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The Concept of Contextualization and its Implications for the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Education in India

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THE CONCEPT OF CONTEXTUALIZATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

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THE CONCEPT OF CONTEXTUALIZATION AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Melchizedek Mithraraj Ponniah

August 1986

THE CONCEPT OF CONTEXTUALIZATION AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
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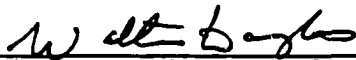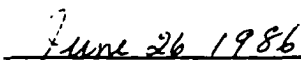
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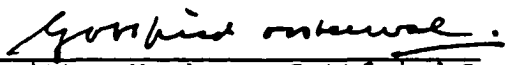
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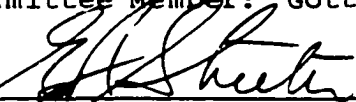
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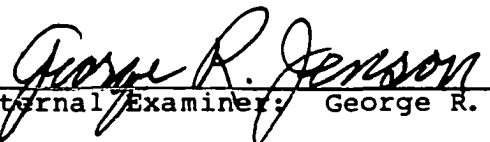
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Graduate Studies

Committee Member: Walter Douglas

Date Approved   *June 26, 1986*

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Committee Member: Edward A. Streeter

External Examiner: George R. Jenson

ABSTRACT

THE CONCEPT OF CONTEXTUALIZATION AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

by

Melchizedek M. Ponniah

Chairman: Roy C. Naden

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

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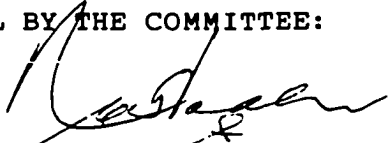Title: THE CONCEPT OF CONTEXTUALIZATION AND ITS
        IMPLICATIONS FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL
        EDUCATION IN INDIA

Name of researcher: Melchizedek M. Ponniah

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Roy C. Naden, Ed. D.

Date Completed: August 1986

Problem

The Seventh-day Adventist chruch in India operates
in a rapidly changing pluralistic context and a predomi-
nantly Hindu culture. Response to the emerging opportuni-
ties and demands suggest the reconstruction of theological
education in more contextual terms. It is imperative that
the institutions and practice of ministry be shaped and
evaluated in terms of the manifold functions to be
performed in the varegated and highly differentiated
cultures within which the Adventist church functions.

1

Method

This study utilized the historical and descriptive methods. Literature was reviewed to gather concepts related to the concept of contextualization and contextualization of theological education.

Conclusions

1. The existing Seventh-day Adventist theological education in India does not adequately address the ministerial context. Consequently, a more contextual curriculum construct was a necessity.

2. The religious, socio-cultural, economic, and educational contexts of India are significant determinants for the contextualiztion of theological education.

3. The data in this study indicated that contextualization was a theological, ecclesiological, educational, and sociological necessity.

4. Involvement in the contexts of ministry during the theological training tend to reinforce the various needs, issues, and problems a future minister might confront, and thus give opportunity to address them in the class discussions.

Recommendations

1. Inasmuch as Adventist theological education in India was in need of contextualization, it is recommended that the proposed contextual construct be studied by

concerned entities with a view to implementation.

2. Contextualization is a dynamic and ongoing process. It is recommended, therefore, that Spicer memorial College in conjunction with the Southern Asia Division and union missions set up a committee to evaluate theological education annually. Of necessity, this committee should include both theologically trained church leaders, theology educators, experienced ministers, ministers in training, and laypersons.

3. It is recommended that field seminars be conducted in all the union missions of India to facilitate the process of contextualization as a mission methodology.

Delhi.

Bombay

. Poona

Bangalore .

Coimbatore .

Madras

. Madurai

. Tirunelveli

. Calcutta

I N D I A

DEDICATED TO

Dr and Mrs. John Matthew Fowler

who have been inspiration to me.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In His gospel commission, Jesus Christ said: "Go,
then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples"
(Matt 28:19 TEV).

The world into which the church is sent is a
colorful mosaic of peoples and cultures, each one unique
in its ways and values, each one also challenging the
proclamation of the Gospel in its own way. For, it is
culture which shapes the ways people hear and understand
the Christian message. It is culture also which should
shape the way that message is being proclaimed and how
churches are being planted. As White (1948) put it, "in
order to lead souls to Jesus, there must be a knowledge of
human nature and a study of the human mind" (p. 67). White
(1936) also said: "Many an effort has remained in large
measure unsuccessful because it did not consider the time
and the place the circumstances and conditions of the
people" (p. 299). This was the way Christ Himself worked
(White, 1936, pp. 41-47). This also was the reason for the

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success of the work of the apostle Paul, who was always, according to White (1936) "shaping his message to the circumstances under which he was placed" (p. 118). Indian theologian Anandakumar (1980) observed: the mission of the church is damaged when cultural factors are ignored (p. 33). On this point a remarkable consensus exists among all mission societies and churches.

One of the important areas in the mission of the church in any culture is theological education. But, like any other aspect of mission, theological education too must be based on the Scripture and self-understanding and built on the particular cultural context in which it occurs. In the past, this latter building block of theological education has been greatly neglected. But, again, there exists a strong consensus among most missionary bodies and churches that there can never be an effective church without considering the cultural ways of the people. Theological education, therefore, has rightly been called the "fourth self" of an indigenous church: besides being self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating, a church must also be "self-theologizing." To assist the churches in this task, the Theological Education Fund (TEF) was established in 1957; it is now called the Programme on Theological Education (PTE) (Lienemann-Perrin, 1981, 15-17, 34).

Sunder Clarke, Bishop in Madras of the Church of

South India, said emphatically that among other endeavors
of the church in India, theological education needs to be
contextualized (Clarke, 1980, pp. 10-23).

Commenting on contextual theological education,
Emilio Castro, a former director of the Commission on World
Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches
(WCC), said: "Methods of theological education will depend
almost exclusively on the answer we give to two basic
questions: Where? and for what?" (Kirk, 1983, p. 48).
The context of ministry and the objectives or goals of
theological education, therefore, should be seriously con-
sidered prior to establishing the methods of theological
education.

Statement of the Problem

Churches cannot afford to ignore the current ques-
tioning of traditional patterns of ministry and theological
education.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in India operates
in a rapidly changing pluralistic context and a predomi-
nantly Hindu culture. Response to the emerging opportuni-
ties and demands suggest the reconstruction of theological
education in more contextual terms. It is imperative that
the institutions and practice of ministry be shaped and
evaluated in terms of the manifold functions to be per-
formed in the variegated and highly differentiated cultures
within which the Adventist church functions.

The present model of Adventist theological education in India is predominantly patterned after Adventist models in the United States of America (see Tables 4 and 5). However, the contemporary religious, socio-cultural, economic, and political milieu warrant a more contextual model of theological education.

Tanner and Tanner (1975) echo this view. They identified three sources of curriculum: society, knowledge, and the learner (pp. 100-142). This implies that the curriculum model for Seventh-day Adventist theological education in India needs to recognize the multifaceted contexts in which it operates and plan courses relevant to that context and the nature of the learner.

Purpose of the Study

In view of these problems, the purpose of this study was to:

1. discuss the basis for contextualization of theological education in India;

2. analyze the Seventh-day Adventist theological training program in India to discover whether it currently meets the needs of contextualization;

3. survey the religious, socio-cultural, economic, and political contexts of India and their impact on Adventist theological education in India;

4. review the contributions of various Christian

churches and agencies in contextualizing theological
education in the Third World;

    5. design a contextual construct for Seventh-day
Adventist theological education in India.

Importance of the Study

    As stated, the present curriculum model of Seventh-
day Adventist theological education in India is a replica
of the North American system.

    The data gathered in this study could be used by
Adventist church administrators and theological educators
in India towards contextualizing theological education.
The resource data in this study may prove useful to
Seventh-day Adventist theological educators in other Third
World countries.

Delimitations

    This study was limited to Seventh-day Adventist
theological education in India. Although graduate level
theological education is available, this research was
limited to the baccalaureate level offered at Spicer
Memorial College, Pune, India. In analyzing curricula of
various theological schools in India, this study was
limited to Protestant institutions. In the view of the
researcher these were more appropriate comparisons as
Adventism emerged from Protestant perspectives and heritage.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to clarify their use in this study and to minimize misunderstanding and ambiguity.

Contextualization: The conscious attempt to communicate the gospel and plant and grow churches through forms and concepts indigenous to a particular culture, based on the Bible and a critical evaluation of the ideas, feelings, and values that permeate such a culture.

Culture: A more or less integrated system of behavior, products, and institutions that are rooted in a common pattern of ideas, feelings, and values shared by a group of people.

Division: The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists with world headquarters at Washington, D. C., carries its global functions through ten divisions. Each of the ten divisions cares for a particular geographical region. India is within the jurisdiction of the Southern Asia Division. The head of this division is a president who is assisted by advisors for various departments.

Union: The Southern Asia Division of Seventh-day Adventist is divided into four unions each headed by a president who is assisted by advisors of various departments.

Section: Each union is further divided into sections, which are comparable to the local conferences of

Seventh-day Adventists in North America.

Basic Assumptions

1. Culture should not just be viewed as a problem or as a hindrance to the Missio-Dei, but as a potential for its advance and a vehicle for its growth and enrichment.

2. There are elements which are relevant to Christianity and congruent with biblical principles in every culture including that of India. Such elements, if incorporated in the communication of the Gospel and theological education, will aid the presentation of Christianity as an indigenous religion relevant to the receiver's cultural needs.

3. No single curriculum could fit the many situations in which theological education is being carried on, but certain basic principles will affect curriculum planning in every theological school. All theological curricula must take into account the particular social, cultural, religious, and educational context of the receptor culture.

Methodology

This study utilized the historical and descriptive methods. From the perspectives of the past and the present, this study designed a philosophical construct for the contextualization of Adventist theological education in India. In reconstructing a brief overview of the past, the historical method was used. In describing the present

situation the descriptive method was employed.

The sources of data for this study were from pub-
lished and unpublished materials such as books, journal
articles, dissertations, interviews, and personal letters
from experienced individuals connected with Adventist theo-
logical education in India.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 2 contains a review of literature relevant
to this study. The third chapter surveys the historical
development of Seventh-day Adventist theological education
in India. Chapter 4 discusses the theological, ecclesio-
logical, educational, and sociological factors. Chapter 5
is a survey of significant factors related to contextuali-
zation of theological education. The sixth chapter
discusses the contributions and efforts of various churches
and agencies in contextualizing theological education and
its implications for contextualization of Seventh-day
Adventist theological education in India. Chapter 7
proposes a philosophical construct for contextualizing
Adventist theological education in India. Finally,
chapter 8 presents a summary of the study, conclusions, and
makes recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews general studies on
gospel and culture, research on contextualization in India,
and contextualization of theological education. The first
section, general studies on contextualization, includes the
report of the Lausanne congress, the Willowbank report, and
studies on Gospel and culture. The second section,
research on contextualization in India, reviews literature
concerning the efforts of foreigners such as de Nobili and
Stanley Jones, and such nationals as Krishnapillai, Sadhu
Sunder Singh, Goreh, Chenchiah, and Bishops Appasamy and
Clarke. The third section, contextualization of theologi-
cal education, includes publications from the Theological
Education Fund and Programme on Theological Education of
the World Council of Churches; and doctoral dissertations
dealing with the contextualization of theological education
in the Third World countries.

Studies on Gospel and Culture

Since the end of World War II churches and missions
have become increasingly aware of the diversity of the
cultures and contexts in which the Gospel is being

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proclaimed. The belief that the Gospel is a package which can be transported from one culture to another without contextualization has lost credibility. This shifting scene is reflected in recent works on contextualization.

A concern for contextualization was a motivating force behind the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in 1974. Byang H. Kato (1975), who reported the discussions, declared contextualization a necessity, and added that the incarnation itself was a form of contextualization. However, he warned that extreme contextualization might lead to syncretism which is incompatible with the biblical paradigm (pp. 1216-1223).

Under the auspices of this congress, 33 of the Lausanne delegates met in Bermuda to study the relationship between Gospel and culture. The Willowbank Report contained the official pronouncement of this group.

The report was merely a crystalization of the papers--The Papers of the Lausanne Consultation on Gospel and Culture--presented during the meetings. At the outset, this report specified the goals for this working group: to develop an understanding of the interrelation of Gospel and culture; to reflect critically the implications of cross-cultural communication; to identify tools necessary for such a communication; and to share the outcome of these meetings with key Christian leaders. After it established the biblical basis of culture, the report

offered a definition of culture and explained the rela-
tionship between church and culture (Stott & Coote, 1980,
pp. 309-339).

That the process of communicating the Gospel cannot
be isolated from human culture was the starting point of
the Willowbank report. This report acknowledged that man
could not be viewed apart from his culture. "God's perso-
nal self-disclosure in the Bible was given in terms of the
hearer's own culture" (Stott & Coote, 1980, p. 313).
Consequently, the Scriptures should not be explained only
from the historical context, for they become effective when
explained in terms of the receptor's culture (p. 317).
Therefore, a missionary, to be persuasive in his communica-
tion, must employ incarnational evangelistic methods. The
report also cautioned that missionaries should not "decul-
turize" a convert (p. 326). Accordingly, the Church, to be
effective, must relate to the contemporary culture of its
geographical location (p. 337).

One major emphasis of the papers of the Lausanne
Consultation on Gospel and Culture needs to be particularly
noted: Stephen Neill's (1980) argument on the tension
between religion and culture. The former Bishop of the
Anglican church in South India argued that every great
religion found its expression in great culture and vice-
versa. According to the Bishop, Jesus gave the best model
in relating to culture. Although Jesus was faithful to his

culture, he was critical of many Jewish practices. Jesus also moved beyond the Jewish cultural wall to reach out to those of non-Jewish culture (pp. 3,4).

The early church had a model in its Master, Jesus Christ, to go into every culture. Most of the then-known world was under the influence of Greaco-Roman culture. Bishop Neill (1980) maintained that "the Church entered into easy relations with that culture only when the religion which underlay it had ceased to be a living force" (p. 6). He believed that there was a dichotomy between religion and culture. The Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians viewed religion and culture as a single force. This group met in New Delhi, India from August 17 to 29, 1981, and issued the report, The Irruption of the Third World: Challenge to Theology. One of the objectives of this meeting was to find ways to contextualize theology. In his report "Theological Priorities in India Today," Samuel Rayan (1983) elucidated the complex and multifaceted context under which theology must be formulated. Poverty, political setting, culture, tribal patterns, caste, and religion were some of the striking features Rayan explained. Rayan pointed out that Indian Christian theology must be of service to the Indian people; its endeavor is to make a meaningful contribution to the march of Indian people toward human fullness in a just society. However, the use of certain cliches throughout his report suggests

that Rayan might be leaning towards the presuppositions of liberation theology (pp. 30-40).

The report further stated:

> Culture is the foundation of the creativity
> and way of life of a people. It is the basis and
> bond of their collective identity. It expresses
> their world-view, their conception of the meaning
> of human existence and destiny, and their idea of
> God. It includes the historical manifestations of
> the people's creativity, such as their language,
> arts, social organization, philosophy, religion,
> and theology itself. Thus religion is culturally
> conditioned. (Fabella & Torres, 1983, p. 20)

In its conclusion, the report pointed out the high value Jesus in his ministry placed on the cultural concerns of his immediate audience and then made its modern application:

> Christian Theology must be open to learn from other
> religions. In the Third World, theology must develop
> in deep communion with the religions and cultures of
> the people. Unfortunately, the Christian evangeliza-
> tion of our part of the World was brought about by an
> aggressive Western culture that lessened our own
> appreciation of our indigenous cultures. For
> Christian life and theology to become relevant for us
> in the Third World, the Gospel of Jesus should be able
> to meet our peoples in and through our cultures. To
> make this possible, the core of the gospel must be
> disengaged from its Western, elitist wrappings and
> reexpressed in the cultural idiom of the poor and
> oppressed of our continents. (Ibid., pp. 201-202)

Whenever the church endeavored to relate to such a local context, inevitably there was a clash between Christianity and culture. Missiologists have postulated approaches to resolve such issues.

Missiologist Donald McGavran (1974) discussed these issues and proposals to resolve this tension. In

<u>The Clash Between Christianity and Cultures</u>, McGavran discussed these issues on the basis of three assumptions: (1) the cultures of mankind are rich, and have need to contribute to global progress and happiness; (2) Christianity must fit in each culture and adapt itself to diverse contexts; and (3) God's revealed Word is authoritative in resolving the tension between culture and Christianity (p. 1).

According to McGavran, Christians hold the following view regarding culture: Cultures are creations of men and are dynamic; unlike social scientists, Christians believe that God played a part in creating the cultures; and Christianity should not and cannot transform all cultures into one uniform model (pp. 10-13).

McGavran (1974) surveyed the attempts made by the Christian churches through the centuries to relate to the local culture. Most of these efforts, he observed, had resulted in making christopagans. Some of the examples he cited were: Spaniards imposing their religion and culture on Indians of Latin America and the Jesuits' adjustment to ancestor worship in China in the 1600s and 1700s. These are examples of resolving culture clash by taking into Christianity elements of the new culture (pp. 17-19).

Nevertheless, every missionary confronts the difficulty of cross-cultural communication. But missionaries from the Third World, Bruce Nicholls (1979) showed, must

understand four different cultures: (1) the Bible's;
(2) that of the Western missionary who first brought the
Gospel; (3) their own; and (4) that of the people to whom
they take the Gospel. Recognizing this, Nicholls proposed
that the Gospel be contextualized, that is, presented in
forms which are characteristic of the receiver's culture.
The problem is to find the right cultural forms and thus
keep the Gospel message both clear and biblical. Nicholls
dealt with tough social, theological, and hermeneutical
questions and proposed a direction for mission in the
future (p. 7).

Such perceptions led Nicholls (1979) to lament:
"Too often the hearer is treated as if he or she were a
tabula rasa and the assumption made that because the Gospel
is the Word of God, it will not return to me void" (p. 9).
He argued that "the Gospel when planted in another culture,
springs up faithful to its unchanging nature but rooted in
its new cultural soil" (p. 36).

Oosterwal (n.d. [a]), an Adventist missiologist,
agreed that the mission of the church must be rooted in its
new cultural soil. However, it is not a natural phenomenon
as Nicholls described. Oosterwal observed that the
"Adventist Church bears the stamp of mid-19th century
American values and the cultural dress of the American
frontier" (p. 1).

Oosterwal was of the opinion that the 19th-century

American features and values of the Adventist Church have
not only been perpetuated within the church in America but
also transported to Adventist churches around the world.
He observed:

> This drawback of the Church's captivity to a par-
> ticular culture has plagued us from the very begin-
> ning, and it continues to be one of the most powerful
> obstacles to Adventist mission in Africa and Asia
> today. (p. 5)

The same writer suggested a solution to this
perennial and thorny problem:

> The Church must become rooted in the particular soil
> in which it is planted, and organization and institu-
> tions must be developed in accordance with the nature
> of that soil and the particular nurture it has to
> offer. (p. 6)

In essence, Oosterwal suggested that contextuali-
zation be integrated as a mission methodology. While
he showed that contextualization is a missiological neces-
sity, Douglas (1982), another Adventist, argued that
contextualization is a theological necessity, too. He
affirmed that genuine theological reflection must be
deliberately contextual. Using this assumption, he defined
theology as

> the articulation of a relationship between an intel-
> lectual and social environment and a central mystery
> of Christian belief--God. It is the response to a
> series of questions which people of a particular
> environment pose to the central inalienable truths of
> Christian faith. (p. 8)

Attempting to build credibility for the contextu-
alization of theology, Douglas explained the efforts of
theologians of the early Christian community who

contextualized tneir peculiar message to the sophisticated
classes of the Roman empire. These early theologians
responded to the demands of the socio-historical and
political situation, the immediate context for their faith
and action. Douglas argued that contextualization was a
deliberate theological method employed by the early
Christians (pp. 11-12).

In his critique of contextualization, Douglas
declared that contextual theology could lead to
exclusivism. Cautioning against such a trap he said,

> while allowing the Gospel to speak meaningfully to
> particular cultures, we must at the same time seek to
> avoid the kind of captivity to particular cultures or
> class intersts which blunt the church's faithfulness
> as a messenger of the Gospel. (p. 13)

Is there a biblical paradigm to support Douglas's
view? Norman R. Ericson (1978) identified patterns in the
New Testament which give one direction as to the nature of
acceptable contextualization, indicating both imperatives
as well as limitations. Ericson cited two examples of
contextualization from the New Testament: (1) the
Jerusalem Council, and (2) Paul's counsel regarding "food
offered to idols" in 1 Cor 8:1-10;22. Ericson established
categories in which to consider and evaluate contextualiza-
tion. (1) God's Word was a clear standard; and (2) meaning
was another element of evaluation. He insisted that a
Christian must so contextualize that the right meanings
were delivered through cultural forms and ideology. The

Christian, then, must be careful not to deliver the wrong meaning by his mode of behavior or cultural participation. Ericson believed that contextualization had been, at all points, a concomitant of the divine communication to man. He claimed that this was evident in the incarnation elaborated in the apostolic mission to the Roman world and had continued throughout the western progress of Christianity (pp. 71-85). Rene Padilla (1981), a South American theologian, contended that contextualization bridged the chasm between New Testament past and present. In this approach both the ancient text and the context of the modern reader were given due consideration (pp. 18-23).

Padilla observed that the Word of God originated in a particular historical context--the Hebrew and Graeco-Roman world. It could be properly understood and appropriated only as it became flesh in a historical situation with all its particular cultural forms. Padilla argued in favor of contextual hermeneutics. The concern of such a hermeneutic was to transpose the Gospel from its original historical context into the context of present day readers so as to produce the same kind of import on their lives as it did on the original hearers and readers (pp. 18-23).

Knapp (1976) discussed the implications of contextualization for U.S. evangelical churches and missions and contended that contextualization had been adopted by many of the evangelical churches in the U. S. A.

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At the outset Knapp explained the background of the term contextualization and evaluated the contribution of the Theological Education Fund (TEF) documents that introduced the concept. He established contextualization as a necessity to theology and _missio dei_. In his evaluation of the TEF documents, Knapp pointed out that contextualization was often misunderstood as the latest in a string of accommodations of the Gospel to contemporary thought forms (pp. 4-14).

The TEF documents have contributed to a deeper and better understanding of contextualization. Knapp preferred to present an alternative definition of contextualization which he claimed was inevitable to the ongoing contextual experience of the church in any culture. According to him,

> contextualization is the dynamic process through which the Church continually challenges and/or incorporates/transforms elements of the cultural and social milieu of which it is an integral part in its daily struggle to be obedient to the Lord Jesus Christ in its life and mission in the world. Contextualization is not only a sociological inevitability but a theological obligation, if the Church is to effectively and concretely live and proclaim the Gospel in the world. (p. 16)

Knapp (1976) espoused three models of contextualization. He claimed to have adopted a biblical paradigm. Unlike liberation theologians, he maintained a safe distance from political situations. His first model--the horizontal model--viewed culture as an external element apart from the community of believers. This exclusiveness projected a dichotomy between the church and culture which,

in essence, was a dichotomy between sacred and secular
(p. 16).

In his second model he presented a more realistic
view. The presupposition for this model was that

> every church, if it is to be truly the church in a
> particular place and time, must take on to some extent
> the shape of its surrounding milieu. Otherwise it
> will be a foreign transplant. (p. 25)

In the third model, he attempted to communicate the
concept of incarnation: to seek continually to incarnate
more perfectly the heavenly community of the church in
history and culture, particularly through the medium of a
careful study of the Scriptures and especially with the
help of Christians from other cultures. This model also
pointed out the eschatological character of the struggle
of the church with the culture. The time span in this
struggle is between the reality of Christ's resurrection--
the "already"--and the Second Coming--the "not yet" (p.
29).

Prior to the Second Coming--the "not yet"--many
aspects of the Church stand in need of contextualization.
One of the areas that particularly needs to be contextua-
lized is theology. Shoki Coe (1976) discussed this issue
in his article. At the outset, Coe explained the
differences between indigenization and contextualization.
Coe believed that, because of the static nature of the
metaphor, indigenization tended to be used in the sense of

responding to the Gospel in terms of traditional culture. As such, the concept of indigenization ran the danger of being past oriented. Contextualization, however, conveyed all that is implied in the familiar term indigenization, yet sought to press beyond for a more dynamic concept which might be open to change and more future oriented (pp. 19-22).

Coe (1976) drew a parallel between incarnation and contextualization. As God became man so that the whole world may be saved, theology must be contextualized so that the whole world might better understand the biblical truth (pp. 22-24).

Charles Kraft (1978) continued Coe's line of thinking. He discussed both the positive and the negative aspects of contextualization. He resorted to the Scriptures to establish contextualization as being biblical. He continued to explain that this concept was imperative in formulating theology. Kraft then hastened to underscore the risk of syncretism which might be the result of extreme contextualization. In such a situation the biblical truths might cease to be powerful and effective. Kraft cited striking examples from the practices of Pharisees, Judaizers, and the Roman Catholic church. Nevertheless, contextualization was not as likely to lead to syncretism as was the preservation of antique forms of theologizing and the importation of these forms into contexts in which they were

not appropriate (pp. 31-36).

Kosuke Koyama (1974), in his book <u>Waterbuffalo</u> <u>Theology</u>, dealt with contextualizing theology within the Asian contexts. Koyama wrote from his missionary experience in Thailand. In the preface to his book he observed:

> On my way to the country church, I never fail to see a herd of waterbuffaloes grazing in the muddy paddy field. This sight is an inspiring moment for me. Why? Because it reminds me that the people to whom I am to bring the Gospel of Christ spend most of their time with these waterbuffaloes in the rice field. . . They remind me to discard all abstract ideas, and to use exclusively objects that are immediately tangible. (p. vii)

In the first section of the book Koyama discussed the insight of contextualization as applied to the Asian situation against the backdrop of their historical developments. He explained the religious context of Southern and Far Eastern Asia, namely, Hinduism and Buddhism. Koyama observed that Hinduism did not take history seriously. For them history was <u>maya</u>. He suggested:

> The Christian message to Hindu India is that Christianity takes history seriously. It is the religion of incarnation (into history, into culture, into language, into the religious situation and so on) of the Son of the history-minded God. (pp. 22, 23)

Koyama said, appropriately, that teaching Western theological concepts not only made it harder for listeners to follow but also was irrelevent to their cultural needs and context (pp. 73-76). Meaningful theological thinking was a result of a deliberate effort to contextualize theology within the cultural context of Asia (pp. 79-88).

In his book, Koyama raised issues that confronted theologians in Asia. These issues included the interdependent world, the Bible, proclamation, accommodation and syncretism, non-Christian faiths, the influence of the West, poverty, and the influence of ancient cultures like China and India (pp. 106-114).

However, contextualization does have its problems. Krikor Haleblian (1983) identified and analyzed the issues and problems surrounding contextualization and potential ways to resolve them. Some of the issues addressed were the definition of contextualization, its differences from indigenization, the legitimate agents for contextualization, syncretism, the limits of contextualization, the Gospel core, and hermeneutics.

Haleblian (1983) offered a tentative definition of contextualization. He believed that contextualization went beyond indigenization into areas of external concern. He used Taber's six points to differentiate between contextualization and indigenization. According to Haleblian, there were two important methodologies of contextualization: the translational model developed by Charles Kraft and the semiotic model formulated by Robert Schreiter (pp. 95-111). The consensus of studies reviewed is that contextualization is a necessity. The term itself originated with the advent of the Theological Education Fund. This concept, when adopted, helps the church to be rooted in the native soil

and to develop in accordance with the nurture it has to offer. Although the term "contextualization" is relatively new, the concept has been prevalent among Christians in India--and elsewhere--as early as the 17th century.

Studies on Contextualization in India

Roberto de Nobili, a Jesuit Priest in the 17th century chose to minister to Indians. He made much progress, according to Cronin (1959), after he discarded European for Oriental dress and adopted Eastern customs (p. 9).

De Nobili not only mastered the Tamil language but also wrote at least 13 books in it. The genius of de Nobili became evident in his intelligent usage of Hindu Tamil terms to refute such Hindu teachings as karma, maya, atman, samsara, and Brahman. Even the Hindu gurus at Madurai, where de Nobili lived, envied his immense knowledge of Sanskrit and Hindu theology (p. 9).

De Nobili, calling himself a sanyasi (an ascetic), went about teaching even Brahmins--the highest caste Hindus. The Tamil people revered and respected sanyasi and de Nobili was no exception (Cronin, 1959, pp. 231-250). This Jesuit priest's missiological methodology, however, was not without its detractors. The Archibishop of Goa and Pope Gregory openly condemned de Nobili (ibid).

In the 19th century, Indian Christians,

particularly converts from Hinduism, endeavored to express Christianity in Indian thought forms. Krishnapillai of Tamil Nadu was an outstanding example of such an effort. Although born and bred in an orthodox Sri Vaishnava Hindu family, Krishnapillai became a Protestant Christian at the age of 30 and for the remainder of his 73 years wrote devotional poetry expressing his Christian faith. In his dissertation on Krishnapillai, Hudson (1970) documented the sincere efforts of Krishnapillai and his brother Muthiahpillai to contextualize Christianity. Through his life and teaching and writing--poems and prose-- Krishnapillai endeavored to present Christianity as an indigenous religion. His master piece was <u>Irakshaniya Yattrikam</u>, a Tamil Christian epic comparable to John Bunyan's <u>Pilgrim's Progress</u> (pp. 457-491).

Krishnapillai, an intellectual, found Genesis 1 viewed through Exodus 20 very convincing and much more consistent than the Hindu scriptures. Hudson observed that the reading of the Bible was a major influence in the conversion of Krishnapillai.

The influential and high caste Hindus of Krishnapillai's days condemned a Hindu for becoming a Christian. Most of the converts to Christianity came from the low caste, thus the high caste Hindus hesitated to become Christians. Krishnapillai, being a high caste Hindu, brought about a change in the attitude of his caste

towards Christianity. Being a poet, Krishnapillai composed
many poems using biblical concepts. Since high caste
Hindus were lovers of classical literary works
Krishnapillai's writings appealed to many Hindus. In
Irakshaniya Yattirrikam, Krishnapillai freely and
effectively used familiar Hindu terminology to elucidate
biblical concepts of the nature of man, sin, God, and
salvation to the Tamil mind (Hudson, 1970, pp. 457-491).

Although not as academically trained as
Krishnapillai, Sadhu Sunder Singh also made an effort to
contextualize Christianity, as is evident from his writings
and recorded sayings. Born of a Sikh family in 1889, the
Sadhu was trained in the Bhakti tradition of Hinduism. As
a boy he learned the Bhagavad-Gita by heart. After his
conversion he donned the ochre robe and became a Sadhu--a
wandering preacher. This, in itself, was an act of contex-
tualization. In all his teaching and preaching the Sadhu
emphasized the Water of Life in an Indian cup. The Sadhu
was known for his insightful parables from Indian life and
teachings (Appasamy, 1966, pp. 40-237)

Bishop Appasamy who had a personal acquaintance
with the Sadhu wrote extensively on his life and teachings.
Appasamy observed that the Sadhu communicated the Gospel of
Jesus Christ through popular parables and illustrations
from the scenes of everyday life.

During one of his visits to Rotterdam, Holland,

someone asked the Sadhu whether more missionaries were needed in India. He replied, "Yes, but your philosophy we don't need" (Appasamy, 1966, p. 191). Thus the Sadhu explicitly expressed the need to dewesternize Christianity in India. His frequent use of the Vedas and the <u>Bhagavad Gita</u> revealed his desire and effort to contextualize Christianity (ibid., pp. 18-20).

Bishop Appasamy himself endeavored to contextualize Christianity through his writings. His father was a convert from Hinduism. Appasamy's Harvard and Oxford upbringing combined with his acute knowledge of Hinduism became useful in the preparation of contextualizing approaches to Christianity in India.

In <u>The Gospel and India's Heritage</u> Appasamy (1942) presented the life and teachings of Christ from India's cultural and religious perspectives. He alluded to the concept of <u>bhakti</u> being the heritage of India. Presenting Christianity as the <u>bhakti marga</u>, he assured, would make Christianity more attractive to the people of India (pp. 5-19).

Throughout his book, Appasamy (1942) drew striking parallels between Hindu holy books and the teachings of Christ. For example, Christ's statement "I and my Father are one" was compared to the Upanishadic concept of "I am Brahman," <u>aham brahmasmi</u>, and to the Indian philosophical concept of monism or <u>dvaita</u> (p. 35).

Along with parallels between Christianity and Hinduism, Appasamy (1942) also pointed out the uniqueness of Christianity. Such an explanation reached its climax in the death and resurrection story of Christ which has no Hindu parallel. The concept of Saviour and salvation from sin are foreign to Hindu thought and belief. Taking advantage of such a theological gap, Appasamy presented Jesus as the only one who could save a Hindu from his chain of death and rebirth--karma-samsara (pp. 223-246).

Appasamy's efforts to contextualize Christianity had been influenced by the contributions of Indian Christians such as Nehemiah Goreh (1825-1895), Chenchiah (1886-1959), and Chakkari (1880-1958). These were a few of the intellectuals who contributed to the contextualization of Christianity in India. In his book, An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology, Boyd (1969) critically analyzed their theological contributions.

Nehemiah Goreh, prior to his baptism known as Nilakantha Sastri Goreh, became a Christian while he was researching as a Hindu to find arguments against Christianity. Even prior to his conversion he had achieved considerable reputation as a Sanskrit scholar and exponent of traditional Hinduism. Such a knowledge helped him to contextualize Christianity to his Hindu friends and relatives. In all his dialogue with Hindus, Goreh tended to be negative. This he did with compassion (Boyd, 1969, pp. 40-57).

Pandipeddi Chenchiah was one of the most striking figures and original thinkers in the history of Indian Christian theology. Chenchiah, a distinguished lawyer, was Chief Judge of the Pudukottai state. He was one of the leading contributors to the publication Rethinking Christianity in India. This work appeared in 1938 on the eve of the conference of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram, Madras, as a reply to Hendrik Kraemer's Barthian approach in The Christian Message in a Non Christian World. Chenchiah believed that Christian faith must be open to receive new insights from Indian culture (ibid, pp. 144-164).

One of the Christian thinkers closely associated with Chenchiah was Vengal Chakkari. In fact, Chakkarai was Chenchiah's brother-in-law. He was a Hindu who became a Christian at Madras Christian college under the influence of William Miller. Along with Chenchiah he founded the Christo Samaj which worked towards contextualizing Christianity in India. Like Chenchiah, Chakkarai used Hindu terminology to explain biblical teachings (ibid, pp. 145-164).

Arumainayagam was another Indian who contextualized Christianity in Tamil Nadu, India. He was affectionately called Sattampillai. Refusing to be under the dictates of a missionary, Sattampillai withdrew from the missionary-controlled Anglican church and organized the Hindu Chris-

tian church or <u>Nattu Sabai</u> (indigenous church). Thangaraj
(1971) analyzed the teachings and history of this movement.

Organized in 1857 with 2500 people this movement
had grown to a considerable size in the 1980s.
Thangaraj (1971) observed:

> He [Sattampillai] was highly nationalistic and wanted
> the Indian church to be truly national and indigenous.
> He was a great lover of the South Indian classical
> music and strongly felt that only Indian music should
> be used in the Indian church. (p. 46)

A few months after this group was organized,
Sattampillai, as a result of his own study, became con-
vinced that, according to the Bible the seventh day must be
kept as the Sabbath. He found receptive people in his
congregation. To this day, <u>Nattu Sabai</u> members keep the
seventh-day Sabbath. Two other studies revealed that most
of the early Adventist converts in the state of Tamil Nadu
came out of <u>Nattu Sabai</u> (Pcnniah, 1977, p. 9; and Moses,
1972, p. 4).

Martin Johnson (1978) in his doctoral dissertation
analyzed the life and teachings of another important figure
who contextualized Christianity in India--Stanley Jones,
an American missionary. Johnson pointed out that Jones
played a significant role in the development of an indi-
genous expression of the Christian faith both in theology
and practice. Jones did everything possible to identify
himself completely with India. "In this he achieved
notable success, being free from any trace of prejudice or

sense of Western cultural superiority" (p. 39).

According to Johnson (1978), Jones set a new
precedent in contextualizing Christianity in India. This
was done by establishing an ashram at Sat Tal in the foot-
hills of the Himalayas.

The ashram concept, although Hindu in origin,
became, in Jones' hand a powerful tool toward contextuali-
zation. Johnson (1978) observed:

> The ashram concept lent itself to Indian Christian
> expression in a particularly excellent way since it
> had little or no associations with idolatry and it
> fitted in with the Christian idea of simplicity and
> corporate spiritual quest. (p. 89)

Bishop Sunder Clarke (1980) built on Jones's
thoughts and reiterated his philosophical outlines for
contextualization in Let the Indian Church Be Indian. From
his wealth of pastoral experience, Bishop Clarke lamented:

> One has to admit that church growth in India is very
> slow. Statistics show that for the past 30 years
> there has been hardly 0.1 percentage of increase in
> the Christian population. The Christian population
> after the independence was about 2.5 and now it is
> 2.6. There are many causes for the very slow growth
> of the church and perhaps one of them is that we have
> failed to be true to our culture. The church has not
> grown because we have not been Indian enough for the
> people around us, for our environment and for our
> culture. . . . We cannot fail to point out that
> church growth has been retarded because of our failure
> to be more contextual. (p. 3)

For Christianity to be Indian, Clarke (1980)
recommended that the church should stay away from Gothic or
Western architecture of steeple and tower, modify patterns
of music and worship, adopt Indian eating and dressing, and

formulate leadership styles, liturgy, and theological education that would speak to the Indian genius. As a caution this author added that one must not confuse indigenization and Hinduization (pp. 10-23).

Bishop Clarke (1980) in all sincerity pointed out that contextualization cannot be a reality as long as the churches in India are heavily dependent on foreign money for their survival (pp. 45-46).

Summary

Although the term contextualization was not then in existence, as early as the 17th century de Nobili resorted to this method in missionary endeavors among the Hindus of India. His writings in the Indian languages greatly enhanced his efforts. A few years later, Krishnapillai, a convert from Hinduism, used Hindu terminology to explain biblical concepts. During the early twentieth century Sunder Singh, a convert from Sikhism, called himself a Christian Sadhu. His insightful parables from the scenes of everyday life in India appealed to both the elite and the down trodden. Bishop Appasamy, Goreh, and Chenchiah expressed their theological thoughts in Indian terms. The Ashram movement started by Stanley Jones, an American missionary, paved the way for contextualizing Christianity in India.

Contextualization of Theological Education

The advent of contextualization has brought an awareness of inadequecy among theological educators in the Third World. Apparently such a realization has led them in search of renewal in theological education. Steven Mackie elucidated such an attempt.

Mackie (1969) in his book Patterns of Ministry, described the progress of an ecumenical study. Part I of the book was concerned with the changes in the work of ministers. Inevitably, it also discussed the function of the ministry, the meaning of ordination, and the relation between professional ministers and other members of the church. Part II, theological education, described existing thinking and recent experiments in the training of professional ministers. The writer arrived at two basic conclusions. First, the churches could not afford to ignore the existing questioning of traditional patterns of ministry and theological education and must regard it as one of the ways in which God is speaking to his church. The second conviction was that neither ministry nor theological education can ultimately be discussed except in terms of the service and formation of all Christians, clergy, and laity alike (pp. 15-149).

Prior to any discussion on innovation in theological education it must be noted that many Third World countries continued to depend on the West for their

personnel, finance, and curriculum patterns in order to maintain their theological educational centers. Bergquist and Manickam (1974) discussed this crisis of dependency in their study. The major purpose of their study was to offer a critique of the existing Protestant patterns of ministry in Third World churches as a result of the missionary heritage. Although their analysis focused on ministerial case studies in India, much of what was said applied to other Third World situations in so far as they shared a history of dependency mediated by the missionary movement. Bergquist and Manickam have discussed in detail the inherited theological education and postulated a contextualized model of theological education derived from Hinduism and Islam in India (pp. 3-49). Commenting on traditional theological education they said:

> The inherited forms of ministry, largely mediated by the Western missionary movement, are proving increasingly inadequate for the autonomous third world churches. Ironically, these forms as adopted in the third world churches often reflect an outdated style even by Western Protestant standards, retaining patterns more typical of the nineteenth or early twentieth century which have long since been modified by the mother churches. (p. 9)

The World Council of Churches and International Missionary Council helped the Third World Churches to update their patterns of theological education. The Theological Education Fund (TEF) and the Programme on Theological Education (PTE) facilitated such an effort.

The TEF, now the PTE, was founded in 1958 to

develop and strengthen indigenous theological education in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Christine Lienemann-Perrin (1981) has written the story of the full 19 years of the TEF's existence, the changes in its goals and strategy, the elements of continuity, and the problems and opportunities of training for the ministry in the younger churches. She set all this in the context of the general relations between the western churches and those in the developing countries. Her book showed that from very early in its existence, the World Council of Churches (WCC)--and one of its predecessors, the International Missionary Council (IMC)--regarded theological education and ministerial training as central to the life and witness of the churches. Besides, it described and analysed how, in three successive states, the ecumenical community responded to the demands and challenges arising from the conviction that theological education has a strategic and unique role in the upbuilding and renewal of the churches (pp. 3-29).

After discussing the prehistory and founding, Lienemann-Perrin (1981) discussed three mandates of the TEF in detail: the first mandate 1958-1965; the second mandate 1965-1970; and the third mandate 1970-1977. During the first mandate period about twenty-seven theological seminaries throughout the Third World were given major grants. In addition, funds were made available to many of the Third World seminaries towards the purchase, publica-

tion, and translation of theological works. Under the
second mandate the TEF encouraged the setting up of
graduate programs in selected Third World seminaries and
motivated the faculties in these seminaries to reformulate
their curricula. Under the third mandate, funds were allo-
cated towards faculty development, innovation in theo-
logical education, and theological education by extension
(pp. 33-195).

The TEF also stressed the need for theological
education in context through publications like Learning
in Context (1973). James Burtness (1973) demonstrated how
the concern for contextualization was rooted in the Chris-
tian Gospel itself. "The sine quo non of theological
education," said Burtness, "is to equip the saints to
recontextualize the text" (p. 16).

Another article in Learning in Context provided an
understanding of fundamental issues concerning the contex-
tualization of theological education. Nazario (1973) des-
cribed these issues with guarded optimism. This author
forthrightly took issue with TEF's definition of the terms
dialectic and indigenization (p. 22).

Nazario considered indigenous awareness a
fundamental issue. Describing this concept he said:

> Indigenous awareness is the process by which inherent
> and inherited values are brought into conscious aware-
> ness. It is only within the context of this awareness
> that a society can face its own values analytically
> and relate to other cultural values critically. Each
> indigenous culture has its own inbuilt process of

> conscious awareness. To introduce ministry, or any
> other technological device into an indigenous context
> would mean breaking the interior dialectic of the
> society and initiating a process of cultural aliena-
> tion. (p. 23)

Some Third World theological educators were not

sensitive to the issues raised by Nazario. As a result,

there has been crisis in theological education especially

in the Third World. In response to this crisis the TEF's

third mandate (1969-1977) called for reform. Financial

viability was an important aspect of this reform. Herbert

Zorn was invited to coordinate the study on the financial

viability of theological education in the Third World.

Zorn's (1975) study showed that some of the main

theological institutions in the Third World were still

dependent on the West for over 70 percent of their income

(pp. 27-28). Tracing this fact historically Zorn postu-

lated that theological education was transplanted from the

West to the East. Inasmuch as the economic potential of

the Third World could not afford a western pattern, theolo-

gical education depended very much on the West for its

financial backing (p. 40). Zorn challenged the Third World

to develop its own curricula which might be financially

viable and culturally relevant (pp. 54-86).

There are, of course, critical issues that need

careful analysis prior to arriving at contextual decisions.

Harvey Conn (1979), in "Theological Education and the

Search for Excellence," discussed some of these current

issues in contextualizing theological education. First he reviewed the history of discussion on contextualization of theological education, and traced its beginning to the Tambaram meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1938. His discussion included the TEF, theological education in the Third World, theological education by extension, and Asian efforts towards contextualizing theological education. Among the Asian theological educators, Conn made special mention of Shoki Coe, Emerito Nacpil, and Bong-Rin Ro (pp. 311-363).

Although such efforts yielded significant results Conn (1979) argued, "The majority still clings to the traditional model of excellence defined by the western past. Third World patterns continue to go to the West for educational circumcision" (p. 318).

In the next section Conn outlined models for excellence which emerged from a conception of the ministry. One feature of the traditional model was that of the "minister as pedagogue." Conn claimed this concept dated back to the time of Clement of Alexandria (d. 215). Although scholasticism, reformation, and the world wars made some impact on the traditional model, changes were minimal.

Since 1972, the TEF had been calling for a new model: the minister as participant in the <u>Missio Dei</u>. In this model, the context of the church became a significatnt variable. Contextualization, therefore, became a response

to the context.   Contextualization "calls for a ministry
not simply involved in the world but deriving its agenda
from the World" (Conn, 1979, p. 337).   This model took note
of the shaping influences of political and sociological
ideologies.

For any renewal in theology or theological educa-
tion, the basis must be the Bible. So Conn enumerated
biblical focal points of renewal.   At the outset, he
discussed the concept of laity from biblical history. Conn
argued that there were ordained and unordained ministers
and the latter may refer to the laity. He drew his basis
from the New Testament teaching that there were varieties
of gifts (1 Cor 12:4).

Excellence in theological education, according to
Conn (1979) did not depend on theological education in
schools or universities alone (p. 354). The variables for
excellence were multifaceted. One of the significant
variables was the context of the believer and the church.
Such a context warranted a contextual theology and a
contextualized ministry (ibid).

Donald Kanagaratnam in his doctoral disser-
tation addressed significant issues concerning contextuali-
zation of theological education which might lead to a
contextualized ministry. Although his dissertation dealt
with theological education in the Sri Lankan context, his
findings were relevant to the neighboring Indian subconti-

nent where the culture is similar.

Kanagaratnam (1978) pointed out that theological
education must take historical, cultural, and social
realities far more seriously so that there could be
creative interaction between content and context. He chal-
lenged the theological teachers to relate theology to the
local cultural, social, and political need in order to
narrow the gap between theory and practice. Out of such a
concentrated effort, the author contended, will emerge a
contextualized theological education. Kanagaratnam sug-
gested that theological students must not confine them-
selves to the halls of learning. Rather, their training
must include working for and among the people they might be
serving in the future. Such a curriculum might widen the
students' creativity and sharpen their critical thinking.
Such theological training would also expose students to the
context of their ministry thus enabling the crystalization
of contextual issues (pp. 40-175).

The Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary, Madurai,
India, had already implemented some of the theories
espoused by Kanagaratnam even before his study commenced.
Robinson (1983), an Indian theological educator of the
Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary (TTS), discussed the
various aspects of theological education with his prime
concern contextualization. He demonstrated how TTS was
effectively operating in a pluralistic religio-cultural

context. He mentioned that both students and professors of the seminary lived among various religious and economic groups of the city of Madurai and commuted to their classes instead of living in the atmosphere of the seminary campus. The students' involvement in these various groups gave them a learning experience (Robinson, 1983, pp. 1-3). In clear terms Robinson pointed out that

> the context determines the curriculum; change in the context demands change in the curriculum as well. Curriculum revision is, thus, an ongoing process. During the last thirteen years of its existence TTS has done several major consultations on its curriculum and several changes have been effected. First, a major departure from the traditional curriculum which we inherited from our British colonial period; then a gradual process of relating it to our context. (p. 5)

These attempts towards contextualizing theological education influenced even churches outside the ecumenical movement to rethink their theological education. Currie's (1977) dissertation, "Strategies for Seventh-day Adventist Theological Education in the South Pacific Islands," dealt with contextualization of theological education in that part of the world. Currie presented strategies to find possible solutions to some of the important concerns: the appropriate type of theological education for the Adventist church in the South Pacific islands and the determination of cultural influence on curriculum. One of the significant conclusions in Currie's dissertation was that courses should concentrate less on Western academic curricula and consider more the ministerial training within

the context of the Pacific islands (pp. 179-267).

Another study by Vyhmeister (1978) dealt with selected curricular determinants for Seventh-day Adventist theological education in the South American context. She showed that theological education should, to a great extent, be based on the needs of the ministers and of the church they serve. The context of the society and the church should be seriously studied and the work and the needs of the society must be considered (pp. 155-249). On the basis of the information gathered and organized, Vyhmeister made six recommendations. She claimed,

> Should these recommendations be implemented, the
> South American Division would have a theological edu-
> cation program created to fit the needs of its own
> minister. However, there would still be the danger
> that this model of theological education might become
> a tradition, just as difficult to modify as any of the
> previous models. Theological education, in whatever
> country it may be, needs to be constantly reviewed so
> it may be well contextualized, not only in space, but
> also in time. (p. 266)

Summary

All the authors reviewed agree that effective theological education must be based on the needs of the learners and of the society in which they will function. The TEF allocated thousands of dollars to Third World countries towards upgrading, innovating, and contextualizing ministerial training.

Currie's and Vyhmeister's studies indicate that Adventists sensed the need for contextual theological

education. Chapter III reviews the historical development
of Adventist theological education in India and examines
and analyzes if it has met the needs of contextualization.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL

EDUCATION IN INDIA

Introduction

A history of Adventist theological education in
India is imperative to evaluate the need for its contex-
tualization. This chapter traces the history of Adventist
theological education from its inception to 1983. The
three main divisions of this chapter are: Pioneer Efforts
at Coimbatore; South India Training School at Bangalore;
and the Beginning and Development of Spicer Memorial Col-
lege in Pune.

Training for the priesthood in India dates back to
2500 B.C. when the Vedic schools of Indus valley civiliza-
tion were in operation (Keay, 1918, pp. 16-17). Altekar
(1944) in his study explains the Gurukula system under
which a student lived with the Guru while pursuing priestly
training (pp. 30-33).

The Fransciscans were the first non-Hindu group to
start priestly training for indigenous men as early as 1542
(Neill, 1984, p. 124). The arrival of Protestant missiona-
ries in the early 1700s resulted in the establishment cf
Protestant seminaries (Neill, 1970, pp. 48-61).

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Systematic theological training for Adventists did
not commence until the introduction of the junior college
at Bangalore in 1930 (Jenson, 1965, p. 42). However, one
of the first acts of Adventist pioneers to India was the
establishment of a small school at Calcutta in 1897. In
rapid succession schools were established in other areas of
India (Jenson, 1965, p. 2). In one of his reports Shaw
(1913), the first superintendent of the Indian Mission,
said:

> our educational work, while yet in its infancy, is
> growing. There are at the present time fourteen vil-
> lage schools, with an enrollment of 615, and four
> boarding schools having an enrollment of 243, making in
> all 858 pupils under our religious training. (p. 2)

Graduates from these few high schools, with the
meager training imparted by the missionaries, returned to
establish churches and schools in their villages and towns
(Prasada-Rao, Interview, 1984).

Indian Christian Training School

In the Biennial conference of the Indian church in
December, 1914, actions were taken to upgrade educational
facilities. H. R. Salisbury (January 1915), President of
Indian Union Mission announced "It was voted to
open this year a training school for our Indian workers"
(p. 6).

Under the direction of I. F. Blue, the Indian
Christian Training School was opened on November 3, 1915,

in Lucknow. Fourteen students were in attendance at the opening: two from Burma, one from Nazareth in South India, three from the Telugu area, two from Bombay state, three from the North West India area, and two from North India (Jenson, 1969, p. 20). Although detailed data regarding this institution was not available, fragmented information regarding some of the early students was located in a booklet. According to Prasada-Rao (1966) the three students from the Telegu field were N. B. Solomon, V. Benjamin, and D. C. Jacob. They returned in the summer of 1916 to their home field (p. 10). Later, Mathi Prakasam of Andhra also attended the Indian Bible Institute for two years (Subushnam, 1956, p. 15).

Like I. F. Blue, many overseas missionaries were closely connected with the development of Adventist missions in India. Notable missionaries included J. L. Shaw, the first superintendent of the India Mission, and his wife, Bessie Lucille. They were responsible for influencing many people to come to India for their life's work (Shaw, 1985). It was Bessie Shaw, while attending a campmeeting in the USA in 1906, who met Judson S. James and asked, "Will you go to India if you are called?" James, not realizing a call might come, responded, "Yes." By October of that year he was under appointment and arrived in Bombay with his family on December 22. Subsequently, James became the superintendent of the South India Mission

and was closely associated with Gentry G. Lowry in founding
the School at Coimbatore--the forerunner of Spicer Memorial
College (Jenson, 1965, pp. 10-11).

Pioneer Efforts at Coimbatore

Coimbatore, an industrial city, is located in the
North-western part of the State of Tamil Nadu. In 1907, J.
S. James accompanied by J. L. Shaw and G. F. Enoch were the
first Adventist missionaries to arrive at Pragasapuram,
Tamil Nadu, at the invitation of a seventh-day Sabbath
group. Subsequently, James settled at Pragasapuram and
established a church and a school (James, 1908, p. 16).

The increasing enrollment at Pragasapuram Elemen-
tary school necessitated upgrading the educational facili-
ties. Such a demanding need led Gentry Lowry and Judson
James to Coimbatore (Eastern Tidings, March 1915, p. 10).
After purchasing a suitable property, a higher secondary
school was started there.

The new school began with six boys and seven girls
Eventually, eight more joined. Of these, thirteen were
from Pragasapuram, two from the Telugu country, four from
Pondicherry, and two from Coimbatore itself (Jenson, 1965,
p. 17).

J. S. James accompanied thirteen boys and girls
from Pragasapuram to Coimbatore (James, 1915, p. 9).
The school at Coimbatore opened four days before the death
of Ellen G. White, one of the prominent founders of the

Seventh-day Adventist Church who provided the philosophical

basis and impetus for the Adventist educational system.

Another report regarding Coimbatore school reads,

> In 1915, a new school was opened at Coimbatore under
> the principalship of Pastor G. G. Lowry. The school
> was established to meet the need of those students,
> who having finished the pioneer lower school of the
> mission at Nazareth in Tinnevelly District, felt the
> need for further training. (Pohlman, 15 September,
> 1945, pp. 1-4)

During the first year of operation of this new

school, standards six to nine were taught. The staff

consisted of Lowry as principal and instructor in Bible,

and Mr. Chinnadoria, a young college graduate, as well as

Mr. Gnanasigamoni, transferred from Pragasapuram and two

other persons (Jenson, 1965, p. 22).

Lowry reporting on the progress of the

Coimbatore school at the opening of the second year said

the school opened with an enrollment of twenty-eight

scholars. It was anticipated that four of the students

would complete the tenth standard that year (Jenson, 1965,

p. 22).

In May 1917, V. D. Koilpillai, V. Isaac, D. Aaron,

and P. Devasahayam completed the requirements for the tenth

standard. Two of them went into active employment for the

church, and the other two went to Lucknow for further

education (Jenson, 1965, p. 23) Thus it may be inferred

that the purpose of the Indian Training School in Lucknow

was to serve the entire area of Asia as an advanced school

whereas the school in Coimbatore addressed the South India Mission needs. The South India Training School constituted the only theological education for most of the early ministers in South India (Subushnam, September 20, 1984).

As the school began to draw students from all parts of South India, consideration was given to locating the institution in a central location. A report (Lowry, 1917) read, "At the last meeting of the committee it was voted that we rent quarters at Bangalore for the South India Training School with the idea of locating there permanently later on" (p. 2).

South India Training School at Bangalore

At the beginning of 1918, the South India Training School was transferred to Bangalore along with G. G. Lowry as the principal. Upon Lowry's appointment as president of the South India Union Mission, F. M. Meleen accepted the position in July 1918 (Jenson, 1965, pp. 25-26).

Obviously, by this time a few schools had been established in different parts of the South India Mission. The South India Mission superintendent stated that there were six schools with a total enrollment of 293 students. A plan was clearly emerging to make the South India Training School the most advanced of these institutions. The plan also called for mature students from each of the other schools eventually to come to this training school for

their advanced studies (ibid).

Such a training center required a more spacious and permanent site. After months of search, Gentry G. Lowry (1919), president of the South India mission, reported:

> At last a property for the training school has been purchased. For four years the school has been conducted in rented quarters, but now that the land has been secured we look forward to a permanent home of our very own for the school. (p. 2)

In March, 1920 Meleen, the principal, reported, "We have been able to move our school into quarters more suitable than those in which we were formerly located. We are now located in the outskirts of the city" (p. 6).

The rapidly growing church in India demanded a larger and more educated working force. Consequently, great stress was laid on the ability of the school to produce pastors, teachers, and other personnel for the needs of the church. Such stress resulted in offering the first year course in theological studies begining with the 1922-23 academic year. H. L. Peden joined the staff the same year and taught courses in ancient and medieval history, college mathematics, rhetoric and composition, pastoral training, public speaking, and testimony study (Meleen, 1922, p. 6).

During the following year, courses in church history and major and minor prophets were offered. Additions to the curriculum required additional staff. P. C. Poley, L. C. Shephard, G. F. H. Ritchie, all missionaries

and Samuel Dason, a national, filled the needed positions
(Jenson, 1965, p. 35).

Some of the new courses became more popular than
the others. A report in Eastern Tidings, August 15, 1924
read:

> At the begining of the 1924-25 school year some of
> the classes are very crowded, for instance in Old
> Testament History class, there are forty students; and
> the class has to be conducted in the chapel as there
> is no other room to hold all. (p. 10)

By this time more elementary schools and high
schools had been established around the various unions
within India. Inasmuch as these schools in the unions
were capable of carrying on training up to tenth standard
(grade), it was recommended that "for the present the South
India Training School carry the advanced work" (Eastern
Tidings, May 1929, p. 10). This meant training up to the
junior college level. This was evident through a report by
Meleen which read: "the regular course of study offered
here provides for the 10th, 11th, and 12 standards"
(Eastern Tidings, December 15, 1930, p. 7). It must be
understood that the final year of high school in India
ended with the completion of tenth standard; only during
the late 1970s twelve years of high school education were
introduced.

From the 1934-35 academic year, grades 13 and 14
were added as part of college training. The medium of
instruction, of course, was in English. Obviously, with a

student body with so many languages and dialects, it was
the only feasible alternative (Losey, September, 1930, p.
7).

With additional courses in many fields of learning
departments of instruction became imperative. The
Department of Religion was organized during the 1935-36
school year. L. G. Mookerjee, a national, became the
chairman of the department (Jenson, 1965, p. 48). The
South India Training School had experienced a phenomenal
growth since it was first established in 1915 at
Coimbatore. Change and continuity were all part of this
growth.

In May, 1937, Principal Losey announced,

> South India Training School is no more! Up out of
> the foundation that has been built by faithful men and
> women in the past has arisen a new school, recently
> named by the Division, Spicer College in honour of
> that faithful veteran, W. A. Spicer. (p. 2)

Although classes equivalent to junior college
education were available at the South India Training
School, in 1937 it was officially voted that

> the Krishnarajapuram school be operated as a Division
> coeducational junior college for the training of
> vernacular workers, with a representative board
> appointed by the Division Biennial Council. (Eastern
> Tidings, January 1937, p. 14)

De Alwis, in her study asked, "Although stress was
placed on the word 'vernacular worker,' how well did the

curriculum fit him for service in the villages in India"

(De Alwis, 1977, p. 28)?

What was the standard for curriculum at this time?
Was there a model for Spicer College? Perhaps, Jenson's
(1965) study might answer these questions:

> The pattern for the development of colleges had by
> this time been well established in the United States
> and other countries. It must be borne in mind that
> though the system of education which the church had
> espoused was distinct because of the deeply spiritual
> mould which characterized it, yet it was also a system
> which was based upon the finest of scholastic
> disciplines. (p. 57)

Obviously, the curriculum at Spicer was modeled
after the Seventh-day Adventist colleges in the United
States and other countries, and most of the teaching staff
was from abroad. Although the existing scenario was alien
to the Indian context, Jenson (1965) said:

> It is not, then, the goal of Seventh-day Adventist
> schools to detach the individual student from his
> national and cultural heritage, nor is it their aim to
> impose a foreign culture upon the student; but,
> rather, to make each student a progressive and
> enlightened member of his own community--to make each
> one a true, loyal citizen of his country, motivated by
> unselfish courtesy. (pp. 9, 10)

Despite limitations, Spicer College moved forward.
A new era in the history of the school was dawning. In
1938 when changes all around the college were evident,
Edward W. Pohlman was called to be the principal. His
innovative ideas resulted in some changes for the better.
In his plans for the college, of special interest was the
large number of new collegiate courses which were to be

offered for the 1940-41 academic year. Particular atten-
tion was given to the theological department. At least
eleven courses were stressed including New Testament Greek.
It was of interest to note that twenty-two students were
enrolled in the theological department, and thirty-four in
the teacher training course (Eastern Tidings, July 1940,
pp. 3-4). These additional courses in religion were the
bases for calling M. I. Packianathan, a national, from
Pragasapuram to join the religion faculty at Spicer College
(Pohlman, February 1941, p. 3).

By this time the physical plant at Krishnarajapuram
was rather inadequate to cater for the junior college, and
the the college itself needed a central location to make it
easily accessible to students from all over the Indian
subcontinent. A commission was appointed to search for a
new site for the college. "This commission was composed of
the following men: J. M. Steeves, G. G. Lowry, E. W.
Pholman, C. C. Cantwell, and M. G. Champion (Jenson, 1965,
p. 62). Incidentally, all these men were overseas
missionaries.

At the end of the 1941-42 school year principal
Pohlman announced that "the plan is to move the college to
Poona during the next school vacation" (Lowry, February
1942, p. 3).

New Beginnings at Poona

August 28, 1942 was a significant day in the

history of Spicer College. On that day the college opened

its doors to students for the first time in its present

location in Kirkee, Pune. There were still the noises of

hammer, saw, and workmen's shouts to distract class discus-

sion and students' study (Pohlman, October 1942, p. 7).

At the new location more college subjects were

offered presenting some degree of choice for the students.

Consequently, some classes were more popular than the

others.

> The class in comparative Religions has been enjoying
> some special assistance given in the form of lectures
> and material distributed by Pastor W. H. McHenry.
> Brother McHenry has specialized in the study of
> Hinduism, with special emphasis on the philosophical
> system. (Pohlman, December 1942, p. 4)

Strangely, a retrospective look at the early Adven-

tist mission may present a divergent view. In 1911, all

the Adventist workers in India met for a council at

Lucknow. Professor W. W. Prescott from the General

Conference was present and preached every night. During

these meetings the delegates proposed that an Adventist

worker must learn something about the religions of India in

order to be better equipped to reach the people with the

Adventist message. This proposal, however, was deterred by

the argument that Israel did not have to study the plans of

the enemy before they took Jericho (Thurber, January 1937,

p. 7).

Thirty years later a growing Adventist Church in

India perceived its needs from within its own context. A religion graduate of Spicer College would be ministering among and evangelizing in a predominantly non-Christian population in India. Some knowledge of Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, and Sikhism would likely enhance his endeavors and strengthen his evangelistic approach.

Introducing a course in comparative religion was a step towards contextualizing theological education. One of the more pressing needs of the religion department in 1943-44 was for an indigenous teacher with a strong theological and evangelistic background. G. Isaiah of Andhra fulfilled such a need (Jenson, 1965, p. 71).

Changes were not only evident in the religion department but also in the administration of the college. In 1944, M. O. Manley assumed the office of principal. In the midst of the school year, however, Manley was called to Burma union as its president and Professor C. A. Schutt became the principal (Ham, June 1944, p. 3 and Eastern Tidings, February 1946, p. 8).

A few months after becoming principal, Schutt announced: "beginning from 1946-47 school year arrangements had been completed to offer a third year of college work (Jenson, 1965, p. 74). This move was a significant step towards a bachelors level of collegiate training.

This progress dictated the need for additional staff. New additions to the staff were made in 1948 upon

the arrival of H. H. Mattison, an American missionary.
Through the years he became famous for his remarkable
ability to expound the intricacies of the Bible. E. L.
Sorenson also joined the staff giving assistance in the
theology department (Jenson, 1965, p. 75).

As usual, some classes were more crowded than
others. A report indicated, "A class in evangelism known
as Training Light Bearers has been organized, and we are
glad to report that nearly 90% of our student body has
enrolled for the class" (Matthews, January 1948, p. 6).

With all the additional classes and qualified
teachers, Spicer College was progressing towards becoming a
senior college. In 1948, Mr. Weaver, an associate
secretary from the educational department of the General
Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, arrived at Spicer
College to evaluate the academic program. At the end of
his visit he said,

> since it has been decided that this shall be the
> senior college for the Southern Asia Division, then
> this school should exhibit the marks of scholarship,
> maturity, dignity and spiritual power and vision that
> are befitting aaa real senior college. (Weaver, May 1948,
> p. 2)

The end of the 1947-48 academic year marked the
inception of senior college graduates receiving degrees.
E. N. Simon and Robinson Koilpillai were the first two
graduating seniors. Among the twelve junior college
graduates one was from theology, three from commerce

classes, and eight from the normal teaching section
(Prasada Rao, March, 1948, p. 5).

A college offering a four-year degree in
theological training needed more qualified teachers.
During the 1951-52 academic year Robert L. Rowe, a
missionary, was called to the religion department where he
remained until 1985. G. R. Jenson, another missionary from
the USA, was called to serve as acting head of the religion
department at the begining of 1954-55 academic year. He
remained in the position until his furlough in December
1956 (Jenson, 1965, pp. 80-81).

Many former graduates and some of the teachers at
Spicer College expressed the need for further education.
With this need an extension school was conducted under the
auspices of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary
then located in Washington D.C., USA. With Frank H. Yost
as Director and Melvin K. Eckenroth and Arthur White as
instructors, the following courses were offered at Spicer
College campus: Evangelistic Procedure, Christ Centered
Preaching, Prophetic Guidance in the Remnant Church, Doc-
trine of the Sabbath and Sunday, and Doctrine of Grace and
Law (Yost, May 1955, p. 2).

While Spicer College was making progress in
academic program, life outside its walls was traumatic yet
significant. After years of struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi
and others, India became an independent nation on August

15, 1947. Thus ended 347 years of colonialism. In the
political arena, Indians gradually occupied positions of
leadership (Majumdar, 1958, pp. 982-1012).

The Christian churches in India responded with
reserved apprehension to this new era. Missionaries had
occupied the positions of leadership in the churches for
scores of years. Bishop Neill (1970) observed: "The idea
of a truly Indian church, in which a missionary would take
his place alongside his Indian colleagues on a basis of
equality, had not yet risen above the horizon" (p. 135).

In response to the emerging political context, a
group of missionary societies established the United Theolo-
gical College at Bangalore in 1910. In 1917 Serampore
College was reconstituted to cffer a Bachelor of Divinity
degree. The Methodists responded by founding Leonard
College at Jabulpur. The Lutherans added their institution
at Rajamundry, Andhra (Neill, 1970, pp. 135-136).

One of the post-independence changes within the
Adventist church was the appointment of Ronald E. Rice as
president of Spicer Missionary College in 1955 (Jenson,
1965, p. 83). This change was effected eight years after
India's independence and five years after India became a
republic.

Along with the many changes at Spicer College
during Rice's presidentship, a new course, Introduction to
the Ministry, became available to the students in the

Religion Department (Spicer Memorial College Bulletin, 1956-57).

Rice remained as president until 1963 when he was appointed secretary of the Department of Education for the Southern Asia Division. Upon his departure, Maliakal E. Cherian became the president. He had the distinction of being the first national president. At the time, he was also the head of the Religious philosophy department (Jenson, 1965, pp. 91-92).

Dr. Cherian helped bring about innovative changes in the religion department. The titles of the courses underwent a change of nomenclature: Bible Survey became Foundations of Christianity; Daniel and Revelation became Christian Philosophy of History; and Pauline Epistles changed to Philosophy of St. Paul. Beginning with the 1963-64 academic year courses in Seventh-day Adventist Church history and the History of Christianity in India became cognate requirements for Religion majors (Spicer Memorial College Bulletin, 1963-64).

From 1962 Spicer College's Department of Religion offered three majors: theology, religious philosophy, and religious history. These changes were effected in view of the declining enrollment in the department. Writing in 1962 Fowler observed:

> statistics for the last five years show a downward
> trend in the ministerial enrollment: 1957-58, 11 1/2
> %; 59-60, 9 %; 60-61, 11 1/2%; 61-62, 10 1/2%. Of the
> 18 senior graduates [four year] of 1962 only one was

from the Department of Theology. Out of the 116
students enrolled this year from the largest union in
the division, only 2 are planning for the Gospel
ministry. (p. 5)

Innovation in curriculum and restructuring of the

religion department certainly attracted more students. A

report (Southern Asia Tidings, January, 1965) read:

"Fifty four SMC [Spicer Memorial College] students are

majoring in religion and theology during the 1964-65 school

year" (p. 16).

The reorganization of the religion department

continued through the ensuing academic year. In 1966, the

School of Theology was formed with George R. Jenson as

dean. The School of Theology served a dual purpose: It

provided opportunities for those who were scholastically

minded to grow in the area of theolgy and it provided

diploma courses to those who had not had a formal high-

school education. This directed more workers from the

field towards a division-recognized certificate (The

Spicerian, September 1966, p. 1).

Responding to the needs of these experienced pas-

tors and evangelists returning to the college to complete

their studies, more courses in non-Christian religions were

introduced in the 1966-67 academic term. These courses

included Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Islam

(Spicer Memorial College Bulletin, 1966-67). During the

following year, a course involving practical training in

ministry and field evangelism was introduced. This

required participation in an evangelistic campaign under an
approved minister. This became the first practical course
offered through the Department of Religion at Spicer
College (Spicer Memorial College Bulletin, 1968-69).

A study of the Spicer College bulletins from 1962-
1969 revealed that there were more overseas teachers in the
Religion Department than nationals. They had certainly
contributed to the scholarship, but in most cases did not
help to contextualize theological education (Fowler, 1985).
In July, 1969, Tissa Brian de Alwis joined the religion
department. He had recently returned with a M. A. in
religion from Andrews University (Moses, September 1970, p.
24). In June 1982, De Alwis received the degree, Doctor
of Theology from Andrews University. His dissertation
concerning Christian dialogue with Buddhists opened new
avenues and positive response from Buddhist scholars. His
teaching style, his lectures, and seminars enhanced the
contextualization of theological training at Spicer memo-
rial College (Rao, 1985).

Any institution of learning stands in need of fre-
quent evaluation. Spicer College is not an exception. In
the Summer of 1970 the executive committee of the Southern
Asia Division requested the General Conference of Seventh-
day Adventist to set up a Higher Education Survey Commis-
sion to study the status and development of Spicer Memorial
College. The General Conference appointed a commission

consisting of Charles B. Hirsch, R. E. Klimes, and V. E. Garber.

The commission visited Spicer College from February 4 through 24, 1971. One of their recommendations read:

> Plans should be made in the departments of Religious Philosophy and Applied Theology for at least one indigenous teacher, with a broad pastoral and evangelistic experience plus proper educational qualification-- preferably a B.D. or equivalent. (Guild, June 1971, p. 9.)

Biblical languages as a minor field of study became available as part of the ongoing innovation in the School of Theology. Pascal Latour and Bruce Johanson, both graduates of Andrews University, were appointed as instructors in this department (Spicer Memorial College Bulletin, 1970-71).

During 1973-74 academic term, William Johnsson returned with a Ph.D. in New Testament studies from Vanderbilt University. He was appointed dean of the School of Theology. Johnsson had taught at Spicer College for a number of years prior to this appointment. Johnsson introduced additional courses in the School of Theology. His efforts to contextualize theological education resulted in offering Studies in Ancient Hinduism, Trends in Modern Hinduism, Contemporary Hindu Thought and Indian Theology (Spicer Memorial College Bulletin, 1973-74). According to the 1982-83 Spicer College Bulletin, these courses were no longer offered.

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Summary

Adventist theological education in India had grown from high-school level training to a baccalaureate degree program. Although transferred from Coimbatore to Bangalore and on to Pune, the objective had remained constant: to train evangelists and pastors. A careful study of the Spicer College Bulletin through the years indicated that the religion curriculum and model for theological education had kept abreast with the trends at Adventist colleges in the USA more than the immediate context in India. It was also evident that there were more overseas missionaries as theological educato:s than nationals.

Although innovation in theological education was needed, an appropriate curriculum model or a philosophical construct for contextual theological training had not emerged. Such a construct could help the contextualization of Adventist theological education in India.

The following chapter discusses the necessity for contextualization.

CHAPTER IV

CONTEXTUALIZATION: A NECESSITY

The advance of the Gospel commission and the growth of the church are proportionately related to the church's ability to relate to the context in which it is planted. This observation is substantiated by the history of the Christian church in various cultures.

During the early history of the church the Apostles attempted to relate the message of Christ to the cultures of their receptors. They sought to take the Christian message that had come to them in the Aramaic language and Jewish culture and communicate it, among others, to the Greeks. The Apostles used indigenous words and concepts to communicate the message of Christianity (Kraft, 1978, pp. 32, 33).

Stanley Jones, a 20th-century missionary, explained that Christianity which arose out of the Hebrew culture was later influenced by the Graeco-Roman civilization. Upon reaching Europe it received another expression. Out of the Anglo-Saxon inheritance came three great characteristics: self-reliance, aggressiveness, and the love of individual freedom (Jones, 1925, pp. 227-230).

It is evident that culture and the church met

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and continue to meet in various ways. Culture is a means through which the gospel and the church are continually expressed in understandable terms. Because culture may be used for good or evil, the Christian is faced constantly with the need to "utilize, reject, or transform cultural forms in the process of response and obedience" (Knapp, 1976, p. 5).

At the 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, serious questions regarding the relationship between the church and culture were discussed (Douglas, 1975). Eleven years earlier, at the World Council of Churches's Faith and Order Commission in Montreal, Kasemann raised a hermeneutical question, indicating the increasing interest in contextualization. Of considerable influence was the publication in 1972 of the TEF report Ministry in Context, which discussed contextualization in light of the technological revolution and the spread of secularism (Nicholls, 1980, p. 49).

Conn (1985) indicated that contextualization is certainly at the heart of most missiological discussion. What is contextualization? The term context was derived from the Latin contexere which means "to weave or join together." Contextus, the noun form refers to "what is woven together, what is held together as a connected whole" (Potter, 1972, p. 321). Knapp (1976) defined contextualization as the

dynamic process through which the church continually challenges and/or incorporates or transforms elements of the cultural and social milieu of which it is an integral part in its daily struggle to be obedient to the Lord Jesus Christ in its life and mission in the world. (p. 5)

Conn (1979) took a different view. According to him contextualization

is more than simply taking the semantic context seriously. And it is even more than taking the social, political and economic context seriously. It is the conscientization of the contexts in the parti- cular, historical moment assessing the peculiarity of the context in the light of the mission of the church as it is called to participate in the Missio Dei. Only through the dialectical interaction of the Missio Dei and the historical process does the Gospel's con- textualization take concrete shape. (p. 337)

In essence, contextualization is a means of rela- ting the never changing Word of God in the ever changing world and its multifaceted contexts. This concept opens up possibilities of approaching the Bible and of reflecting upon the Christian faith in new ways in the light of needs and priorities peculiar to India.

However, a basic problem one confronts in the pro- cess of contextualization is that of distortion and dilu- tion, commonly referred to as syncretism, that is, the danger of allowing the context to determine the content. Syncretism occurs "when critical and basic elements of the Gospel are lost in the process of contextualization and are replaced by religious elements from the receiving culture" (Douglas, 1975, p. 1227).

When the Church permits the context to write its

agenda, or determine its content, contextualization looses
its biblical basis. De Nobili's mission methodology at
Madurai, India, could be an example of this (Cronin, 1959,
pp. 231-240).

Another inherent danger is in an exaggerated
emphasis on a particular cultural experience or context
that leads to exclusivism. Douglas (1985) is of the
opinion that the fourth-century church succumbed to such a
temptation.

An understanding of the basis for contextualiza-
tion, perhaps, will help avoid syncretism and exclusivism.
The rest of the chapter is a discussion on the theolo-
gical, ecclesiological, educational, and sociological bases
to emphasize the necessity for contextualization.

Theological Basis

The literature studied repeatedly stressed that the
divine-human encounter never occurs in a cultural vacuum.
The supracultural biblical message must take on the forms
of the receptor's culture so that it may be received,
understood, and responded to intelligently. The basic
issue, therefore, is how the supracultural may be communi-
cated in culturally relevant and meaningful terms without
being distorted or diluted by the non-Christian elements in
a culture. Is there a biblical basis?

At the outset it must be stated that a person's

understanding of the biblical concepts is conditioned by
his culture. He lives in a concrete historical situation,
in a culture from which he derives not only his language
but also his patterns of thought and conduct, his methods
of learning, his emotional reactions, his values,
interests, and goals. Padilla amplified this concept fur-
ther. He said that God's Word reaches man in terms of his
own culture, or it does not reach him at all (Padilla,
1979, p. 290). The Scriptures are good examples of this
concept. Costas (1979) suggested that "the Scriptures are
contextual from beginning to end" (p. 25).

Undoubtedly, the Bible is a dynamic witness to
God's purpose to meet man and to communicate with him in
his concrete historical situation. This is indicated by
the anthropomorphic language of the Bible: God walks in
the garden in the cool of the day; God has eyes, hands,
feet; God repents. It is indicated by the action of the
logos who pitched his tent at a definite spot in time and
space, as a member of the Jewish nation (Padilla, 1979, p.
295).

Such a divine revelation indicates that "the
Creator-God while transcendent is also immanent and active
within the environmental, historical, social, and economic
context of the world" (Kanagaratnam, 1978, p. 47). That
the creator God's revelation is related to the receiver's
culture is evident from the Bible.

> He [God] reveals himself to concrete peoples in speci-
> fic situations by means of particular cultural symbols
> and categories.   It is not possible to read the OT
> without being struck by the human character of its
> revelatorial claims. Theology in the OT appears as a
> culture-bound, historically-situated reflection on the
> God who makes himself known in human language. (Costas,
> 1979, p. 25)

For example, the symbols in the Abrahamic covenant

(Gen 15:6-21) bear strong affinity to the contemporary

nomadic culture of Mesopotamia and the ancient Middle East.

Later in history, God chose the culture of the Hebrews to

convey certain meanings about Himself. The Old Testament

is a vivid illustration of how God is willing to work with

a culture that is not perfect for all cultures. Neverthe-

less, God started where people were, embedded in their own

cultural context, and He used the cultural forms people

could understand to communicate something about Himself

(Whiteman, 1984, pp. 276-77).

During the Exodus, God Himself formulated the

method for Israel's education.

> But the people were slow to learn the lesson. Accus-
> tomed as they had been in Egypt to material represen-
> tations of the Deity, and these of the most degrading
> nature, it was difficult for them to conceive of the
> existence or the character of the Unseen One.   In pity
> for their weakness, God gave them a symbol of His
> presence. "Let them make Me a sanctuary," He said;
> "that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:8. (White
> 1903, p. 35)

The Israelites were accustomed to the Egyptian

culture. God, in His mercy, asked Moses to build the

Sanctuary so their Egyptio-israeli mindset would have a

tangible symbol of worship. God's educational methodology

for Israel operated within their cultural parameters. His revelation to the Bible writers also fits in this category.

Although inspired by God (2 Tim 3:16,17; I Pet 1:21), the Bible writers used terminology with which their immediate readers were well acquainted. For example, John writing to a predominantly Greek mind employed the Greek concept logos to explain the concept of incarnation (John 1:1). Ladd (1974) was of the opinion that John deliberately chose the term logos as it was widely known in both the Hellenistic and the Jewish worlds in the interests of setting forth the significance of Christ (p. 238).

The term logos in John 1:1 had a rich heritage to both Jews and Greeks. For Greeks, who held a theistic view of the universe, it was the means by which God revealed himself to the world, while among those with pantheistic outlook, logos was the principle which held the world together and endowed men with the wisdom for living (Newman & Nida, 1980, p. 7).

Logos was also used by Plato and Philo and in the metaphysical speculations of the Alexandrine school. To them logos was the "idea of all ideas," the archtype of the universe. Philo perceived logos as abhorrent to and entirely incapable of incarnation. It was compatible to and based on their idea of dualism (Spence & Exell, 1977, p. 5).

In Greek, logos signifies both reason and the

spoken word--inner thought and outward expression. John
chose the term and applied it to Jesus because his earthly
life and ministry were actually the revealing of the divine
purpose to men and needed to be understood not only as a
mere historical event but carrying divine significance
(Butterick, 1962, p. 694).

Dabar, or "the Word," to the Jews meant the means by
which God created the world (Ps 33:6). In the philosophi-
cal Judaism of NT times "the Word" largely assumed the
functions assigned to "wisdom." Thus by the time John
wrote his Gospel "the Word" was close to being recognized
as a personal being, and it had roles relating to the
manner in which God created the world and the way in which
God revealed Himself to the world that He brought into
being (Newman & Nida, 1980, p. 7).

In John 1:14, the writer says: kai ho logos
sargz egeneto kai eskenosen en hemin. John's assertion,
ho logos sargz egeneto (John 1:14) amazed and refuted all
Hellenistic philosophical and Gnostic dualisms that sepa-
rated God from His world (Kittel, 1979, pp. 76, 77).

Blackman (1962) observed that

> the Logos actually entered the human sphere in the
> sense of becoming a human being: the Word became
> flesh (John 1:14). The choice of the word, 'flesh'
> rather than simply 'man' is deliberate: it signifies
> humanity in its physical aspect. (p. 694)

In John 1:14 the writer emphasized that it was God
Himself who in the Word entered human history, not as a

phantom but as a real man of flesh. The word translated "to dwell" <u>eskenosen</u>, or "to tabernacle" was a biblical metaphor for God's presence (Ladd, 1974, p. 242). Incarnation, therefore, is a bridge between the known and the unknown; between the infinitesimal and the infinite; between the apparent and the real; between the human and the divine.

The incarnation of God in human form is one of the cornerstones of the Christian faith. Theological reflections on this topic have resulted in volumes and articles. Whiteman (1984), however, lamented that "there has been little discussion or reflection on the fact that God became incarnate in a specific culture" (p. 275). This aspect of the incarnation, the cultural aspect, has tremendous implication for contextualization of Christianity in the cultures of the world.

First, the incarnation makes clear God's approach to the revelation of Himself and of His purposes. God did not shout his message from the heavens; rather He became present as a man among men. The climax of God's revelation is Emmanuel. And Emmanuel is Jesus, a first-century Jew. The incarnation unmistakably demonstrated God's intention to make himself known within the human situation and context. Because of the very nature of the Gospel one knows it only as a message contextualized in culture (Padilla, 1979, p. 286).

Second,

> When God became man, Christ took flesh in a particular family, members of a particular nation, with the tradition of customs associated with that nation. All that was not evil he sanctified. Wherever He is taken by men in any time and place he takes that nationality, that society, that 'culture,' and sanctifies all that is capable of sanctification by his presence. (Walls, 1982, p. 97)

In the incarnation of Christ, God completely identified with man in human condition. Kraft (1979) observed that "God in Jesus became so much a part of a specific human context that many never even recognized that He had come from some where else" (p. 175). Through the incarnation the Word came to man at a particular time and place; hence, the incarnation was the "divine form of contextualization" (Coe, 1973, p. 50).

The incarnation had set the precedent for the Gospel of Christ to take the context of the receptor's culture seriously; so the receiver could relate to the Gospel and respond favorably. As Jesus, the divine One, condescended to become human to relate to the context of this earth so a messenger of the gospel must become a person to relate to the receptor's culture and his context.

Third, "the incarnation teaches identification without loss of identity" (Stott & Coote, 1980, p. 324). Although Jesus became man He did not loose his identity as God. In the process of contextualization one should be cautious not to sacrifice the biblical norms and

consequently lose the Christian identity. If carried to the extreme it might not be contextualization but syncretism.

In addition to Christ's incarnation Paul's pattern of ministry and his writings also provided a theological basis for contextualization. Concerning the different styles that Paul followed in his various books of the Bible Samuel and Sugden (1983) said that

> the very evidence which leads some scholars to think that the Pastorals are not Pauline because they do not contain many of Paul's themes in Romans, is exactly the evidence which shows that Paul contextualised the gospel and highlighted different themes in different contexts in order that the gospel should bring life in each context. (p. 122)

One of the remarkable examples of contextualizing Christianity within the thought forms of a pagan culture was evident in Paul's speech at the Areopagus in Athens. In Acts 17:28 Paul described the character of God by means of two quotations: "In him we live and move and have our being," and "For we also are his offspring." Tano (1981) observed,

> not only were these lines from pagan poets; they also referred to Zeus, the chief of the Greek gods. By utilizing these statements Paul recognized the element of truth in them because they described the character of the Christian God. (p. 64)

Paul used familiar categories to introduce Jesus Christ to the Greeks. In fact, Paul accommodated himself to all kinds of people. He understood that the Gospel was needed and had to be applied to different cultures and social

structures.   For example, in I Cor 9:20-23 Paul wrote:

> To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jew. To
> those under the law I became like one under the law
> (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win
> those under the law. To those not having the law I
> became like one not having the law (though I am under
> Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law.
> To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I become
> all things to all men so that by all possible means I
> might save some. (NIV)

Commenting on this verse Calvin (1948) said:

> Among the Gentiles he lived as if he were a Gentile,
> and among the Jews he acted as a Jew: that is, while
> among Jews he carefully observed the ceremonies of the
> law, he was no less careful not to give occasion of
> offence to the Gentiles by the observance of them.
> (p. 307).

Paul the Apostle was willing to accommodate himself
to all peoples, circumstances, and contexts. White (1915)
observed: "The apostle varied his manner of labor, shaping
his message to the circumstances under which he was placed"
(p. 118). The objective of Paul's missionary methodology
was "that I may by all means save some." To accomplish
this he was willing to comply with the habits, customs, and
opinions of others as far as possible without compromising
principle. Commenting on the implications of this concept
Nichol (1980) suggested: "God's ministers must be ready at
all times to adapt themselves and their ministry to the
nature of those for whom they labor" (p. 735).

This concept of adaptability or contextualization
could be seen in action on the day of Pentecost as well.
Although all the disciples were of Hebrew origin and did
not know most of the languages of their listeners the

Bible recorded:

> Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews
> from every nation under heaven. When they heard this
> sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because
> each one heard them speaking in his own language.
> Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men
> who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each
> of us hears them in his own native language? Par-
> thians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia,
> Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and
> Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene;
> visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to
> Judaism); Cretans and Arabs--we hear them declaring
> the wonders of God in our own tongues! (Acts 2:55-11
> NIV)

God had a special purpose in accommodating the

message of Christianity in all these languages: to save

all. Indeed, the Word could be understood and appropriated

only if and as it became "flesh" in a specific historical

situation with all its particular cultural forms. The

challenge of hermeneutics was to transpose the message from

its original historical context into the context of readers

to produce the same kind of impact as it did on the

original hearers and readers (Padilla, 1981, p. 18).

However, Tano (1981) warned:

> Theological formulations of a given time and place
> should not be transported into another period or cul-
> ture without creative reinterpretation or recontextua-
> lizing. Failure to reinterpret or recontextualize
> results in the imposition of one culture or context
> upon another. (p. 54)

Each culture is different. Consequently, each

culture warrants a different theological approach. Karl

Barth, recognizing the need for South East Asians, appealed

to them to formulate theology that would speak to their

problems and needs. In one of his letters to the Christian theologians in this region Barth asked two questions regarding the relevance of his theology in the region: "Can the theology presented by me be understandable and interesting to you--and how? And can you continue in the direction I had to go, and at the place where I had set a period--and to what extent?" (Barth, 1969, p. 3). Barth's theology had to be formulated within its own context. His theological objective was to "overthrow the influence of Schleiermacher and the theology of religious experience and to replace it with a 'theology from above': a theology that adopts the Word of God as its starting point" (Veitch, 1975, p. 28). Perceiving the vast differences between the European and Asian contexts, Barth (1969) offered the following counsel:

> In my long life I have spoken many words. But now it is your turn. Now it is your task to be Christian theologians in your new, different and special situations. . . . You truly do not need to become "Europeans," or "Western" men, not to mention "Barthians," in order to be good Christians and theologians. You may feel free to be South East Asian Christians. (p. 3)

The message of the Bible should be presented to each culture in its own particular cultural clothing. The Three Angels Message of Revelation 14:6-7 is of paramount importance in this aspect: "Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth--to every nation, tribe, language and people" (NIV). Unless the Three Angels

Messages are communicated within the receiver's cultural parameters, the receiver may not understand the significance of the message nor grasp its urgency.

White (1946), one of the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist church, supported this view. In her advice to the early Adventist mission in England she said:

> I have been shown that there must be a different mold put upon the work here in these kingdoms, and there must be a power from the God of heaven to inspire you to work in a different way. . . . Habits and customs are different here from what they are in America. (p. 420)

The responsibility rests on the Church to make the Word of God become flesh in the cultures of various people. The contextualization of the biblical message warrants the contextualization of the Church. Hence, there is an ecclesiological basis for contextualization.

Ecclesiological Basis

One of the chief objectives of the Church's mission is to make the Word--the biblical message--incarnate. It has as its model, Christ, who was incarnated in a concrete sense, in a human nature, and in a particular cultural group. For this reason, "the church in its incarnating mission, should give impulse to the full humanization of man, and should do this within the characteristics of the culture to which it is sent" (Wonderly, 1973, p. 31). As the Head, so the body (Col 1:18).

Second, the church is commissioned to help

complete the process of redemption and subjugation of the forces of evil accomplished in Christ's resurrection (Luke 10:17-20; Acts 1:8). Despite its imperfection, the church is meant to be a model to the world as to what a people and their culture renewed and transformed by being brought into subservience to Christ's Lordship would be like. "Renewing, transforming and at times rejecting the culture which surrounds it and of which it partakes is of the essence of the very existence of the church" (Knapp, 1976, p. 20).

Third, the church is not an abstract being outside the world. It does not exist in a void. It is very much a human reality subject to the contingencies, limitations, and conditioning influences of the society in which it exists and operates (Costas, 1979, pp. 26-28).

Church history is replete with examples of the ongoing relationship between Christ and culture. It was reflected in Jesus' conflict with the religious estab-lishment of his time (Matt 5:17-48; 15:1-14). It was also apparent in the tension between Jewish and Gentile Christians. Such a tension surfaced and became evident at the Jerusalem Council. Some insisted that in order to be a Christian one must adapt the cultural forms of the Jews. Paul, however, distinguished the meaning of being Christ-like from the cultural forms that the Judaizers insisted were part and parcel of being Christian. The

issue was resolved by the declaration that the Gentiles did
not have to adopt Jewish cultural forms (e.g., circumcision)
in order to follow the ways of Jesus Christ (Acts 15).
However, the issues concerning church and culture came up
again.

Second-century apologists dealt with the problem of
making a semitic tradition intelligible to Hellenistic
audiences. Justin Martyr's speculation on Stoic and Middle
Platonic understandings of the logos provided a basis for
translating biblical concepts into a new cultural setting.
The recovery of Aristotle's lost works in the early
medieval period in the West provided the opportunity for a
radical recasting of theology more in tune with the emer-
ging urban and mercantile society (Schreiter, 1984, p.
262).

The church's response to culture varies from total
rejection to total identification. Total rejection of all
customs as pagan is a common response. In some parts of
the world drums, songs, dramas, dances, body decorations,
certain types of dress and food, marriage customs, and
funeral rites have been condemned because they were thought
to be directly or indirectly related to non-Christian reli-
gions. But new customs replace the old ones that have been
rejected.

> Too often the missionary imports customs from his or
> her own culture, unaware that these will be reinter-
> preted and often misunderstood within the local cul-
> ture. For example, missionaries in India rejected the

> red sar[ees] used by Hindu brides, and substituted
> white ones, not realizing that in India red stands for
> fertility and life, and white for barrenness and death.
> (Hiebert, 1984, p. 288)

On the other extreme, the church's response had
been to accept the national culture uncritically into the
church. This might result in syncretism of all kinds,
based on the philosophical assumption of cultural rela-
tivism (Hiebert, 1984, p. 289). Relativism in the end
destroys all authority. The result is generally some form
of eclectic neo-paganism.

Hiebert postulated an alternative approach which he
called critical contextualization in which approach "the
old is neither rejected or accepted uncritically. It is
explicitly examined with regard to its meanings and
functions in the society, and then evaluated in the light
of biblical norms" (ibid., p. 290). Hiebert's
critical contextualization seemed to maintain a balance.
On the one hand the church must be related to the immediate
culture; but it must not loose its identity.

In some countries, like India, the church has suf-
fered an identity crisis due to the socio-political
entities. Protestant missionaries first came to India
during the colonial period. The first two missionaries,
Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plutschau, arrived on July
9, 1706 at Tranquebar, Tamil Nadu (Neill, 1970, pp. 53,
54). Although these missionaries endeavored to study the
local language and religion, Christianity was branded as a

Western religion because of its form and appearance.

Anything Western was obviously categorized as part of

colonialism. This link between Christianity and coloni-

alism had far-reaching repercussions. Thomas succinctly

stated that educated

> Indians were torn between their love for India, the
> painful awareness of the decadence of their social and
> religious existence, on the one hand, and the
> challenge of Christianity and Western culture, its
> presentation by the colonialists and the missionaries
> as a symbol of superiority, on the other. It sowed
> the seeds of ambivalence in the minds of educated
> Indians as far as their response to Western culture
> and Christianity was concerned and they began to feel
> a crisis of identity. (Thomas, 1979, p. 45)

In India, the Church's foreignness seems to be a

continuing problem. The post-independence situation is not

very different from that of the colonial period. The

editors of <u>Guardian</u>, a popular Christian periodical in

India, explained this problem and suggested possible solu-

tions:

> The Christian Church in India is facing a crisis.
> The Church is suspected as being a foreign element on
> Indian soil. This foreignness of the Indian Church is
> a serious stumbling block to many men of other faiths,
> and a hinderance to the growth and the deepening of
> the experience of the Indian Church. As a result of
> this foreignness, the Church finds itself in a cultural
> ghetto, cut off from the mainstreams of Indian life
> and culture, and thus completely inadequate to come to
> terms with its Hindu or Muslim neighbours. It is the
> inner change that is essential, and this is a funda-
> mental change of attitude which will involve a change
> in the way in which we frame our Christian concepts
> and even involve a change in the substance of the
> concept themselves. We need urgently a new indigenous
> theology. (Guardian, 1967, p. 2)

Another problem that confronted Christianity and

Indian culture was summed up by Boyd in the expression "mission compound." Many Christian converts from Hinduism were ostracized from their family and tended to congregate around the missionary bungalow where gradually a little isolated Christian community arose which had very little in common with its surrounding environment. This led to a sense of dependence on the mission, a tendency to regard the missionary as the Christian's 'Ma-bap' (father and mother) and had led to the charge that Christians were 'denationalized' (Boyd, 1974, p. 12).

The Christian Church in India has projected a Western image. Hindus have been suspicious of the Church perpetuating the Western style of life. The Church's Western style architecture--Gothic, Corinthian columns and steeples--has only added strength to such suspicion (Clarke, 1980, pp. 10, 11). Clarke postulated solutions to the issues he has raised. He emphasized that "the Church in India must begin by being firm on the sure foundation of Jesus Christ and then build with Faith and orient herself in her contextual situations" (p. 9).

Second, Clarke suggested that

> the liberating love and knowledge of Jesus Christ must be suitably woven into the matrix and fibre of India and its people. Jesus Christ should be revealed contemporarily, understood and witnessed in Indian culture. . . . The good news must be a leaven in the Indian dough, it must be the salt--salting the Indian people. It must penetrate the strong and deep cultural heritage we possess. (pp. 11,12)

Kim (1975), a Korean, believed that the church must make a conscious and an enlightened effort to assume and integrate the cultural values and religious currents of thought that had informed the life of Asians through the ages. Otherwise the church would continue to remain a minority entity unable to permeate the mainstream of peoples' lives; the Christian message would remain an idiom foreign to any cultural soil (p. 191).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is confronted with problems and issues identical to those of other Protestant denominations. Oosterwal traced this problem to the historical context of the Church's origin. Oosterwal (n.d.[a]) argued that

> the Adventist Church was conceived and formed in the cultural uterus of the American frontier and its particular ethos, and that during its growth and development the church absorbed many of the values characteristic of 19th century America. . . . In language and patterns of thinking, in organization, in life style and in strategies for evangelism and mission, the Adventist church bears the stamp of mid-19th century American values and the cultural dress of the American frontier. (p. 1)

Oosterwals's findings indicated that the Seventh-day Adventist Church had become a captive to American culture, its values, ethos, language, and logic. This captivity prevented the Church from reaching out to other cultures (p. 4). Oosterwal believed this captivity was also one of the most powerful obstacles to Adventist mission in Africa and Asia (p. 5).

Oosterwal questioned whether there was any way to

resolve these problems? Were there possible solutions?

> The Church must become rooted in the particular soil
> in which it is planted, and organizations and
> institutions must be developed in accordance with the
> nature of that soil and the particular nurture it has
> to offer. In order to do so, however, [the] Church
> and its mission, must be liberated from the unhealthy
> ties to certain traditions, patterns of thought and
> forms of behavior that are a heritage of a former
> culture, not because these values are wrong or bad in
> themselves, but because they hinder the Church in the
> present mosaic of cultures. . . to accomplish the task
> for which God has called it into existence. As Christ
> became flesh, bones of our bones, part of a particular
> human culture and life style, so also the Church,
> which is His body, must become one with the people to
> whom it has been sent. Said Jesus: "As the Father
> has sent me into the world, so send I you into the
> world" (John 17:18). And that means, that the
> Church, as individual believers and as a corporate
> structure, must in every way become one with the
> people, their patterns of thinking, their interests,
> their culture, to whom it has been sent. For, there
> simply is no communication without identification.
> (Oosterwal, n.d., pp. 6,7)

Ellen G. White perceived that there were problems

when the church confronted a non-American culture. She

suggested some solutions. In her addresses given to the

European Missionary Council held at Basel, Switzerland, in

September of 1885, White pointed out the failure of the

missionaries in not using the apostle Paul's methods, who

became a Jew to the Jew, a Greek to the Greek, and a Roman

to the Romans. White (1886) said:

> Souls here in Europe have been turned away from the
> truth because of a lack of tact and skill in pre-
> senting it. . . When the mission fields in this new
> country were opened before me, I was shown that some
> things in every branch of the mission needed a
> different mold. (pp. 211-215)

A few years later, in 1895, when White herself was

a missionary in Australia, she wrote the following perceptive counsel:

> The people of every country have their own peculiar, distinctive characteristics, and it is necessary that men should be wise in order that they may know how to adapt themselves to the peculiar ideas of the people and so introduce the truth that they may do them good. They must be able to understand and meet their wants. (White, 1923, p. 213)

It is evident from White's writing that she was a careful observer of cultural differences. She underscored the importance of adapting to the new circumstances and making the Gospel meaningful and relevant to the receptor culture. She also stressed the need to accept cultural diversities and seek to adapt one's ministry to that context.

People in different parts of the world have developed autonomous sociological structures which in turn strongly influenced their culture and living conditions. An understaning of the sociological basis would be likely to help in planning for the church's theological education.

Sociological Basis

Sociology examines the structures in which people live and relate to each other. It examines how the structures express and channel power and resources in society, how structures maintain the present divisions of power, how structures condition the values that people

hold, and promote world-views which justify the status quo (Kaluger & Unkovic, 1969, pp. 1-12).

The challenge of sociology to the Church is to ask how much the Church in its structures and in its beliefs is conditioned by the positions which its members hold in society. Third World Christians are increasingly asking questions about biblical interpretation which come from the West. They ask why the formulation of the Christian faith produced in the West insisted for years that Jesus had no social or political stance. Why have Western interpreters been blind to the workings of God and the plight of the poor in Scripture? (Samuel & Sugden, 1982, p. 67).

The Church must understand that

> it is literally impossible to evangelize in a cultural vacuum. Nobody can reduce the biblical Gospel to a few culture-free axioms which are universally intelligible. This is because the mind-set of all human beings has been formed by the culture in which they have been brought up. Their presuppositions, their value systems, the ways in which they think, and the degree of their receptivity or resistance to new ideas, are all largely determined by their cultural inheritance and are filters through which they listen and evaluate. (Stott, 1980, p. vii)

Their evaluation has a significant bearing on their conversion experience. McGavran observed that "men like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers" (McGavran, 1970, p. 198). From his years of missionary experience, McGavran observed:

> The resistance of Hindu, Buddhists, Confucianists and Moslems to the Christian faith does not arise primarily from theological considerations. Most of the adherents of these faiths do not prefer their

religion to Christianity. Most of them being
illiterate, know very little about their religious
system. . . . Their resistance arises primarily from
fear that 'becoming a Christian will separate me from
my people.' (p. 191)

In countries like India, society imposed limita-

tions on conversion. It was not easy for a Hindu to become

a Christian until the middle of the 19th-century. In

addition to many legal limitations they had to face social

ostracism and often persecution. According to Hindu

personal law, a convert to another religion was an apostate

and thereby became unfit to perform the ritual and

ceremonial responsibilities in the family. Consequently, a

convert legally lost his property and the rights of inheri-

tance. It was only in 1850 that British India adopted a

policy to protect converts from one religion to another

from these disabilities (Mayhew, 1929, p. 132).

This protection policy and other religious freedom

policies adopted by the Indian government did not change

the sociological repercussions of conversion (Banerjee,

1982, pp. 188-314). The objections to conversion in India

were more social than religious or theological. Hiebert

(1984) made a similar observation. According to him

the importation of cultural practices from outside has
made Christianity a foreign religion in many lands,
and alienated Christians from their own peoples and
cultures. It is this foreignness and not the offence
of the Gospel that has often kept people from
following Christ. (p. 288)

Sociologists argued that when an individual was

exposed to values, institutions, and life-style alien to

his cultural mainstream, he separated himself from the restraints and obligations of his culture. Consequently, his/her value system became superficial alternatives isolated from rest of the society (Lifton, 1968, pp. 13-27). If institutions such as the family, church, and the school failed to perpetuate and reinforce the cultural norms of that particular society, the psychological and sociological security of an individual could be threatened (Kaluger & Unkovic, 1969, pp. 145-178). On the other hand participation in a culture could provide one with a sense of belonging. "It gives a sense of security, of identity, of dignity, of part of a larger whole, and of sharing both in the life of past generations and in the expectancy of society for its own future" (Stott & Coote, 1980, p 313). It may be concluded that communication is more effective within a social context and never takes place in a social vacuum.

Christianity, born in an Eastern cultural setting, became integrated into the Graeco-Roman culture. The direction in which the Word of God spread from its Graeco-Roman setting to the West and from the West to the Third World is represented in Figure 1.

Stanley Jones was one of the few overseas missionaries who made it clear that Christ and Western civilization were not to be regarded as one package. Jones insisted that Indians could "have Jesus without the system

- - - -Original
Context

--Word
of God

- - - - Western Culture

- - - - - Graeco Roman Culture

- - - - Word of God

--A Third
World
Culture
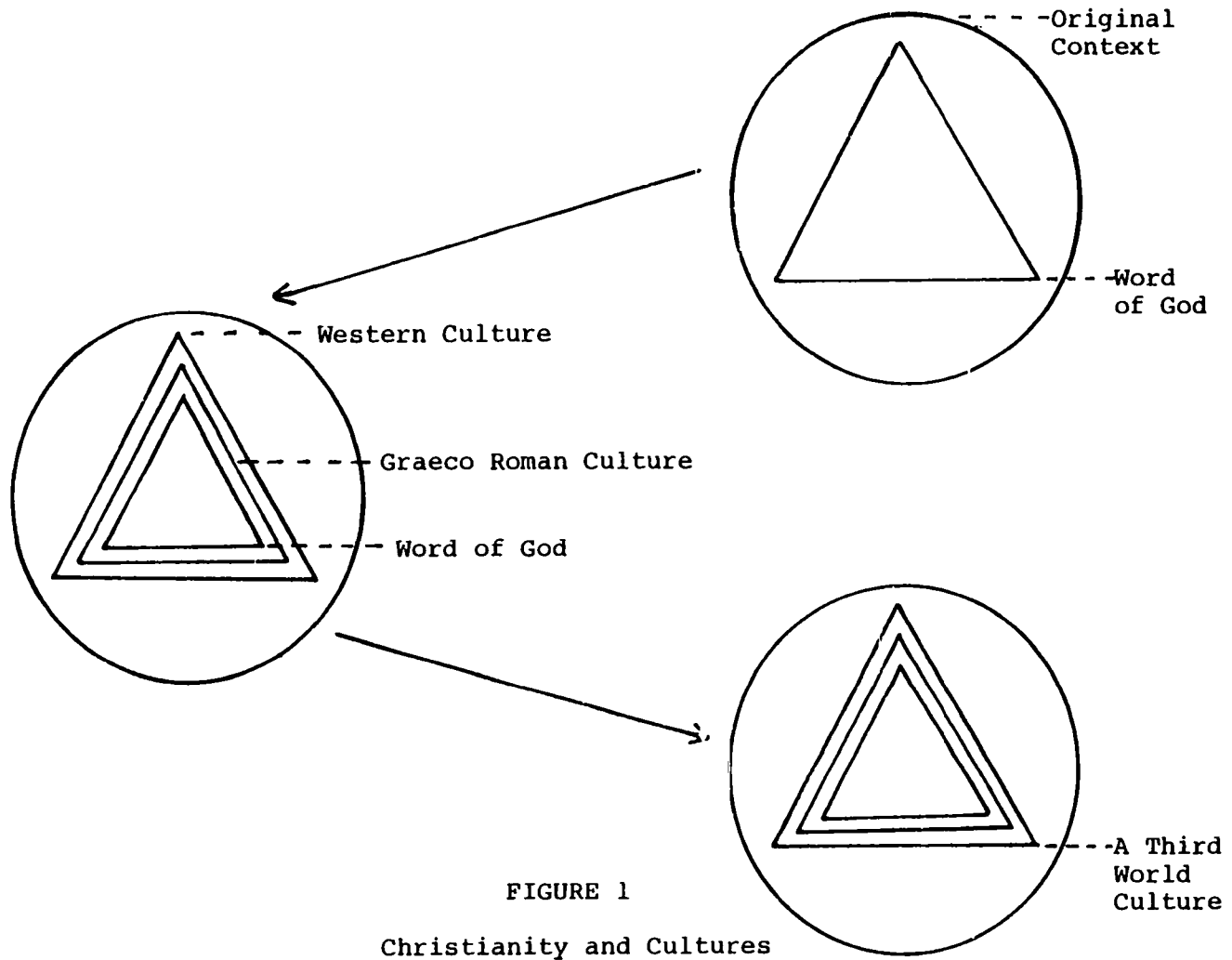
FIGURE 1

Christianity and Cultures

that has been built up around him in the West" (Jones 1925, p. 18). Jones sought to foster a more indigenous expression of Indian Christianity by establishing a Christian Ashram at Sat Tal in the Himalayas and another Ashram at Lucknow (Johnson, 1978, p. 283).

An Indian who presented Christianity within the Indian sociological structure was H. A. Krishnapillai, a Tamil poet who lived from 1827 to 1900 in Tirunelvelli District, Tamil Nadu. After his conversion to Christianity at the age of thirty, for forty three-years he wrote devotional poetry. "His life graphically illustrates the many elements involved in the encounter of two religious traditions in a specific locale, each tradition embodied in a different culture" (Hudson, 1970, p. ii). Krishnapillai's <u>Irakshaniya Yattirikam</u> illustrated that although a change was necessary after conversion to Christianity from Hinduism there could be continuity in adhering to the Indian cultural patterns (Krishnapillai, 1894). Krishnapillai's writings certainly seek to contextualize Christianity within the sociological milieu of his society.

Contextualization not only has theological, ecclesiological, and sociological bases but an educational basis too.

Educational Basis

In a very broad sense, according to Kaluger and Unkovic (1969), education was synonymous with socializa-

tion. One of the basic objectives of education was the
socialization of young and old concerning the fundamental
values, norms, and practices of society. Education, also,
perpetuated culture. In a narrower sense, education was
the deliberate transmission of selected knowledge, skills,
and values to prepare individuals for effective membership
in the society (p. 308). Any system of education that did
not prepare an individual to function effectively in his
own society did not provide him a relevant education.

In his analysis of the educational concepts of Ivan
Illich and Paulo Freire, Conn (1979) observed that educa-
tion must start with the needs of the student in his unique
context (p. 330).

A student might come to school conditioned by the
influence of his family and culture. One of the objectives
of education would be to modify his personality, his fears,
anxieties, and feelings of assumed adequacy or inadequacy,
to install in him a satisfying personal development, and to
impress upon his mind those principles which might be the
foundations of the society (Kaluger & Unkovic, 1969,
p. 309).

For these objectives to become reality, it was
significant for an educator, first of all, to have an
intimate acquaintance with the structure and complexities
of the students' culture (Fischer & Thomas, 1965, p. 22).

In addition, an educator must be aware that "educa-

tion. . . cannot pursue some narrow course to fulfillment,
impervious to the stresses and strains of the society which
sponsors its existence" (ibid, p. 31).

These basic principles would aid educators to
understand their task more adequately and to improve the
quality of decisions to contextualize education.

For education to be culturally relevant, or contex-
tual, its aims and goals, the personnel, the material
resources, and the appropriate attitudes and behavior for
members of the institution must arise from the needs that
exist within that society and the culture that augments
it (Ibid., p. 31).

One of the chief concerns of educators in any
culture is the formulation of a curriculum. The first
principle to be used in designing curriculum is the explo-
ration of the interface between the student's existential
self and the social-cultural milieu. This means estab-
lishing a sense of connectedness between the experience of
the student and the cultural context (Bowers, 1974,
p. 115).

Then too, the curriculum designed must be appro-
priate to the developmental levels of the people and must
be geared towards their concerns, abilities and questions
(Moore, 1983, p. 188). Such a curriculum will help
primarily to prepare the student for the joy of service
within his cultural setting. At least some of the current

learning theories seem to favor this view.

Needless to say there are points of convergence
between learning theory and the concern for contextualizing
instruction. Psychologists and educators have contributed
to a cross-cultural understanding of 'earning patterns.
David Ausubel (1968) observed that specialists in scholarly
fields develop cognitive structures which correspond to the
structures of their disciplines. For example, when evan-
gelical theologians hear the name of George E. Ladd, they
would immediately associate it with a post tribulational
view of the rapture in systematic theology. Facts, names,
and dates are integrated into meaningful patterns and glued
together by a system of interrelated ideas. For Ausubel,
one of the central tasks of a teacher was to help students
develop these kinds of structures for the subject matter
they were learning (pp. 505-532).

Education, therefore, becomes more relevant and
effective when associated with familiar cultural struc-
tures. Laxity in this aspect may have serious repercus-
sions. For example, Thomas (1979), in his studies,
explained that the British colonial masters used the
Western educational system to attract Indians to Chris-
tianity. These students were reading Mill, Duff, and
Macaulay who eulogized Western culture and Christianity and
poured contempt on Indian culture and religion. They also
listened to Christian missionaries who constantly criti-

cized Hinduism as the cause of the cultural, social, and political degeneration of India. The natural psychological need in the colonial setting was that Hinduism and Indian culture should be upheld against the onslaught of Western culture and Western Christianity (pp. 22,23).

The Adventist church has developed an educational system in many countries of the Americas, Africa, Asia, Australia, and Europe. Thousands of students are trained every year. It is somewhat tragic, however, that many of these educational institutions have reproduced American patterns insofar as curricula, affiliations, and even faculties are concerned. This has produced educated nationals who know more about the USA, England, and other Western countries than their own country. They have even become more proficient in English than in their native tongues (Schantz, 1983, p. 690).

> The duplication of the "American" SDA educational system in certain overseas fields has also had the effect that both mission and church have not really become indigenous in the eyes of the people, but continued to be regarded as "American" transplants. Furthermore, over the years these mission workers and church members were all too often prone to emigrate to the USA whenever the opportunity arose. (ibid., p. 690)

White stressed that educational programs in foreign lands should not follow the American pattern. Indeed, she advised that the local culture and conditions should help shape the education program itself. Regarding overseas educational institutions White (1913) stated :

> No exact pattern can be given for the establishment of schools in new fields. The climate, the surroundings, the condition of the country, and the means at hand with which to work must all bear a part in shaping the work. (p. 531)

While involved with the building of the Avondale College in Australia, White (1915) wrote: "God designs that this place shall be a center, an object lesson. Our school is not to pattern after any school that has been established in America, or after any school that has been established in this country" (p. 374).

Summary

In this study, contextualization is defined as the process of interpreting Christian truth and relating Christian mission in terms of and applying it to the real life issues arising from the sociocultural context within which the interpreters and missionaries live. Although a necessary and useful process, extremes in contextualization may result in syncretism and exclusivism. Contextualization, therefore, must have a strong theological basis.

The Scriptures are replete with examples of contextualization. Human history begins with God communicating with man within man's own context. This chapter discussed five biblical paradigms: The Abrahamic covenant, theocratic education during the Exodus, the use of the term logos, the incarnation, Paul's missionary methodology, and speaking in tongues on the day of Pentecost.

In addition to these biblical pradigms Karl Barth's suggestion to contextualize theology was discussed. To this was added White's advice that there must be a different mold put upon the work in various countries.

In addition to the theological basis there is an ecclesiological basis for contextualization. As Christ was sent into this world, so He sends his church into various cultural contexts. The identity of the Church is very much influenced by its surrounding culture. In fact church history provides examples of the confrontation and relationship between culture and the church. The data in this chapter have indicated that people in various cultures are more likely to become Christians if they are not required to cross their cultural barriers. Contextualization, therefore, is a sociological necessity too.

It was pointed out that it is impossible to evangelize in a cultural vacuum. Sociologists warned that if the family, church, and the school failed to perpetuate and reinforce cultural norms of the society, the psychological and sociological security of an individual could be threatened. Stanley Jones, an American missionary, attempted to preserve the cultural elements in the life-styles of his converts in India by establishing ashrams. H. A. Krishnapillai of India presented Christianity within the Indian sociological structure by means of his poetry.

In addition to the sociological basis there is an

educational basis for contextualization. Educational
theorists argued that education must start with the needs
of the student in his unique context. For education to be
functioaai it must be culturally relevant. The curricula
of an educational system must reflect the needs of the
society and the context of its people. The data in this
chapter also pointed out that the Adventist church has
developed a world-wide educational system which continues
to be regarded as "American" wherever it is established.
However, White stressed that the local culture and condi-
tions should help shape the educational program.

The following chapter discusses some of the
significant factors that may influence contextualization of
Adventist theological education in India.

CHAPTER V

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS AFFECTING THEOLOGICAL
EDUCATION IN INDIA

The context of a country is significant in
developing a relevant educational system (Vyhmeister, 1978,
p. 55). This chapter discusses historical, religious,
socio-cultural, economic, and educational contexts, and the
development pattern of the Seventh-day Adventist church as
significant factors in contextualizing theological educa-
tion in India.

Historical Factors

India derived its name from the Indus river along
the banks of which an urban civilization flourished more
than four thousand years ago. The archaelogical evidences
from Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa indicates that this civiliza-
tion dated back to 2500 B.C. These ancient people, the
Dravidians, lived in peace until the influx of Aryans from
central Asia to the fertile Indus valley. This and many
other successive foreign invasions forced the Dravidians to
southern India (Warshaw, Bromwell & Tudisco, 1974,
pp. 15, 16).

Despite this influx of Aryans, India is one of
world's oldest continuing civilizations. This continuity

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is attributable partly to its ability to adapt to internal
and external challenges. The internal challenges came in
terms of religious reformations starting with Mahavira, the
founder of Jainism, and Gautama Buddha, founder of Buddhism
in sixth and fifth century B.C. Later, Guru Nanak (early
16th-century), the founder of Sikhism was followed by 19th-
and 20th-century reformers, revivalists, and thinkers such
as Dayananda, Vivekananda, and Gandhi. The external
challenges came from invading conquerors such as the Aryans
of prehistory, Alexander in the fourth century B.C, White
Huns in the fifth century A.D., Afghans in the 12th-
century, Mughals from the 16th-century and the Europeans
from the 18thcentury (Warshaw & Bromwell, 1974, pp. 15-95;
Wolpert, 1977, pp. 24-285).

This mingling of the various cultures of the world
in India resulted in the rise of different races. In 1982,
out of 740 million Indians, 72 percent was Indo-Aryan;
25 percent Dravidian; and 3 percent was Mongoloid and
other races (Kurian, 1983)

Religious Situation

This multiracial population adhered to many reli-
gions and cults. Eighty-three percent of the Indian
population was Hindu; 11 percent was Islam; 3 percent was
Christian; and 2 percent was Sikh (Information Please
Almanac, 1985, p. 203).

Despite the presence of many religions and sects,

Hinduism has "profoundly influenced the lives and thoughts of countless millions of Indian people from cradle to grave. It has left an indelible impression on the entire culture of India" (Ponniah, 1978, p. 1). Hinduism has survived foreign invasion, attacks of Islam, the arrival of Christianity, and the challenges of Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism.

What is Hinduism? Hinduism is a complex and rich religion. No founder's initiative, no dogma, no reform have imposed restrictions on its domain. On the contrary, the contributions of centuries have been superimposed without ever wearing out the previous layers of development (Slater, 1963, pp. 47-86).

It is believed that Hinduism, as a religion, revolves around and operates within five major presuppositions: **Brahman, Atman, Karma, Samsara, and Maya**. All philosophical investigation presupposes the reality of **Brahman**. Hindu literature defines Brahman as the supreme reality (**Mundaka Upanishads**, I. 1. 6). One of the ancient poets of the Tamil language expressed the views of his days when he said:

> Brahman is the real, the One without a second, pure, the essence of knowledge, taintless, serene, without beginning or end, beyond activity, the essence of absolute bliss, transcending all the diversities created by **maya**, eternal, ever beyond the reach of pain, indivisable, immeasurable, formless, nameless, immutable, transcendent, beyond the reach of mind and speech (**Viveka Cinthamani**), stanzas 237--240).

Brahman, the ground of all being, is the sum and substance of the Upanishads (Taithiriya Upanishads III. 10. 6). Brahman also is the object of all knowledge. All who know or realize that they are part of Brahman attains immortality. Such an experience would be the result of the union of Atman with Brahman (The Bhagavat Gita 1981, 13.31; 4. 7, 8).

What is atman? Hinduism operates with three components constituting a human being: atman or soul, manas or mind, deha or body. The word atman comes from the root an, meaning to breathe, and is used to indicate the most fundamental being of the individual. While Brahman is the ultimate and outer reality, the atman is the innermost reality in man. It is the life-giving object in man and the soul of man (Parrinder, 1973, p. 39).

The belief that atman is indestructible often appeared in the Upanishads and was fundamental to the arguments in Gita. Regarding atman the Gita said:

> That is not born, has no mortality, came not to be nor ever comes to be; unborn, eternal, lasting ancient one, it is not slain when slaughtered bodily. (The Bhagavat Gita 2. 19. 20)

Since the atman never dies, it wanders on earth from body to body in a cycle of birth and rebirth (Maitri Upanishads II. 6). This process is known as samsara. It really means 'going through' transmigration. It is a common belief that a soul or atman takes many births and rebirths before the final stage of moksha.

The iron law of _karma_ determines the nature of the next birth. The _Upanishads_ explained that those who are of pleasant conduct here might enter a pleasant womb of a _Brahmin_--the highest caste in Hinduism. But those with bad and vile conduct during their present lives might enter either the womb of a dog, or swine, or an outcaste (_Chandogya Upanishads_ V. 10. 7).

The laws of Manu (1886) explained the exact recompense of one's deed:

> In consequence of many sinful acts committed with his body, a man becomes in the next birth something inanimate; in consequence of sins committed by speech, a bird, and in consequence of mental sins, he is reborn in a low caste. . . .The slayer of a Brahmin enters the womb of a dog, a pig, an ass, a camel, a cow, a goat, a sheep, a deer, a bird, a _kandala_ and a _pukhasa_. . . . A Brahmin who steals the gold of a Brahmin shall pass a thousand times through the bodies of spiders, snakes, lizards, of acquatic animals. . . . Those who eat forbidden food, worm; for stealing grain of a man becomes a rat;. . . for stealing a horse, a tiger; for stealing a woman, a bear. (pp. 486- 498)

The law of _karma_ admits no deliverance from the consequences of actions until the full penalty is exacted. The notions of supernatural deliverance, or forgiveness of sin, is regarded as immoral, and contrary to the laws of cause and effect (Ponniah, 1981, p. 16; Humphreys, 1972, p. 15).

Sinari (1970) explained this view:

> Every happiness or sorrow in man's life is the predetermined effect of actions committed by him sometime, either in his present life or in one of his numberous past lives. In the same way, no act done by

one in one's life hereafter can go without creating a possibility of its results, to be experienced either in this or in some future life. (p. 15)

To attain liberation from <u>karma</u> is the common motivation behind all the major religious systems in India. However, as long as <u>maya</u> dominated the <u>atman</u>, there can be no freedom from <u>karma</u>.

<u>Maya</u> is another important presupposition in Hinduism. <u>Maya</u> may be translated as illusion. Hindu philosophy claims that the world has the tendency to delude man into thinking that it alone exists, that it is self-dependent. This delusive character of the world is designated as <u>maya</u>.

A simile that Sankara, an eighth-century B.C. philosopher, often used to illustrate this concept was that of a rope which through the creative "ignorance" of the person was thought to be a snake. For him the snake was real till he discovered his ignorance or <u>avidya</u> (Zachner, 1968, p. 100).

<u>Maya</u> has influenced the thinking and attitude of millions of Indians. Psychologically considered, it has the power to heal Indians of frustrations, failures, fears, shocks, the lack of adjustment, and defeats. Perennially, it has made Indians accept both life and death with a certain amount of neutrality and unconcernedness. The Hindus are taught to imbibe an attitude that nothing really exists and therefore nothing really matters.

What is the attitude of the Hindus towards Christians in India? Although Hinduism fosters peace and non-violence, revivalist Hindu organizations such as the Ananda Marga have taken up the cudgels to preserve the purity of the Hindu ethos. In the midst of such revivalism, Christianity is branded as a form of foreign religious and cultural invasion. During the late 1970s the Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu militant organization, formed an alliance with the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, India's leading opposition party. Together they advocated that the secularist policy of the government of the day was a serious menace to the traditional dharma--heritage of India. The growing influence of the RSS for the formation of a Hindu state in India underlies their antagonism to the Christian faith (Banerjee, 1982, p. 127).

Having foreseen this scenario, most of the Protestant denominations in India united their Church governments and resources. In September, 1947, Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist churches became the Church of South India (CSI). Missionary outreach was regarded as a fundamental raison d'etre of this ecumenical union (Sundkler, 1954, pp. 344, 345; Neill, 1970, p. 153).

In this multireligious context, it is imperative that Seventh-day Adventist theological education offer courses with an indepth knowledge of Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, and the ecumenical movement. These courses also

should teach ways of communicating the Biblical messages to people of other faiths and ways of thinking.

Socio-cultural Context

India's socio-cultural orientation is largely influenced by the presuppostions of the various religious groups. Most cultural anthropologists suggested that a sense of unity of all life, a desire for synthesis, an eagerness to know the truth, and a feeling for the sacredness of all life achieved through the concept of ahimsa underlie the basic values of Indian culture (Chatterji, 1966, pp. 34-59).

The basic unit of Indian society is the family. Family is also the key to understanding stability and change in the Indian society. Among the Hindus the traditional ideal family is the "joint family," usually a male-dominated kinship pattern to which each nuclear family relationship is subordinate (Stackhouse, 1984, pp. 205-206). Usually, major decisions, including marriage, are decided by the family and not by the individual alone.

In the Hindu society, the identity and status of a family was based on the caste system. When this system is followed, the four main castes are <u>Brahmin</u>, traditionally priests; <u>Kshatriya</u>, ruler and soldier; <u>Vaishya</u>, merchant; and <u>Shudra</u>, peasant, laborer, and servant. The untouchables are not regarded as part of the caste system. These four

main groups are further divided into sub-caste groups which are further subdivided into smaller endogamous units (Srinivas, 1962, pp. 63-65).

Although the caste system was convenient for Britain's "divide and rule" policy, the post-independence period has totally rejected this modus operandi. The constitution of India guarantees equal status to all Indian citizens. This has cut at the very root of the caste system. Although constitutionally, the caste system is illegal, it is still widely prevalent in India (Ghurye, 1969, pp. 409-410).

Inasmuch as people of various caste groups join the Christian Church in India, it has become mandatory for the church to confront the issue of caste. M. M. Thomas, an Indian theologian argues:

> the issue is no longer the simple one of whether a
> Christian can be for or against caste, whether caste
> practices can be tolerated in the Church, but has
> become a question of the nature of the Church under-
> stood over against the notions of religious community
> and secular state. (Forrester, 1980, p. 188)

The history of the Christian church in India is replete with examples of the church's effort to eradicate the caste system. However, this does not deny the existence of caste feelings within the Church.

Although illegal, most of the Indians marry within their caste group. Although "love marriages" are prevalent, and various patterns of arranged marriages are emerging, most conservative Hindus and some liberal Hindus

adhered to arranged marriages. In an arranged marriage parents, with the help of friends and relatives, choose the life partner (Cormack, 1961, pp. 86-90). ·

In any Indian home, the hierarchical authority rested on the husband. Wife and children were obviously subjected to his dictates. A wife was expected to have unquestionable trust in her huband's decisions. At meals the women customarily served all the men first and ate only after the men had finished (Mandelbaum, 1970, pp. 38,39).

Food habits vary according to the caste, geographical area, and economical status. Most of the high caste Hindus have been vegetarians since the rise of Jainism and Buddhism in sixth centuary B.C. Altough most of the other castes were non-vegetarians, beef was a taboo in a Hindu home. While most of the North Indians depend on wheat products, the South Indians had rice products as their staple diet (Mothershead, 1982, pp. 62-63).
B.C.

Indian music is another significant cultural factor. The oldest surviving musical theory, <u>Natya Shastra</u>, was attributed to Bharata of third century B.C. "Indian music belongs to the melodic or modal system, not to the harmonic system. Numberless melodic modes (ragas), based on a progression of notes, have been evolved, each with its distinct aestetic ethos" (Barry, 1958, p. 353). In contrast to the familiar Western scale of twelve half-

tones, there are twenty-two microtones on the Indian scale.

Theological education must sensetize future ministers to the role of the church in the socio-cultural pattern of India and teach them to communicate the Christian message within this context.

Educational Factors

Like the Church, education has become a powerful force in the eradication of the caste system. Prior to India's independence, one's caste determined one's occupation and status in society (Srinivas, 1962, pp. 98-111). The government's promulgation of compulsory education, and a variety of vocational careers have helped the emancipation of downtrodden millions. According to 1981 data, the literacy rate in India was 36 percent: 74 percent male and 24.88 percent female. India's existing educational system includes 118 universities and 3000 colleges and research institutes (Paxton, 1984, pp. 611-630; Warshaw & Bromwell, 1974, p. 123).

Although the Christian church was one of the agents facilitating change in the educational structure of India, some of the Hindu leaders were apprehensive and critical. Keshub Chandra Sen said in a lecture:

> It seems that the Christ that has come to us is an Englishman, with English manners and customs about him and with the temper and spirit of an Englishman in him. Hence is it that the Hindu people shrink back and say, 'Who is this revolutionary reformer who is trying to sap the very foundations of native society

and bring about an outlandish faith and civilization
quite incompatible with Oriental instinct and ideas.'
(Mozoomdar, 1883, p. 23)

Economic Factors

The educational context of India, to a large

extent, is regulated by the economic climate of the

country. Gross national product of $159.40 billion in 1980

and per capita income cf $260 per year may be indicative of

the growing economy in India. Although India manufactures

highly developed heavy products, it is also a poor country

where fifty per cent of the people earn hardly enough to

stay alive (The Far East and Australia, 1984-85, pp. 356-

362.

D'Souza (1983) observed that the "Indian society is

clearly in a state of transition. It is moving from

colonialism towards a mode of dependent capitalism despite

its socialistic pretensions" (p. 642). Consequently, India

has been experiencing the emergence of various classes.

Perhaps the most powerful of them is the national

capitalist class with industries all over India and abroad;

the regional capitalists with political power at the state

level; a class of landlords and rich farmers who have no

other interest than their own; a class of educated youth;

and a vast number of working class and landless laborers

(ibid., p. 643).

According to a study conducted in 1981, 10 percent

of the Indian population belonged to the rich class; 20

percent belong to the middle class (small farmers, indus-
trial workers, etc.); 70 percent were below the poverty
line (40 percent of them below the absolute limit)
(Zeitler, 1981, p. 184).

Theological education cannot afford to ignore this
context of the country. In fact, the economic context
should be a determinant in formulating curriculum for theo-
logical education. It is also significant and imperative
for future ministers to be informed of this context of
their ministry and be taught to develop approaches to
communicate the Gospel to people of all economic levels.

Political Context

The politics of India have been greatly affected by
its divergent and contrasting socio-cultural patterns and
its historical past. The influx of Europeans into India
began with the arrival of Vasco da Gama of Portugal on
May 27, 1498, when a large part of India was under Mogul
domination. This was the beginning of European imperial
conquest which lasted for four and a half centuries.
Holland, France, and England followed the Portugese in
establishing various Indian towns and cities as their
colonies. England was the only power that succeeded in
uniting the whole subcontinent which was a region of frag-
mented kingdoms and city-states under various princes and
kings. The British East India Company which arrived in

Surat, India, as traders in 1608, became rulers of this
land (Wolpert, 1977, pp. 135-144).

Britain introduced Western laws, notions, and edu-
cation. Carnoy (1974) argued that the "British educational
policies in India were designed to control politically the
Indian subcontinent and to keep its people economically
dependent on Britain" (p. 83). The consolidation of
British power and their rule under force brought about the
emergence of national consciousness among Indians during
the 19th-century. However, organized freedom movement came
later.

Mahatma Gandhi launched his nationwide campaign for
India's independence on August 1, 1920. In his struggle for
independence, Gandhi adopted the principle of ahimsa or
non-violence. The freedom movement under the leadership of
Gandhi won India's independence on August 15, 1947.
Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) became the first prime
minister of the world's largest democracy (Wolpert, 1977,
pp. 301-349).

On the eve of independence India was declared to be
a secular state which guaranteed the right to practice any
religion. Repeated attempts by Hindu extremists to estab-
lish a Hindu state have failed (Warshaw & Bromwell, 1974,
pp. 112, 113).

India, in 1985, still had a parliamentary type of
government. The constitutional head of the state was the

president elected every five years. He was advised by the Prime minister and a cabinet based on a majority of the bicameral parliament. Rajiv Gandhi, a grandson of Pandit Nehru, was the prime minister of India (Information Please Almanac, 1985, p. 203).

In area, India, one-third of the size of the U.S.A. was divided into twenty-two states and nine union territories. While each state was governed by elected leaders, the union territories were directly under the jurisdiction of India's president. Almost every state had its own language and culture. Although there are 1652 languages and dialects spoken in the country, the constitution accords official recognition to fourteen languages (Kurian, 1983).

Development of Seventh-day Adventist Church in India

This pluralistic context continues to be a challenge to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in India--a minority Christian Church with a membership of 126,267 in 1984. This figure and the others in this chapter were taken from the Statistical Report, 1974-1984, issued by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in India was divided into three union missions: North India Union, Central India Union, and South India Union. In 1984, Northeast India Union was established to better facilitate

the coordination of the Church's ministry in that region.
These four unions were under the jurisdiction of the
Southern Asia division with headquarters in Pune (formerly
Poona), India.

Although churches were established in urban
settings, the majority of the membership lived in rural
communities. The growth in membership through baptism is
more among the rural communities than urban population
(Willmott, 1985). Table 1 indicates the total church
growth for the years 1974 and 1984 in the three union
missions.

The rate of membership growth for the ten-year
period, 1974 to 1984, does not vary significantly. While
the population growth rate has increased, the rate of Church
growth was maintained. In 1974, 463 Adventist Churches in
India experienced a .011 percent growth; and in 1984, 749
Adventist Churches experienced a .010 percent growth.

Figure 2 shows the baptismal rates from 1974
through 1984 in the four unions of India. Baptisms
decreased from 1974 through 1977. Although there was an
increase of 104 baptisms in 1978 and 3,667 in 1979, the
down trend in baptisms started in 1981 continued through
1984.

According to figure 3, apostasy has been a recur-
ring problem among the Seventh-day Adventists in India.
In 1977, 7,342 were baptized; but, 12,954 apostasized or

TABLE 1

CHURCH GROWTH IN INDIA
1974 - 1984

Year	Number of Churches	Number of Members	Rate of Growth (percent)
1974	463	72,016	.011
1984	749	126,267	.010
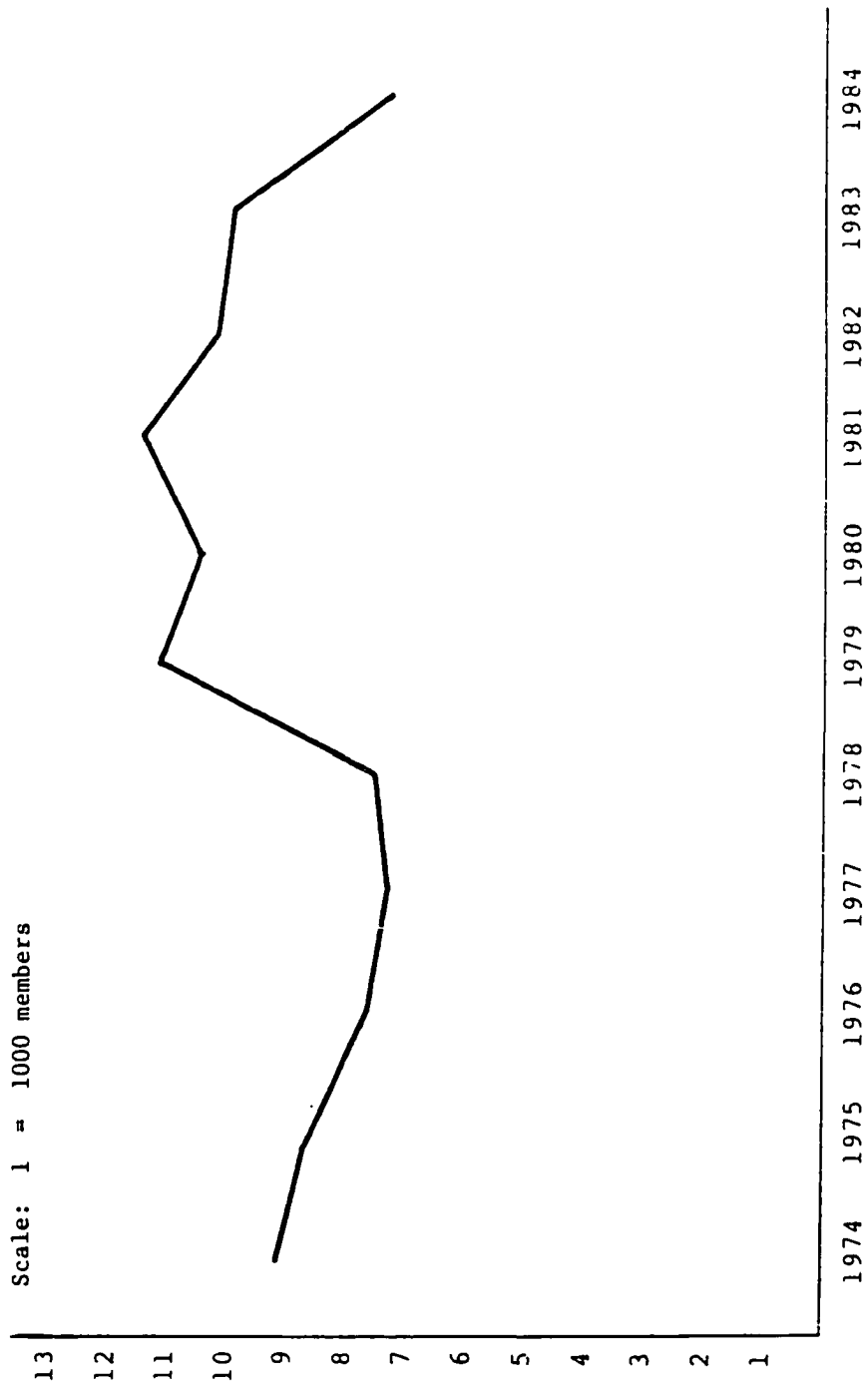
Figure 2

Baptism 1974-1984
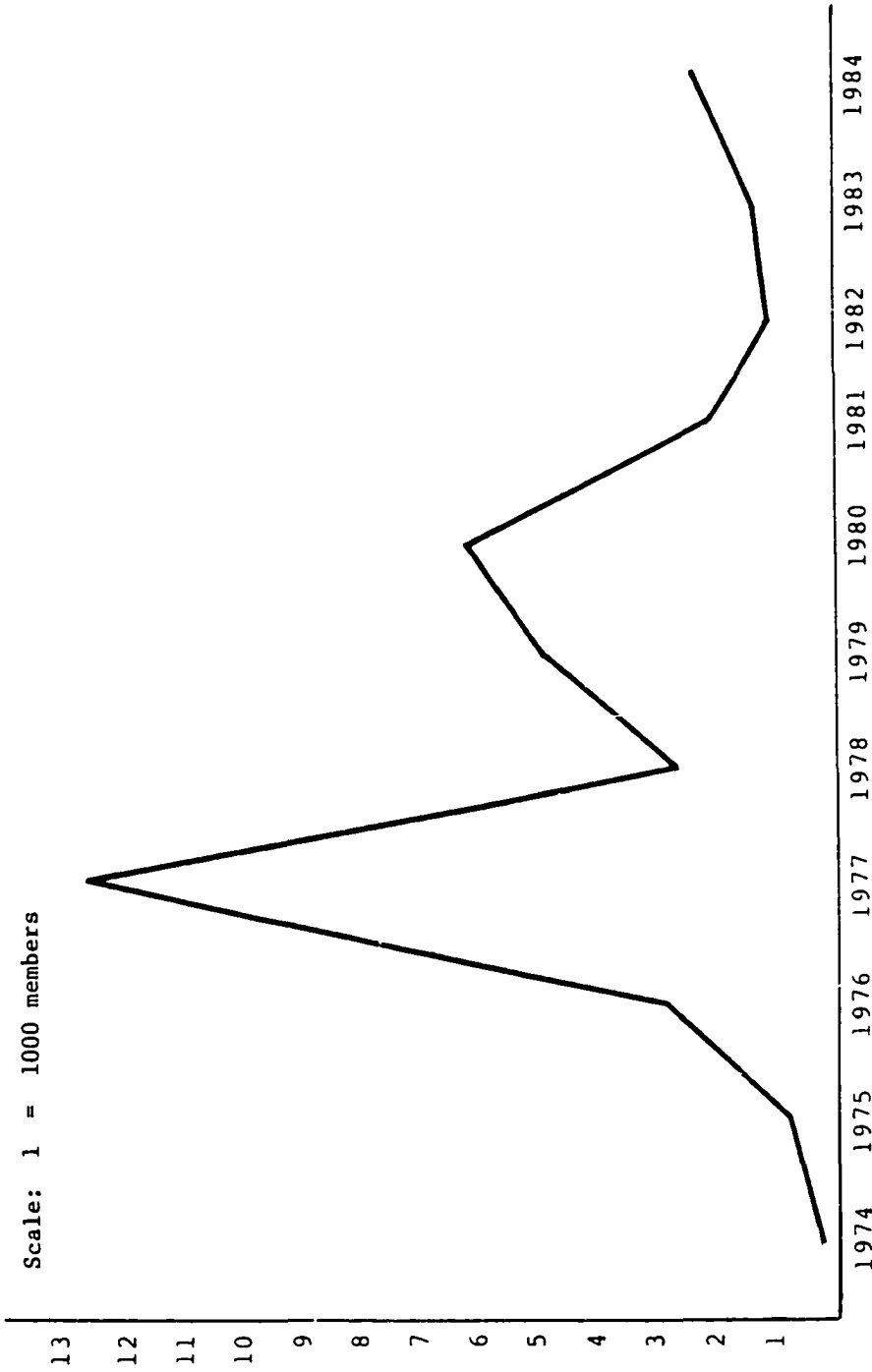
Figure 3

Apostasy 1974-1984

were listed as missing. However, the rate of apostasy or missing members for 1974 and 1984 was .00 percent, or the records were not kept up to date.

Table 2 shows the membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in relation to the population in the four unions. The data indicated that Adventist presence is greatest in South India Union, followed by Central India Union.

Table 3 illustrates the ratio of licensed and ordained Adventist ministers in India to the Adventist membership for 1974 and 1984.

The data in this section indicated that the rate of Church growth is slow and far below the rate of growth in many of the Third World countries and that apostasy is sometimes serious. From this data it may be assumed that pastors need training in Church growth and nurturing their membership. According to table 2, it may be assumed that there are many unentered areas and unreached people in the Northern Union and other territories. Training in communicating the Adventist message to these various groups in different cultural regions is imperative.

Summary

This chapter surveyed some of the significant factors that should influence the contextualization of theological education in India. These included the historical, religious, socio-cultural, economic,

TABLE 2

INHABITANTS PER SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
IN INDIA IN 1984

Union	Inhabitants per Adventist Member
Northern	21,429
Northeast	4,804
Central	4,405
South	2,049

TABLE 3

RATIO OF MINISTERS TO ADVENTIST MEMBERS
IN INDIA

Year	Number of Members	Number of Ministers	Number of Members per Minister
1974	72,016	319	226
1984	123,267	446	283

educational contexts, and the development of Seventh-day
Adventist Church.

India, an ancient country, has a wealthy heritage of
religious philosophy. This religious philosophy including
Hindu presuppositions such as **Brahman**, **atman**, **samsara**,
karma, and **maya** have influenced countless Indians
throughout history. These presuppostions have deeply
influenced the social orientation of India. The caste system
is a direct result of the belief in these presuppostions.

Although the caste system was practised in pre-
independent India, the constitution of free India deplores
this evil system and designates its practice as illegal.
One of the chief causes for the high percentage of
illiteracy has been attributed to the rigid caste system
which has in turn affected the country's economy.

Concerted effort under the leadership of Gandhi
helped to find solutions to social problems and gain
India's freedom from 347 years of colonialism. On August
15, 1947 with Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister, India
declared itself a secular democratic nation.

People of varied cultures speaking hundreds of
languages and dialects live under one government today.
However, the slow economic growth with a distorted produc-
tion and distribution pattern and increasing numbers of
both illiterate and educated unemployed youth, the growing
number of small farmers losing land and swelling the army

of landless laborers is creating convulsions in the social, economic, and political spheres.

In this context one sees the contemporary trends of Seventh-day Adventist churches in India. According to Table 1, the present church growth in India is .010 percent. Baptisms seemed to be on the decrease. While 7,332 people were baptized into the Adventist Church in 1984, 2,471 church members apostatized or were listed as missing.

In such a context the theological education of the Seventh-day Adventist Church needs to be updated and made relevant to the changing context. The ministers in training must be made aware of their ministerial context and the issues around it. Theological education, therefore, needs to address the various contexts explained in this chapter. This issue is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI

CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The changing contexts, the growth of science and
technology, the new awareness of accountability among
laity, and new approaches to education have challenged
theological educators to reevaluate and propose changes in
ministerial training.

Studies such as Thomson's (1983) indicated two
continuing dilemmas in theological education: first, what
to include in the curriculum as new disciplines and new
issues emerge in the rapidly changing society; second, how
to integrate the academic, practical, and spiritual (p.
128). Theological seminaries around the world as in India
have responded to these issues in their own contexts.
Various agencies had contributed to and aided such a
response.

As the literature reviewed indicated Roman
Catholics were pioneers in contextualizing Christianity in
India. Roberto de Nobili's contribution in this regard
cannot be overemphasized. Since Vatican II, Catholics in
India have been promoting contextual theological education,

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sacramentology, and liturgical celebrations (Puthanangady, 1981, pp. 146-163).

This chapter discusses the role of the Theological Education Fund (TEF), the efforts of selected seminaries in India, and Adventist models towards contextualizing theological education.

The Role of the Theological Education Fund

In 1910, at the first World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, the lack of adequate theological training in the younger churches was one of the main topics of discussion. The participants recommended that several missionary societies cooperate in developing indigenous theological training. In 1928, at the Jerusalem conference, the training of indigenous pastors was still recognized to be a recurring problem. Theological training was said to be inadequate. In 1928, at the third General Assembly of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram, India, theological education of the younger churches was an important theme. This conference concluded that theological education was the "greatest weakness" of the whole Christian enterprise. Several recommendations for the improvement of theological education were espoused. A thorough investigation of the problems and issues surrounding theological education initiated at Tambaram lasted until 1957 when the Theological Education Fund (TEF) was established (Linenemann-Perrin, 1981, pp. 3-7).

Responding to the International Missionary Council's recommendations made at Tambaram, a study of Indian theological institutions was launched under the leadership of Charles W. Ranson. In view of the rapid changes in the Indian political, ideological, and ecclesiastical situation, Ranson suggested that Christian ministers should be trained to fight for social justice and to discover anew the relevance of the Gospel to the changing context. He recommended that the churches in India train indigenous theologians to change the imperialistic identity of Christianity. Ranson's recommendation was a significant move towards contextualization of theological education for India (Ranson, 1945, pp. 56-78).

Simultaneously, detailed studies on the structure and curriculum of theological education, particularly in the Third World churches, were published through the International Missionary Council. These findings formed the basis for the establishment of the TEF. The founding of the project, to a large extent, was due to the endeavors of Charles W. Ranson. With a donation of two million dollars from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and pledges from eight large American missionary societies, the TEF was established at the Ghana session of the International Missionary Council which convened from December 28, 1957, through January 8, 1958 (Lienemann-Perrin, 1981, pp. 15-17).

The TEF was set up for three consecutive periods:

the First Mandate, the Second Mandate, and the Third

Mandate. The First Mandate sought to "develop and

strengthen indigenous theological education." The Second

Mandate promoted excellence in theological education. The

excellence sought was defined in terms of theological

training which led to a real encounter between the student

and the Gospel in terms of his own forms of thought and

culture; and to a living dialogue between the Church and

its environment. During the turbulent 1960s the Third

Mandate was formulated with its call for reform in theo-

logical education (Coe, 1973, p. 236).

During the Third Mandate the staff of the TEF

adopted the term "contextualization" to describe the

dialectic between universal technological civilization and

local cultural situation. The TEF staff proposed that

theological education be contextualized on four levels:

> Missiological contextualization: Theological educa-
> tion should aim at the renewal and reform of the
> churches, at the development of human potential and
> the realization of justice.
>
> Structural contextualization: The structures of theo-
> logical education should correspond to the social and
> economic conditions of a given situation.
>
> Theological contextualization: Theology in the situa-
> tion in which it is 'done' is authentic inasmuch as it
> relates the proclamation of the Gospel to the most
> urgent tasks of the Church in this world.
>
> Pedagogical contextualization: The educational pro-
> cess is a liberating and creative force. Elitist and
> authoritarian attitudes are overcome. Academic study
> and practice merge into one approach. (Lienemann-
> Perrin, 1981, p. 175)

During the Third Mandate period, a study on patterns of ministry and theological education was set up in response to the New Delhi session of the World Council of Churches. The researchers of this project were assigned the following questions as guidelines for their study: 1. How can the work of the ministry be performed and new patterns of ministry be recognized and utilized in new situations of the modern world? 2. What modifications in the traditional academic curricula and methods of practical training are called for in order to meet the challenge of changing times? (Mackie, 1969, p. 150).

At the end of their research, the group made the following recommendations:

> No single curriculum could fit the many situations in which theological eduction is being carried on today, but certain basic principles will affect curriculum planning in every theological school. All theological curricula must be planned in terms of the nature of theology;. . . and the particular social, cultural, religious and educational context of the individual church or school. The whole curriculum should be rethought on this theological, functional and contextual basis. (Ibid., p. 157)

Inasmuch as the TEF had fulfilled its mandated role, upon the recommendations of its staff the World Council's Central Committee in July 1977, decided to create a successor organization. Consequently, the Programme on Theological Education (PTE) was established (Lienemann-Perry, 1981, p. 234).

PTE was created to reaffirm that "theological edu-

cation is vital for the life and mission of the church."
It was mandated to focus its work on ministerial formation.
The understanding was that theological education must be
dynamically related to the churches and to the socio-
cultural context (Ministerial Formation, 1979, p. 1).

Responding to this challenge in October 1978, PTE
staff visited several Asian countries to discuss a case
study approach with theological educators. These case
studies were later presented at their Manila meeting. The
following cases were presented at the consultation: Tamil
Nadu Theological Seminary, Madurai, India; Tainan Theo-
logical College, Tainan, Taiwan; Harris Memorial College,
Manila, Philippines; Divine World Seminary, Tagaytay City,
Philippines; and the South East Asia Graduate School of
Theology, Manila, Philippines. They represented several
ecclesiastical traditions, the three major subregions of
Asia, and various approaches to theological education
(Ministerial Formation, 1979, p. 1).

The Efforts of Selected Theological Seminaries in India

Many Indian theological educators, challenged by
the efforts of the TEF and PTE, responded to the need to
contextualize ministerial training. David L. Moses, an
Indian theological educator involved in the First Mandate
of the TEF suggested that

> the curriculum of ministerial training must be
> completely reformed. Only by so doing could one

achieve the cultural, religious and social awareness required by an academically competent indigenous Church. In the theological schools of India such subjects as history, culture, Indian languages and music should also be taught. In addition, more emphasis should be placed upon having theological instruction in indigenous languages in the future (Lienemann-Perrin, 1981, p. 108).

Robinson (1983), principal of Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary, Madurai, India, pointed out that there were two dominant features in the Indian context: the pluralistic religio-cultural and massive poverty. He added that "a contextual theological education cannot bypass these realities" (p. 1).

In India, since the beginning of the amalgamation of most Protestant churches under the designation of Church of South India (CSI) and the Church of North India (CNI), theological education was coordinated and facilitated by ecumenical cooperation. The Board of Theological Education of Serampore University regulated the policies for most of the Protestant theological seminaries in India. However, some denominational colleges existed outside the Serampore framework (Samuel & Sugden, 1981, p. 135).

Samuel and Sugden (1981), in their study, suggested that theological education in India has not been contextualized. They observed that a number of factors prevented this. First, theological eduction was divorced from the living contexts which could be used as a resource material for study. Under the existing system students acquired knowledge unrelated to their context of ministry.

Second, the content of theological education was imported from other contexts. The theological educational system, therefore, was under heavy criticism as it had not produced ministers to fulfill the needs and contexts of India. In response, the Board of Theological Education of Serampore initiated a research project to examine the models and expectations of the ministry that were projected in the colleges and the needs of the Church in India (pp. 135, 136).

Responding to the criticism of their training, almost all the theological seminaries attempted to make definite changes in their curriculum to meet the needs of the Indian context. The curriculum of Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, and Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary, Madurai, reflected an effort towards contextualization of theological education.

Union Biblical Seminary, an evangelical institution, trained ministers for many Protestant denominations in India. During the 1984-85 academic year the ministers in training represented over twenty-four denominations. In addition to offering traditional subjects, this seminary's curriculum includes such courses as the theology of poverty and development, history of indigenous Christian movements, trends in India, and Church in contemporary Indian society. These courses and their practical application to the multicultural context of India helped to contextualize

theological education in the seminary (<u>Union Biblical</u> <u>Seminary Prospectus</u>, 1984-85, pp. 3, 44).

Union Biblical Seminary also offered Theological Education by Extension (TEE). It was available to lay members to equip themselves for ministry and helped full-time ministers to update their training. Extension courses for the Bachelor of Theology were offered in Hindi and Marathi languages (<u>United Biblical Seminary prospectus</u>, 1984-85, pp. 40-41). Theological training in the local languages was able to focus on issues and problems of the local context and find appropriate expression in the language of the context.

The Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary (TTS) at Madurai, India, was an ecumenical seminary. Their theo-logical education, offered in Tamil, trained ministers for Tamil-speaking churches in Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and India. In addition to courses required by the Board of Theological Education, TTS offerings included: The Indian Heritage, Sensitizing for Christian Ministry (a pratical introduction to the problems in Tamil society); Music for Ministry (an introduction to Indian music); Current Affairs (an intro-ductory course on political, social, cultural, and techno-logical trends and events in India); Living Faiths in India, (study of major Indian religions: Hinduism, Jainism, Islam, and Sikhism); Philosophical Reflection in India (an introduction to the Indian philosophical

system); Theological Reflection of Indian Christians
(theological concepts developed in India); and Theological
Reflections on Neo-religious Movements (including some
political parties opposed to religion).

The financial assistance from the TEF aided this
seminary in producing quality theological books in the
Tamil language. Publication of Tamil theological volumes
then became an ongoing process at this seminary (Robinson,
1979, p. 5)

TTS prepared ministers for a new style of ministry
where the pastor acted as an enabler and fellow worker, not
a benefactor or administrator. The curriculum at TTS pro-
vided opportunity for exposure to actual living contexts
(Robinson, 1979, p. 7). Some students lived in the slums
to learn of the tragedies and struggles of the oppressed
and thereby to learn to meet their spritual needs. TTS
also sponsored halfway homes for the victims of immoral
traffic, a home for the destitute, and retirement homes for
the low income people (TTS Handbook, 1978, pp. 6-8). Stu-
dents from the seminary were sensitized to the problems and
context of this segment of the society.

Robinson (1983), principal of Tamil Nadu Theologi-
cal Seminary, stated that

> Theological education is for the mission of the
> Church, for equipping the people of God to live in
> obedience to the Gospel, and to bring the Gospel
> meaningfully and relevantly to those who have not
> experienced it. Our curriculum is, therefore, student

oriented, and not just content oriented. The context of the student is taken seriously. The types of ministry that are to be carried out today in the Indian context have been analysed and an adequate curriculum that would equip the candidates to carry out such ministries has been worked out (p. 1).

TTS encouraged ministers in training to take their immediate contexts seriously. The curriculum in the seminary introduced them to the indigenous cultural heritage including art, music, and drama, which the Indian theological schools had so long treated as alien and pagan. Students were also taught the effective use of the Tamil language--the language of their context (Robinson, 1979, p. 8).

The principal of the seminary, Robinson (1979), observed

> it is our hope that through our students we will be able to educate our church to understand and appreciate the richness of our indigenous heritages so that the Church may grow out of its 'foreignness' under which it suffers still and thus become effective in its ministry (p. 9).

Models for Contextualization of Seventh-day Adventist Theological Education in the Third World

The need for the contextuallization of theological education has already been sensed in some Adventist centers of theological education. This section discusses two studies done on the contextualization of Adventist theological education in the Third World countries (Currie, 1977; Vyhmeister, 1978).

Currie developed contextualized models for the

South Pacific Islands. In his first model for a Bachelor
of Theology degree, he made an effort to avoid the influ-
ence of liberal arts curricula. The total religion
requirements represent 55 percent of the required 192
credit hours with major emphases on academic studies rather
than practical. However, 27 percent of 192 credit hours
were designated as electives and 17 percent as general
education. Currie emphasized a major theme for each year
of theological training in this model (pp. 233-35).

Currie's (1977) second model accentuated practical
theology and field education which amounted to 50 per cent
of total credits. Continuing education, for the benefit of
ministers, was already built into this model. Such an
arrangement provided an encounter between ministers in
training and experienced ministers which enriched students'
view of reality and expectations in ministry (pp. 236-38).

In his conclusions, Currie argued that theological
training in the Pacific Islands must be offered within its
own context (p. 256). He also observed that "a Third World
theological educational curriculum trend concentrates less
on Western academic curricula and more on practical skills
and professional studies" (p. 257). He recommended that
Seventh-day Adventist theological education in the South
Pacific islands follow this trend (p. 257).

Vyhmeister (1978) recommended similar objectives
for Seventh-day Adventist theological education in the

countries of South America. She recommended that Seventh-
day Adventist theological education in South America be
offered within the philosophical, cultural, educational, and
socio-economic context of the countries its graduates serve
(p. 260).

Vyhmeister sent out five hundred questionnaires to
the ministers and leaders of the South American Division of
Seventh-day Adventist Church. She studied selected curri-
cular determinants on the basis of the results gathered,
organized, and analyzed from the questionnaires. In spite
of the differences pointed out, there was considerable
consensus. The following subjects were ranked by the nine
groups of respondents: Righteousness by Faith, Doctrine of
Christ, Advanced Evangelism, Biblical Eschatology, Doctrine
of the Atonement, Advanced Preaching, Lay Leadership
Training, Church Administration, Biblical Theology,
Biblical Exegesis, Pastoral Counseling, History of Sabbath
and Sunday, Pastoral Problems, Marriage Counseling, Mass
Media Communications, Doctrine of Revelation-inspiration,
Contemporary Theology. The subjects identified here did not
reflect contextualization at all. It might be that the
ministers thought in terms of the Western model.

Vyhmeister made six recommendations based on
her study and concluded:

> should these recommendations be implemented, the South
> American Division would have a theological education
> program created to fit the needs of its own ministers.
> However, there would still be the danger that this

model of theological education might become a tradi-
tion, just as difficult to modify as any other pre-
vious models. Theological education, in whatever
country it may be, needs to be constantly reviewed so
it may be well contextualized, not only in space, but
also in time. (p. 266)

Summary

In response to the 1938 Tambaram declaration that
the theological education was the "greatest weakness" of
the whole Christian enterprise, a thorough investigation of
theological education was initiated. Ranson's enquiry
recommended a contexualization of theological education for
India. This and the findings of the IMC formed the basis
for the establishment of the TEF in 1957.

In 1977 the TEF was succeeded by the PTE. The TEF
and the PTE played a very significant role in initiating
and funding efforts for the contextualization of theologi-
cal education.

Indian theological educators responded positively
to the suggestions of the TEF and PTE by seeking to
contextualize theological education. Some called for
complete reforms of the theological curriculum. Studies
suggested that theological education in India was divorced
from the living context and that the content of theological
education was imported from other contexts.

Responding to these recommendation most of the
theological seminaries including UBS and TTS made definite

changes in their curricula to meet the needs of the Indian context.

Realizing the need for contextual theological education in the Adventist church, Currie and Vyhmeister conducted detailed studies for the South Pacific islands and South American countries, respectively.

The next chapter assesses the need for the contextualization of Adventist theological education in India and proposes a contextual construct.

CHAPTER VII

A CONTEXTUAL CONSTRUCT FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the existing Seventh-day Adventist theological education in India to discover whether it meets the needs of contextualization; and to propose a contextual construct for the Adventist theological education in India.

Spicer Memorial College (SMC), Pune, is the only institution that offers a Bachelors degree in theological education for the Seventh-day Adventist ministry in India. Theological education is coordinated by the Department of Religious Philosophy. In 1985, this department was staffed by eighteen full-time theological educators and five visiting professors. Among the eighteen full-time theological educators were eleven nationals and seven from overseas. Among these, sixteen had professional training in theological education: three held a B.A.; eleven held an M.A. in religion; two held an M.Div.; one held a Ph.D. in Old Testament Archaeology, and one had a Th.D. in Biblical Studies. Sixteen of these educators had spent a short time (one to five years) in direct ministry.

Although from different countries and cultures,

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their purpose was to train individuals for the ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist church in India. According to Spicer Memorial College Bulletin (1984-85),

> The aim of the Department of Religious Philosophy is to make it possible for each scholar to discover for himself the meaning of life: its relation to God and man. It introduces him to a systematic and intensive study of the Scriptures and presents the challenge and privilege of devoting oneself to a life of service for God and humanity. (p. 280)

The aim of theological education as stated fails to be specific about its end-product or result and does not seem to address the needs of contextualization.

An Analysis of Existing Theological Education

Table 4 shows that the Bachelor degree in Religious Philosophy required 37 semester hours in a religion concentration; 36 semester hours for cognate requirements; and 55 hours for a minor concentration and general education requirements (Spicer Memorial College Bulletin, 1984-85, pp. 89, 280).

The cognate requirements mandate 200 hours of practical work in church ministry which amounts to one month working eight hours a day. Additionally, if a ministerial student chose Applied Theology for his minor (see Table 4), though not mandatory, he may be benefited from the practical perspective of pastoral ministry to a certain extent. Even if a ministerial student earned all these credits, they would be hardly sufficient to acquaint him with the issues and problems of his ministerial context.

TABLE 4

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AT
SPICER MEMORIAL COLLEGE

Religious Philosophy Major Requirements:
Thirty-seven hours, the required courses are:

Moral Principles (credit not applied)	4
Gift of Prophecy	2
Advanced Apocalyptic Literature	4
Philosophy of St. Paul	6
Comparative Religions	3
Principles of Islam	2
Principles of Hinduism	3
Hebrew Philosophy	6
Biblical Theology	6
Electives	5
	37

Cognate Requirements:

The Ancient Near East	6
History of Christianity	6
Homiletics	4
Introduction to the the Ministry	3

or

Biblical Hebrew	6
Secondary Education Methods	3
Introduction to Philosophy	2

or

Additional Applied Theology

or

Health Education Courses	6
	36

Practical work in Church ministry, 200 hours under the
supervision of the Head of the Religious Philosophy
department assisted by the Head of the Department of
Applied Theology.

TABLE 4--<u>Continued</u>

<u>Other Available Courses:</u>

Life and Teachings of Jesus	4
Biblical Eschatology	2
Studies in the Spirit of Prophecy	2
Doctrine of the Atonement	2
The Book of Hebrews	2
Modern Theology	2
Problems in Religious Philosophy	1-3
Seminar in Religious Philosophy	1-4
Research in Religious Philosophy	1-3
Readings in Religious Philosophy	1-2
Primitive Religions	2
Religions of the World	3
Principles of Buddhism	2
Principles of Jainism	2
Principles of Sikhism	2
Principles of Zoroastrianism	2

<u>Minor Requirements for Applied Theology:</u>
Twenty-one hours, the required courses are

Personal Evangelism	2
Field Visitation	2
Homiletics	4
Introduction to the Ministry	3
Field Evangelism	1-4
Pastoral Counselling	3
Advanced Homiletics	2
Electives	1-4
	21

It appears that the Seventh-day Adventist theological education offered in India is very similar to that of Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Mich. The Bachelor of Arts in religion at Andrews University requires 45 quarter credits for a major in religion. Table 5 shows the mandatory courses in the 1985-87 Andrews University bulletin.

It appeared that 62 percent of the required courses and 41 percent of the total available courses for a ministerial student at Spicer Memorial College were identical with or similar to that of Andrews University (see table 5). This implies that to some extent the Adventist theological education in India was patterned after the Adventist theological education in the USA, and does not reflect the needs of the Indian context. However, the bulletins for the years 1967-1985 indicated that contextualization had been attempted, but not to the point of extensive revision of the curriculum. Consequently, there is a need for a more contextual curriculum.

Some of the Indian Adventist church leaders have sensed an increasing dissatisfaction with the existing patterns of theological teaching and training. They are convinced of the need for radical change in the whole structure of training for ministry. Fowler, Jesudas, and Willmott (1985), all ministerial graduates of Spicer Memorial College, argued that training should be in the

TABLE 5

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM
FOR BACHELOR OF ARTS IN RELIGION

Major in Religion: Requires 45 credits

Law and Writings	4
Life and Teachings of Jesus	5
Studies in Daniel	4
Studies in Revelation	4
The Prophets of Israel - Early Prophets	4

or

The Prophets of Israel - Later Prophets	
Doctrines of the Christian Church	8
Introduction of Christian Ethics	4
The Writings and Philosophy of Ellen G. White	4
	37

Biblical Studies

Understanding the Old Testament	3
Understanding the New Testament	3
Essentials of Christian Faith	4
Christian Beliefs 1	4
Christian Beliefs 11	4
Topics in Religion	2
Acts and Epistles 1	4
Acts and Epistles II	4
Special Projects in Religion	1-3

Studies in Religion and Theology

Issues in the Great Controversy	4
The Gift of Prophecy	4
Biblical Backgrounds	4
Workshop in Prayer	2
Studies in the Sanctuary	4
Introduction to the Testimonies	3
Testimony Studies	3
Christian Business Ethics	4

Church History

History of the Christian Church I	4
History of the Christian Church II	4

TABLE 5--Continued

Applied Theology

Christian Witnessing	4
Homiletics	8
Preparation for Mission Service	3-9
Public Evangelism	2-5
Introduction to Pastoral Ministry	4

Biblical Languages

Greek 1	12
Greek 11	9
Greek Exegesis, 1. 11	3 or 6
The text of the New Testament	3
Beginning Hebrew	4

Philosophy

Introduction to Philosophy	4
Modern Western Thought	4

Honors in Religion

Honors in Religion (topic specified)	2
Honors in Religion (topic specified)	2

context of the ministry which is society. However, the
existing training takes place in the institution, which is
largely separated from the church and society. They
observed that theological students were trained in the
institutions, with occasional forays into church and
society, in the hope that when they finished they would be
able to fit into that context.

Willmott (1985) argued that the system of theologi-
cal training did not match the needs of the church, because
it was separated from the church. One can be trained to
meet the actual situation in the churches only by being
involved in it. The existing system did not provide such a
context.

Contextualization of Seventh-day Adventist
theological education in India, therefore, appeared to have
an immediate need:

> This is not a matter primarily of adding subjects to
> the curriculum, but rather of recasting the materials
> of traditional courses in the light of the situation
> in which the Church has to live, make its witness and
> train its members (1965-1970 TEF Mandate). (Quoted in
> Issues in Theological Education, p. 32)

The Rationale for the Contextual Construct

According to Bowers (1974), a curriculum specialist,

> The first principle to be used in designing curriculum
> is the exploration of the interface between the
> students existential self and the social-cultural
> milieu. This means establishing a sense of connected-
> ness between the experience of the student and the
> cultural context. (p. 115)

Some of the important factors in developing a contextualized theological education were the needs of the church, the situation of the society, the background of students, the trends in theological education, and the objectives and policies of the organized church (Hsiao, 1985, pp. 22-24).

Hsiao believed that a contextual theological education should be: 1. Christ and Bible-centered; 2. Church-rooted and Church-directed; and 3. World-oriented and world-directed (p. 28).

These features assume that practical and theoretical aspects of theological education must not be categorized or isolated one from another. Rather, these two aspects must be integrated to offer a holistic theological training. In addition to this, Hsiao (1985) pointed out that a functional curriculum should be life-related. It is not only teaching materials used, nor subjects taught, nor programs provided, but also experiences in which the students may be involved and which meet the students' educational needs (p. 21). Holistic theological education necessitates knowledge of the ministerial context--the society. Involvement in the affairs of a society or community must have implications for theological education.

The Basis for the Contextual Construct

The contextual construct outlined in table 6 was

TABLE 6

A CONTECTUAL CONSTRUCT FOR
ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL
EDUCATION IN INDIA

General Education

Indian Sociology
Indian Behavior (Psychology)
Indian History and Culture
Regional Language Literature
Indian Music
Research Skills
Math
Human Physiology
English
Typing
Indian Philosophy

Religion Courses

Life and Teachings of Jesus--Lessons in
  Contextualization
Introduction to Islam
Introduction To Jainism
Introduction to Sikhism
Theological Responses to Neo-Religious Movements
Contextualization of Christianity--a Historical
  Approach
Public Evangelism
Local Church Ministeries
Preaching in India
Contextualized Preaching as Illustrated in Hebrews
The Ancient Near East
Contextualization of Christianity in India
Biblical Hebrew
Pauline Contextualization as seen in the Epistles
Greek
Old Testament Prophecies
Major Hebrew Prophets and Indian Realities
Minor Hebrew Prophets and Indian Realities
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Motifs
Motivation of Laity
Ecumenical Movement in India
Development of Adventist in India
Survey of the Old Testament

TABLE 6--<u>Continued</u>

Western Theolgoy
Indian Christian Theology
Marriage and Family
Pastoral Counseling
Indian Liturgy

developed on the basis of: (1) Concepts gathered from a
review of literature regarding the concept of contextuali-
zation and its implications for theological education;
(2) ideas gained from personal interviews with theological
educators and leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist church
in India, and (3) the bulletins of theological educational
centers in India containing contextualized courses (The
Union Biblical Seminary, Pune; The United Theological
College, Bangalore; The Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary,
Madurai; Spicer Memorial College, Pune; 4. and data
described in the previous chapters of this study.

The Contextual Construct

The Scriptures underscore the importance of
involvement in the community. Jesus Christ Himself set the
precedent for such a pursual. In order to save mankind,
He left heaven and became intimately involved with the
joys, sorrows, celebrations, needs, and problems of his
immediate earthly society (John 2:1-11;11:1-44; Luke 7:11-
17; Luke 5: 4-9).

Jesus emphasized involvement when He said: "You
are the salt of the earth" (Matt 5:13). Salt becomes
useful only when it comes in contact with something else--
food or any commodity. Ministers in particular and Chris-
tians in general are called to stay in the world, touching

even its unworthy life, if they would redeem it
(Butterick, 1978, p. 472-474).

Jesus also endorsed this concept of involvement
when He sent His disciples on a missionary journey after
only a few months of training and exhortation. "He sent
them out to preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:2). They
were sent out to be involved with people, to stay among
them (Luke 9:1-6). This missionary endeavor provided them
with opportunities to live in the context of their ministry
and practice all that Jesus had taught them. "When the
apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had
done" (Luke 9:10).

The contextual construct in table 6 was designed to
provide a contextualized Adventist theological education
for the ministry in India. While seeking to maintain some
basic elements of the traditional liberal arts training,
this construct attempts to contextualize the theological
courses and balance theory and practice. The contextual
construct is proposed for a Bachelor of Arts degree which
could be offered through Spicer Memorial College, Pune,
India.

According to this contextual construct the
first year would be a period of orientation. During these
three quarters, students would be introduced to the ethos
of Seventh-day Adventist community and its theological
stance, and general education courses.

English would help the student to sharpen his communication skills, Research Skills provide the necessary knowledge to conduct research which may be a requirement for some courses. Indian History would help to understand and appreciate India's ancient culture and significant historical developments that make up present realities. Introduction to Psychology helps the minister-in-training to understand human development and the psychological needs of man within the Indian context. Introduction to Hinduism, and Introduction to Islam, Jainism, or Sikhism would seek to promote a right understanding of and proper attitude towards adherents of these religions, so that meaningful dialogue could be initiated. Indian Sociology would introduce the minister-in-training to the contemporary issues of the Indian society (the caste system, poverty, injustice) and its challenges to his future ministry. The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ would study the Gospels and their relevance to the existing contexts in India and apply the model of Jesus' ministry to the Indian mind. Introduction to Ministry would explore the future minister's sacred calling and the functions of ministry.

Such courses would provide basic knowledge concerning the student's context and concept of ministry. A minister is not only responsible to maintain his church members in the truth, but he is also entrusted with the divine mandate to offer everyone within his pastoral

district the truth of the Gospel. It is imperative to the pastor, therefore, to understand the mindset and context of his district.

To apply this knowledge, the Summer quarter, during the first year could be spent either in evangelism of literature ministry, or assisting a senior minister in an evangelistic endeavor--evangelistic campaign or/and personal evangelism.

The curriculum for the second year could introduce the students to more courses concerning the context of ministry. Indian Philosophy would provide an introduction to the different philosophical systems of India. Indian Music would introduce the student to Carnatic or Hindustani music which would be the music of his context. Studies in Ecumenism would help to understand the rationale behind the union of churches to which most Christians in India belong. Inasmuch as in most cases students minister in their own language area, courses in Regional Language Literature would reinforce language skills. Seventh-day Adventist heritage would be emphasized through courses such as Apocalyptic Literature, and the History and Development of Seventh-day Adventist Movement which would not only trace the historical past of the movement in frontier America, but also highlight its origin and development in the Indian subcontinent. History of Christianity, on the other hand, would study the development of the Christian

church from its inception to the present, and trace the
process of contextualization and the impacts of ancient
near-eastern, Hellenistic, Roman, and modern western cul-
tures. Modern Prophets would help the student to under-
stand the ministry of Ellen G. White and the relevance of
her writings to the Indian culture and would discuss the
messianic movement in India. In addition to regular
classes, it is suggested that ministerial students assist in
the operation of the area churches and help establish new
companies and congregations around the city and suburbs
close to the theological seminary. This program should be
coordinated by professors from the Religious Philosophy
department. Such a program would meet the requirements for
the course Local Church Ministry.

During the summer quarter, second-year ministerial
students could assist in an evangelistic endeavor such as a
public evangelistic campaign, seminar evangelism, or
personal evangelism. Preferably, this should be done in
the language region of the student which probably will be
the context of his future ministry.

All third-year students should be encouraged to
live off-campus in rented rooms or houses among the various
strata of society--low caste, high caste; and among the
various religious groups--Hindus, Moslem, Jains, and Chris-
tians of different denominations. While living among these
various groups, the students should be encouraged to learn

more about their religion and socio-cultural values. This would also involve them in the community affairs of the society. Through this personal interaction with Hindus, Moslems and other religious groups, a prospective minister would be better understand the role of religion in their lives. This exposure also would bring about an awareness of the magnitude of poverty, suffering, the caste system, and religious pluralism which are widely prevalent in the Indian society. Such an involvement would expose the student to the life-style, problems, felt-needs, and issues of their ministerial context and provide an opportunity to reflect on these theologically.

Living in the context itself would provide the minister-in-training much more creative and qualitative education than to confine him to the residential life of the college for four years. It is suggested that theological education in the context of ministry would lead to a self-motivated education where students become agents of learning through action and interaction in their contexts, deeply motivated to make use of the resources available from the community to enhance their theological thinking.

Commenting on theological education in context, Hasel (1984), dean of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, said, ". . . I think from our perspective we feel it is best to train the person in the cultural and social setting where that person will actually do ministry"

p. 23). Illich (1970) and Freire (1968) reinforce this
view when, among other things, they demand that living,
learning, and working be inter-connected and contextual.
They flatly reject the thesis that learning is a direct
result of teaching and that learning and schooling are
synonymous. Education, they argue, must start with the
needs of the student in his/her unique context.

During the third year the students should have
opportunities to communicate the Gospel to the people in
their context. This might be done on a one-to-one basis,
in a seminar format or in small groups. As much as possi-
ble, programs geared towards meeting felt-needs should
precede the actual teaching of the Bible: for example,
health classes and sessions on how to stop smoking. The
problems confronted, needs observed, and experiences gained
could be discussed in the course seminar on Local Church
Ministries coordinated by theological educators with ade-
quate pastoral experience. Senior ministers from the
different pastorates might be invited to these seminars
every quarter so that a minister-in-training may keep
abreast of the needs and problems of the people of his
future ministerial context.

These seminars, also, would discuss the necessary
skills for communicating the Gospel to the Hindus, Moslems,
Jains, Christians of various denominations, and other

religious groups based on the experiences of both students and instructors.

In addition to this, the curriculum during the third year could enrich students' theological and biblical understanding through courses such as Pauline Contextualization which would study the Apostle Paul's endeavors to accommodate his ministry and writings to various cultural groups; and Contextualized Preaching as illustrated in the book of Hebrews. Courses in biblical languages would offer the students the necessary tools to understand the context of the biblical times and writers. Courses in Indian Church History would provide an understanding of the origin and development of Christianity in India from the apostolic times to the present, the tension between the church and the cultural milieu of India, and the historical heritage of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in India.

This contextual construct also suggests third-year students to be actively involved in the operation of the Seventh-day Adventist churches in and around the location of the theological seminary. The students, divided into small groups along with their professors as coordinators, could organize, coordinate, and conduct weekend church activities and services. This would meet the requirements for the Local Church Ministries course.

During the third summer quarter ministerial students could be given the responsibility to organize and

conduct evangelistic endeavors such as Bible seminars and evangelistic campaigns. It would help to carry out such programs within the student's own language group assisted by younger ministerial students and under the supervision of professors from the seminary. This would provide an opportunity for theological educators to be involved in the context of ministry rather than to be confined to the environs of academic pursuits alone.

A minister-in-training would return to his fourth year of theological training equipped with first-hand experience in evangelism, a better understanding of his ministerial context, and more mature attitude to accept greater challenges for his final year of training.

During the first two quarters of the fourth year a ministerial student would continue to attend classes as an off-campus student living in the context of his ministry. The final-year courses would be of deeper theological content but conducted as seminars. Courses in biblical and theological studies could include Minor Prophets, Major Prophets, Western Theology, Indian Christian Theology, and the contributions of Chenchiah, Sadhu Sunder Singh, Bishop Appasamy, M. M. Thomas, and other prominent Indian theologians, and the issues of Indian society such as religious pluralism, castism, injustice, and poverty and their implications for theologizing in India, plus basic Seventh-day Adventist theology such as Revelation and Inspiration,

Eschatalogy, Sanctuary, Sabbath, and Second Coming of Christ. A course in Ancient Near East would reinforce biblical studies through the aid of archaeological findings. Inasmuch as there is great potential for evangelism among the laity of the Church, a course in motivating the laity for evangelism would aid in developing approaches for lay evangelism. Courses such as Marriage and Family or Pastoral Counseling would acquaint a minister with the necessary methodology and tools for crisis and therapeutic counseling.

Finally, it must be noted that even if courses are contextualized in terms of content, only teachers who believe in and have experienced the benefits of contextualization can make it a living reality in the lives of students. Teachers, therefore, are a vital force in contextualizing theological education.

Upon graduation from the theological seminary, a minister who had followed this approach would be far better prepared and ready for ministry in the Indian context.

Summary

The first part of this chapter discussed the existing curriculum for Adventist theological education in India. The data revealed that the aim of theological education was nebulous and was not contextualized. The analysis of Adventist theological education in the U. S. A.

and in India indicated that the existing curriculum is patterned more after the U. S. A. model than on the multi-cultural context of ministry in India.

Some of the leaders of Seventh-day Adventist Church in India have expressed that the existing curriculum needed updating as it is more theorectical than practical. They reccmmended that students be trained in the actual context rather than in the academic setting alone.

Consequently, contextualization of Adventist theological education seems imperative. Such a process warrants a rationale for a philosophical construct that would offer a contextualized curriculum.

The following section on the rationale for the contextual construct mentioned some of the significant factors in developing a contextual curriculum for theological education. The rationale assumed that there should not be a dichotomy between practical and theorectical aspects of theological education; rather both should be integrated to offer holistic training.

After discussing the basis for the construct, the contextual construct itself was explained. This section emphasized the concept of involvement as a significant methodology for ministry. Such a concept was substantiated with a biblical basis.

The contextual construct proposed a curriculum sensitive to and addressing the existing ministerial

context. This model called for students' involvement in
the operation and the evangelistic endeavors of the Church.
The concept of involvement built into the curriculum also
required students to live off-campus among the various
economic and religious groups in the vicinity of the theo-
logical seminary. Such an involvement would expose the
minister-in-training to the issues and problems of his
ministerial context. The construct also explained the
course offerings and their significance to the context.

The following chapter summarizes all the
chapters in this study and makes recommendations that might
be implemented.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although schools for training "Indian workers" were established at Calcutta in 1897, and at Lucknow and Coimbatore in 1915, systematic Adventist theological education did not commence until 1930. In the same year a two-year college training for ministry was established in Bangalore.

The physical plant at Krishnarajapuram, Bangalore, became inadequate. A growing Adventist Church in India necessitated a central and spacious location for theological training. On August 28, 1942, a new facility for theological training was established as Spicer College in Pune (Poona).

The new location offered improved curriculum in theological education. The basic curriculum design, however, reflected American features. Although the American model might suit the needs of the American minister, it proved to be irrelevant to the Indian context. Maliakal E. Cherian, upon becoming president of Spicer memorial College and Chairman of Religion Department in 1963, effected innovations in curriculum in response to the contemporary needs of the Adventist ministry and the

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Church in India. This was a helpful beginning towards contextualizing Adventist theological training in India, but only a beginning.

A careful analysis of recent Spicer Memorial College Bulletins indicates that Adventist theological education in India had kept abreast of Adventist theological curriculum in the United States of America rather than meeting the Indian contexts. It seems reasonable to assume that contextualized curriculum would be more likely to meet the ministerial needs of Indian ministers than an imported model.

What is contextualization? Contextualization is a means of relating the never-changing Word of God to the ever-changing world and its multifaceted contexts. This concept opens up possibilities of approaching the Bible and of reflecting upon the Christian faith in new ways that meet the needs and priorities which are peculiar to India.

Syncretism and the danger of allowing the context to determine the content are two problems which need to be avoided in the process of contextualization. A sound theological base will help to avoid such dangers.

Theologically, the Bible has been a dynamic illustration of contextualization. That the creator-God's revelation of Himself is related to the receiver's culture is evident from the Bible. For example, the symbols in the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 15:6-12) bear strong affinity

to the contemporary nomadic culture of Mesopotamia and the ancient Near East. Later in history, God asked Moses to build the Sanctuary for Israel so that their Egyptio-Israeli mindset might have a tangible symbol of worship.

Although inspired by God, the Bible writers employed terminology familiar to themselves and their readers. For example, John writing to a predominantly Greek mind employed Greek phraseology, logos, to explain the concept of the incarnation (John 1:1).

The incarnation itself is a vast illustration of contextualization. Jesus, the divine One, condescended to be united with human nature so as to better relate to the context of this earth. So also the Church, His body, must relate to its context in proclaiming the Gospel.

In addition to the incarnation, Paul's pattern of ministry and writing provide a theological basis for contextualization. The variance of language, illustration, and personal requests in his writings suggest Paul's effort to communicate contextually. I Corinthians 9:20-23 shows that Paul made a conscious effort to accommodate himself to all people: to a Jew he was a Jew; to a Greek he was a Greek; he also felt at home among the Gentiles.

In essence, the Three Angels messages of Revelation 14:6-12 spell out this concept in noting that the Gospel must be proclaimed to every nation, tribe, language, and people. Because the biblical message originally was

communicated within the cultural context, the receiver was better able to understand and grasp its urgency. Any contemporary contextualization of the biblical message will aid in its understnding and reception.

One of the chief objectives of the church is to make the Word--the biblical message--incarnate. The church does not exist in a vacuum. It is subject to the contingencies and conditioning influences of its immediate society, and must address both the issues and the audience of this context. This tension between church and culture is a continuum. The church councils during the apostolic period and the church fathers of the second, third, and fourth centuries responded to culture by moving gradually from total rejection to total identification. The Christian churches in India from the beginning experienced the problem of being identified as Western. Ecumenical leaders, such as Clarke (1980), have urged that the church's message be presented within the matrix of Indian context (pp. 11,12).

The Adventist Church has also confronted the same tension between the church and culture. Because the Adventist Church originated in America, it has, in its language, patterns of thinking, strategy for evangelism, and mission identification acquired and/or inherited the frontier mentality of 19th-century America. To combat this, the church in each geographic location must be rooted in

that particular soil and develop its institutions to address the needs and problems of that particular context.

Contextualization has not only a theological and ecclesiological basis, but also sociological foundation. Studies by McGavran (1970) pointed out that most of the non-Christian resistance to conversion arises from fear that becoming a Christian will separate the individual from his people and culture (p. 191). This dilemma, according to sociologists, threatens an individual's identity and sociological security (Kaluger & Unkovic, 1969, pp. 145-178). Realizing this, Stanley Jones, an American missionary, endeavored to foster an indigenous expression of Indian Christianity when he established a Christian Ashram at Sat Tal in the Himalayas and another Ashram at Lucknow (Johnson, 1978, p. 283). Although Ashram was basically a Hindu institution, Jones adapted it to fit the requirements of Christianity in an effort to make it a comfortable environment for Hindus.

H. A. Krishnapillai, a Hindu convert to Christianity, utilized his literary talents to present Christianity within the sociological context of 19th-century Tamil Nadu, India. His monumental work, <u>Irakshaniya Yattirikam</u>, freely borrowed Hindu terminology to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Hudson, 1970, pp. 457-491). His writings took Christianity to many educational institutions in his state.

Contextualization is also an educational necessity. Unless curricular objectives and the style of teaching address students contextually, education will make little contribution to a society. In particular, theological education must be contextualized so that the ministers will develop the skills to communicate the everlasting Gospel in an ever changing-society.

A number of factors influence the contextualization of Seventh-day Adventist theological eduction in India: Religion, the socio-cultural context, economic climate, political emergence, and the Adventist church's distinctive mission.

The religious situation of India continues to be a major factor. The presuppostions of Hinduism, Brahman, atman, karma, samsara, and maya suggest a sense of religious complacency. The syncretistic and philosophical characteristics of Hinduism have helped it survive the invasion of Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. An Adventist minister-in-training must be taught this context of India in order to communicate the Gospel attractively to the Hindus who compose 90 percent of the population.

India's socio-cultural context was largely influenced by Hinduism. The basic unit of Indian society is still family. The traditional family was joint family in which parents, grandparents, children--married and unmarried--lived together under one roof and shared in the

expenses of the family. Each family could be categorized under a caste grouping. Caste, although unconstitutional, nevertheless exists in every level of society. Theological training must make ministerial students aware of these sociological realities and thus help them to gear communication to accommodate these features.

The sixth chapter of this study examined the efforts of the various churches and church agencies to contextualize theological training in India, models for contextualizing Adventist theological education in the South Pacific, and the countries of South America were discussed.

The International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches (WCC) promoted and supported the contextualization of theological training in many Third World countries including India. The Theological Education Fund (TEF) and the Programme on Theological Training (PTE) of the WCC facilitated the contextualization of theological education at the Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary in Madurai, India, by helping to publish theological books in the Tamil language and financing innovations in the seminary curriculum. Responding to the needs of the Indian context, Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, also undertook a process of contextualizing its curriculum and theological training as a whole.

Although most non-Adventist seminaries in India

have made some effort to contextualize theological training, Adventist theological education in India still reflects the Western status quo. It appears that 62 percent of required courses and 41 percent of the total available courses at Spicer Memorial College religion department are almost identical with those of Andrews University, U.S.A.

This study has postulated a construct for contextualizing Adventist theological education in India. This construct endeavors to balance theory and practice, and accentuate involvement in the Indian context of ministry. After an orientation period of two years, a ministerial student would be required to find off-campus housing in different parts of the city close to the college. While living among these various groups, the students would be encouraged to experiment in relating religion to socio-cultural values. During the summer months, a minister-in-training would first assist then later lead out in an evangelistic endeavor, whenever possible in his own language.

During the fourth year, most classes would be conducted in a seminar style to provide an environment in which ministers-in-training can discuss their experiences in ministry and the results of involvement in the Indian context while living off-campus.

This contextual construct would suggest that theological educators approach their teaching from the perspective of the Indian context and student's needs; so that a student might begin ministry fully aware of the lively relationship between the Word and world.

In this study, the process of contextualization was employed as a means to Adventist mission and service in India.

Recommendations

1. Inasmuch as Adventist theological education in India is in need of contextualization, it is recommended that the proposed contextual construct be studied by concerned entities with a view to implementation.

2. Contextualization of theological education is a dynamic and ongoing process. It is recommended, therefore, that Spicer Memorial College in conjunction with the Southern Asia Division, and Union missions set up a committee to evaluate theological education annually. Of necessity, this committee should include both theologically trained leaders, theology educators, ministers of experience, minister in training, and laypersons.

3. It is recommended that field seminars be conducted in all the union missins of India to facilitate the process of contextualization as a mission methodology.

For Further Study

1. Inasmuch as Adventist ministers in active

ministry need a continued awareness of contextualization, it is recommended that a study be given to continuing education for Adventist ministers in India.

2. Because lay persons in India are actively engaged in evangelism, it is recommended that a study be conducted on theological education by extension for lay persons in order to make them fully aware of the priority of a contextualized approach to their ministry.

3. Inasmuch as this study was limited to the Bachelors level of theological education, and Masters level theological education is presently offered at Spicer Memorial College, it is recommended that study be given to the contextualization of theological education at the graduate level.

4. This study was limited to contextualization of theological education only. It is recommended that a study be done on contextualizing liturgy of the Seventh-day Adventist church in India.

APPENDIX A

A SUGGESTED SEQUENCE TO THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCT

APPENDIX A

A Suggested Sequence to the Proposed Construct

First Year

First Quarter	Second Quarter
July - September	October - December

English
Research Skills
Indian Sociology
Introduction to Hinduism
Life and Teachings of Jesus--Lessons in
  Contextualization

English
Introduction to Islam
Typing I
History and Culture of India
Life and Teachings of Jesus--Lessons in
  Contextualization

Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
January - March	April - June

Introduction to Jainism or Sikhism
History and Culture of India
Introduction to Ministry
Indian Behavior (Psychology)
Typing II

Literature Evangelism

or

Public Evangelism

Appendix

Second Year

First Quarter	**Second Quarter**
July – September	October – December

Contextualization of Three Angels'
  Messages I
Regional Language Literature I
Contextualization of Christianity--
  A Historical Approach I
Indian Philosophy
Human Physiology or Math I
	Contextualization of Three Angels' Messages II
	Regional Language Literature II
	Contextualization of Christianity--A Historical
	  Approach II
	Local Church Ministries
	Human Physiology or Math II

Third Quarter	**Fourth Quarter**
January – March	April – June
Indian Music Ecumenical Movement in India Development of Adventism in India Modern Prophets and Messianic Movements Cultural Anthropology	Public Evangelism in Student's Language Area

Appendix

Third Year

First Quarter

July - September

Pauline Contextualization as Seen
   in the Epistles I
Biblical Hebrew or
Greek I
Contextualization of Christianity
   in India I
Preaching in India I

Second Quarter

October - December

Pauline Contextualization as Seen
   in the Epistles II
Biblical Hebrew or
Greek I
Contextualization of Christianity
   in India II
Preaching in India II

Third Quarter

January - March

Intermediate Greek or Hebrew
Contextualized Preaching as Illustrated
   in Hebrews
Survey of the Old Testament
Local Church Ministeries

Fourth Quarter

April - June

Public Evangelism Conducted by Ministerial
   Students

Appendix

Fourth Year

First Quarter

July – September

Major Prophets and Indian Realities
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Motifs
The Ancient Near-East
Motivation of Laity
Intermediate Greek or Hebrew

Second Quarter

October – December

Minor Prophets and Indian Realities
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Motifs
The Ancient Near-East
Theological Reflections on Neo-Religious
    Movements
Western Theology

Third Quarter

January – March

Indian Christian Theology
Marriage and Family in India or
Pastoral Counseling
Worship and Liturgy in the Indian Context
Church and Indian Society

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