 2018:234-236). People for whom missionaries were previously sent to, can now be neighbors, co-workers, and partners. Large urban centers are especially contexts of cultural plurality both due to the arrival of a variety of immigrant ethnic groups and because of the development of different worldviews (Gonçalves 2017).

In Latin America, Brazil is one of the countries that receives the largest number of immigrants. Both the city and the state of São Paulo have emerged as the areas of greatest concentration of these ethnic immigrant groups. The city of São Paulo is a clear example of ethnic and cultural plurality where in one neighborhood, it is possible to notice the overlap of different immigrant groups (Porta 2004:5).

How can Christians communicate the gospel in a context of overlapping diverse cultures and ethnic groups? Contextualizing the gospel in a critical and intentional way for each group within this context is the only solution in terms of reach, impact, effectiveness, and continuity (Dias 2015:176). This exposure to various immigrant groups results in the challenge of contextualizing the gospel message for each community in terms of what makes sense to them and in ways that help them accept the Good News (Bauer 2005; Paulien 2018:10). Especially in large urban centers, the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church as a worldwide Christian

denomination also faces the challenge of contextualization to the many ethnic immigrant groups where it is already present and where it still intends to enter (ASSOCIAÇÃO GERAL 2012:16-18; General Conference 2003:para. 31-46; 2009: para. 15; Souza 2011: 685-687).

In addressing this growing missiological challenge, aiming at the effective evangelization of prominent and growing unreached audiences, the Adventist Church in South America has developed projects that contextualize the gospel for immigrant groups. The city of São Paulo stands out from other cities due to the concentration of most of these projects. The Adventist Church has contextual projects in the Hispanic, Haitian, Arab, Jewish, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese communities.

This article offers an example of Adventist ethnic churches in São Paulo. Next, it analyzes the contextualization of worship among those groups. Finally, it explores contextualization possibilities in the face of the growing missionary challenges in these urban contexts of cultural plurality. The data was collected in three ways: (1) exchange of e-mails with current pastors of nine contextual projects; (2) ethnographic observations in two of the contextual projects (the Korean church and the Chinese Adventist community of São Paulo) at the time of an internship in 2020; and (3) bibliographic review.

The analysis and evaluation of the projects was based on the Institute of World Mission's description of contextualized worship, which includes six aspects: architecture, music, prayer models, teaching initiatives, ways to show reverence, and types of meetings. Four more aspects were also added—language, pastor, objects for rites, and public (former religion), which were considered as equally relevant and important for the research.

Contextual Projects for Immigrants in São Paulo

Both the history of the city of São Paulo and the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this massive urban center has depended on an intimate relationship with immigrants who have chosen to settle in this metropolis. The migratory wave that took place at the turn of the 20th century was driven by the need for a larger labor force, especially for coffee plantations that no longer used slaves to do the work (Mendes 2015:50). However, many of the foreigners—those who had specialized skills and those who did not adapt to the routine or the work on the farms—sought to settle in São Paulo.

At the turn of the century, a good portion of the city's population was represented by immigrants (Mendes 2015:38). Michael Hall (2004:121) points out that as early as 1893, foreigners accounted for 54.6% of the population of São Paulo, which was the capital of Brazil. Even after a few

years of low immigration, in 1920, the percentage of foreigners among the population of the metropolis still reached 35%, similar to New York City in the same time period. The data also showed that “among the population over fifteen years [of age], foreigners in the city (188,045) were more numerous than Brazilians (186,077).” In 1934, even when the percentage of the immigrant population came to represent 28% of the total population of the city of São Paulo, practically two thirds of the population of São Paulo were foreigners or children of foreigners. During those years, the large immigrant population residing in São Paulo included Italians, Portuguese, Spanish, Germans, Hungarians, Syrian-Lebanese, French, Russians, Japanese, Jews, Armenians, Poles, Turks, British, Scandinavians, and Americans (Hall 2004:121; Mendes 2005:42; Schmidt 1980:85).

Immigration to the city of São Paulo gradually declined because of two world wars and the arrival of the political Vargas Era, characterized by several restrictive measures for foreigners. In the meantime, immigration gave way to migration and the formation of a new working class in the metropolis. At the end of the 1940s, “immigrants totaled 627,433, while migrants totaled 1,080,488” (Mendes 2005:44).

Additional groups arrived in the city from the second half of the 20th century and at the beginning of the 21st century. Representing the Observatory of International Migrations (OBMigra), Cavalcanti, Oliveira, Macêdo, and Pereda (2019:3-5) present a legal record of 492,700 new long-term immigrants (with more than a one-year stay) between 2011 and 2018. Among these new immigrants and nationalities are Haitians, Bolivians, Venezuelans, Colombians, Argentines, Chinese, Portuguese, and Peruvians. The Haitian community stands out from the other ones by representing 21.5% of that total. São Paulo received 41.2% of these almost half a million new immigrants and the state of São Paulo emerged as the number one choice of foreigners. It also stood out for the increased absorption of “immigrant labor in 2018.”

During the same period of transition from the 19th to the 20th century, the Adventist Church began to enter the state and city of São Paulo, aware that both were growing exponentially due to the advance of their industries and the arrival of large numbers of immigrants from various parts of the world. The Adventist Church followed the traditional evangelistic approaches as used throughout Brazilian territory and focused primarily on British and German immigrants, with whom there was more cultural and linguistic proximity, but also on those who spoke Portuguese (Marcelino 2016:40; Mendes 2005:37-39; Vieira 1995:137). Observing the arrival of several immigrant groups and the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in São Paulo during that period, Haller Schünemann concludes “that the large presence of immigrants in the city was a favorable factor for the growth of the SDA church” (2009:157-160).

A unique aspect of the work of the Church in São Paulo was the "return to mission among new immigrants" in the second half of the 20th century (Mendes 2005:37). In 1959, the first of many new ventures emerged—the first Japanese Adventist community in São Paulo was established. In the late 1960s, the core of the Korean Adventist community was formed. Near the end of the 1990s, ethnic projects were implemented with the Arab and Jewish communities. At the turn of the millennium, the activities that led to the emergence of the city's first Hispanic Adventist church were initiated (Mendes 2005:47-48). Addressing the factors that led to the organization of these projects, Mendes (2015:51) points to "linguistic-cultural need" and "interreligious dialogue" as the two fundamental reasons for the development of those ethnic projects.

Japanese Community

Based on the records of members of the previous São Paulo Conference, Mendes (2015:46-47) comments that, from 1925, the year of the first baptism of a Japanese convert to Adventism, until 1964, there were a total of 25 Japanese who became members. The former Brazilian Adventist College (CAB) played a central role in bringing this group to Christ (Hosokawa and Schünemann 2008:111-116).

Because of that missionary work, Pastor Kiyotaka Shirai started the first Japanese Adventist community in São Paulo in 1959. The group met "on the premises that the German Adventist community used in the Central São Paulo Church, in the Liberdade neighborhood" (Mendes 2015:47). Around the same time, a group of Korean Adventists gathered at the Pinheiros Adventist Church.

In 1965, the first Japanese Adventist community in Brazil was officially organized (Mendes 2015:47). Pastor Tossaku Kanada, who had also accepted the Adventist faith as a CAB student, was the leader. When the church was organized in 1970, there were sixty Japanese converts. In 1981, the first church building was built, in the south of São Paulo, at a location conveniently close to a significant portion of its 80 members (Hosokawa and Schünemann 2008:118).

A second initiative in the Liberdade neighborhood, in the 1980s, developed by Japanese Adventist pastor Kojiro Matsumani, gave birth to a second congregation (119). Located in the Mirandópolis neighborhood, this new community was named *Nipo Kibo No Niwa* [Garden of Hope] Seventh-day Adventist Church. It has an intriguing architecture, a Japanese garden, and a small lake at the entrance to the church (Mendes 2015:70).

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Korean Community

In the 1960s, the first Koreans began to arrive in São Paulo. Mendes (2015:47) and Kiwao Mori (1984:13) point out that because some of them were already Adventists when they arrived in the city, they sought out the Pinheiros Adventist Church. After a few years, in the early 1970s, the first core group of Korean Adventists in São Paulo emerged. Eventually they established a Korean church in the Aclimação neighborhood, which was a preferred location by Korean immigrants (Truzzi 2001:150, 152).

Shortly thereafter, a second Korean church was established in the Bom Retiro neighborhood, where many Korean immigrants worked in the clothing industry (Mendes 2015:88). In recent decades, this second Korean church has divided, giving rise to two other Korean churches, both located in the same neighborhood. In 2012, the new church building of the Newstart Korean Church was dedicated and in 2018, the new church building of the Korean Adventist Church of Brazil was inaugurated.

In general, the liturgy observed at Sabbath worship services at the Korean churches in Brazil follows a model very similar to that adopted by most traditional Adventist churches. Obviously, the biggest difference is the use of the Korean language, including prayers, songs from the Korean hymnal, and the sermon. On the first Sabbath of the month, the sermon is translated into Portuguese in order to connect with Brazilians who are interested in the community. A greater linguistic variety is observed in the Sabbath School. For example, the youth class makes use of Portuguese and values interaction and dialog during the study. Also noteworthy is the architectural aspect that includes the use of various arrangements with oriental plants, especially bamboo (Mendes 2015:70).

Jewish Community

In 1978, Benoni de Oliveira founded the São Paulo Institute of Jewish Heritage. Twenty years later, in 1998, the first Adventist Jewish community was organized in Sao Paulo, and named "*Beth B'nei Tsion* (BBT), which means House of the Sons of Zion" (Mendes 2015:52). Adopting this name implied following a methodology of dialogue between Adventists and Jews as conceived by pastor Itzhak Henry Poseck (Borges 1999:16-17). With the support of the local conference, the effort of lay members, and the leadership of pastor Reinaldo Siqueira, the new Adventist contextual initiative was implemented.

Currently, the Adventist Synagogue of São Paulo has its own building located in the Pacaembu neighborhood. On the outside, the building is modern and inviting. Especially on Fridays and Saturdays, its services

follow Jewish customs. At sunset on Friday, the *Qabalat Shabbat* [Sabbath reception] is celebrated through the singing of psalms and hymns in Hebrew and Portuguese (Mendes 2015:54-55). The liturgy, created for moments of sabbatical worship, combines Jewish elements with aspects found in the New Testament and other worship styles used in traditional Adventist churches. During the ceremonies and moments of prayer, especially *Ma Tovu,* the *Shema,* the whole congregation reads excerpts from the book of Deuteronomy, and *Amidá,* when everyone participates in a silent prayer. After the prayer, a master of ceremony leads the community in reading passages from the New Testament, comparing them with parts of the *Torah* (books of the Pentateuch) and *Haftará* (books of the Prophets), "in order to present the messianic characteristics of Jesus, emphasizing the Jewish customs of Jesus and the gospels." Especially during the Sabbath services, an important part of its liturgy involves the congregational in the reading of *Parashá* (weekly part of the Pentateuch) through a manuscript scroll that is passed through the members. The sermon that characterizes the main preaching is performed in Portuguese. Another liturgical aspect adopted by the Jewish community refers to allowing men and women to sit together and for women to actively participate in the various parts of the worship service (Nunes 2009:44, 45).

There are other interesting features that make up several unique elements of the liturgy of this contextual church. At the end of each service, the congregation is invited to participate in the *Kidush,* which is a gathering that involves the sharing of food by all the attendees. The community also includes special celebrations for the New Year and for the feasts of the Jewish calendar—Easter, Pentecost, Atonement, and Tabernacles (Mendes 2015:55). The guiding principle behind this ethnic enterprise has been "to build a respectful and meaningful dialogue with the Jewish community" (Nunes 2009:47), especially the academic Jewish community of São Paulo.

Arab Community

The Prayer House of the Open Arab Community in São Paulo opened in 2000 as an initiative inspired by the missionary activity in the Jewish community in previous years. At first, a Brazilian Adventist pastor of Arab descent, Assad Bechara, sponsored the project. After returning from a period of study in Egypt, which was the result of an investment by the Adventist organization in his specialization, pastor Bechara began this project with a focus on the Islamic community (Mendes 2015:56).

During worship services, there is an emphasis on reverence and silence, so that the environment encourages attention and reflection on what is being offered. The community requests that all women wear head scarves;

the songs and prayers are in Arabic; prayers also involve the use of rugs; and everyone involved in the worship service removes their shoes as a sign of respect.

Everyone can participate in the ablutions of feet and forearms. After that, the attendee recite some verses of the Koran related to the biblical theme for the day. The sermon is in Portuguese.

In addition, it is interesting to note that the architectural setting for this project uses a large space in an "oriental tent format," which includes typical landscaping, "abundant use of tapestry," Islamic artistic elements, and the absence of Western religious symbolism (Mendes 2015:70).

John Travis (1998:407-408) developed a classification tool for six possible types of Christian communities within a Muslim context. Mendes (2015:58) classifies the Open Arab Community in São Paulo as a Type C-4, "because it uses the Arabic language in part of its worship service, uses typical elements such as music and clothing, employs Islamic terms . . . and await the return of *Isa al Masih* [Jesus the Messiah]."

Hispanic Community

Since 2000 there has been a gradual increase among Hispanics to meet for religious activities, such as Sabbath School, community meals, youth services, and small-group Bible studies, with the first Hispanic-speaking Adventist church in São Paulo officially organized in 2004 (Mendes 2015:59-61). Initially, the initiative was conceived and implemented by a group of Bolivians. However, as others became aware of the projects and activities carried out in Spanish, Peruvians, Paraguayans, Argentines, and Chileans joined. The church moved its location to a region where there is a concentration of both Latino immigrant residences and companies. Currently, this church is the main congregation in a pastoral district.

In addition to employing the Spanish language in their liturgies, these Adventist Hispanic communities include music and other elements within their worship services that are typical of the members' home churches. According to their current pastor, it is customary for these communities to say "amen" only at the end of prayers, to praise with ethnic musical instruments, especially the Andeans, such as *charango*, *quena*, and *zampoña*, and decorate the churches with flags representing their countries of origin. These subtle adaptations seem to have helped the immigrants strengthen their "sense of belonging to the community" and "rebuild their religious space and their Adventist identity" (Mendes 2015:59-60).

Haitian Community

The large Haitian migratory inflow to many regions of Brazil between 2010 and 2015 produced an Adventist group in the metropolis of São Paulo (ENTRADA migrantes e refugiados, 2018:1-8). In 2010, the Central Paulistana Seventh-day Adventist Church provided a space for the Haitian community to start holding its own Sabbath School class in French. Due to the growth of the community, in 2014, Sabbath worship in Creole began to be held in the same space, contributing to the formation of the group's identity and the creation of missionary strategies and social action among Haitians (Marcelino 2016:42, 72, 76-87). In 2015, the Haitian community had 90 members. However, due to the Brazilian economic crisis, in 2016, many of these members migrated to other countries, leaving the group with around 50 members (Marcelino 2016:55). Currently, the Haitian community still holds company status and does not have a Haitian pastor of their own who is familiar with their language and culture (Marcelino 2016:86).

In the Haitian Adventist community, worship services are performed in two distinct languages, French and Haitian Creole, for Sabbath school and divine worship, respectively. As the country's "high language," French is not accessible to the entire Haitian population, including a significant portion of Adventist community members in São Paulo. However, the use of French seems to convey "the image of a group with a 'high status'" (Marcelino 2016:78). On the other hand, Haitian Creole is accessible to the entire population, the reason for the internal decision to do the divine worship in Creole.

Their liturgy follows this order: "a call to worship, Bible reading, songs, prayer, sermon, hymn, and final prayer" (84). The initial prayer is preceded by a short invocation sung while kneeling. Congregational singing is based on the Adventist French hymnal, but special music is alternated between Creole, Portuguese, and, occasionally English. The liturgy of worship for this ethnic project aims at satisfying the group's need to "continue their religious practices" experienced in their homeland, and to "express this religiosity" with their countrymen (2016:74).

Chinese Community

The most recent ethnic project implemented in the city of São Paulo seeks to reach Chinese immigrants. The Chinese Adventist Community of São Paulo began its official activities in early 2020, with the arrival of Chinese Adventist pastor Wang Huajian and his wife Rong Liao. Because this project has just begun to be implemented, its activities are developed

on the premises of the Liberdade Adventist School and Central Paulistana Seventh-day Adventist Church. The newly formed ethnic Adventist community was integrated into an existing project with a Pathfinder Club led by Tseng Kan, which reaches out to Asian children who are present in both the Adventist school and the Liberdade neighborhood. The Pathfinder Club has helped pave the way for this contextual outreach by building a sense of community with the children and connecting them with Sabbath activities.

Adventist initiatives in previous years for the Chinese experienced little success. Those who were aware of the previous attempts noted that they lacked a contextual character and leadership that understood the Chinese language and culture. They failed to use approaches tailored to the needs of the local Chinese people.

The worship service liturgy at the Chinese Adventist Community uses both Mandarin and Portuguese. Despite the different levels, most members are familiar with both languages. Usually, the first elements of the divine service are performed in Mandarin. This includes prayers, Bible readings, announcements, and the sermon. The Sabbath School takes place in Portuguese and involves a special music and the study of Bible stories.

Both the sermon and the stories studied in Sabbath School focus on young people by using language appropriate for this audience, aiming to increase a desire to study more about the Bible, and building meaningful relationships with Jesus. For evangelistic purposes, Sabbath School lesson study time does not follow the subject in the *Sabbath School Quarterly*. The goal is to lead the group to reflect on relevant issues of life, the need for a relationship between God and humanity, and biblical principles valid for this new generation.

Assessing Contextualized Worship in Ethnic Congregations

The *Mission Institute Handbook* addresses various topics related to mission and cross-cultural work, including contextualization, in five dimensions: life, approach, message, worship, and previous culture (Institute of World Mission 2019:76). Among these categories, the contextualization of worship is relevant for this study to assess the contextual projects developed by the Adventist Church among immigrant communities in the city of São Paulo.

For a definition of contextualized worship, Sooi-Ling Tan (2016:1) states that this "simply means creating worship services that are biblically grounded and culturally relevant to the context." Kimberly Martin (2018:11) complements this concept by adding that it is the church's quest

to "communicate the Gospel through the way it conducts music and congregation in moments of worship in such a way that those from another culture can also relate" to the message communicated.

According to the Handbook (2019:76), contextualized worship consists in adapting the means and ways in which a given group seeks to express its worship, so that it maintains both its meaning and biblical purpose, as well as an image of belonging in the group's own context and culture. Worship contextualization should consider the following six elements: (1) architecture, (2) music, (3) prayer, (4) teaching styles, (5) reverence, and (6) meetings.

The criteria used to evaluate contextualized worship within the ethnic churches in São Paulo included the six elements listed in the *Mission Institute Handbook* plus three additional ones: language, pastor, and objects. In order to observe the religious background of the members of these contextual projects among immigrant communities, one last item—"Public"—was also created. This is important to see who is attracted and attending the outreach projects.

The "language" aspect was added to the evaluation criteria because it is essential for any initiative aimed at reaching an immigrant group. On the other hand, considering that the church, as well as the community around it, has the potential to be heterogeneous in relation to the use and familiarity with different languages, diversity must be allowed for in some way.

In addition, the category "pastor" was included because the impact of pastoral leadership depends greatly on the knowledge about the group's culture. "Objects" refer to the value and meaning attributed to certain utensils within certain ethnic worship ceremonies.

The section below reflects the evaluation framework applied to the Adventist ethnic churches in São Paulo and their elements of contextualized worship. Even though there is more than one initiative aimed at two of the six immigrant groups, the Adventist contextual projects have been grouped around the immigrant communities that characterize their identity and mission.

Ethnic Churches and Elements of Contextualized Worship

Japanese Community: *Language*—Japanese and Portuguese; *Pastor*—Brazilian; *Architecture*—Japanese garden; *Music*—Japanese and Portuguese lyrics; *Prayer*—traditional; *Teaching*—preaching and Sabbath school; *Reverence*—traditional; *Objects*—none; *Meetings*—worship service, Sabbath school; *Religious Background*—majority Christian.

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Korean Community: *Language*—Korean and translation available; *Pastor*—Brazilian with Korean ascendance; *Architecture*—typical plants; *Music*—Korean lyrics and different musical instruments; *Prayer*—traditional; *Teaching*—traditional; *Reverence*—traditional; *Objects*—musical instruments; *Meetings*—worship service, Sabbath school, youth meetings; *Religious Background*—majority Adventist.

Jewish Community: *Language*—Hebrew and Portuguese; *Pastor*—Brazilian with Jewish ascendance; *Architecture*—synagogue inspired interior; *Music*—Jewish lyrics and styles, percussion and clapping; *Prayer*—*Shemah*, *Amidah*, and *Ma Tovu*; *Teaching*—preaching, comparing *Torah* and *Haftarah* with NT; *Reverence*—*Kippah* and *Tallit*, silence, men and women can sit together, women actively participate; *Objects*—parchment manuscript (*Parashah*) and Masoretic text; *Meetings*—worship service, Sabbath school, Sabbath sunset, Jewish festivals (*Kiddush*); *Religious Background*—lay Jews.

Arab Community: *Language*—Arabic and Portuguese; *Pastor*—Brazilian; *Architecture*—Arab ambiance and landscaping, tapestry, Islamic art, large hall; *Music*—Brazilian and Arab lyrics and styles; *Prayer*—on prayer rugs; *Teaching*—preaching and comparison between Qur'an and biblical themes; *Reverence*—silence, no shoes, scarves for women, ablutions; *Objects*—prayer rugs; *Meetings*—worship service, Sabbath school; *Religious Background*—none.

Hispanic Community: *Language*—Spanish; *Pastor*—Hispanic and Brazilian; *Architecture*—flags of countries represented; *Music*—typical lyrics, styles and instruments; *Prayer*—traditional (amen only at the end); *Teaching*—preaching, Sabbath school, Pathfinders, Adventurers; *Reverence*—traditional; *Objects*—typical musical instruments; *Meetings*—worship service, Sabbath school; *Religious Background*—majority Adventist.

Haitian Community: *Language*—Haitian, Creole, and French; *Pastor*—Haitian elder; *Architecture*—none; *Music*—lyrics in French and other languages; *Prayer*—traditional and sing before and after opening prayer; *Teaching*—preaching, Sabbath school; *Reverence*—traditional; *Objects*—none; *Meetings*—worship service, Sabbath school; *Religious Background*—majority Adventist.

Chinese Community: *Language*—Mandarin and Portuguese; *Pastor*—Chinese; *Architecture*—none; *Music*—Mandarin and Portuguese lyrics; *Prayer*—traditional; *Teaching*—preaching, study of narratives, group

study, Pathfinders; *Reverence*—traditional; *Objects*—musical instruments; *Meetings*—worship service, Sabbath school; *Religious Background*—majority Christian.

Suggestions for the Critical Contextualization of Worship

The contextualization of worship needs to be recognized as a fundamental process for maintaining a direct relationship between worship and mission (Meyers 2016:9). Since worship is one of the main means of communication and evangelization, contextualizing it is essential for the various audiences to receive the gospel in biblically and culturally appropriate ways. Promising contextual alternatives to traditional forms are based on the development of greater cultural and religious sensitivity through intercultural communication, attitudes of hospitality, and hybridization (Martin 2018; Meyers 2016; Tan 2016).

The "language" dimension seems to be one of the most contextualized aspects among the ethnic projects. Most groups make use of two languages in their worship services. Despite the particularities of each project, they all could improve in providing translation services so that everyone has the possibility to follow what is taught and done during worship. Translating worship into Portuguese is also important in order to hold second generation immigrants.

Regarding the "pastor," it is curious to note that the initiatives among Koreans and Chinese have ethnic pastors, while the other projects still do not have a minister (except for one Hispanic group) from their language group. The Haitian community, for example, even after ten years of existence, does not have a Haitian minister.

When it comes to the element of "music," the Hispanic and Chinese communities stand out for their use of typical instruments and for including music styles that can reach the different groups among their members. Since most projects already mix languages during the worship services, it would be better if all the groups varied their music styles as well (Martin 2018:16-17).

The "meetings" aspects or types of worship services proved to be the least contextualized. Except for the Jewish project, the rest of the projects have not made much effort in this area. Before proceeding with the other elements, it is important to understand how a typical Seventh-day Adventist church is characterized in São Paulo. This is usually the starting point for the contextualization process directed towards a specific group.

The "meetings" element appears to be closely connected to the "Religious Background" of the people attracted to the various projects. If they

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do not demonstrate much difference from a standard Adventist Church, which follows a North American model, the groups seem to communicate to and attract only an Adventist or Christian public. This lack of contextualization has little impact on the foreigners in the community, especially those who belong to other religions.

It seems that many church leaders feel more comfortable staying with a Western Adventist worship model that is more comfortable for the pioneers of the project, rather than accepting the challenge of contextualizing the worship services. If the worship forms have value, understanding, and meaning only for the members of a particular contextual project, the missional effectiveness aimed at the target audience and the new generations will be greatly impaired. If these projects wish to be successful in their mission, they must develop new models of Adventist worship that are sensitive to the culture of their respective immigrant groups, especially, in keeping with the intercultural communication dynamics that plays a pivotal role in evangelization in these contexts.

Conclusion

Taking into account the evaluation of contextualized worship in ethnic Adventist churches in the city of São Paulo, the conclusion is that, despite the initiatives already implemented, especially, the elements "pastor," "music," and "meetings" still require a lot of contextualization. Cultural sensitivity, intercultural communication, a hospitable environment, and hybridization processes are key to the improvement of the contextualized worships.

The best contextualization in most of the ethnic projects were the "language," due to the inclusion of more than one language during the worship and teaching that used a variety of means to convey biblical truths. The projects aimed at the Hispanic and Jewish communities stood out for their initiatives regarding the use of "objects." In addition to the projects with the Arab and Japanese communities, four other groups stood out for their contextual appropriations to the "architecture" element.

After observing and evaluating the contextual projects developed by the Adventist Church with immigrant communities in São Paulo and the various levels of contextualization of the worship services, much more could have been achieved. Despite the three data sources regarding the constituent aspects of the elements of contextualized worship, it was not possible to obtain enough information about certain projects and the elements of contextualization.

Contextualization among ethnic and multiethnic communities in the various world contexts should be further investigated. Some studies depicting cases in the United States emerge as pioneers, but other regions, such as Latin America, have not yet made many contributions to the subject. The growth of immigrant populations in other states and cities in Brazil also raises the potential for the development of new contextual projects around the country, which requires studies on models or guidelines that could serve to guide the implementation process.

Another suggestion is the need for a study focused on the observation and evaluation of other contextualization dimensions (life, approach, message and previous culture), as proposed by the *Mission Institute Handbook* (2019), among contextual projects for immigrant communities. Yet another possibility would be, from the findings on the elements "teaching" and "meetings," to suggest contextualized missionary approaches—evangelistic methods—for other contextual initiatives in São Paulo.

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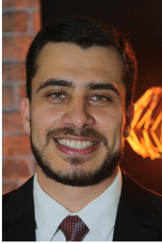

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