
This study of the establishment and growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tanzania is worthy of note for several reasons. First it constitutes a chapter in the history of the dynamic growth of Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa, the location of the most dramatic shift in the demographic weight of Christianity from the North to the South, which Philip Jenkins has so clearly described in *The Next Christendom* and subsequent publications. Second, it traces the perhaps even more surprising growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church from difficult and small beginnings to a folk church in at least six communities in Tanzania. Third, in so doing, it opens a window on a relatively neglected aspect of this remarkable change in Sub-Saharan Africa—the growth of minority denominations to dominant Christian groups in some societies. And finally there is much that missionaries, whether experienced or new appointees, and missionary scholars can learn from this analytical and detailed study.

Stefan Hoeschele, who taught at the Tanzania Adventist College near Arusha for seven years, has thoroughly explored all available Adventist archives and publications, as well as the general literature on missions in Tanzania, and drawn upon some ninety interviews, in gathering materials for this study. The title *Christian Remnant – African Folk Church* is indicative of the thesis underlying this study and of the two poles which have functioned together in dynamic interrelationship in the growth of Adventism in Tanzania. The “Remnant” motif, stemming from the Millerite Movement, includes the eschatological sect-like self-understanding of a people with the felt-responsibility of proclaiming an end-time message worldwide. (Rev 14:6, 7, 12). This includes a sense of tension with the wider society regarding some matters of lifestyle and theology including the keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath. The “Folk Church” concept is used to represent a minority denomination which has expanded and incorporated members of the wider society to the extent that it
has become a religious majority that lives and witnesses in relatively low tension with its social community. Interaction between patterns of thought and action at these poles has given shape to the expansion and development of the Adventist Church in Tanzania.

The initiative for this mission arose in the Adventist Church in Germany under the leadership of L. R. Conradi and was informed by the Protestant missionary concept of reaching a “Volk” (people) in its entirety. This together with the comity principle fostered the development of folk churches. Conradi sent two young men to the Oriental Seminar in Berlin, and others to the Colonial Institute in Hamburg to equip them with the knowledge and skills essential to the missionary task. Adventist missionaries entered Tanzania in 1903 and soon thereafter commenced work among the Pare people. Perhaps not surprisingly by 1909 a grammar of the Pare language had been produced and the translation of the Gospels was well under way.

This history reveals both the difficulties encountered and the successes achieved. There were tensions with colonial and local authorities and struggles regarding traditional cultural and religious issues such as ancestor rites and worship, polygamy and brideprice, and rituals of the cosmic and life cycles. Considerable dislocation was caused by the internment of German missionaries during World War 1. A lesson learned during this period of upheaval was the success of Pare “missionaries” in sustaining the work that had been started among the (alien-to-them) new Christians on the Eastern shore of Lake Victoria. Hoeschele also records the changes in missionary methods employed in response to the social and religious changes during the transitions of Colonial rule, the wars, political independence, the rise of literacy and urbanization. The early emphasis on direct teaching, and establishment of schools, was supplemented by the publishing and distribution of literature, medical work, and public evangelism in the rapidly growing cities.

Hoeschele also pays attention to the functions and importance of theological conviction in the dual process of enculturation and creation of an Adventist identity. Maintenance of a strong eschatological hope, and affirmation of the resurrection of the body at the coming of the Lord, in conjunction with the doctrine of conditional immortality, over time displaced traditional ancestor related beliefs and practice. The eschatologically informed remnant-related ecclesiology inspired both a strong sense of mission and corporate identity. Strict observance of the seventh-day Sabbath constituted a considerable obstacle at times, but also
confirmed the strong Seventh-day Adventist sense of identity. The means by which this sense of unity and identity has been maintained are Sabbath worship services, Sabbath School Bible lessons and discussions, revival campmeetings, and involvement in evangelistic outreach teams.

All of this and more make this a highly rewarding book to study, and one from which much can be learned regarding both missionary methods and practice. In addition it constitutes a model for the research, location and use of sources, and writing of the much-needed history of the planting and development of the Adventist Church in many places. It is the most carefully researched, extensively documented, and analytical study of the planting and development of the Adventist Church in a single country of which I am aware. It consists of ten chapters which may be divided into three sections—the early beginnings; the multifarious issues involved in the development and extension of the church; and a final analytical section. It contains four maps, quite a few photographs, very extensive footnotes, an extensive classified multi-sectional bibliography, and index.

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The movement of Muslim “guest workers,” refugees, and immigrants to Europe in recent years is a phenomenon that has had extensive repercussions for Europe. Many critics view the growth of the European Muslim community as a potentially dangerous Islamic renaissance, characterised by aggressive fundamentalism. This new climate has unleashed an array of critical debates in the public forum often pertaining to escalating tensions, confrontations, and, in worst cases, serious violence and killings or the fear thereof. As such, the European community has found itself in a position in which it must consider what constitutes the notion of ‘European community’. The legitimacy and nature of democratic rights and social laws, religious liberty, and freedom of the press have all come under question in the wake of a changing European cultural profile. It is from within this context that the book Das Christentum begegnet dem Islam: Eine religiöse Herausforderung (Christianity Encounters Islam: A Religious Challenge) has arisen. The result of extensive research by a