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European University Studies

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To my wife, Gerlinde,

and daughters,

Sabine and Beate,

who have shared with me

the joy and agony

of missions

ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Der Adventbote
ABH	Der Adventbote in der Heidenwelt
GCB	General Conference Bulletin
HW	Herold der Wahrheit
KP	Khalil Papers
KS	Kirche und Staat, Zeitschrift für Glaubens- und Gewissensfreiheit
NP	Nowfel Papers
OD	Original Documents
RH	Review and Herald
SP	Simon Papers
ZW	Zions-Wächter

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PREFACE

The Seventh-day Adventist Church entered the Middle East 100 years ago. Between 1879 and 1939 its mission in the Arab lands was directed and supported by its European missionaries, but since World War II it has been under American leadership. The period from 1879 to 1939 is, however, of special concern here, since it presents itself as a complete chapter of mission history. Describing a complete cycle of the development of a mission, from its origin to its withdrawal, is of interest, since it reveals characteristics so common in Protestant mission history in the Middle East. Most interesting are the experiences of a diverse missionary force that came from various European backgrounds. Their joint encounter with Middle Eastern Christianity and Islam shall be mentioned. Though Seventh-day Adventists penetrated successfully into most countries in the northern and southern hemisphere, it will be interesting to note why they were unable to reach Middle Eastern Christianity and Islam in like manner. Their aspirations and failures in missionizing these peoples will be of major concern.

It was, therefore, first of all important to evaluate the western outlook of Seventh-day Adventism before it was possible to analyse the mission's ability to enter and to adapt to the setting of the Middle East. The historic forces which frequently interrupted its development will be mentioned, but most attention is directed to the theological and sociological components which either hindered or supported the mission outreach. Hence, this presentation tries to give some insights into a Middle Eastern mission history which may be of concern to the church historian, theologian, sociologist, and to those who are interested in inter-religious and inter-cultural studies.

Therefore, in this research the attempt has been made to present an interpretation of a mission's desire to enter the Middle East rather than stating its mere mission history. Consequently, it does not claim to be a final history, but its main concern is rather to point to some missiological problems faced in an inter-religious and inter-cultural experience. With such intentions in mind, it is hoped that it might stimulate further discussions on the encounter of religions, to which the outreach of modern missions has so greatly contributed.

The research is mainly based on sources collected by the author

which have not previously been available to the public. Since the European Seventh-day Adventist Mission in the Middle East was mainly sponsored from Central Europe, almost all sources are in German, though printed mission reports are also available in English. In addition to the extensive published reports, private correspondence of missionaries and church members, as well as church records, have been evaluated.

In this connection special recognition is due to Faris Dow, Mrs. Marie Meyer-Khalil, Dr. phil. et med. Wilhelm Lesovsky, Pastor Shukri Nowfel, and Pastor Erich Simon for making their private correspondence and papers available. Special thanks is to be given to the Advent-Verlag, Hamburg, for granting permission for the writer to use its library freely.

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Middle East College
Beirut

June 1978

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM IN THE WEST

The Origins in the United Staates of America

About twenty years after the first Protestant mission entered the Middle East, Seventh-day Adventism was born in New England in the 1840's. Like the mission of the "American Board for the Commission of Foreign Missions," it owes its heritage and much of its character to American revivalism. The new movement was, however, inward looking and mainly concerned with itself at the time when the former was already involved in vigorous missionary activities. While the "American Mission" was promoted by an energetic and optimistic generation of young churches, well established in the United States in the early nineteenth century, Seventh-day Adventism was entangled in a long maturing process. Before these obstacles were overcome, it could not concern itself with the question of foreign missions.

Within the context of American millenarianism the Millerites proved to be the most influential and largest group in the early nineteenth century. William Miller's second advent proclamations met the prevailing eschatological expectations of the time. The urgency added to this doctrine by the Millerite movement was approved by many leaders and laymen of various denominations. But the concentration on a fixed date of the imminent advent made the ultimate collapse unavoidable. The inter-denominational spirit of revival which could have been of great significance thus ended in an anti-climax most detrimental for almost everyone involved.[1]

The prejudice caused by the collapse of the Millerite movement created many problems for anyone attempting to preach another advent message. Yet, a few stranded individuals, allied loosely together, started a movement which later matured into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

To begin with, Seventh-day Adventism had to overcome the theological aftermath of Millerism, which so greatly influenced its birth and later development. There was first of all the theological preoccupation with the question of the second coming of Christ, which, according to the premillennial Millerites was to have occurred between 1843/44. Early Seventh-day Adventist hesitated to interpret the tragedy, though they retained the Millerites' eschatological outlook on prophetic and apocalyptic interpretations. The idea that the time of probation had already appeared lingered

for some time in early Seventh-day Adventism until it was gradually replaced by the view the time of judgment had begun.

The Millerites' emphasis on a particular doctrine naturally delayed the discussion on other theological issues, which became the burden of Seventh-day Adventism. Right after the evaporation of the Miller movement other doctrines became more and more significant. Once the situation permitted the study of theology from a wider angle the doctrinal perspective changed accordingly. Opposing views emerged, but the new movement survived since the doctrine on eschatology still had its centrifugal power over the nucleus of advent believers. Their experience had become a common tradition despite theological differences.

The consolidation process of Seventh-day Adventist theology began right after 1844, reaching its climax about 90 years later in 1932, when after an all-over inventory the church's articles of faith were officially stated.[2] Before that, theological expressions of the church reflected rather the opinions of individual leaders, though common consent on the main tenets of theology already emerged by 1848. The year 1861 also pointed to this consolidation process, when the name of the church, which included the doctrines of the Sabbath and the advent of Christ, was adopted.[3]

Sparked off by a laymen's movement, the consolidation of Seventh-day Adventist theology demonstrates the encounter to be faced, when one central issue gives birth to a movement. That which at one point was an advantage hampered its later course of development, since adjustments to an all-over theological concept were inevitable. While Millerism was effective as an all-uniting force of an inter-church movement, the doctrine of the advent was suddenly limited and less effective when it became involved in the birth and growth of a church. Thus the theological heritage of Millerism preoccupied Seventh-day Adventism between 1844 - 1888. This development did not mature without struggle. Questions on the Sabbath and on eschatology crystallized somewhat less painfully than those on the godhead and Christology.[4] These discussions forced the interest of the church to be focused on internal matters and delayed its engagement in foreign missions up to the turn of the century.

Seventh-day Adventist theology emerged as an amalgamation of various Protestant views with traces of the New England theology. As a conservative-orthodox and fundamentalistic branch of Protestantism of Calvinistic back-

ground, it finally took its place among American denominations. Enriched through the presence of rugged New World personalities, its gradual formation advanced step by step in the melting process. While different ideas and personalities appeared at first to hinder its development, their vital asset to its growth became evident once the crystallization process was complete. These events were not without effect on its later mission enterprise, as shall be noticed.

Seventh-day Adventism could, of course, not embark on a foreign mission program as long as its theology was not formulated or at least a common platform established. The church, not following the apostolic tradition or a rigid ecclesiology in its church structure, was built on congregational patterns, the endorsement of its theology had either to come through common consensus or the approval of a spiritual authority. Both possibilities were available within the Seventh-day Adventist Church; the latter proved to be the more effective one. Ellen G. White's sanctioning of the church's theology - herself contributing greatly in shaping it - had the effect of an authoritative approval of a prophet.[5]

Yet this crystallization process had already the seeds of a mission outreach within itself. The search for a common understanding of various doctrines attracted individuals into its centrifugal process from different Christian churches, but none made such an impact and drew as many adherents as the doctrine of the Sabbath. Depending on the consensus toward its set of beliefs on a wide range of religious groupings, Seventh-day Adventists were automatically forced to select their followers from a wider geographical area than was the case with most churches. Seventh-day Adventist doctrines were not suitable to be absorbed by a single socio-cultural setting, but were from the beginning selective and widespread. At first the movement was, of course, limited to the United States of America and Canada, but toward the end of the 19th century extended to Europe and Australia and eventually to all parts of the world.

The development of the church organization kept pace naturally with the spreading of Seventh-day Adventism. In the 1840's, since the movement was still limited to groups of individuals in New England, a church organization was considered unnecessary if not undesirable, even though the elements of an organization were already in existence just under the surface. Because the center of gravity shifted with the westward movement of Adventism from

New England to the Midwest, Battle Creek (Michigan) became the denominational center within one decade. Here, whether or not it was needed or desired, the situation imposed upon the church a simple form of organization. Thus, while the church had passed through its infancy in New England, it enjoyed its childhood in the newly founded states of the Midwest in the second half of the 19th century. Here Seventh-day Adventism developed its theology and also defined the type of organization it needed.[6]

The new protective environment in the Midwest encouraged an internal maturing process with little influence or opposition by an older and richer cultural and religious setting as had been previously the case in New England. This, however, does not mean that the church matured in a vacuum. Its inheritance from New England remained with it and determined its later development.

The expansion of Seventh-day Adventism made it necessary to find ways to facilitate and maintain its spread. The traditional way of collecting the flock into communal churches was not applicable, since most members did not live in closed communities, though there was the manifest desire of living together and forming churches for the sake of physical fellowship. But this was not easily implemented during the formative years. Therefore, another ecclesiastical form emerged: the scattered church, a body of believers in dispersion, held together through the unifying bond of the written word, the church paper. This type of church setting was possible through the improvement in the communication system in the early 19th century. The flow of written communications among the members transmitted feelings of togetherness and made church life somewhat tangible. This style of church life, so typical of early Seventh-day Adventism, emerges again in its later mission.

The church paper and its editor as the central force in the life of the church was a carry-over from Millerism. Like most secular and religious papers in the United States of America, the Millerites had made full use of the boom, which the press enjoyed in the early 19th century. Though somewhat latecomers, the Millerite papers fulfilled a great religious need by providing information in regard to various Bible interpretations. Most subjects were viewed from the perspective of prophecy, especially as seen in the light of the latter-day events of Matt. 24.[7] Although united in their aim, the Millerite papers differet much in content and purpose depending on the

editor's personal interests and convictions. In some papers the editor's position was dominant, while in others main consideration was given to views of various authors' and readers' reactions. The latter did more justice, of course, to the wide spectrum of Millerite views and subsequently made a greater impact on the cause. The abilities of its editors were certainly closely related to the existence and success of the Millerite movement.

Seventh-day Adventism likewise made use of the press in many ways. Its success is not separable from the untiring effort of its founder and longtime editor, James White, who, after two unsuccessful trials finally succeeded in his third attempt to establish the denominational press. With his influencial paper, the "Review and Herald", White employed a divers tool that shaped the denomination between 1848 and 1881 not only in the United States of America, but in other parts of the English-speaking world as well.[8]

With the aid of the paper, James White stimulated the momentum of growth in Seventh-day Adventism. By inviting associates to express themselves and encouraging readers to respond to various issues of discussion, he pursued a middle-of-the-road course, eliminating extremist views not only from the paper but also from the movement. It is plain that this process of elimination and consolidation naturally led to the foundation of the church, a joint achievement of the editor and his readers.

Finally, with the possibility of reply, the editor helped to close the circuit of communication, which would otherwise not have been available for a dispersed community. It was through these efforts that the editor in his key position unified the Seventh-day Adventist Church despite its diverse background.

This type of a church, established in the absence of close social ties, could only develop slowly. But despite this deficiency, it provided its community, in the long run, with steady and controlled directives. Thanks to its papers the church was able to build an ecclesial community without close communal relations. This experience demonstrates not only the most outstanding contribution of the editor to the growth of Seventh-day Adventism, but sheds also some light on an important aspect of modern ecclesiology.

Actually, the individual Adventist demonstrated great loyalty to his church, even though he was physically isolated from his fellow-believers. His economic independence greatly contributed toward this individualism; the socio-religious environment was not necessarily important for the durability

of his faith. But despite this, the Seventh-day Adventist did not live in a vacuum; the unity with the church through the church paper cannot be sufficiently emphasized. It was the main agent that helped him to internalize common beliefs, even though direct social contacts, which are often considered the main contributing factors in the development of religion, were not always available. The individual stand of such believers, should be understood as a sign of strength, but it must also be recognized as a limitation on part of the church's outreach, since not every person was able or willing to join a church with such a loose type of fellowship. This handicap became especially evident when Seventh-day Adventism embarked on mission activities among Middle Eastern communities, where the individual enjoys close social ties with his church and community.

There were also forces at work to unite Seventh-day Adventists into gathered communities.[9] The polarization into groups had always existed and became ever stronger with the creation of institutions. Generally, the bond of fellowship was encouraged through regular church meetings on the Sabbath. Where physical communion was possible, group and church activities took place; otherwise, regular tent-meetings, a left-over of revivalism and Millerism, served occasionally as links on the regional level, while Bible and general conferences provided for the spiritual and physical unity.

The editorial church office was early connected with the less stable position of the itinerant-preacher, who became famous during the great revivals and was not new to the scene, since his presence was an integral part of the frontiers. He labored as pioneer and promoter of churches, being the missionary par-excellence. Since his activities were limited to a short time at any place, the editor and his church paper fulfilled the role of the church pastor by providing continuous communication. The editor, James White, proved to be the major stabilizing factor in this respect with the help of his wife, Ellen G. White, who gave major support to the editorial office through her numerous writings on social and theological questions. Thus the vacuum left behind by the itinerant-preacher was filled by the editor with the ever-present flow of literature, which was financed through contributions, sales, and subscriptions.

In the 1860's the mission reached the West Coast and the South after the Civil War. The steady expansion of Seventh-day Adventism favored by this west- and southward movement urgently called for the development of the

church's organization, since the leadership of the editor and his itinerant-preachers could no longer meet the ever increasing demands.[10] Consequently, the editor and the itinerant-preacher gradually lost importance with the steady growth of the church organization. This development will be of importance in the next chapter on foreign missions, when again the focus is on the editor's leadership.

The spreading of Seventh-day Adventism in the United States and Canada brought the church in contact with non-English speaking communities. This holds true in the Midwest and West where large numbers of Scandinavians and continental Europeans had settled in the farm-belt region. These communities in retaining their culture in the 19th century curtailed greatly the editor and itinerant-preacher until adjustments were made. Gradually a non-English press developed with its itinerant-preachers and the church grew slowly into a multi-lingual and multi-national body. But the church's concern for the immigrant did not arouse interest for the unknown man on the other side of the Atlantic until some thirty years after its birth.[11]

It was the immigrant who passed Seventh-day Adventism to Europe and eventually to the Middle East. His literature found its way to relatives abroad, but the interest thus developed did not spark a desire for mission work, even despite invitations from the Old World. The church was still too much preoccupied with its affairs at home and any involvement in mission service with all its responsibilities and expenses was certainly not yet within the scope of the young American denomination. It was, therefore, left to the immigrant to take this burden upon himself by returning to his homeland. And even in 1874, when the first official missionary went abroad, Seventh-day Adventism was still a young movement with an American accent.

TRANSPLANTATION TO EUROPE

Seventh-day Adventism in Europe had its own spiritual roots before the American brand set foot on the old continent. Historical affinities are generally claimed to the great reform-movements of the 16th century and to Pietism. But the ties to Anabaptists and especially to Seventh-day Baptists were closer, since the latter kept the Sabbath in England since the days of the Reformation.[12] There were definitely many European religious streams that served in one way or another as god-fathers.

As Seventh-day Adventists in America originated in the Millerite movement, European Adventists developed in the spiritual atmosphere of the early 19th century Germany.[13] European Adventists began to keep the Sabbath before they knew about the existence of any sabbath-keepers in the New World. The most outstanding group was the "Getaufte Christen-Gemeinde" in Vohwinkel, Germany, which embraced the Sabbath under its leader J. H. Lindermann in 1867.[14] Such an incident was, of course, of little significance from a mission point of view, since the minute community's outreach was limited to its immediate neighborhood or to believers of the same historical and theological tradition, which was of Baptist background. Had some of these sabbatarians not been absorbed by Seventh-day Adventism, which gradually widened its horizon, their existence might be of less significance today. Yet under the influence of the more progressive American Seventh-day Adventists, European Adventists found their way out of isolation.

American Seventh-day Adventism finally crossed the Atlantic with the help of immigrants returning to Europe. These self-styled missionaries, noticing the entanglement of the church with its own affairs in the United States, therefore, rather took impatiently upon themselves the responsibility of beginning the mission in the Old World. As Seventh-day Adventism found its level in North America, so it was bound to spread along the prescribed course of group affinity in Europe. The Waldensians and different groups of Baptist and Pietist background were the first recipients of its message.

The first of these self-made missionaries was the Pole and former Franciscan monk, Michael B. Czechoswki. He embraced Seventh-day Adventism in the Midwest in 1854 shortly after his immigration to the U.S.A. in 1851. He is in more than one way of interest to mission studies, since he represents in himself, like many early Seventh-day Adventists, an accumulation of various religious streams.[15]

For four years Czechowski studied American Seventh-day Adventism very closely. He fully realized the importance of the position of the editor in the development of the church and the role of the press at the center of Seventh-day Adventism. After obtaining sufficient experience as itinerant-preacher in his own parish-district in the Ontario region and attending tent-meetings, he felt ready for his new task.

Thus having internalized Seventh-day Adventism, its theology

and organization, its enthusiasm and operation, Czechowski's conviction about spreading Seventh-day Adventism in Europe came to maturity, but was not shared by the church leadership. Under these circumstances Czechowski decided to undertake the mission on his own. Among ex-Millerites in Boston, who had maintained connections with England since the days of William Miller, Czechowski found financial support even though they did not share his belief in the Sabbath.

Czechowski began his work in Europe as an itinerant-preacher, inaugurating his mission successfully among the Waldensians in the Italian Piedmont valleys. Since his wife was a native of nearby Solothurn, he settled and campaigned around the area of Lake Neuchatel, where his reception in Baptist and evangelical circles was favorable.[16]

In the formative stage of his mission, Czechowski retained his work as itinerant-preacher, but tried to introduce the press as early as possible into his mission outreach. Within two years it was arranged according to the American pattern. With the publication of the weekly "L'Evangile Eternel" - which reflected in context and purpose the American "Review and Sabbath Herald" - Czechowski shifted his emphasis to the editorial office, being preacher, editor, and publisher, while his associates traveled through the area as itinerant-preachers. Like the Seventh-day Adventists in North America, he gathered people into his church, who were in accord with the teachings of Seventh-day Adventism. His efforts were not in vain; within four years, 1864 - 1868, about fifty adherents joined his movement.[17]

It was, however, premature to adopt the American model in all its aspects as early as Czechowski did. While he was successful in preaching and recruiting followers, the financial management proved extremely difficult. His apparent unawareness of the economic burden involved caused him to pursue this type of mission which created for him tremendous financial strains and burdens. Building and maintaining a press was beyond his resources, especially since the income from the sales of literature and the contributions from the small flock could not meet the financial needs. Extra work had to be accepted and great personal sacrifices made to help the mission survive. Czechowski too readily transferred the American experience into the European scene, not realizing that even in America the press collapsed twice before it succeeded.

Because his mission was not supported or encouraged by the leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in America, Czechowski preferred to

pursue a separate course. Apparently his aim was the establishment of a European church independent from the American movement. This presumption is supported by the fact that, during his four years of labor in Switzerland, he refrained from informing his followers about the existence of Seventh-day Adventists in America and the headquarters in Battle Creek of his whereabouts. A great financial crisis finally forced Czechowski's disclosure of his previous connections, resulting in detrimental consequences for him. The task of transplanting the American model to Europe proved too difficult for a one-man mission. When his followers lost confidence in his leadership and established contacts with the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Battle Creek, his efforts were bound to collapse.

The fact that contacts were established is worth noticing, for it indicates strongly that despite the widespread scattering of believers, regionally, not so entirely indigenous, interests co-existed with the desire of belonging to a unified body.

Czechowski was thus practically forced out of his work and left Switzerland disappointed but not discouraged. With new determination he established himself as a successful itinerant-preacher in Roumania, once again introducing Adventism, but omitting the press, which suggests his ability in drawing the right conclusions from his past experience.[18]

The news about Czechowski's success in Europe, most favorably received in Battle Creek, caused regret among the leadership for their earlier shortsightedness toward his mission. To envision any involvement more information was necessary.[19] However, instead of investigating the situation on the spot, American leaders invited their European counterparts to the U.S.A.; the very act induced considerable consequences later on. Since under the prevailing conditions the older men were indispensable in 1869, James Erzberger, a former student of the Mission School of St. Chrischona in Switzerland, connected with the Basel Mission, was sent in response. Curtailed by the language problem, his extended visit of one year and a half was necessary in order to grasp and internalize the essentials of American Seventh-day Adventism.[20]

Erzberger, like Czechowski before him, underwent the school of experience, acquiring on-the-spot-training within the church: its theology, publishing work, church organization, evangelistic efforts, including tent-

meetings, and of course, the newcomer, the denomination's educational system. The young Swiss understandably received much more attention than Czechowski. Thus close relationship were established during his stay. The newly established friendship proved itself shortly before Erzberger's departure, when Swiss Adventists appealed to their American fellow-believers for financial help. Due to a bank failure, the Swiss Adventists, some of whom were watchmakers, encountered a financial crisis, consequently requesting a loan of 2000 Dollars in gold. Since the amount surpassed the financial ability of the church, the loan was sacrificially raised by private initiative after many appeals in the church paper and placed in the trust of Erzberger.[21]

Despite his success in obtaining the loan, Erzberger was not well received upon his return to Switzerland. Filled with enthusiasm and the desire to implement his newly acquired knowledge - the sole reason for his trip - Erzberger underwent the bewildering experience of encountering opposition instead of praise. By trying to implement ideas internalized in a different socio-cultural group, Erzberger was not accepted by his own society. From a sociological point of view the presumption of a cultural clash becomes a plausible reason for the rejection of Erzberger's leadership. Here the consequences of the invitation to America become quite apparent, resulting not only in regrettable differences but also leaving the leadership question unsolved. The fact that Erzberger failed to send a report to America about the reception of the loan, but instead, remained silent for one year - which must have been most disappointing to the doners - suggests the seriousness of the collision.[22]

In 1872 Erzberger finally broke the silence, hinting that some differences had arisen. But the loan was paid back while the leadership crisis was still unsettled and the vacancy caused by Czechowski's departure was not filled. Therefore, a second representative, Adémar Vuilleumier, was sent to America in 1870, in the hope of obtaining American leadership for Switzerland.[23] At this point, American Seventh-day Adventists consented to go abroad for the first time. The Europeans recognized their dependence upon American leadership and economic support, and presented themselves as an ideal testing ground for further mission.

By the time the first official missionary, J.N. Andrews, left the U.S.A. in 1874, Seventh-day Adventism had been greatly consolidated in America since the great disappointment of 1844. The young leadership of those

days had matured and the church's position stabilized by a theology better stratified, an organization indicating steadiness, and the spiritual leadership of Mr. and Mrs. White generally accepted. The internal development having thus achieved a minimum of durability, Seventh-day Adventism was now in a better position to look abroad. Most of North America was attended to, which necessitated the need for new territory for the realization of the church's "manifest destiny". Therefore the Protestant environment of Europe presented itself as the ideal environment for such a mission outreach.

Upon his arrival in Europe, Andrews, the first missionary, found a mission already established. His major task was to consolidate what was already available and to give vigorous leadership, a qualification the Swiss could not so easily develop within their own setting. Here the experience of thirty years in the New World proved a real asset in unifying, organizing and speeding up the maturing process of European Adventism, whereas without it, it might have remained fragmented and nationally oriented for some time.

Within two weeks of his arrival, Andrews called a general session. He organized the Swiss believers into a church within the following few months.[24] The congregational model was adopted from the U.S.A., as well as the organizational structure, which recognized the General Conference and its headquarters in Battle Creek, Michigan, as its head. The church, which originally had been anti-mission, reversed its mission outlook and set the stage for a world-wide mission encounter.

Though Andrews built on tilled ground and on a religious environment similar to his own, he found the cultural-religious atmosphere in Europe quite different. The change from the Midwest to the traditional setting of Switzerland was drastic. His great efforts of adjustment to the cultural differences between Europe and America, especially in the mastering of French and German, were not in vain considering his successes. However, the relationship between religion and its cultural content, he did not fully realize. His understanding of missions was rather fashioned according to the view that the spreading of the Gospel succeeds best through application of the already established experience of the church in North-America. Since the close affinity of American Seventh-day Adventism to European evangelical Protestantism aroused no serious obstacle, questioning this presumption, this view remained unchallenged until Seventh-day

Adventism encountered later on the more complex cultural settings in the Middle East.

Without any previous experience in foreign missions, Andrews had to define for himself the role of the mission and that of the missionary. Under such circumstances his mission developed understandably as much as Czechowski's along the American model. Main emphasis was given to reach individuals receptive to Seventh-day Adventist teachings, aided by literature in French and German. Subsequently, Andrews too, emerged in the role of the editor,[25] but did not live long enough to witness the steady advancement of the European press, as he had observed the growth of the press in Battle Creek. It was in the 20th century, from 1897 - 1930, that the European church papers enjoyed the position their American counterparts held in the second half of the 19th century.

As in America, previously, the editor and his preachers spread Seventh-day Adventism eventually all over the European continent, from the Atlantic to the Ural, from Norway to the Black Sea. In Western Europe, district churches and pastors developed, making regular church activities and parish work possible. In Eastern Europe, for geographical and communicative reasons, district pastors remained in the role of itinerant-preachers for a longer period.

Eventually the various countries in Europe were organized as mission fields under the supervision of the European Council of Seventh-day Adventist Mission, which was better known among the German-speaking Adventists as the "Advent-Mission". Its responsibility was to maintain and keep unity and to provide communication for rapid expansion. Here, too, by keeping pace with the development, the church organization finally replaced the role of the editor and itinerant-preacher.[26]

The spreading into non-western cultures of the Middle East was eventually the by-product of the expansion of European Seventh-day Adventism. Being drawn into the Levant through European merchants and artisans, the mission unexpectedly started in Egypt in 1877, in Turkey in 1889, and in Syria in 1898. The gradual encounter with the different peoples of the Middle East shall be the concern of the following chapters.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM IN TURKEY

Developments in Eastern Europe

With the eastward expansion in Europe Seventh-day Adventism eventually came in contact with the Armenian people either via the Balkan states to Istanbul and Asia Minor or via Russia to the center of ancient Armenia. As in the U.S.A. in the latter part of the 19th century, Seventh-day Adventism in Eastern Europe was characterized by its mobility, individuals and families moving about and settling in various areas. This was a common tendency of most minorities, but especially true of those of German descent, who, due to political insecurity and economic instability, were seeking new lands in the fertile regions of the Ukraine, Volga, and Crimea, and also in the neighborhood of the Armenians in the Caucasus.[27]

There is no doubt, that the German communities in Eastern Europe played an improtant role in the expansion of Seventh-day Adventism. Protestants, such as the Lutherans, Baptists and especially the Mennonites were the recipients of its message. Naturally, the German element was predominant in the young mission-church and its leadership, the most outstanding itinerant-preachers being of German background. Therefore, the attempt to incorporate Seventh-day Adventism in Russia under the German Seventh-day Adventist Church - which by then was also influential among the peoples of the Austrian dual-monarchy and elsewhere in the Balkan - is not surprising. Though this attempt failed in 1891, the German presence was felt for many years to come, since both, the German-speaking mission in Central Europe and the mission in Russia, were directed by the same vigorous mission-president, the German-American, L. R. Conradi, who held, in more than one way, the Russian mission under German control.[28]

In the late 19th century, Seventh-day Adventism spread rapidly in Russia. The developments in the settlements along the Don and the Volga, in Crimea and in Caucasia, were of special importance, since they presented themselves as spearheads for the mission outreach into Turkey, Persia,[29] and especially Armenia. Itinerant-preachers crossed occasionally into the nearby countries, whenever German or Russian Seventh-day Adventists tried to settle there. Hence the German settlers in Eurasia became the leading factor in the advancement of the mission, keeping not only the line of

communication open with the centers of the church in Basel and Hamburg, but also establishing connections with German elements in the Americas and Australia.

The progress was slow-moving and hampered by many difficulties. The favorable kinsmen relations at first exhibited by the German minority in Russia toward the young Adventist mission changed, as the latter expanded and concentrated mainly on its own national group. The German Protestants, already a minority among Orthodox and Muslims, fearing for their existence as a consequence of disunity and decrease, reacted defensively against the steady rise of Seventh-day Adventism. Because of this development the mission was only able to draw individuals and families of close religious and national affinities into its sphere, leaving the masses of Orthodox Christians and Muslims untouched due to the lack of cultural and religious connections.[30]

Seventh-day Adventism in Eurasia, widespread and scattered as it was at its inception in North America, developed less freely due to various external and internal forces. The geo-political situation restraining free and frequent communication between the itinerant-preacher and the believer, was a hinderance to rapid growth, stability, and maturity of the mission, while, with the lack of bi-lingual and bi-cultural personnel, a successful bridging of national and cultural barriers was impossible. The insufficient mail system finally curtailed a free continuous flow of information between the editor in Basel and the scattered believers. Under these circumstances the editor-itinerant-preacher era never developed in Eurasia.

With the absence of the centralizing leadership of the editor, the great burden of serving as a unifying link of the dispersed mission rested on the itinerant-preacher. His activities were like those of his American colleagues, visiting friendly and related communities, preaching, and giving Bible studies either in their houses of worship or in their homes. Baptism followed usually as the result of his efforts. The performance of baptism by immersion, as it was practiced, was not always easy, for convenient baptismal sites were not too readily available. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper, preceeded by the ordinance of feet-washing, was the culmination of the itinerant-preacher's mission. The new convert, left behind as a nucleus, was responsible to make his faith a reality by greatly relying on his personal applications. Thus, in unity with the church along the main tenets

of its teachings, such as the Sabbath and the second coming of Christ, and possessing a fair knowledge about biblical prophecy, he was, otherwise, rather independent in his religious thinking for the lack of continuous written guidance. The limited information on the basic doctrines of Seventh-day Adventism and the convert's search in Scripture had to be coercive enough to retain his loyalty to the mission-in-dispersion.[31]

Placed in this disadvantageous position, the new convert's problems of internalizing Seventh-day Adventism must be understood accordingly. This was reflected in the limited financial support given to the itinerant-preachers (of course, the difficult economic situation in Eastern Europe must also be given consideration), who depended greatly on the support of the church in the West.

With these loose bonds of church affiliation Seventh-day Adventists lived in the neighborhood of Armenia, when suddenly the mission among the Armenians and also among the Greeks in the Ottoman Empire started through indigenous forces.[32]

Indigenous Beginnings

The origin of Seventh-day Adventism among the peoples in the Ottoman Empire must be credited to the efforts of a former shoemaker of Istanbul, a Greek who laid the foundation of the mission not only among his people but who also became instrumental among the Armenians. Like Czechowski, he, too, returned from the U.S.A. upon his own initiative. Thus Seventh-day Adventism started among the Christian minorities in Turkey in 1889 through the efforts taken by an indigenous force.

On his way from San Jose, California, to Istanbul, Theodore Anthony passed through Battle Creek, where he presented his idea to the leaders of the church. His intentions were favorably received, especially by the later director of the European Mission, L. R. Conradi, who was himself preparing to go to Europe. Anthony, however, had no ambitions of becoming a church leader or founder, as in the earlier case of Czechowski, nor did he aim to transplant Seventh-day Adventism in the fashion he observed in the U.S.A. He was rather satisfied with passing on his faith to his fellow natives on the Bosphorous. In contrast to Czechowski, he required no

financial support and retained good relations with the church and its organization, which by that time had established its European headquarters in Basel.[33]

Upon his arrival Anthony first visited the Protestant groupings hoping to find a common ground and understanding for his mission among them. However, he met opposition, especially from the Quakers, since no religious body dared to be drawn into a religious controversy, not merely for reasons of self-defense, but mainly because of the tense and restrictive situation prevailing in the Ottoman Empire and especially at the doorsteps of the Porte. Thus meeting opposition and persecution from his fellow Protestants, Anthony was eventually handed over to the authorities on charges of disturbing the religious peace. Imprisonment and restrictions on his activities were finally inevitable, straining his savings and endangering his mission.[34]

As a layman, Anthony disposed of little or no mission experience. His limited knowledge of the English language restricted the usage of denominational literature, which at that time was mainly published in the major European languages. But his internalization of the main tenets of Seventh-day Adventism and especially the interpretation of prophecy concerning the final events was sufficient to convert the Armenian, Zadour G. Baharian, a former student of the Protestant College of Aintab in southeastern Turkey. With this conversion Anthony prepared the way for an indigenous Armenian Seventh-day Adventist movement, a task which the German settlers could not achieve. The question of the degree of indigenization will be continually evaluated in this discourse.

With the conversion of Baharian, the mission early realized its opportunity to extend its influence into the Ottoman Empire. Not able to inspect the situation on the spot, an interesting repetition of circumstances occured when the church leaders called Baharian to the headquarters in Basel (as Erzberger and Vuilleumier had previously been invited to America) to internalize the church's teachings. After staying in Basel for two years, Baharian was prepared to help Seventh-day Adventism cross the cultural frontiers of an ancient people.[35]

Baharian's training centered around the question of printing and preaching Seventh-day Adventism to the people in the Ottoman Empire, since the editor-itinerant-preacher formula was considered the principal method of spreading Adventism. Encouraged to translate literature into Armenian

and Turkish, which was published right at the Polyglott Press in Basel, Baharian launched his mission by sending literature to his former acquaintances in Cilicia and Istanbul. Upon his return to Turkey he attended to the interest created by his literature. This marked the beginning of a national Armenian Seventh-day Adventist movement.[36]

In considering Baharian's successful labors in Cilicia, Istanbul, and the villages in nearby Nicomedia, where within two years he gathered his first adherents composed of Armenian and Greek Christians, one must conclude that he was able to project Seventh-day Adventism into his native culture. The absence of any hidden or open evidence of any cultural clash strongly supports this presumption. When the president of the European Mission, H. P. Holser, visited Turkey in 1894, he found the mission with its roots already well established.

Baharian's previous connections with the Protestant Mission in Turkey contributed likewise to his initial success. Definitely, his Protestant background and college education in Aintab prepared the way for Seventh-day Adventism before he even came in contact with it. Like Anthony previously, Baharian tried to establish himself among the Protestants. The general climate among the Armenians in their insecure role as well as the atmosphere for revival among this minority group, contributed not only to this favorable reception by Orthodox Armenians but also by Armenian Protestants. Without the mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which entered Turkey and the Middle East in 1820 - 1821, Seventh-day Adventism would have been less successful in establishing a foothold. The Seventh-day Adventist Mission followed that mission's trail in more than one way in Turkey. The relationship between Seventh-day Adventism and other Protestant missions was correct and cordial and only erupted into open hostilities when the Seventh-day Adventist Mission made inroads into their communities. Otherwise, the reality of belonging to minority groups and persuing the same objectives of spreading Protestantism bridged the gap between the missions.[37] This fact became especially evident when the president of the European Mission, the German-American, H. P. Holser, on his surveying tour in Turkey together with Baharian visited the establishments of various missions in Anatolia in 1894. Due to Baharian's good relationship with the Protestant Mission, they were well received.[38]

Baharian's former connections with the Protestant Mission had convinced him of the necessity for Seventh-day Adventists to establish an educational center for its mission also. He, therefore, seized the opportunity of Holser's visit to acquaint him with various Protestant training centers. Baharian's strategy had the desired effect. Holser was so impressed with the mission outreach of these institutions and was so moved by the studious and education-conscious Armenians that he favored the beginning of Seventh-day Adventist educational work in Turkey as soon as possible.[39]

To contemplate the possibility of establishing a school in Turkey was at that time a rather utopian idea. So far, Seventh-day Adventist education was still in its formative stage, since the church was a latecomer among the Protestants in the field of education. In America elementary education officially started in 1872 and higher education two years later. Most of the schools which were either academies, training schools or seminaries, however, were not operated before 1890. To this category also belonged the establishment of three mission schools in other continents among European Adventist settlers, like the one in Australia in 1892/94 (Avondale College, Cooronborg), the second in South Africa of the same year (Clermont College, Cape Town), and the third in South America in 1898 (River Plate College, Argentina). Not even the schools in Western Europe had been opened yet. Sweden was the first European country to establish its school in 1898 (Ekobyholmsskolom, Rimbo) and Germany the second in 1899 (Friedensau, Magdeburg). While by that time Seventh-day Adventists operated schools only in the U.S.A. and were just beginning to give consideration to opening others for the European settlers in the southern hemisphere, Baharian's envisioned strategy in extending the educational program also to the Armenians, the first Seventh-day Adventist people of a non-western culture, was a far-sighted and decisive advance in attempting to build the mission on a wider base.

With a five weeks' training program the first educational experience in Turkey started in 1895. Such programs were repeated at intervals until the establishment of the school materialized in 1910. Mainly young Armenians attended these institutes, also Greeks, Assyrians, and Jews participated. Holser, presiding over the first institute, soon realized the necessity of teaching in the Turkish language in order to reach all nationalities residing within the empire, but chiefly the minority groups.[40]

Six students of the first institute (4 Armenians and 2 Greeks) joined the mission immediately as itinerant-preachers. Partly preaching and partly colporteuring, their activities resembled more the characteristics of a layman than an experienced itinerant-preacher. Not being much better prepared than the early self-made itinerant-preachers in the New World, they depended solely on their private Bible studies and the little instruction they had received during the institute.

The mission outreach of these oriental itinerant-preachers was only partially successful. Cultural and religious differences were not necessarily the major obstacles, since the Armenian and Greek colporteur-preachers faced apparently no major problems in crossing cultural barriers. The weakness of their outreach lay rather in the complications arising from imposed travel and communicational difficulties in Anatolia, which restricted the movement of the itinerant-preachers and as such limited the sale of their literature on which they depended for their subsistence. The economic hardship discouraged them from pursuing their profession for too long, since financial support was not forthcoming from the mission. This proves again that methods developed in one socio-economic setting are not easily transplanted into another cultural environment, especially into a non-western one such as Turkey. The weakness of this system was only gradually recognized and slowly replaced by the more professional minister, who was supported by the young mission-church in Turkey and its headquarters in Western Europe.

The education of a professional ministry, however, proceeded more slowly than anticipated. The legal position of the mission which was not recognized by the Porte or the Protestant millet, forced the postponement of the establishment of the training school until 1910. The Armenian Seventh-day Adventists, not in a financial position to send all their ministerial candidates to the German seminary in Friedensau, as had been the custom of the German settlers and other national groups in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, were forced to rely much longer on lay-preachers, since they did not favor the educational institutions of other churches in Turkey. The Protestant schools were accused of being "poisoned by higher criticism", and the Orthodox seminaries were considered as rejecting the teachings of the Gospel and captivated by the spirit of "unbelief and socialism". Therefore the mission further depended on its itinerant-

preachers emerging from the short training programs held at intervals and the efforts of its laity. The establishment of an indigenous school geared toward the Armenians and other minorities in the empire remained the main concern.[41]

The dream of the first Seventh-day Adventist pioneer of Armenia, Baharian, was suddenly realized with the unexpected change of the constitution of Turkey by the Young Turks in 1908 which provided the freedom necessary for opening the school. Since the change in the Ottoman Empire had come so suddenly, the mission found itself unprepared. Funds had to be raised and teachers provided. By 1910 the European Mission was finally able to supply 20.000 Marks and five teachers, which included three Armenians. Though ten students enrolled the first year, the humble start was a major success for the Armenian Seventh-day Adventists, since hardly any other mission field of the denomination had received its own training school within such a relatively short time.[42]

Certainly, the mission outreach in Asia Minor was determined by its human resources and the dependence on itinerant-preaching. Within two years after the change of the Turkish constitution, thirty individuals of mainly Armenian background served either as district-pastors, itinerant-preachers, or colporteurs. Their reception was favorable among the Armenian and Greek communities, especially by those with Protestant connections, who invited them into their churches and homes. This cordial atmosphere was, however, many times shortlived, since the doctrine of the Sabbath gave rise to opposition and sometimes even to forceful and tumultuous scenes. Hereby the Protestant communities often reacted with greater violence despite close theological affinity. Their already endangered minority status caused them to be more alert and self-defensive than the less organized Armenian and Greek Orthodox Churches.[43]

The outcome of such encounters was usually restricted to the conversion of a few individuals whose minority status became even more precarious. Holser already noticed in 1897 the insecurity of the newly converted sabbath-keepers, who were still living within the social boundaries of their former church-nation, being left to themselves most of the time without regular pastoral care. Holser, therefore, promoted a church-organization which was instrumental until 1908 in somewhat overcoming the problems of these dispersed Seventh-day Adventists.[44]

In the absence of residing pastors, the circulation of denominational literature contributed to some extent in uniting the scattered believers. Due to the previous educational efforts of various Protestant missions - by eliminating illiteracy and creating interest in religious literature - the Seventh-day Adventist Mission could prosper within a reading community which depended upon the literature especially in the absence of social ties and binding forces. The fact, however, that the Armenian Seventh-day Adventists had no internal editor and literature at their disposal was one of the major obstacles hampering the establishment of an indigenous and unified church. Since almost all the literature was translated from either English or German publications, an indigenous press geared toward the oriental mind could not develop.

During the 19th century the western Seventh-day Adventists' main interests were the prophetic interpretations concerning the latter-day events, emerging from western theological, political, and historical views regarding the developments in the Ottoman Empire, with which the church papers were heavily loaded. These discussions, by relating the events to the political setting in the East, somehow appealed to the oriental Christian of evangelical background. But on the whole they were not corresponding to the basic socio-religious and cultural concerns, not to speak of the national aspirations of the people, the least of those of the Orthodox Churches.

That this type of literature was not more coercive on the Armenian community was also due to the lack of personal engagement on the part of the young believers by not promoting its sale and distribution outside their communal borders. This task was rather left in the hands of the colporteurs and itinerant-preachers. The permanency of political instability, travel restrictions, and travel expenses only added more complications to the already prevailing conditions arising from the diversity of the socio-cultural structure in the Ottoman Empire. Of the editor-itinerant-preacher model, which so greatly contributed to the advancement of the mission in the West, only the itinerant-preacher became somewhat significant, but due to his limitations, a different formula was necessary for the establishment of an indigenous mission.[45]

Lack of Religious Freedom

The political and social restrictions prevailing during the 19th century not only in the Ottoman Empire but throughout Eastern Europe were the greatest impediments for the establishment of an indigenous mission. Seventh-day Adventists did not enjoy the same freedom as the missions under the Protestant millet. Individuals and families embracing Adventism by attempting to evangelize among their own community were often subject to severe opposition which developed into open oppression. Violent scenes, instigated by religious or state authorities, sometimes engulfed the entire community. Consequently, these communities were not willing to extend the protection of their millets to Seventh-day Adventists which kept them somewhat without a legal status.

Seventh-day Adventists were not necessarily irritated about their insecure status. Believing in the appearance of the soon coming latter-day events which, according to their interpretation of prophecy, was inaugurated by the turmoil in the Ottoman Empire, no improvement in their legal status was expected or even desired. Seventh-day Adventists prepared themselves for this event and understood their hardship as part of their destiny.

However, Seventh-day Adventists were not entirely delivered into the hands of their opponents. There still existed some friendly relationships with Orthodox and Protestant relatives and a certain amount of mutual respect prevented their differences from rising into a permanent conflict. After all, most Christians, aware of their minority status, realized their own legal position provided by their millets which was no guarantee for safety in front of the age-old tensions between Muslims and Christians. Since all Christians experienced this phenomenon alike, a mutual concern embraced their communities. While the majority of Armenians, however, was preoccupied with the question of their nationhood, Seventh-day Adventists suffered with them the consequences, but did not share their national ambitions in the face of the expected latter-day events.[46]

The confrontations with the police and the Ottoman government also gradually developed into a state of co-existence. After several Armenian Seventh-day Adventists were taken into custody, their belief in the separation of state and church was realized and their attitude toward the state appreciated. But though the personal conviction was understood by the Ottoman

officials, Seventh-day Adventists were cautioned to restrain their activities, since they constituted no legally recognized body. Thus the Ottoman government, already in strained relationship with the Christian churches, refrained from oppressing Seventh-day Adventism and only restricted its freedom of movement within the existing laws, careful not to disturb the equilibrium of the Christian communities.

Under these conditions Seventh-day Adventists found themselves without political, legal or communal support. Though they were not forbidden, they were restricted, not totally banned but tolerated. As long as their numbers were insignificant and their deportment unnoticed among the communities, their existence was bearable to them and to the authorities. But when by 1900 their adherents grew to 200 and their activities became more open and noticeably, their whereabouts could not be hidden. Escaping surveillance, detention, or deportation by the police was not always possible. This unhealthy position of the mission by 1900 was convincing enough to the leadership at the headquarters to necessitate a modus vivendi, for Seventh-day Adventism depended on freedom for its growth despite the conviction that the world was approaching its last chapter in history.[47] It was for this reason that the mission president, L. R. Conradi, made an official presentation to the Director of Religion in the Ottoman Empire, but it was in vain, for the Porte was not interested in yet adding another millet to the already existing ones.[48]

The refusal of legal recognition forced the mission to continue in its ill-defined course. The Porte was in no position to challenge the views held by a small and loosely organized group of believers, yet the restrictions were a continuous stumbling-block for the existence and outreach of the mission. Since the role of the press and the position of an Armenian editor had not merged, the unity of the scattered believers depended even more upon a regular visitation program.

It was on this basis that the introduction of the service of the foreign missionaries, who were less restricted in travelling about in the Ottoman Empire, seemed the only solution to this problem. The home-base got, therefore, more directly involved in the affairs of the mission, taking over the lead and solving its problems. Hence, in 1902 one of the most daring and rugged itinerant-preachers in the Orient, the German-American Krum, who was a missionary to Syria since 1900, was instructed to survey

the situation in Asia Minor.[49]

Krum's evaluation of the mission in Asia Minor was the first since Holser's visit in 1894. To his amazement some members, who had been without pastoral care for five years, were still loyal sabbath-keepers while others had become lukewarm. He administered the Lord's Supper with all believers and baptized those that were waiting for it since the last iterant-preacher's visit. He noticed also, that the spiritual climate among Protestants and Orthodox in Cilicia and Nicomedia was much more favorable toward religious matters than in Syria.[50]

Before 1902 the mission was very loosely organized, yet the primitive character of the mission did not change much once a more regular visitation program was introduced and regular churches and groups organized under the leadership of local elders and deacons. Theologically, the keeping of the Sabbath and the concern for the latter-day events still constituted the central issues. The Lord's Supper preceded by footwashing remained, in addition to baptism by immersion, the highlights of church worship, while Bible studies, prayer, and reading of denominational literature continued to be the main form of worship. Seventh-day Adventists in Asia Minor were, therefore, in a much different situation than their western counterparts, who by that time could already point to established churches and institutions that provided social and physical ties.

The Seventh-day Adventist Mission was building, with its simple form of religious practices and its key issues on theology, a grass-root movement among the common man, the peasantry and members of the lower class who were receptive to its teachings, though it also attracted a few educated Armemians in Istanbul and Etchmiadzin. Since the mission was not as yet institutionalized in the Ottoman Empire and since socio-economic factors played no major part, the message of Seventh-day Adventism remained the center of attraction.

That other churches and missions played a major part in preparing the spiritual ground for Seventh-day Adventism, either through their preoccupation with religious-national matters, which caused their followers to seek contacts with other missions, or by creating a spiritual revival in their community, which made individuals receptive to the additional doctrines taught by Seventh-day Adventists, has already been discussed. Therefore, collecting members from various religious backgrounds into the

new bond of fellowship was not considered an act of proselytism, but was somewhat understood as a legitimate duty the mission was called for. It was not the concern of Seventh-day Adventism to destroy other churches or missions, but rather to be complementary to them. This, therefore, led to a dual identity of the mission, being part of the Christian body on one side and a separate movement, independent and non-cooperative, on the other.

The calling out of the faithful was, of course, not extended to the Muslim communities, who, due to lack of cultural and religious affinities, attracted the missionaries less, even though some similar views on certain doctrines existed. The hostile relationship between Islam and Christianity in the Ottoman Empire did not inspire Seventh-day Adventists to take the initiative toward Islam but caused them rather to remain aloof since they, like the other Christian communities, felt the oppressive presence of Islam. Thus Seventh-day Adventism basically remained a mission among the Christians, an attitude unconsciously shared by the indigenous itinerant-preachers and their western missionary-colleagues.

It was not long before the foreign missionaries realized their limitations among the oriental cultures. After discovering the unbridged barriers existing between their expectations and the realities in the mission field, they soon retreated. Their short mission service suggests resignation and disappointment. Appeals by the leadership were made to overcome this weakness and missionaries were encouraged to dedicate their full life to the cause, studying the languages and facing the hazards of life, the political insecurities and the ever-present diseases of the Orient. The success of building an indigenous mission on foreign leadership, if at all possible, depended very much on overcoming these problems.

The attempt to place the mission in the hands of foreign missionaries soon proved undesireable. Though bonds in the mission were strengthened, it isolated the indigenous forces from the leadership, increasing the mission's dependence on Western Europe. This understanding already emerged in various missions in Europe, where in the establishment of national missions the involvement of nationals was dominant even though the German element was still a prominent factor in promoting the mission. Therefore, a new approach had to be found, enabling the Armenians and Greeks to take a greater share in developing their own mission. Krum, during his survey of Anatolia in 1902, already noticed that national workers of various

Protestant denominations operated under the auspices of the American Mission. He observed especially the freedom the Mennonites enjoyed serving under this mission despite their theological differences. Gradually the idea developed that Seventh-day Adventists should establish a similar understanding with the American Mission. Krum, himself not convinced at that time that Seventh-day Adventist participation was adviseable, helped the mission to change its attitude. The general religious climate in Turkey was one of conciliation and cooperation among the Protestants. There was not always hatred among the competing missions; the minority status sometimes proved stronger than theological differences.[51]

L. R. Conradi placed such a request before the American Mission during his visit to Turkey in 1908. Even though he was well received by its leadership in Istanbul, his request found only the approval of half of the members representing the American Mission in Turkey. While the negotiations were dead-locked from the very beginning, no further negotiations were necessary since, with the granting of the basic human freedoms through the sudden revolution of the Young Turks in the same year, the mission had achieved its goal. Seventh-day Adventists received this news with relief and in a telegram to the Sultan thanked the Ottoman government for the freedom granted.[52]

Development Under Persecution

The change of the constitution granting freedom of speech and movement gave rise to great hopes for the pursuance of an increased mission outreach, since full participation of the Armenian and Greek Seventh-day Adventists was now permitted, the establishment of the press was made possible, and better conditions for the itinerant-preachers were provided. The new available opportunity prompted the mission in Turkey to adapt its strategy accordingly. Within two years the headquarters of the Levant Union Mission was transferred from Hamburg to Istanbul. Though the Swiss missionary, E. Frauchiger, became the president of this vast territory, which included Turkey and the Arab countries, indigenous leadership emerged from within the local mission.

At the first opportunity a general meeting was held in Istanbul in

September 1910. For the first time delegates from 14 churches and groups met freely to attend a business meeting, the first of its kind in Turkey, at which Asia Minor was divided into the following three mission fields:

1. Armenian Mission Field. It included the vilayets of Sivas, Trapzon, Erzurum, Van, Diyarbakir, and Harput.
2. Greek Mission Field. It included the Greek-speaking parts of Asia Minor and the Greek mainland.
3. Turkish Mission Field. It included the territory mainly populated by Turks but also inhabited by Christian minorities.[53]

Though the mission fields were structured in respect to the religio-national interests of the Armenian and Greek people, it was difficult to move strictly along ethnic lines. Any church founded in these three territories included, unavoidably, Armenians, Assyrians, or Greeks, a situation which was not too favorable in developing national churches according to the national-consciousness of these peoples. The duplexity of languages, customs, and religious expectations ran counter to the intentions of the mission. Among the three nationalities the Armenians made the greatest efforts in missionizing their people. Baharian, president of the Armenian Mission Field, launched a major outreach in ancient Armenia and Cilicia where the efforts reaped the best results. In the years of freedom that followed the three missions in Turkey enjoyed a prosperity as revealed in the statistics below:[54]

Year	Colporteurs and Itinerant-preachers	Printed pages sold	Tithe (Piasters)	Membership
1909	2	-	-	234
1910	6	1,686,400	18,700	-
1911	14	2,162,000	29,700	-
1912	12	4,415,500	43,000	350

The income from sales of literature and from tithe now covered the colporteur-itinerant-preachers' expenses. Had it not been for the presence of some western missionaries and the financing of the full-time employed indigenous leaders, like Baharian, the mission in Turkey would have been on the road to economic independence from the European Mission.

The constitution of 1908 was, however, not entirely favorable to Seventh-day Adventists, since the newly gained rights also brought duties. The problem of compulsory military service, which had not existed so far for

Ottoman subjects of Christian background, took the Seventh-day Adventists, as pacifists, by surprise. This problem emerged for the first time during the Balkan Wars of 1912 - 1914, when church-members were also drafted. In the Ottoman Army no provisions were made for conscientious objections of pacifists and non-combatants, and thus Adventists found themselves again in opposition to the law. As a minority group with little legal backing, the young Seventh-day Adventists were in no position to seek legal recognition for their cause. Individual members were advised to arrange for themselves with their superiors a non-combatant position in the army which also allowed them to keep their Sabbath. This approach, not too successful in every case, caused other Seventh-day Adventists to emigrate rather than to be drafted. This problem presented itself, therefore, as a severe hinderance in the development of the mission by encouraging the believers to emigrate to countries offering more rights.[55]

While in one way the constitution of 1908 provided more rights, it did not grant full autonomy and independence to Christian minorities, therefore, the internal situation in the empire was as precarious as before. The communal strife between Christians and Muslims continued and was even intensified. Already in 1909 the Christians in Cilicia were persecuted, many lost their lives. The Seventh-day Adventist Mission lost their leaders and followers in Adana and the surrounding cities. Only those residing in the villages of the Taurus Mountains escaped the massacre.[56]

The persecutions reinforced the Seventh-day Adventists' understanding of the final events and increased the expectation of Christ's immediate return. The introduction of the new constitution was considered as simply a delaying operation of the final Armageddon, an act of grace on the part of God, which was to allow the mission to complete its task. Even though the course of events turned out otherwise, the persecutions seen in the eschatological understanding of Adventism provided comfort and hope for the moment of trial and preparation for the final fate.[57]

The Balkan Wars kept up the momentum of this interpretation, especially among the Greek members in western Anatolia. Yet the feared massacres were averted and did not break out before the Greeks were defeated by the Turks in 1921/22 when, with the evacuation of the Greek population, the Seventh-day Adventist Mission was also dislodged from western Anatolia. However, for the Armenians, the majority of Seventh-day Adventists in Turkey,

the major onslaught, massacres and deportations, had already taken place in 1914/15 as a result of the defeat of the Armenian national aspiration. The efforts of the mission of the past 30 years thus came to a rapid end. More than half of the 450 members lost their lives, while the others were dislocated in the Middle East or immigrated to the West.[58]

During World War I the mission was practically paralysed. The indigenous pastors were prohibited to travel, leaving most church-members to themselves if they were not called to the banner like the German missionaries who left Henry Erzberger, a Swiss, behind with the task of keeping the mission from disintegrating as much as possible.[59]

The events of World War I finally brought the discussion of the prophetic and apocalyptic interpretations into the forefront. Already before the outbreak of the war great events were expected; the Seventh-day Adventist Mission had entered most countries of the world and the evangelization of the world was viewed as an introduction to these events. Other doctrines were of less significance and the eschatology pre-occupied the publications and theology of the church similar to the time of the Millerite movement.

For the Seventh-day Adventists in the Ottoman Empire the interpretation of Daniel 11:40 - 45 and Daniel 12 were of uttermost interest, since they reflected part of the historical events of the last days as observed within their empire. Looking back on their history, they observed that since the encroachment of Egypt on the territory of the empire, the time of Mohammed Ali, the fulfillment of prophecy became true. Accordingly, the king of the south (Egypt) was bringing the king of the north (Ottoman Empire) gradually to a fall. Napoleon's intervention in the Middle East and Egypt's subsequent independence was considered as the beginning of this process. Finally, with the internationalization of the conflict, the collapse of the empire, which was to involve all nations in the battle of Armageddon, was envisioned. The eruption of World War I was, therefore, a sure sign for these last events. The sultanate-caliphate was expected to make its last stand from its newly erected residence on the holy mountain (Jerusalem), after being dislodged from Istanbul (Dan. 11:45), a dramatic event which was supposed to be brought to a sudden end according to God's final intervention. Being thrown into the midst of this turmoil, Seventh-day Adventists found comfort in promises of deliverance such as

Is. 49:18 - 22.[60]

Similar interpretations of history were shared by other denominations and were also of concern to the general public in the West. Numerous publications treating the development of the "Eastern Question" stimulated the momentum, of which the Anglo-French struggle over the Middle East since Napoleon's intervention in Egypt, the national up-risings in the Balkan, the Crimean War as well as the Turco-Italian War and the Balkan Wars were at the head of the discussion.[61]

World War I and Aftermath

Nowhere in its mission were the consequences of World War I to Seventh-day Adventism as disasterous as in Turkey. Its membership being reduced to a handful of believers either through massacres or evacuations. The mission was brought to the edge of collapse. Since the causes were external, nothing could be done to avoid the catastrophe. The time of freedom introduced by the constitution of 1908, on which much hope was set for the creation of a successful mission, resulted in exactly the opposite. With the expulsion of the Armenian and Greek communities from Asia Minor, the breakdown of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission was unavoidable.

Though some of the prophecies concerning the downfall of the Ottoman Empire proved true, others, such as Turkey's expulsion from Europe and the establishment of the caliphate in Jerusalem, did not. Consequently, new interpretations emerged reflecting possible developments of the post-World War scene, which were, however, of far less concern not only to the believers in the Middle East but to those in the West as well. Now the focus shifted from the Bosphorus to the Persian Gulf, from Istanbul to Baghdad. Armageddon was interpreted in connection with the struggle for political and economic hegemony of the major powers in the Middle East, and the vacancy of the caliph's supposed established seat in Jerusalem was replaced by the fear of the occupation of the holy city by the pope.[62]

The adjustments to the realities of the condition of the mission, however, were much more difficult than finding new theological interpretations. Postwar Turkey confronted the Seventh-day Adventist Mission with an entire new situation. With almost all of its churches practically

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The adjustments to the realities of the condition of the mission, however, were much more difficult than finding new theological interpretations. Postwar Turkey confronted the Seventh-day Adventist Mission with an entire new situation. With almost all of its churches practically

evaporated, it was almost thrown back to its starting point. The sponsoring churches in Western Europe were gradually prepared for this fact by the frequent mission reports that reached Europe during and after the war which mentioned the atrocities and massacres to which Seventh-day Adventists had been exposed. Despite the hardships which the churches in Western Europe themselves faced during World War I, much sympathy was shown and aid forwarded through the international organizations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.[63]

After the war the rebuilding of the mission was much more difficult than first expected. Up to this moment Seventh-day Adventists in Turkey showed a positive attitude to their fate, hoping for the improvement of their situation. But the course of events indicated a still more downhill ride with constant civil strife and wars, extinguishing or dislocating eventually almost all members from Asia Minor. Consequently, the remaining Seventh-day Adventist layman showed little courage to return to their villages or to remain behind in Turkey. Once the stream of refugees started to move into the neighboring countries or to the West, the current could not stop anymore. Due to the horrifying experiences and the memories of the massacres, naturally few were willing to return after the armistice was enforced, leaving behind only the heavily dismantled church in Istanbul. With the loss of its pioneer and leader, Baharian, who was also murdered, the Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Turkey finally lost its opportunity of becoming an indigenous church among the Armenians.[64]

The dislocation of the mission into the neighboring countries came as a heavy blow. The movement which had once started among individuals and gradually had taken on a more socio-organic form was now shattered. With its first sprouts of indigenous elements destroyed, it could not, of course, retain its momentum once dispersed among neighboring cultures. The small groups in the diaspora were not vital enough to raise themselves above their refugee status. Socio-economic pressures gave further impetus to the westward migration which brought the mission among the former Armenians and Greeks of Asia Minor, as such, to an end. While moving to the West, these groups merged with western Seventh-day Adventism. Thus the mission ceased to exist with the exception of a few very small groups which survived the ordeal in the Middle East.

Despite the hopeless shattered situation after World War I, the

mission composed of a few Armenians and western missionaries, did not retreat from Turkey altogether. In the hope of readjusting to the situation under the young Turkish Republic and of building its outreach anew, the mission held on to the little that was left. But lacking enough indigenous forces, the revival of the mission to its former status was utopic. The amputated mission was rather forced to be defensive and satisfied with easing the wounds of the few remaining believers.

After the Peace Conference of San Remo in 1922 some political stability came to Turkey again, but the young republic, though secular in tone, discouraged religious freedom and restricted the movements of Christians as much as before 1908. Eventually all communications with Asia Minor were broken off and the mission found itself limited to the vicinity of Istanbul. While this stalemate continued, the number of missionaries was gradually reduced to one or two, while from the remaining indigenous members more followed their fellow-believers in disillusion into exile to the West.[65]

The mission faced the task of establishing a new indigenous leadership, but this time the task was more difficult since the mission could not be built on man-power prepared by other denominations as had been previously the case. Furthermore, with the emigration of so many Christians the prospects of growth were less bright. A new mission strategy built on long range planning, where education was to have a major role, was necessary. The old editor-itinerant-preacher model, never really successfully introduced into Turkey, had to be indefinitely abandoned under the new reversed circumstances, where foreigners were more restricted in this role and only national elements succeeded within the framework of a layman's movement.[66]

But instead of starting with the educational project, the post-war situation imposed upon the mission the position of a caretaker, therefore, with the welfare projects for its widows and orphans, and unemployed illiterate church-members, the actual intentions of mission planning fell short. Though it was beyond the mission's ability to provide sufficient funds and work, it suddenly found itself serving as a social bridge toward emigration. The emigration in Turkey, as well as in other parts of the Middle East, as shall be noticed later on, became a trial to western Seventh-day Adventism and its mission, a problem which still is the major obstacle preventing a successful mission outreach.[67] Herein the Seventh-day Adventist Mission followed the footsteps of the Catholic and Protestant missions.

While attempting to open a school in Istanbul the mission was encouraged to extend its facilities to the orphans and passing-through refugees. Plans were laid for fund raising and appeals to Europe and to the U.S.A. on behalf of the orphans were not in vain. As the funds were still collected in 1922 and as the Greeks were defeated in western Anatolia, the erection of an orphanage in Salonica became of even greater importance. With it vanished the last hope of establishing an institution in Turkey which could serve as a center for the mission's future work.[68]

By 1922 the situation in Turkey decided the mission's destiny. Without indigenous leadership it was practically forced to a holding operation. Various attempts in the 1920's and 1930's to break out of the enclave in Istanbul and to find new avenues failed. Despite similar views held by Seventh-day Adventists and Muslims such as abstaining from alcoholic beverages and pork, excluding icons and ceremonies from worship, believing in the final judgment and resurrection, and keeping its day of rest (Sabbath) from sundown to sundown, the questions at issue constituted no urgent appeal to the Muslim world. The situation did not improve. Though nurtured and held together by foreign missionaries the emigration rate far outreached the conversions. The church-membership fluctuated during this period between 60 to 80 members, a fact which the mission gradually became accustomed to.[69]

There was no solution for the stagnant situation either from within or from abroad. The few missionaries voiced their concern in the official church papers but could not expect any answer from their fellow church-members in the West, who were not acquainted with the situation in Turkey. With no competent place to direct this question to, frustrated missionaries were left alone with their task.[70]

Looking at Islam

While the Christian communities almost disappeared in consequence of World War I, Islam suddenly came closer to the attention of the mission. So far no direct contacts had been established and the perplexed and astonished missionaries, viewing Islam from the Christian perspective, were unable to envision how to bridge the gap even though both held a number

of similar views. Though these common concerns sufficed as a basis for discussions, Seventh-day Adventists were not in the position to embark on a mission outreach among the Muslims. Besides, the new Turkish Republic restricted religious communications and did very little to enforce religious freedom. Hence a new approach was not forthcoming, which was also due to traditional suspicions the young state was unable or unwilling to eradicate.[71]

The missionaries in the 1920's and 1930's were even less prepared for an encounter with Islam and found their relation with it more difficult than their predecessors who at least had the experience of missionizing among the Christians. Since they lacked the theological insight into Islam, a considerable amount of time after mastering the Turkish language had to be spent to approach the Islamic mind. The hope the secularization and westernization process fostered by Kemal Pasha might make an approach easier proved as wrong as the assumption that Islamic practices and thought would vanish with a matter of time,[72] a view which was not only held by Seventh-day Adventists.

Eventually the conviction, that the encounter with Islam was unavoidable if there should be any progress, crystallized. In face of the enormous task, the mission fully realized its own inability. The way oriental churches first engaged themselves in missionizing the East, especially the Nestorians, whose zealous efforts were best remembered, the reasons leading to their defensiveness in the struggle with Islam over the centuries, was now appreciated. These circumstances helped the missionaries view their limited prospects in regard to learning the languages and cultures of the East, which was easier accomplished by indigenous forces.[73]

Suddenly the neglect of Islam was fully recognized. In the whole Balkan region not a single Seventh-day Adventist preacher had specialized in Islamics. The missionaries descerning Islam with western and Christian perceptions, emphasizing its illogic and inconsistency in its teachings and ethics, lacked the understanding of its social and cultural embeddedness. In this respect Seventh-day Adventists reflected the common understanding of Islam held by Christians at large. Consequently, the missionaries in Turkey were unable to penetrate the religious and cultural borders and could not establish an approach to the Muslim people.

While struggling with the problem at the frontiers, the support from the homebase declined with the rise of National Socialism in Hitler's

Germany. Finally, World War II brought the stalemate to an end by forcing the withdrawal of the European Seventh-day Adventist missionaries from Turkey altogether. In 1939 the mission outreach in Turkey suddenly came to a standstill. What originally had been started by indigenous forces was eventually destroyed by the consequences of history. What indigenous believers could not hold together, foreign missionaries could not be expected to maintain either. Thus the mission was abandoned and turned over to American Seventh-day Adventists, who inherited the mission task since World War II and still maintain the status quo.[74]

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM IN EGYPT

First Attempt Among Foreigners

As in Europe and Turkey, the entry of Seventh-day Adventism into Egypt occurred not as a result of a planned mission strategy, but rather as the by-product of initiatives taken by individuals, continuously extending the frontiers of the mission. The church, with no direct control over the nature of this outreach, was constrained to follow its laymen into new territories without preparation.

Among early western Seventh-day Adventists, many convinced self-appointed lay-missionaries chose their immediate community as their personal mission responsibility. Sometimes encouraged by their successes in their own vicinity, they assumed wider responsibilities, functioning as part-time or semi-itinerant preachers. Adopting the activities of the apostles as examples for their outreach, these lay-missionaries' theological and otherwise professional preparation was no prime factor in implementing personal convictions. Rather the commitment to their faith and to the urgency promulgated by the advent message determined and coerced their mission involvement.[75]

Besides the inspiration derived from the early church, the lay-missionaries were influenced, not so much by the Reformation as by the motivation and examples of the great Protestant mission awakening of the 18th and 19th century, viewed as the continuation of the historical mission process begun by the apostles and now not only promoted by a wider spectrum of modern denominations, but also in particular by the Seventh-day Adventists themselves.[76]

According to this self-understanding Seventh-day Adventists were not to carry the sole mission responsibility themselves. Recognizing William Carey, Prelate Bengel, and Count Zinzendorf as their forerunners, whose mission outreach was likewise inspired by eschatological studies, Seventh-day Adventists followed their steps with confidence. But since, according to their perception, the relationship between the second coming and the mission in the outgoing 19th century was insufficiently stressed, Seventh-day Adventists felt responsible to keep up this momentum. Based on prophetic and apocalyptic interpretations, this conviction was re-enforced

by an additional view emerging from Rev. 14:12, that the keeping of the decalogue, with special emphasis on the Sabbath, had to become an integral part of this composition of parousia and mission.[77]

It was this understanding that coerced laymen in Italy to spread Seventh-day Adventism also to other parts of the Mediterranean world. The competition for recruiting followers, an apparent problem in the small mobile Protestant community in Italy, was extended from the peninsula to the Italian community residing in various parts of the Middle East. Waldensians and Baptists, whose close affinity promoted the rise of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission, provided manpower and the communication links for its outflow into Egypt.

Though the beginning of Seventh-day Adventism in Egypt must be attributed to the efforts of an Italian layman, the master-mind behind the effective outreach was the former Methodist medical-missionary and later Seventh-day Adventist preacher, Dr. Herbert P. Ribton, who labored in Naples where he came in contact with Seventh-day Adventism via the Seventh-day Baptists. Because of the close theological relationship between the two sabbath-keeping churches, both were more concerned with the propagation of their common belief than with protecting their own interests, demonstrating a spirit of cooperation, which prevailed among them in Europe for some time, until the more agressive and progressive Seventh-day Adventists gave cause for pursuing separate courses.[78]

Dr. Ribton and the church leaders in Battle Creek and Basel recognized the importance of literature as a valuable aid in screening Italy for prospective church-members. Using first English and French publications, Dr. Ribton was finally authorized to publish also in Italian, serving as editor and itinerant-preacher at the same time. From Naples, literature found its way to other parts of the peninsula, Sicily, and Malta. But only through the endeavor of Rumaldo Bertola, a travelling agent from Naples, Seventh-day Adventism spread into Egypt.[79]

Also in Egypt Seventh-day Adventism expanded along national and religious lines. Following the trail of the Italian Protestants, the Seventh-day Adventist Mission in its primitive stage was limited to this environment and could, as such, not penetrate into the sphere of the Coptic and Greek Orthodox Churches, not to mention the world of Islam.[80]

The stalemate among the Protestants in Italy and the difficult

task of penetrating into the Catholic community convinced Dr. Ribton to change the center of his activity from Naples to Alexandria, especially encouraged by the reports of the initial success of Bertola. In the hope of better prospects, Dr. Ribton undertook the move without first acquiring any insight into the religious and cultural environment prevailing in that great metropolitan city.

Meanwhile by 1879 the Seventh-day Adventist Church was more sympathetic with the idea of foreign missions. A significant change appeared since J. N. Andrews' successful mission in Europe. The fact also that Dr. Ribton, like Andrews, could build on the work of a layman, helped to bring about the decision to send the physician to Alexandria. The leadership in Basel, depending on the approval of the headquarters in Battle Creek, finally received the authorization for Ribton's move. Financial support for travel, food, house rent, and clothes expenses was guaranteed, though the willingness for personal sacrifices was essential, since the church's financial support for the missionary amounted not much more than for the itinerant-preachers in the West, due to its limited financial position. Despite these restrictions, Dr. Ribton was determined to undertake the mission at any price, convinced that its extension would hasten the latter-day events.[81]

Upon his arrival in Egypt in 1879, Dr. Ribton did not restrict his activities to Italians, but also established contacts with other foreign communities and the indigenous population. Operating a language school to stimulate Bible-reading, translating literature into Arabic, and administering medical care, constituted his main efforts. But this outreach, though appreciated by some foreigners, found no response among the Egyptians, because no affinity with them had yet been established and the cultural barriers were too difficult for either side to cross. Hence Dr. Ribton fell back on the foreign community, dedicating all his efforts to foreigners residing or passing through Alexandria. Thus the spreading of his mission among the western culture in the East was possible, but to penetrate into the world of the Egyptians lay still in the unknown future.[82]

The first attempt to enter the Arab world suddenly ended disasterously on June 11, 1882, when during the anti-western uprising by Colonel Arabi Pasha, Dr. Ribton and two of his followers were killed in Alexandria. With the loss of its leader and the dwindling foreign community,

Seventh-day Adventists also were dislocated from Egypt and the mission was forced to withdraw. The cause of this severe setback was mainly ascribed to this political event, but the lack of an established indigenous base also deserves thorough consideration. The need of adapting to the local scene was only gradually realized. The role the self-supporting lay-missionary played by taking the lead in the second attempt to enter Egypt will be of interest in the following investigation.

Second Attempt Among Foreigners

As noticed earlier, the rapid expansion of Seventh-day Adventism in the latter part of the 19th century had not made possible the development of indigenous editors and their itinerant-preachers into non-western cultures. Therefore, the church had to find new avenues for its outreach into new areas such as Egypt. To keep up the momentum of its mission outreach, the lay-missionary was called to the forefront. As in other denominations he was to assist the Seventh-day Adventist Church to implement its global outreach. Promoted at the General Conference session of 1891, church-members were encouraged to accept the challenge of enrolling as self-supporting missionaries, due to the church's inability to supply sufficient professional missionaries.[83]

The laymen responding to this kind of an appeal - teachers, physicians, and businessmen - naturally preferred to missionize among Westerners, since they had no foreign languages at their command nor did they intend to stay abroad for too long.

The colporteur, the layman selling denominational literature from door to door, was the first who responded to the call. But without the support of the editor and itinerant-preacher, who had not entered Egypt from the very beginning, his prospects of success were dim. The absence of religious similarities forced his retreat to the foreign community, touching the Arabic-speaking natives with his foreign literature only on the surface.

As a "storm-trooper", the colporteur's concern, unlike the itinerant-preacher's, was not necessarily that of collecting individuals into the fold. His intentions were rather to prepare with his literature the ground

for a later mission outreach. In this he followed somehow the practices of the British Bible Society. But un-acquainted with Arabic, which prevented him from understanding the Egyptian culture, he lacked the ability to interpret his success by not distinguishing between the foreign and local population. He, therefore, passed on an incorrect picture about the situation at the mission frontline to his home-base in Western Europe. It was these reports by the colporteurs that placed a great burden upon the believers in the West and inspired other laymen to follow the colporteurs' footsteps to the Middle East and particularly to Egypt.[84]

Since, Dr. Ribton's death in 1882, no missionary efforts had been pursued for some time. A few Armenian Seventh-day Adventists fleeing from Turkey settled in Egypt in 1896, but foreigners themselves and preoccupied with their own fate, they possessed little courage for any missionary activity. Thus the colporteurs stood alone, confronted with an overwhelming task, and consequently appealed for more help.

Being greatly impressed by the poverty and diseases prevailing in Egypt, the colporteurs' reports elicited the response of nurses, mid-wives, health-reformers, and physiotherapists in the years to come. With regard to health, Seventh-day Adventists had recognized its essential principles since the 1870's, a number of prominent health-reformers being among their ranks. Actually, the concern for health became a vital part of the denomination's teachings, stimulated by E. G. White's active role in shaping health-awareness. Thus the combination of healing and preaching, the restoration of the spiritual and physical man emerged as the ideal missionary approach for laymen.[85]

1899 marks the arrival of the first two families and one nurse in Egypt. Establishing a health-center, which within a short time proved an ideal self-supporting effort, they attracted the foreign community in Cairo, favorably responding to a vegetarian diet offered by a western-styled kitchen. Lectures on health in connection with religious topics were also part of the program. But the native Egyptian, following his own traditional way of cooking and caring for the sick, made little use of the institution. Again the mission was restricted to the foreign community; the nurses being accepted only by the upper class, accustomed or willing to open their homes to foreigners.[86]

It was not long before the lay- and self-supporting medical

missionary also realized his limitation. The German language, of little use in a predominantely English-speaking community, together with the assistance of two Swiss-trained Armenian nurse aids, were of no great avail in the oriental environment. Vegetarianism, a product of the western scene, where fresh foods were less available and unbalanced diets common, did not correspond to the situation in Egypt where the daily diet included varieties of fresh vegetables. Since the expected results were not forthcoming, the medical-lay-missionary stayed no longer than his predecessor, the colporteur, resulting first in the closure of the health-center and eventually in dropping the medical approach as the main mission outreach in Egypt.[87]

Concerned by the unstable situation in Egypt, the president of the European Mission, L. R. Conradi, visited Egypt in 1901 and 1902, where he realized the necessity of an organized leadership essential in maintaining permanency in the mission strategy. Contacts with other organizations also operating medical missions, like the Presbyterian Mission in Asyut, convinced Conradi that such projects required the backing of a well organized and stable leadership. Consequently, the European Mission organized its missions in the Arab world into the Oriental Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists with the headquarters in Cairo; W. H. Wakeham, the brother-in-law of Conradi, was appointed president in 1902. Unfortunately his leadership was short-lived, since health problems caused his withdrawal from Egypt only four years later.[88]

Mission Among Egyptians

With the departure of Wakeham and thus the failure to promote the mission through an organization, Seventh-day Adventism made little headway. Still radiating its western stigma, it was dominantly occupied with the western population in the Egyptian metropolis. This situation, however, changed drastically with the arrival of George Keough from Ireland in 1908, who, free of bias and uninfluenced by the German missionaries, developed his own strategy, moving right across the cultural barrier by living among the fellahin of the Nile.

Keough settled to begin with in the predominantly Coptic district of Akhmim on the Upper Nile. The area was relatively receptive to foreign

missions, since the Egyptian Presbyterians were already established there. Thanks to the efforts of this mission, Keough was able to establish his foothold later on in distant Beni Adi near Asyut, since a former Presbyterian elder, Yacoub Bishai Yacoub, who had embraced the Sabbath there upon his own initiative, had heard about the Irish sabbath-keeper and came by chance in contact with him. When Keough was invited to pitch his tent in Beni Adi in 1912, he not only inaugurated a movement embedded in the indigenous culture, but was assisted by the social element so vital in establishing the mission along social patterns. Yacoub's patriarchal charisma and social control over his extended family enabled Keough to establish the mission on an indigenous foundation within one year, baptizing 24 fellahin of which 17 were men.[89]

From this experience the mission drew significant conclusions. The necessity to free itself from its involvement with foreign communities in the metropolitan cities and to build rather on indigenous ground was finally realized. Meanwhile, the mission divided into two sections, one continuing in the established pattern in the cities under the German W. K. Ising, previously connected with the mission in Syria, and the other concentrating on the Egyptian community in Upper Egypt with Beni Adi as its center under the leadership of Keough.

At this turning-point the influence of preconceived ideas about Coptic Christianity and Islam was still apparent among Seventh-day Adventist missionaries. Former contacts or inadequate information about either religion served as a basis for misconceived notions, leading to the inability to comprehend the eastern mind. To begin with, there was little in common to bridge the gap. However, the change of attitude was less associated with a thorough study, greater interest in these religions or improved relations, but was rather the result of the gradual involvement of Keough with the affairs of the Coptic community. Keough's readiness to venture into an unknown experience and Yacoub's step toward Seventh-day Adventism, prepared by his Protestant-Coptic background, mediated and bridged the gap. Thus the Beni Adi experience changed the previous attitude of western missionaries and provided for a gradual understanding of the Egyptian people. Without the readiness of both men, the mission might not have succeeded in entering Upper Egypt. As with Baharian in Turkey, the indigenous elements were an important factor in founding the mission.

By the time the mission established its first roots, World War I threatened its existence. Meanwhile about 40 individuals from the various Orthodox Churches joined the mission, but most of them came from Coptic background. The kin relationship within the Coptic community in Upper Egypt necessitated the mission's change of its previous pattern, namely from collecting unrelated individuals to approaching whole families within the prevailing social structures.

With the outbreak of the war, W. K. Ising was interned in Lower Egypt by the British Forces and taken to a prisoner-of-war-camp in Malta, while Keough, a British subject, was able to retain his post in Upper Egypt. This was vital for the future development of the mission, since his displacement could have severely disrupted the progress of the mission. From 1896 to World War I sixteen missionaries had served in Egypt but none had adapted himself to the native culture as had Keough.[90]

The continuous growth of the mission within an indigenous atmosphere was only possible because of a number of favorable circumstances. As already noted, the British occupation of Egypt had not necessitated Keough's departure, and with his vigorous leadership the young mission's destiny was insured. It is doubtful whether the national pastor, the former Presbyterian elder, Awaida Abd al-Shahid, could have taken over effectively in Keough's absence.

Furthermore, the mission did not yet experience the socio-economic and educational pressures, so characteristic after the 1920's, when the believers began to crowd into the cities of the Nile delta, until opportunities enabled emigration to the West. Definitely, during World War I and the years that followed, the shelter enjoyed between the Nile and the desert guaranteed the development of the mission in Upper Egypt. The experience there was the opposite of that of the mission in Turkey, which at about the same time was torn apart by the consequences of World War I.

The sudden mission advance in Egypt was hailed in Western Europe as breaking of the walls of superstition and prejudice. But the actual circumstances bringing about this change, Keough's originality and departure from the previous practices of the mission, were not realized. Keough, commenting on this subject in later years, complained about the short-sightedness of the German missionaries, who had wasted their efforts on the foreign communities. His main argument against them was rooted in the fact that the

Westerners' only preoccupation was with their business interest, unless they settled there specifically for religious reasons. Since, according to Keough, the former were non-religious and the latter already religiously allegiant, he saw little prospects for growth. Serving these foreigners with medical care was in his opinion a wrong investment, keeping the mission from progressing and gaining access to the native people.[91]

Keough also discussed the reasons for the hesitation to enter the villages along the Upper Nile, which were located between Dairut and Akhmim. The major factor lay in the extreme living conditions separating the missionaries from the ordinary Egyptians. Finding no hotel or the like, the shelter mainly available was with a fellah, whose standards of living and hygiene were far below the missionaries' expectancies. The use of touts or houseboats on the Nile, as it was the practice of the Presbyterian Mission, was not reported. Domestic animals, vermin, and the dust and heat of the Nile Valley made the adjustment difficult from the accustomed environment of the western homeculture to the new situation. Comparing Egypt with tropical Africa led Keough to the conclusion that the adjustment in areas with regular rainfall and fresh water supplies was much easier, by providing the condition where the missionaries could develop independently from the native surrounding, maintaining their own living standard in their mission station.[92]

Basically, the main problem was the mission's failure to prepare the missionary mentally and socially for the transition. Therefore, the initiative had to come from an individual missionary, who understood the problems of crossing cultural barriers and envisioned the steps that made the transition possible, rather than from the mission at large. Once Keough undertook the initial step in this direction, the difficulties were less than expected and he found the new environment rather friendly and hospitable.[93]

Keough was as much a product of the western culture as his fellow missionaries from Central Europe and Scandinavia. Originating from diverse European backgrounds, the persuance of more independent mission strategies should have been expected. But the opposite was demonstrated. Despite different national and cultural backgrounds a concerted action was exhibited as if the missionaries had been of one particular socio-cultural group. Apparently, by the turn of the century, the church had already established

a certain group consciousness and group behavior among European Seventh-day Adventists, promoted by the editor-itinerant-preacher, who consolidated the movement greatly. Being thus unable for independent and new approaches, but rather breaking their hearts over apparent unsolvable obstacles, their mission outreach became their Waterloo and subsequent cause of departure.

Once the new avenue was established, the mission's strategy was not determined by the headquarters, the home-base, but was like in many other instances of mission history, the product of the mission itself, the result of the spontaneous undertaking of an individual, daring to depart from existing patterns and established practices, a step, requiring self-denial and sacrifices. As a result, the 1920's witnessed the mission's concentration on the villages in Upper Egypt, where the work among the Coptic population advanced undisturbed, and where for the first time Muslims received also some attention, though only from a distance.[94]

From the standpoint of the mission, it was not tresspassing on the territory of another church. Considering the Coptic Church rather backward, lifeless, and dead, there was little the mission could build on according to the observations of the missionaries. In fact, the fellahin were mainly illiterate. They had hardly any insight into the teachings of Christianity, except what was observed from the Coptic liturgy. This the missionaries deducted from the fact that there existed little church activity and pastoral care; circumstances assisting in the advancement of Islam to that extent, that Muslims drew converts among the Copts. This situation favored the introduction of education, as already practiced by other missions in Egypt. Seventh-day Adventists strongly felt the burden of preserving Christianity through education, stemming the influence of Islam by filling the place the Coptic Church neglected.[95]

Between the two world wars the mission outreach was greatly shaped by Keough's pioneering work. Keough was, above all, a self-made missionary with the earnest desire to pass on his faith to a people of different social, cultural, and religious affinity, who, by his example, inspired the mission to settle in the unfamiliar setting of Upper Egypt.

Living in this cultural setting and adopting its language, there developed a gradual interest in the new environment, but this did not suffice to bring the missionary to a close understanding of the oriental mind, its pattern of thought and behavior. Again the mission altered its strategy,

realizing the limitations of the western ministerial training program in a non-western culture. In its determination to overcome the problem, the mission required the enrollment of the missionary-intern in the School of Oriental Studies in Cairo. With studies in Arabic and Islamics, the missionaries of the 1930's received a fairly adequate preparation. It was during this time that the mission adapted as much as possible to the cultural scene, the mission theology or the method of mission outreach.[96]

As long as education was not part of their mission program, the missionaries retained the customs of the villages, consciously or unconsciously, as much as possible. The architectural style of the mission-church in the villages served as a suitable example. By lacking any trace of the missionaries' western influence, it strongly indicated other than mere economic considerations. Built with the help of the villagers, the churches reflected the same simple style so characteristic of this region: brick walls, a plain earth floor, and a corn stalk roof. A partitioning wall, following the prevailing customs, marked the separation of the sexes.

Also from the sociological point of view the mission-church reflected the setting of the Egyptian village, being very distinct from the customary church-of-individuals of the West. In the absence of modern communicational facilities between the villages, with only limited railroad service along the Nile, the mission was more or less restricted to the boundary of the village, unless use was made of boats, donkies, or taxies. Consequently, the mission-churches emerged as parish-churches, developing along the prevailing social structures with its advantages and limitations. In this way the mission-church drew many villagers into its sphere. But the interest of the fellahin in the mission's activities must be viewed in the right perspective. It should not only be attributed to the efforts of the mission or the social connections of its members to relatives, but also to the lack of interesting activities to highlight the monotonous village life, and the available leisure time of the average fellah. This unexpected phenomenon of becoming a center for curiosity's sake or social outlet demonstrated clearly the extent of the mission's possible outreach and its limitation.

In places without a residing missionary, the local custom of adding a visitor's room to the church was retained to enable the visiting district pastor to give more attention to his flock and partake in the village life.

Serving at the same time as a first aid station, the mission-churches more and more became focal points cultivating friendly relations. In the absence of village priests, the Seventh-day Adventist pastor gradually functioned in the role of a parish priest, though Seventh-day Adventism was not accepted en masse.

Seventh-day Adventism was unsuited for mass conversion. Its small membership kept in the missionaries' and their Egyptian followers' minds much longer the image of a mission alive, which did not allow them to develop at this stage a concept of an indigenous church. The hesitancy to join the mission whole-heartedly arose mainly from economic considerations. The practice of tithe paying - faithful members paid their tithe regularly in cash or crop - added an economic burden of which the missionary and the fellah were well aware. The mission was careful in admitting its members, testing their faithfulness on this ground.

Next to economic considerations came the question of Sabbath observance. In a predominantly agricultural district, with its dependence on irrigation, the water supplies might be scheduled to the land on a Sabbath, due to the controlled flood in the fall. The sudden demand of harvesting, due to the fast ripening process, necessitated work at any time. To the fellah, therefore, the setting aside of a certain day of the week was a hinderance in the struggle for survival. The question of time and its use was unknown to him anyway, making little difference on which day of the week the work was done. And even if he could arrange for himself to keep the Sabbath, the social pressure, arising from his interdependence with his kinsmen, was a further hindrance.[97]

Furthermore, illiteracy was another handicap in making an impact, since memorization of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and important Bible texts, at which the women excelled, was the only way of overcoming the obstacle. Definitely, the editor-itinerant-formula of the West would be out of place in this type of society. The stationary missionary and the indigenous district pastor were needed to help the mission accomplish its aim.[98]

Instead of finding solutions to the economic and agricultural problems facing the fellah after embracing Seventh-day Adventism, the mission introduced education with the dual aim of overcoming illiteracy and preparing young converts for the ministry with the additional intention

of stemming the advance of Islam, as already mentioned. But the realities proved to be otherwise, since education lured the young believer away from the villages, which a generation later had painful consequences. As long as education was not emphasized, the members were willing to stay in the Nile Valley, but once the door to education was opened in Cairo in 1927 the move from the villages into the metropolis developed rapidly, uprooting the mission eventually from its most favored environment, leading it not only away from Upper Egypt but finally encouraging the emigration to the West after World War II, since English became the language of the educational system and consequently, also, of the mission.[99]

In introducing education into Egypt, the European Seventh-day Adventist Mission had to rely on the denomination's system of education as developed in the U.S.A. Accordingly, the first training center opened at the outskirts of Cairo in 1927 with V. E. Toppenberg as principal. Soon after village schools in Upper Egypt emerged, serving as supply centers for the training school in Cairo. The villagers, not desiring manual training, defeated the purpose for which the institution was partly established. In pursuing non-manual professions, the students naturally lost the desire for returning to their villages. The possibility of uprooting the mission in Upper Egypt was noticed, but prompted no decisive steps to check the trend. As long as the village schools supplied students the training center flourished, but as no manpower returned to the villages and the educated youth sought emigration, the mission in the villages with its schools gradually weakened. This phenomenon, which indeed was not only a problem of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission, was symptomatic of the general trend of Protestant education in the Middle East.[100]

After the uprooting from the Nile Valley, the mission returned to the metropolis where its destiny was decided. The retreat of the German missionaries resulting from World War II and Keough's departure to the U.S.A. in 1943 marked the end of the European Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Egypt. The educated, English-speaking church-member soon emigrated after World War II, while the non-Arabic-speaking American missionary, filling the vacancies, could not prevent the further westernization process of the mission.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM IN MESOPOTAMIA, PALESTINE, AND SYRIA

Mission Among Foreigners

The development of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Syria started as in Egypt among the foreign community. This shows again the relatedness of the mission to its western culture which was so drastically evident in the background and behavior of the denomination's first colporteur-itinerant-preacher-missionary to Palestine, the German-American, John Harry Krum.[101] Formerly a colporteur among the Germans in Pennsylvania, he qualified himself after some theological training in Lincoln (Nebraska) and Hamburg (Germany) to preach among his countrymen in Germany. As a successful evangelist in Berlin, he soon followed the trail of the German settlers to the East, which brought him to Palestine in 1898 where he labored among the German settlers, especially the Friends of the Temple, a religious society which held several colonies in the Holy Land. This contact became very important for the later development of the mission, for without this the mission might have found it more difficult to enter the Bible Lands as was the case with a Swiss colporteur,[102] who had been sent to the Middle East two years earlier but could not establish himself due to the lack of contacts with people of close religious and national affinity.

Krum benefited from his favorable relations with the German community in Palestine. It enabled him to settle in Jaffa and later in Jerusalem, which gave him time to adjust to the climate and environment and to plan his mission outreach among the foreigners before moving on to the Arabic community. Though this fact may appear positive at first, it also had its negative side, since his preoccupation with the German community prevented him from becoming acquainted with the indigenous cultures prevailing in Palestine.

With a certain amount of training in two unrelated fields, colporteur-evangelism and hydrotherapy, Krum examplified the typical self-made and rugged individual shaped by the pioneer spirit of the American Midwest of the 19th century.[103] Self-confident and enterprising he went abroad, maintaining his western behavior pattern in thought and action.

As long as he labored among Westerners, his approach was well suited and well received. However, when his territory among the foreigners was covered and his literature sold, the confrontation with the Arab community became unavoidable. For this moment he was neither prepared nor had he acquired the understanding of the socio-cultural structure of the Arab society.

Krum appeared not to be troubled by this fact, since he was not aware of the situation he was in. Instead of learning the Arabic language, he employed a young Persian as his interpreter for his evangelistic work and as intermediary with the Ottoman authorities. He trusted the interpretation and judgment of this youth, a multilinguist (he spoke Persian, Turkish, Arabic, and English), to be sufficiently authentic. It must be assumed, however, that this youth viewed Krum's missionary venture and the Arabic culture from his own socio-cultural perspective. This dependence on an interpreter and foreigner revealed itself in time a severe handicap in gaining a true understanding of the people and their culture, their religious feelings and economic situation. These second-hand impressions led Krum to misunderstand the people's curiosity in his activities by interpreting their openess as a real interest in his message.[104]

Moreover, the fact that he reaped some results confirmed his opinion that his bold approach was likewise acceptable and successful among the Arabs as it was in the West. Experienced missionaries of other denominations with better insight into the complexity of the situation and puzzled by his behavior, cautioned him to take a more moderate line. They warned him about his false judgment concerning the Arab community and the possible failure of his mission. But, not yielding to advice and believing the Arab openness and hospitality to be genuine in regard to his message, he pursued a massive visitation program, likewise keeping his house open to any visitor, Christian or Muslim. Misjudging their socio-religious standing in their society, he not only entertained the false impression of attracting real prospects for conversion, but also imagined that leaders and teachers of the Muslim community were among his followers.[105]

Eventually, his provocative outreach stirred up opposition in the Christian and Muslim communities alike. The authorities, though not hindering his activities, limited the access to his house by placing guards at the entrance of his residence. Krum, not fully realizing the grave

situation and the tension surrounding him, was unaware that those visitors attempting to continue their visits were themselves estranged from their society for social or economic problems and sought, for this very reason, contacts with him. He viewed their consequent arrest and imprisonment as persecution. However, after their release from prison and refusal to join his mission even though they were baptized members, he realized that their connection with him did not result in their desired improvement of their social and economic standing.[106]

Krum's first accounts of his success were well received in Western Europe and especially at the headquarters in Basel. The president of the European Mission, H. P. Holser, most impressed, immediately envisioned the extension of the mission to the entire Arab world from Syria to Morocco, including the Sudan. In fact, Krum's report prompted him to resign from his leadership responsibilities and to go to the Middle East. Health problems also contributed to his decision. He hoped in a warmer climate his failing health would improve, which, however, did not occur, forcing him rather to withdraw from his new post in Egypt.[107]

In due time Krum learned that the situation in Palestine was different from the West, thus he realized his need to adjust and his misconception of the religious atmosphere. In trying to win converts, he became less offensive and more cautious. Finding his colporteur-itinerant-preaching too provocative, he decided for the indirect approach of serving with his medical skill in Jaffa and Jerusalem. His medical service was beneficial at that time since medical care was not readily available, and his outgoing personality was still a great asset in bridging the communication gap with the Arabic community, even though he did not fully understand their language.[108]

The medical-missionary soon found himself overburdened in his work. Again appeals for aid from the West created false impressions as to the possibilities of mission in the Middle East. About twenty missionaries responded in the years until World War I.

By 1900 the medical mission of the European Seventh-day Adventists was well established. Five sanatoriums not only served as mission outreach but also supplied trained manpower for the mission field. This accounts for the missionaries who worked till World War I in Palestine and Syria either as nurses, mid-wives or physiotherapists.

Though there were medical facilities and hospitals available, which were mainly charity institutions of various missions, medical services in Palestine were not widespread. Both ignorance and lack of access prevented the people from consulting hospitals or physicians. Thus Krum and his immediate successors visited homes in and around the villages of Jaffa, teaching mainly the common fundamental principles of health in the area of hygiene and nutrition.

After 1900 the medical work became more stationary and institutionalized. Krum opened a clinic in Jerusalem while another missionary, F. Hörner, continued in Jaffa by transforming an old mill into a clinic.[109] The stationary physio-therapeutical health service later replaced the home visitation program and remained for the following 14 years the major outreach of evangelism. However, these institutions, attracting mostly the interest of the foreigners, gradually transferred the mission back to the foreign communities and finally solidified foreign institutions. This whole development with all its dimensions and consequences was not understood in its true meaning. Encouraged by their successes, optimistic reports about rapid increases reached the headquarters in Europe, which in turn resulted in sending further medical missionaries.

The shift toward the idea, that the Arab community is best reached through well established institutions, found support by the new mission director, L. R. Conradi, who inspected the mission in 1901 while touring the Levant. Widely travelled in America and in Europe and maintaining contacts with several missions, Conradi also internalized the generally accepted view held by these Protestant missions that the interest of any mission outreach is served best by operating efficient institutions. This conviction was reinforced when he passed through Beirut visiting the American Mission. After the reception by Dr. Bliss, president of the Protestant College of Syria, Conradi was shown the institution where he had the opportunity to receive firsthand views on the situation of the American Mission from American missionaries serving at the faculty. His visit to the press of the American Tract Association, where he saw the prints of the Arabic Bible, left a deep impression on him. Afterwards he favorably commented that Seventh-day Adventists should also establish their headquarters for the Middle East in Beirut. The closeness to the

American Mission and the newly established railroad links between Beirut and Syria were definitely the reasons behind his thinking. The existence of other Christian communities in the area did, however, not occur as the godfather of this idea. Conradi had only some vague information about them.[110]

The idea of establishing medical institutions was also reinforced by Conradi's observations in Jaffa of the tremendous demands for medical service. The resident medical missionary, Hörner, reported 1580 patients calling on his clinic in his first eight months of service. That there were among his patients many Europeans did not arouse any question yet. They made his mission rather possible, allowing him to serve and evangelize a community to which he could best relate because of his native language. This was especially true of the Templers from the colonies of Wilhelma and Saronna. Further, they assured his income, since the Arab community expected the service free of charge. This financial consideration was an important factor in the establishment of a self-supporting mission.[111]

From the viewpoint of finance and mission outreach, the institutionalized medical mission seemed the ideal approach. Unfortunately, it was hampered and threatened by the constant possibility of contracting contagious diseases, of which cholera and typhoid were mostly feared. Considering that the purity of the water consumption was not government controlled, a constant bacteriological analysis of the water and antiseptic precautionary measures would have been an absolute necessity. The deathroll of eight persons and the high rate of sickness reported by the family of missionaries in the 1910's and 1920's accounts partly for negligence and ignorance in this matter, though the water supply might not necessarily have been the cause for these casulties, since the general standard of hygiene gave also great cause for concern.

Another limitation of physiotherapy as a mission outreach was the water shortage which was especially a problem in Jerusalem. Though housing and installing the necessary equipment was also difficult, this could be overcome by either renting the facilities or building the entire institute itself, as was done in the case of the health center in Jerusalem in the 1930's. Yet the water supply always remained a constant problem. In Jerusalem it was stored in a cistern and pumped into the clinic. The maintenance of the clinic overburdened the missionary with many duties,

such as pumping and heating, and supporting the clinic besides his professional work with the task of evangelism, because the clinic was run as a one-man or one-family institution.[112]

With the medical work increasing, the amount of time for evangelism decreased in proportion. The success with medical care somehow compensated for the lack of conversions. The so-called apparent disinterest in religion was, however, not understood by the missionaries. The socio-religious moment in the Middle Eastern society was not recognized. Rather they were holding on to the idea of overcoming the stalemate by retaining their western approach and calling for more and more manpower from home. Though the church was willing to send the requested help, the missionaries felt it was never enough. They complained that more support was given to the mission fields in Africa, because missionaries there were able to report greater success. Yet despite this accusation, the response of the European Seventh-day Adventist Church was generous in the 1910's. Manpower was made available and the missionaries were allowed to take the initiative in shaping the mission's outreach and its destiny, a practice which is so characteristic of the history of Protestant missions.[113]

The emphasis on healthful living propagated by Seventh-day Adventism in the Middle East did not correspond with a urgent need. The consumption of alcohol and the habit of smoking constituted no real danger around the turn of the century, for both habits had not yet been adopted by the Middle Eastern society. Comparing this situation with Europe, the missionaries were impressed by the temperance mindedness of the Arabs. Thus there was only the question of hygiene, which, together with the insufficient supply of water, presented itself as a real problem. Since it was more related to the home and to the sphere of the woman, the male missionary was of less use, which encouraged the mission to send missionary couples where the wife was either a physiotherapist or a nurse, also.

Struggle for Change

The president of the European Seventh-day Adventist Mission, L. R. Conradi, though supporting the idea of establishing medical institutions also stressed the importance of evangelism. For this reason

a mission center was established in Beirut in 1908. As in 1900, when dispatching his brother-in-law to Egypt, Conradi again selected a close associate whom he thought understood his vision.

In Walter K. Ising, his personal secretary and associate, Conradi found the right man. Like Conradi, he was of German-American background. After emigrating to Missouri in 1889, he returned to Germany at the age of 26. Through his travels with Conradi, he was acquainted with the denomination in Europe and therefore was best qualified to understand the aspirations of his mission president.[114]

Ising's previous experience as editor (he was the editor of the German church paper "Der Zions-Wächter") and itinerant-preacher in Western Europe, qualified him for the western scene. But as he went to the Orient, he possessed no insight into the Arab world, neither the culture, the people or its language. This forced him to rely first on the German community in Beirut. But finding only limited interest, he moved near the Syrian Protestant College hoping to establish contacts with the English-speaking students.[115]

It had been Conradi's idea to set the mission on a more permanent footing. With the Protestant Mission in Beirut as an example in mind, he realized the necessity of a long-range plan to be essential for the establishment of an indigenous mission-church. The work of the physiotherapist proved to be unsuited for the accomplishment of this aim, which was now to be achieved by witnessing and spreading Seventh-day Adventism. Therefore, to master the Arabic language was imperative. Guided by these ideas, Ising resolved to study Arabic. His studies at the center of the Protestant mission in the Lebanese mountains in Abeih were of great help to him. He became fully aware of what it meant to speak the native language by observing the performance of missionaries of other denominations and their national pastors. Their success made him doubt whether he could ever become as effective. He concluded that a national clergy would still be a better solution.[116]

After one year of study Ising began his public work. He was not yet prepared to preach in Arabic, thus he relied on the small German- and English-speaking communities of Beirut and Jaffa. Some affinity was established with the Templers and members of the Blue Cross, but little success was forthcoming which convinced him that the trail of the western

residents had to be abandoned and that the transition to the local population was indispensable.[117]

Ising speeded up his studies in the Arabic language while, at the same time, concentrating on students from the Syrian Protestant College, some of whom were attending Bible studies in his home. From these contacts he noticed that students from Christian communities of northern Syria and Iraq had the greatest concern for religious matters.

Ising's outreach finally bore fruit among a few students who had received Bible studies over a period of two to three years. They were already Protestants when coming in contact with him, though they originated from Greek Catholic, Jacobite, and Muslim backgrounds. His first converts were, as such, well educated students, who were, despite their Protestant training, not too westernized. Thus Seventh-day Adventism, which was assisted by Protestantism and education, came closer to the oriental world. This process of conversion was slower than the mission had experienced in Turkey among the Armenians and Greeks, but enjoyed, inspite of it, deep and lasting results.[118]

It is important to notice at this point, that the insight acquired through his own experience enabled Ising later as leader of the mission in the Middle East, or while executing important functions at the headquarters in Europe, to stimulate and direct the mission in the Arab world. His struggle for indigenization began mainly here and lasted until the outbreak of World War II, when the European Seventh-day Adventist Mission withdrew from the region. Since the future of the indigenous leadership depended on these early beginnings, the mission had a good chance of becoming an oriental church.

While Ising was attempting to build his mission on indigenous elements, he was opposed by his German followers in Beirut, who eventually were dropped from membership.[119] He likewise failed to cooperate with the former Presbyterian worker from southern Lebanon, Elias Zarub, who accepted Seventh-day Adventism in 1902 after reading denominational literature received from a Lebanese migrant returning from the U.S.A. Establishing communication with Krum, who worked in Palestine at that time, Zarub joined the denomination without having physical contact with the church. Together with Krum he toured the Christian villages in southern Lebanon as a colporteur but retained his independent course. By printing

his own literature on Adventism and baptizing a few followers, he was at the verge of initiating a Middle Eastern church. When Ising arrived this independence was interrupted. Ising's western understanding of church unity, mission organization, and strategy was incompatible with Zarub's eastern concept of individualism.[120]

Unfortunately, a precious opportunity was lost by not acknowledging individuality among churches according to localities, customs, or social structures. Elias Zarub from Alm El-Shaab emigrated with his family to Brazil, where he continued to be a faithful member. It must be mentioned at this point, that from the very beginning the trend of emigration was an ever present possibility in the mission.[121]

After the first attempt to establish a church failed under the efforts of Zarub, the second materialized under Ising in 1908/1911, when the mission-church in Beirut was established with the membership of five Germans, seven Arabs, and one Armenian.[122]

The mission in Beirut gained its foothold within three years which was relatively faster than in Jaffa and Jerusalem where it was engaged in the institutionalized medical approach. The converts in Beirut were all young, educated men and had, except for the foreigners, an oriental outlook. Ising's firm leadership enabled the mission to build on its western and denominational expectations as well as on the oriental culture, since both elements were present in the church.

Almost all converts came from established families where economic pressure was not predominant. Their education ensured their employment which necessitated no support from the mission. Therefore, one might safely conclude that more than self-interest prompted them to join an unkown mission in the Middle East, a mission which was easily misunderstood to be Jewish rather than Christian. A real concern for religion, together with the preparation of their education and their readiness to receive Seventh-day Adventism, were the motives for joining the mission. As in Turkey, young educated Christians became the supporters of the church, but with the difference that the Armenians were able to pass on their faith to the common man, whereas this was not so readily the case in Syria at the formative time of the mission.

While Ising endeavored to establish the mission on a firm footing, he came to realize the ethnical differences among the Syrian believers,

which were more complex than in Turkey and Egypt. Combining widely scattered individuals of the various nationalities from Armenian, Assyrian, Lebanese, and Kurdish backgrounds prevented the formation of an organic unity of his mission. For a long time his followers maintained their separate identities, but gradually they realized their isolation. Traces of attempts to emigrate can be noticed in most cases and their closeness to the foreign community residing in the Middle East cannot be denied.[123]

Unfortunately, greater responsibilities were assigned to Ising, as he became president of the mission in the Middle East including Egypt, Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Syria.[124] Conradi's aim to press on with his vision in the Middle East via Ising was thus accomplished. But the administrative work curtailed Ising in strengthening the foundation laid in Beirut, and prevented him from deepening his outreach there. He no longer had the opportunity to broaden his understanding like Keough in Egypt, who labored much longer in one locale and therefore, penetrated further into the culture of the people. But in spite of this disadvantage, Ising's leadership gave stability to the mission.

Burdened with more responsibility, Ising changed his original way of approach and fell back on the editor-itinerant-preacher model. He encouraged his young supporters to translate denominational literature from the West and to canvass the area, thus hoping to make an impact on a wider scale.[125] This, however, did not mature since the communities of the various Arab countries were not accustomed to buy religious material. Moreover, it was not customary for strangers to visit homes without an invitation. The multi-lingual Armenian Seventh-day Adventists were willing to give this method a trial, but abandoned it due to its poor prospects for subsistence, since literature-mission outreach was even less suited in Syria and Mesopotamia than it was in Turkey.

Setback Beyond Control

While Ising was building the mission on a firmer foundation than the medical missionaries were able to do, World War I brought his efforts to an abrupt halt. Most missionaries returned to Europe at the earliest

opportunity, followed by their German church members who suddenly felt insecure like many other foreigners residing in the Middle East. Ising, who, in the meantime, had the headquarters transferred to Egypt, was interned by the British Forces and taken to a prisoner-of-war camp in Malta for the following five years. Only the Swiss missionary, Henry Erzberger, was convinced to stay, moving first from the Mediterranean coast to the hinterland, to the Lebanese mountains and Jerusalem, and finally retreating to Istanbul as the British Forces approached.[126]

The mission, composed of a small band of followers by the time of the outbreak of the war, rapidly dwindled in 1914 until it constituted only a handful of dispersed Arab believers. With the departure of most of its foreigners, and its Arab members, likewise, returning to their native homes in Mesopotamia and Syria, the mission in the Bible lands practically ceased to function. While still maintaining his faith, each individual member remained without fellowship and pastoral care, except for in Lebanon where the former Presbyterian pastor, Ibrahim Khalil, retained communication with believers and with the headquarters of the Armenian Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Istanbul.[127]

The war came as suddenly for the homebase in Europe as for its mission fields. Prior to the outbreak a new mission paper, "Der Advent-Bote in der Heidenwelt", was launched.[128] Its purpose was to promulgate interest and support at home for the rapid expansion of foreign missions. Seventh-day Adventism had reached, as such, its first climax before the war. By entering most major countries of the world, its mission outreach had finally caught up with the global involvement of most major Protestant missions. In their rapid expansion Seventh-day Adventists recognized a clear sign of the last events, when unforeseeingly the war added a new perspective and momentum to their goal.[129]

The sudden outbreak cut all communication to the homebase. This was true for Egypt and eventually for all the Arab countries. Though the church's headquarters in the U.S.A. tried to assume responsibility for establishing communication or support for stranded missionaries, the church in Central Europe was very much concerned for the well-being of those individuals that were either interned or separated from their families.[130]

The war also imposed a series of questions. The leaders at the homebase wondered whether nationals would be open-handed towards

missionaries if no finances were coming through, or if the national pastors would continue their work without pay. It was also suddenly recognized that expanding the mission along colonial and political interests was a noticeable mistake. Though the church strongly advocated the separation of state and church, European Seventh-day Adventist missionaries were encouraged to work in countries that were either friendly to their country, belonged to its political interest sphere, or were colonies of it. The German interest in the Ottoman Empire since the end of the 19th century, which encouraged Central European missionaries to work in the Levant, must also be seen in this connection.[131]

The distribution did not always occur along these patterns and there were many missionaries working in the territory of other colonial empires. Yet there was ample reason for concern in the headquarters that its mission under the Allied Forces' influence might be closed and deprived of continuity. There was also anxiety about the serious blow Christianity would receive by the display of hatred and destruction among Christian nations. Could the missionaries return and regain confidence among peoples who might have lost confidence in the Christian teaching, was a question of discussion. One was afraid that the work of pacifying the natives and erradicating tribal warfare would receive a serious setback.[132]

These questions reflecting the concern for the mission at large were of somewhat minor importance to the mission in the Middle East where membership was insignificant compared with that of Southern Asia, Africa, and South America. Yet the limited communication with the homebase was there, and most likely was much more difficult than in the other fields where contacts with the main headquarters in Washington, D.C. were available. Definitely, the limitations imposed by the war were distressing for the mission, since it depended on communication, travel, and information.

The missionaries abroad pondered over questions of different nature. Ising, while being interned in Malta, had five years to reflect on his experiences in Beirut. There he could compare it with the success of his fellow missionary in Upper Egypt, George Keough. His conclusions drawn in exile were of extreme importance for the re-opening of the mission after World War I. They became the main directives for the mission in the Middle East between 1922 - 1939, as shall be discussed at the end of this chapter.

But while the missionaries wondered about the unexpected change in the political arena and while the church leadership came slowly to grasp the new realities, the question of the failure of the mission became as pressing as ever before. In general, a breakdown of history was anticipated with the final approach of the near end-of-time, but certainly, this was not expected at that moment, since it was well understood that the task of the mission was not yet complete. The situation in the Middle East was ample proof of this. Mission president, Conradi, having attended the world mission conference in Edinburgh in 1910, shared this view with other missions, and adopted, likewise, the motto: "In this generation to all the world."[133]

This view he affirmed again immediately after the conference. Accordingly the mission movement was one of the most powerful forces in which God demonstrates that he prepares the world for the second coming of Christ. But Conradi realized, that although the Seventh-day Adventist mission extended its borders all over the world, it was not the work of the denomination, but of God, who was going to bring it to its final end. At that time the combined world membership of the church was about 100,000 and engaged 4000 missionaries and pastors in evangelism and another 3000 in teaching and medical work.[134]

To Conradi, World War I must have been a greater puzzle than to any of his missionaries. His entire strategy suddenly collapsed and an investigation for possible miscalculation became necessary. He had supported the idea of sending missionaries into colonies ruled by their respective governments. That German Adventists worked within their own national colonies signified to him God's assistance for speeding up the mission process. This he held also true for other evangelical missions.[135]

When the war broke out, Conradi anticipated its fatal adverse effect on his mission, but yet remained confident of God's intervention to turn the turmoil to the advantage of the mission, though he was apprehensive of possible dangers threatening the mission in terms of loss of life and property.[136]

He was also concerned about the fact that Christians fought each other. Now, while primitive and higher cultures had renounced war as a necessity for life and venerated Christianity for peace, he feared the destruction of the image of Christian mission. So far evangelical

Christianity had come closer together in Edinburgh to support the great final task despite national differences. Edinburgh left its definite impact on Conradi. He was convinced, therefore, that these Christians, who though unable to direct the events of the war, would try their utmost to restore peace for the sake of missions, by striving to prevent the escalation of the war. Yet, should this not be possible, and should Germanic Protestantism schismatize over the question of war, and should Christian Europe lose its noble position in the world and destroy its source of divine blessing, Conradi argued that the Seventh-day Adventist Mission would have no hand in this catastrophe which would only bring the world under the power of non-Christians. With these thoughts he dissociated himself and his mission from the consequences of the war, which could befall western Christianity.[137]

Post-World War I Inventory

After World War I an all-over inventory into the various European Seventh-day Adventist mission fields was undertaken. For the homebase the situation in the mission fields remained obscure during the war, due to the lack of information, which gave rise to unwarrented fear about adverse circumstances. However, the international cooperation of the denomination proved of great advantage. When European missionaries were forced to abandon their posts, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, with the location of its headquarters in an Allied Forces country, transferred responsibilities to Seventh-day Adventist missionaries from outside Central Europe, who unhesitatingly accepted this extra burden and thus helped these missions in Africa and Asia as much as possible. With the restoration of communication the church leaders in Europe were relieved by these encouraged reports which injected renewed stimulus for missions. While the situation of the mission in the southern hemisphere clarified, the condition in the Middle East, with the exception of Egypt, remained very vague. The collapse of the mission in Turkey bad been affirmed by Armenian refugees. But for the one in the Bible lands, where the few members were widely scattered and any communication was impossible, an on the spot inspection became necessary.[138]

Despite the difficult situation during the war, the Central European

Seventh-day Adventist Church did not lose its vision and zeal for missions. Since the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Germany was not too harmfully affected by the war, it contemplated the resumption of its former share of the denomination's mission outreach. This was different after World War II, when the war was fought on German territory, which destroyed and paralysed most of its churches. As a result, the debile church was not only deprived from returning to its place of responsibility, but was forced to withdraw as an independent organization from foreign missions altogether.

The aftermath of World War I necessitated a series of conferences. The most outstanding one was the conference in 1920 held near Magdeburg, Germany, where Seventh-day Adventist leaders from Europe met with delegates from its world organization, the General Conference. There the continuation of the European Seventh-day Adventist Mission enterprise was greatly favored. Recognition was given to the European missionaries' ability in learning foreign language and adapting to various environments. Though the loss of the German colonies was regretted, the independence gained from political and colonial sentiments was recognized as a great advantage. Thus the return of Central European Seventh-day Adventists to the mission fields was agreed and finances and personnel were made available.[139]

Like other denominations Seventh-day Adventists took a fresh look at missions. The event of the war reinforced the commitment for the COMITY agreement. Seventh-day Adventists felt the pressure of joining it, since Conradi had previously met the leaders of the other missions at the international mission conference at Edinburgh in 1910. Now at the dawn of a new mission era, when the opportunity of reshaping the mission map was opportune, he recognized the necessity to stipulate the mission's standpoint. Concerning the issue of territorial distribution, Conradi disapproved of any restrictions, which, according to his understanding, would allow only one selected Protestant denomination the task of missionizing one particular territory, thus competing with the Roman Catholics and possibly Islam. He preferred, rather, a pluralistic approach which would allow the pursuance of "silent work". From his point of view the Seventh-day Adventists were going to continue to hold on to their policy of non-interference in other missions.[140]

Nine years later, W. K. Ising, then in charge of the mission in the Orient, viewed this subject from his perspective. Noticing the

plurality of the Middle Eastern society, he concluded that the presence of various missions best suited the interest of advancing Christianity. The original foundation of the early church with its pluralistic spirit was more fitting in achieving this goal than the unity of missions of the 20th century, which to him was a product of the spirit of liberalism and produced only the opposite, namely no missionary activity at all. In addressing the denomination's first all-European youth congress held in Chemnitz in 1928, Ising reinforced his view on an open mission approach in all territories, which presented to him the greatest spiritual and intellectual challenge of all times.[141]

Returning to the Arab countries of the Middle East imposed no major problems to Seventh-day Adventists from Central Europe. The territory, though no former colony, was now divided into French and British mandates. Ising was called to return to direct the reconstruction. His former experiences in Lebanon and Egypt and his time of contemplation at Malta qualified him best for this assignment.

Ising realized the arduousness of his assignment, yet he went to work confidently with a new vision and understanding. The main impediments were the lack of qualified manpower and the loss of church members, which necessitated a new recruitment. Therefore visitation of all the members in the Middle East and the rebuilding of the mission staff were his main concern. In his position as the secretary of the European Seventh-day Adventist Church, to which he was appointed in 1920, he realized the opportunity for developing and implementing a new strategy based on his previous experiences and meanwhile acquired understanding. Now, knowing the needs of the fields, he could select and prepare missionaries for the advancement of a stable and continuous mission. The fact it lacked any experienced missionaries, with the exception of Keough in Egypt, urged him to begin with a new and different approach.[142]

In developing his new strategy, Ising based his efforts on past experiences. He stressed that the understanding of the Middle Eastern people was the prerequisite for any success. Realistically, he admitted that because of lack of such an understanding not everything had developed satisfactorily. He argued that future missionaries should not be confronted by these problems. This he wanted to avoid by improving their lot. He realized the need of a specialized education for anyone

going to the Middle East. Therefore, the planning and implementing of the mission strategy was no longer to be left in the hands of the missionaries alone, who had, in the past, to act upon their personal understanding of the situation. Ising recognized clearly the obstacles causing the early return of many missionaries, noticeable the absence of any advisory authority which had created insecurity, frustration, and discouragement.

The failure to learn the Arabic language and to strive for an understanding of the eastern mind helped in speeding up the return of the same problems. Ising was aware that missionaries of other denominations did not face as many of these pains-taking experiences. They arrived better prepared in the Orient and were given further training once they arrived.

Ising also recalled his work among the foreigners and especially among the Germans in Beirut. In 1920 he justified his earlier approach because it had enabled him to get started while learning Arabic. Since this approach was now no longer available, he resolved to provide the new missionary generation with the opportunity of learning the language before entering their service. It was his intention to build the future of the mission on a more indigenous ground.[143]

Ising's views were also shared by Keough. In leaning on publications of Islamic and Middle Eastern studies of other denominations, both reached the conclusion that the character of the mission should be indigenous, where the missionary's role would be the one of leadership or support as educator, leader, advisor, and friend. The adaptation to the ethnic needs was considered extremely necessary, though building the mission on a national character in order to achieve financial independence. Gradually the Arabic believers were to increase their participation and the foreign missionaries were to decrease their responsibility in proportion. Both felt that the interests of the nationals were not recognized enough; their aspiration should be emphasized rather than hindered. Finally, they believed that the so-called inefficiencies of the Arabs were, by far, outweighed by their outgoing character. In this they were more appealing to the heart and national conscience of the people than the rationalized and systematized approach of the missionaries.[144]

Ising was detained in Malta for 61 months and remained officially president of the Syrian-Egyptian Mission. During this time the mission in Egypt was supervised by George Keough, but the Syrian mission remained unattended. Meanwhile, Ising had sufficient time to lay plans for the time of reconstruction. After his release in 1920, he was appointed secretary of the European section of the Seventh-day Adventist Church which placed him in the opportune position of implementing his ideas. At the first opportunity he set out to survey the situation in the Middle East. The new political situation delayed his departure until 1923, when he finally, with the help of previous contacts and a personal invitation, received visas of the British and French mandates.[145]

To his surprise, some church members had had no contact with the mission for seven to ten years. Yet the members he had baptized had remained faithful throughout the war, their faithfulness being a great encouragement to him. They became the new nucleus for his outreach and foundation for the envisioned indigenous church. Two of these earliest converts, Ibrahim Khalil and Shukri Nowfel, became the leading national pastors in Syria, and the pharmacist, Bashir Hasso, served as an active elder in Mosul. Ising had met them first as students in their twenties, now they were established in their faith and matured enough to take on responsibilities.

After Ising's return to Europe missionaries were again recruited from the traditional centers of Seventh-day Adventism, especially from the theological seminary of Friedensau near Magdeburg, Germany. Within the following two years a number of vacant posts were filled. George Keough was appointed president of the Egypto-Syrian Union Mission, which was organized in 1923 and enlarged by the annexation of Iraq in 1927. While Ising had previously established the headquarters in Beirut, Keough preferred Cairo.

Since the mission had an indigenous base by 1923, it was not bound to commit again the pre-World War I mistake of concentrating its efforts on the foreigners. The insights gained by Keough in Upper Egypt were not entirely applicable for Arab countries that differ culturally and socially from the Egyptian setting, but they provided valuable guidelines for

avoiding the pre-World War I mistakes.

While the mission still concentrated on the conversion of individuals, local social structures also assisted in the advancement of the mission. The Middle Eastern custom of paternal leadership was most successful, whenever such individuals were available. This socio-religious foundation rendered reliable support to the mission in providing stability and preventing emigration. It even intensified its effectiveness if any influence could be exerted over the extended family, or when a joint business enterprise reinforced the unity of the family.[146]

This ideal way of adapting to the Middle East was constructive only as long as the family retained unity in its socio-economic and religious structure. As such it assisted in extending the mission to friends of the family, and contributed freely to the establishment of institutions and the general course of the mission. The immediate family thus served as spearheads to other parts of the extended family, which usually remained within their former religious circle, but would occasionally cooperate in inter-family marriage arrangements. These socio-religious groups would have constituted a self-supporting and self-perpetuating mission in the 1920's and 1930's, had it not been for the presence of the foreign missionaries and their expenses, which were carried by the home-base.

The mission never became a mass movement. It attracted only nucleus families. Yet there were also opportunities which promised success on a larger scale. One of these experiences was reported from Salt in Transjordan, where Ising and Erzberger were contacted by 120 men just before World War I. In apparent disagreement with their own ecclesiastics, they declared their intention of joining the mission if support, such as education, was offered. Ising felt, however, at that time, that the mission should not get involved, since this request did not present a true picture of conversion, nor should the mission become an ally of any group which sought security through a foreign mission. Expounding these views to the villagers, only one showed interest in the teachings of the mission and eventually accepted the message.[147]

After World War I, the contacts with Salt were resumed where Bedouins had settled. Ising saw the moment opportune for the operation of an outpost on the periphery of the desert under the supervision of a

national pastor. He hoped that some influence could be extended to the desert. But through the contact with the desert societies, the incompatibility of desert life and its standards with Seventh-day Adventist morals was recognized. According to these observations principal doctrines, such as Sabbath observance, tithe paying, or the celebration of the Lord's Supper were more easily understood by Bedouins than questions concerning the conduct of life. While lying, gaining excessive profits or the question of self-defense are rejected, at least in theory, in most localities, save the dessert, they constitute fundamental issues for survival in the desert communities and therefore are not easily understood.[148]

The mission enterprise in Salt was the first, if not the only, attempt in Seventh-day Adventist mission history to enter the desert. A similar request was made by Christians from Taibe in Palestine,[149] who offered to donate land if the mission would establish and operate a school there. Though the Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics and one Protestant mission were already established there, some citizens were still looking for a further source of support. Since this invitation was based on social and economic considerations caused by World War I, and since it surpassed the mission's financial abilities, the Seventh-day Adventist mission refused to render communal services.[150]

These inquiries made in the hinderland encouraged the mission at least to move inland.[151] Since most Catholics and Protestant missions had established their foothold along the coast and in the main cities, the hinterland appeared more inviting to the Seventh-day Adventist Mission. A number of problems the mission had experienced in the costal area gave further stimulus to move into the interior. Moreover, travelling had become easier and safer under the British and French mandates.

With these observations in mind, Ising returned to Europe in 1923 to lay down the strategy for a new mission offensive. Again new missionaries were recruited from denominational seminaries in Germany, Great Britain, and Scandinavia. For the first time the headquarters was in the position to lead, whereas in the past this was the prerogative of the frontline. While Ising from the homebase thus assured the right support, Keough accomplished continuity and stratification of the mission outreach in exercising leadership, guidance, and training in the Middle East.

By 1925 most mission stations were reopened including the health institute in Jerusalem, though Ising must have been well aware of its limitations. Apparently it was still believed that medical care was part of the mission outreach. Had it not been for the financial crisis of the 1930's and Hitler's restriction on money transfers, more institutions might have been opened to meet the various requests for medical institutions. The economic situation curtailed the mission and prevented its further institutionalization in the 1930's. Smaller projects had to be pursued and evangelism was restricted to the evangelization of individuals. Under these restrictions individual nurses and midwives worked in various homes and kindergartens, having access even to the royal household of the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan.[152]

After rebuilding the mission to its pre-World War I level, Ising joined it again in 1929. Upon his arrival he found the foreign missionaries equal to the number of national pastors. He emphasized again that the national pastors should shoulder greater responsibilities, especially since the political involvement of the British and the French in the Middle East made the atmosphere for foreigners less favorable. Therefore Ising sought the support and advancement of indigenous pastors. But the outbreak of another world war and yet another withdrawal of the missionaries was not foreseen at that time.[153]

It was during this time that the need of a denominational school of higher learning became apparent.[154] One training school had been in operation in Cairo since 1928, but this did not suffice for the great and pressing needs of the pastors. Thus plans developed which visualized a center of higher education in Beirut. Yet the hopes for a quick solution failed with the outbreak of World War II, when all the missionaries from Central Europe were called away from their posts for the second time. Still the training center began its operation in 1939 with the help of Arabic pastors and British missionaries, until it could mature into what has been known since 1946 as Middle East College.

The mission grew slowly but steadily between 1923 and 1939. Its total membership reached 600 by the end of that period. From the various Christian communities there were more men than women converts which were added and retained. This resulted in the formation of small companies here and there. The prevailing travelling restrictions and the new borders

establishend by the mandate powers made resident missionaries or national pastors even more necessary, giving little prospect for the itinerant preacher and colporteur model to develop.

The scattering of the believers imposed a number of problems on the Middle Eastern Seventh-day Adventist society. The question of marriage was especially complex. Representing various ethnic groups, the social function of the mission was not as flexible as desired, which complicated the choice of a suitable partner despite the common faith. Various national and social considerations prevented an open door policy, though marriages across ethnic groups were known. Endogamy was preferred if marriage partners were not found within the denomination. A woman coming into the church through marriage usually accepted the faith of her husband and helped to maintain the marriage, though her loyalty to her husband's faith was not always passed on and shared by the following generation. In cases where marriage partners were not accessible in the local constituency or among close relatives, marriages were also contracted within the denomination over wider distances, either within the Middle East itself or in relation with the West. But marriages between Arab and Armenian believers were almost unheard of, the two national groups being very conscious of their distinctive heritage.[155]

Towards Better Preparedness

While Ising met the immediate needs of the Middle East, he also engaged himself in working out a long-range strategy that would bring the mission beyond its established level. The denominational seminaries in Europe offered no specialized studies for missionaries.[156] Ising, judging from his own experience, opposed the idea that missionaries be exposed to the Orient without some specific training in Middle Eastern studies, such as languages and Islamics. Therefore, his efforts were directed to a rationalization of the previous non-systematic procedure, which by its irresponsible output of non-specialized missionaries proved unprofitable for all parts involved: the missionary, the mission, and the homebase.

According to his new policy, Ising, while in charge of the personnel recruitment, selected young ministerial graduates for a one-year oriental

study program at the School of Oriental Studies in Cairo. The first two candidates were sent in 1925. Once the project proved feasible, three more followed in 1926. They were expected to acquaint themselves with the Arabic language and Islam. School vacations were spent in the villages of Upper Egypt to apply the new insights gained in Cairo.[157]

This promising pioneer program was watched by the church members with growing interest, since Ising published regular reports in the main German church paper, "Der Adventbote". Ising understood that progress reports were not only to function as stimulants for fund raising, but served essentially in developing cohesiveness between the members at home and their mission.

After the first group completed their specialized studies, Ising requested an evaluation which was to reveal the workability of his strategy. In reply the missionaries, Steffen and Bethmann, voiced the understanding of their teacher, Dr. Zwemer, by expounding the general opinion as understood in mission circles, that because of the westernization process of the Middle East Islam was steadily loosing ground. The candidates also argued that education was necessary to meet the challenge. They still retained their belief in the three classical approaches of missions: medicine, education, and literature distribution.[158]

While the candidates received insights into the mind of Islam and its behavioral aspect, they also became aware of the problems and consequences conversions would bring about. But their new understanding did not encourage them to develop a new mission outlook. They rather retained the existing practices of advancing the mission along the established pattern of education and medical service, though the limited impact of these services must have been known.

After the second group of interns finished their studies at the School of Oriental Studies, Ising left his post in Europe and returned to the Middle East in 1929 in order to take again charge of the mission, releasing his long-time co-worker, George Keough, from his duties. The fact that both alternated several times in the leadership between 1908 and 1943, giving the Egypto-Syrian Mission stability and a continuous growth, deserves due recognition.

Unfortunately, European Seventh-day Adventists were divided in 1928 into three administrative units, each supervising parts of Europe

and its mission fields.[159] At that time the combined European membership was nearly at the 80,000 mark, which made the partition into smaller units necessary for the sake of an effective administration.

The missions in the Middle East (Turkey, Persia, and the Arab lands) remained, however, still under German leadership, which was now in charge of Germany, the Balkan states, Russia, and mission fields in Africa and Asia. Though the Middle East was administered and supported by this new administrative unit, manpower was still drawn from the other European states, too. This explains why Keough could stay and serve until 1943, the date of his final departure from the Middle East.

The financial consequences of the reorganization of the European Seventh-day Adventist Church and its mission fields destroyed some of Isings hopes and plans. While still serving as secretary of the previous all-European organization, he had hoped to be able to supply additional funds for his mission in the Middle East. But the reorganization absorbed the means which affected the recruitment of personnel and the postponement of three projects, namely, the establishment of a college and a press for the Arab world, and the building of mission houses in Syria and Iraq. Ising could not but express his disappointment over this setback. He considered the mentioned projects of utmost importance since they were places of visual and physical identification, and necessary reference points for the purpose of association and retreat, which was so essential for the scattered church members.[160]

Upon his return Ising convened a general meeting of all missionaries and national pastors in the Anglican boy's school in the summer resort of Ain Anub on Mount Lebanon. All the 22 rooms were made available. For two weeks various topics of concern for the mission were discussed. For the first time experiences were exchanged, which, so far, the missionaries had to keep to themselves. The studies at the School of Oriental Studies especially stimulated the session. The discussion drew out the conviction that more preparation was necessary and similar gatherings were needed in order to be more successful. The former president of the all-European Seventh-day Adventist Church, Conradi, was also present, being able now to see the results of the mission he once inaugurated.[161]

The conference was ended with the resolution that similar meetings should convene annually. However, the next session did not materialize

until 1935, when the opening of a new mission center in Jerusalem gave justified reasons for it. The world-wide depression was felt in the mission field. Depending on financial support not forthcoming from Germany, the financial depression was especially felt in the Middle East.[162]

Since Krum's arrival in Palestine, the mission had changed considerably toward a better understanding of the area. Keough's self-observed experience in Egypt, the influence of national pastors educated in non-denominational schools, and the studies at the School of Oriental Studies directed the mission's outlook gradually from its former western base to an oriental point of view. Though this process developed in a period of 30 years, it was far from being complete. In fact the meeting of 1935 marked only another step in the attempt to bridge the gap with Islam. Now that these preparations were complete, the mission turned toward the next move. Out of its realization that it lacked experience as a late-comer in the Middle East, advice and consultation were sought from experts of other denominations. The invitation of Dr. Bishop and Pastor Neilson from the Newman School in Jerusalem to lecture on Islam during the ministerial convention in 1935 is another indication of this trend.[163]

The mission's awareness of Islam was greatly stimulated as a result of this conference. The vast gap separating it from this great monotheistic religion was felt immensely, and in response the mission committed itself to devote more time for the study of Islam. Ising encouraged his co-workers to prepare themselves better in order to face the challenge.[164]

To encourage independent studies and foster systematic research, a working group was organized. Its main duty was to find ways for approaching Islam from a Muslim point of view. For this reason an understanding of the Muslim's religious thought pattern and his historical background with its problems and aspirations was the basic prerequisite.

In approaching this task each participant was encouraged to acquire a fundamental knowledge of Islam and to study two books in the field of Islam within one year. A further year was allocated for recording the findings, which were supposed to be duplicated and made available for exchange, thus giving all missionaries access to each other's findings. In this manner Ising hoped to strengthen the mission, and since no funds were available for specialized studies, this seemed to be the only suitable

solution.

A supervisory committee was appointed consisting of Erich Bethmann, Wilh. Lesovsky, and Ising as the chairman. In order to pursue a unified study the following proposal[165] was adopted which all missionaries were encouraged to follow:

A. General study requirement
   1. Doctrines
      The religion of Islam
   2. Historical developments
      The history of the caliphate

B. Topics for individual consideration
   1. Arabia
      a. Geography, topography, animal and plant life
      b. History till Mohammed
      c. Arabia and the Arabs in the Bible
      d. Arabic heathenism, life, customs, women before Mohammed
      e. Modern Arabia
   2. Mohammed
      a. His predecessors, childhood and youth
      b. The Meccan period
      c. The Medinian period
   3. Quran
      a. The origin of the Quran
      b. The concept of God in the Quran
      c. Jesus in the Quran
      d. Sin in the Quran
      e. Redemption in the Quran
      f. Old Testament influences in the Quran
      g. New Testament and Christian influences
      h. Pagan influences
      i. Eschatology
      k. Position of man
      l. Women
      m. Contradictions
      n. Sagas, fables, folklore

The participants were also encouraged to collect material of current events in the Islamic world. Bethmann and Lesovsky were granted leave to attend the Newman School in Jerusalem for six weeks. This was to give them a better start and to assist in the preparation of some material for the next session, which was to be held in 1936. But the events of pre-World War II made Ising's presence in Central Europe necessary, where he again accepted the post of secretary. The meeting scheduled for 1936 never convened. Fortunately, Keough returned to the Middle East in 1938 to give the mission its direction till 1943. Looking back at his experience Ising regretted that circumstances prevented the realization of his vision. But he expressed the hope that one day these efforts would bear fruit.

Instead of seeing the fruits of their labor, the missionaries from Central Europe were suddenly forced to leave their position in September of 1939.[166] Unfortunately, World War II set a sudden end to all planning and preparations. Once more Keough held the position during difficult times. As such, 60 years of European mission had passed without the desired results, though the mission was more indigenously oriented by now. The catastrophic developments of the war exhausted the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Central Europe to the extent that the resumption of its mission work after World War II was impossible and the field had to be taken over by the American Seventh-day Adventists. After 60 years of labor, European Seventh-day Adventists were almost at the point where they were coming closer to the mind of the Middle East. Their activities were not in vain, since Bethmann's and Lesovsky's findings represent the church's most mature understanding of the Middle East.

Erich W. Bethmann

Bethmann was one of the very few Seventh-day Adventists who was able to penetrate deeper into the mind of Islam than the average missionary. His work at the School of Oriental Studies alerted him to current scientific discussions on Islam which led him to the discovery of the functioning of Islam within its social context. The ability to speak and understand the Arabic language gave his 20 years of mission experiences in various parts of the Middle East a genuine first hand insight and depth.

Bethmann's concept of Islam with its missiological applications naturally reflected the spirit of the 1930's and 1940's.[167] Especially the influence of the notorious Dr. Zwemer was of immense significance, whose mission outlook provided the essential insight for Bethmann's understanding at that time.[168] While in his articles, which were freely published in the German church paper, "Der Adventbote", he evaluated current publications of orientologists like Wellhausen, Nöldeke, Andrae, and Muir, he also considered the reports of missionaries of other mission societies.

Bethmann's expositions in the church paper about the situation in the Middle East had the main purpose of explaining the reasons for the little success in this region, which contrasted so greatly with reports from other mission fields where success seemed to be plentiful. Of course, Bethmann's scientific information was of little use in Western Europe, the articles generated no futher discussion on the subject. Yet the possibility of explaining and defining one's position was of great importance to the missionary. Though not comprehended by the general public, they gave encouragement to fellow missionaries.

As already noticed, Bethmann's concept of Islam reflected the thinking of the 1930's, a time when Islam was still viewed from the perspective of the frontier's posts of Christianity. Accordingly the cause for the birth of Islam was detected in Mohammed's personal and external problems. In this Bethmann followed Wellhausen, Nöldeke, and Andrae. Yet Bethmann discovered also in their expositions possibilities for bridging the gap to Islam, since Mohammed was not only viewed as a desert-produced poet and epileptic fanatic, but was also seen in his attributes of a mystic whose relationship to God could not have been possible without the so plentiful circumstances that led Mohammed to his religious conviction. Thus Mohammed not only borrowed from Christianity, Judaism, and paganism, but also added originality to his religion through his own spiritual experience, which was of great importance in its relationship to his socio-religious and economic problems.[169]

To Bethmann Mohammed was a prophet in the sense of a Weberian concept. Produced by a socio-cultural environment, the experience of Mohammed lay long before his time dormant in "the heart of every son of the desert".[170] It needed only a spark of ingenuity to kindle it to an ever blazing fire. Once the eruption occured, all the particularities of the culture were, of course,

included in the new religion. The desert environment, which more than any scenery on earth impressed his soul overwhelmingly with the omnipotence of God, had, more than anything else, made a major impact on Islam.[171]

Born in such an environment Mohammed naturally combined a keen sense for the need of the hour with practical decision. In this socio-religious context Mohammed emerged as a true prophet who believed in the truth of his commission. He became not only the prophet of Islam but was also its prophecy, he was a transmitter of revelation but not the revelation himself. However, his religious ideas are not the prerogative of one people, but they are also the joint property of all peoples. For this reason one can only expect ideas already existing in a people coming forth from a religious leader.[172]

Therefore, a religion which was produced by internalized cultural forces had also to be externalized in a reinforced manner. Bethmann understood the relationship of these forces, which made its impact upon all parts of life. He recognized that a departure from such a socio-religious structure was almost impossible. Thus Islam, a world in and by itself, was difficult to approach, even though many common joints with Christianity appeared on the surface.[173]

Under such conditions a conversion en mass was unthinkable. Bethmann also emphasized the difficulties individuals faced in trying to become Christians. In this context the old method of collecting individuals suddenly emerged as a possibility in building a mission, because it excluded somewhat sociological and traditional problems.[174]

Bethmann not only discerned the socio-cultural elements which made Islam, but he recognized also those human symbols that held it in cultural bondage and presented itself as difficult obstacles to missions by being restrictive to and satisfied with itself. Thus Islam lacked for instance the recognition of the guilt of sin, which hampered any Muslim Christian dialogue. Bethmann understood the difficulties Islam would have to face if it had to change its outlook. He realized the impossibility of submitting to the idea of salvation of Christ, which would mean the abolition of itself.[175]

Bethmann proposed therefore another way of approaching Islam. He detected in the mystical aspirations of Mohammed, as it is the case with many mystics, the desire to replace elements that hindered the religious

experience of the Arabs of becoming a higher religion. Once Islam was understood from this perspective, the idea of building a bridge across the gap was theoretically possible.[176]

Bethmann realized that there were not only spiritual but also cultural concessions to be made. He pointed to the great cultural potentials that rested in Islam, which could emerge again as they did in the past. "...the other shore is not barren desert....", but constitutes a way of life just as Christianity.[177] Though the West has come closer to the East through the modern and rather deceptive applications of science, it has not really bridged the gulf between the two monotheistic religions. The missionary should, therefore, not identify himself with the cultural superiority displayed by the Christian and industrialized West, since technology does not reach the heart of the Muslims. Islam should rather be approached through its own culture, of which Christianity has made so far little use. Remaining in the past only within the Greco-Roman world, the Nestorians mainly bridged the gap via the oriental culture.[178]

Hence Bethmann was critical of mission strategies which emphasized consciously or unconsciously aspects of western cultures. In this concept the presentation of religious values through scientific help, such as education or medical aid, or through indirect influences such as agriculture and economy, did not receive his favor. Bethmann advocated that the orientals have survived thus far without these influences and have regarded them as unnecessary for survival. They rather set the missionary and his task into a suspicious twilight, because the intention of Christianization could not be denied. Furthermore, those aids of teaching, healing, and caring did not represent a truly theological minded world either. The "theocratic" East could not be approached with these non-theological tools. They are handy and practical but unintelligible and without faith-transforming power. Spiritual truth must be presented through spiritual means and not by philanthropic works.[179]

Accordingly, Bethmann was not enthusiastic about a mission strategy within an institutionalized approach. He rather preferred a personal approach to Islam where friendly relationships were the means of bridging the gap. Therefore all symbols of the missionaries' culture had to retreat into the background in order to approach Islam within its cultural context. Importance was given to the customs of the Middle East, especially the

practice of hospitality, which was open to the missionaries. Here East and West could meet on a mutual basis. But in order to make full use of it, one needed to have sufficient knowledge of their languages and culture, and demonstrate respect to Islam and its institutions. Though results were not expected to come forth immediately, steadfastness in adversity and a loyal stand to their experiences under which they suffered was necessary. Only thus the heart of the Muslims could be approached and a bridge to their faith established.[180]

Finally, Bethmann suggested a careful selection of the missionaries sent to the Middle East. Only the best possible mentally equipped personnel, well trained in religious and philosophic thinking, who mastered the language and understood its social system, would be called since the more practical type of man, who is appreciated in Africa, finds himself out of place in the Middle East.[181]

Hence, Bethmann suggested that missionaries concentrate only on the Middle Eastern community. To work for Christians and Muslims at the same time did not find approval, since the two communities meet only among the higher strata of society, whereas the vast majority of the society remains aloof from each other, even though they have much in common.[182]

Bethmann was working in Baghdad at the time of the outbreak of World War II, when he was imprisoned by the British Forces and held in a camp in Burma for the duration of the war. Released eight years later, he emigrated to the U.S.A. where in 1950 he published his views on the Middle East.

Wilhelm H. Lesovsky

Lesovsky had already submitted his manuscript to Ising in 1938. Unfortunately, his material was not published since it was written in German whereas Bethmann's manuscript was available in English.

Lesovsky's mission outpost in Damascus served him as a window to the desert for some ten years. He lived not at the Nile or the Tigris, nor did he enjoy the Mediterranean as some other missionaries. He faced rather the interior of the Arab lands, a view that forced him to look into the eyes of the Bedouins, whose style of life he considered a healthy adaptation

to the desert environment. Thanks to his studies in education and psychology at the University of Vienna, he penetrated not only into the religious sphere of the desert but observed also its behavioral aspect. He perceived the changes brought about by western influences which destroyed the foundation of this civilization. Therefore, he warned of the harmful influence of western education and capitalism which would destroy the Bedouin's moral values and freedom and thus undermine existing authorities allowing western influences unchecked access.

The process of settling and changing the Bedouins into a sedentary people was, to Lesovsky, a forceful enslavement by capitalism, a social change comparable only with the impact of the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century. He warned that this new situation would bring unknown psychological and social problems to the Bedouins, which were already existing in the poverty stricken and over-crowded cities, producing in them a final reaction harmful to Christianity.[183] Lesovsky, concerned with the trend of creating further economic and social disparity, suggested to support not only Middle Eastern Christianity but also the Muslims.

History played an important part in Lesovsky's analysis. By comparing the present situation with early Christian history he was afraid modern missions might repeat the errors of the past, that, by their religious and economic interests, the interior of Arabia would again be neglected. As Mohammed had observed the inability of Christianity to overcome its preoccupation, Muslims would judge the intentions of modern missions in like manner. Consequently, Lesovsky warned Seventh-day Adventists from any entanglement with political, social, and economic questions, which might prevent their message from reaching the Arabs.[184]

Judging from his understanding of church history, Lesovsky believed that the Greek Orthodox Church had lost its sense of mission. By its involvement with Greek philosophy and mystic cults, it failed to follow the tradition of the Early Church. It introduced Sunday observance and persecuted the Nazarenes who remained loyal sabbath-keepers. He felt little could be accomplished with the modern Greek Orthodox Church, which was very conservative at home and disinterested in mission abroad.[185]

Lesovsky lamented naturally the Protestants' reproach toward the Greek Orthodox Church. Here he could point to the Anglican bishop of Jerusalem's conciliatory overtures made in the Near East Mission Council.

He felt the Protestants supported, as such, the old Byzantine Church. They should have rather allied themselves with the "Protestants of the East", the Maronites, who had always stood up against Eastern Rome but had, in the meantime, joined their former enemy, Rome, due to the efforts of the Jesuits.[186]

Lesovsky lauded the valuable support the Maronites had rendered in the past to the Protestant cause; the first Protestant teachers and pastors had come from this community. Their contributions in literature, civilization, and culture were well understood. They were more active than the Greek Orthodox and, therefore, would have been of greater help if they had received more support in the field of education. Yet, Lesovsky noticed that the trend toward Rome was unrevokable, since the French Mandate assisted in this fusion. He feared, however, that this would not be the best for the Maronites, because it would lead them eventually to the indifference in Christianity as it existed among the secularized French.[187]

Along with the disintegration of the Greek Orthodox Church, Lesovsky envisaged the decline of the Armenian Orthodox Church, despite its attemps to overcome its problems with the help of modernism and science. He felt that the Armenians' interest in knowledge created rather an ever-growing discontent, which would encourage their economic self-dependence and defense mechanism for national survival and threaten their own interest by disassociating themselves from their neighbors and hosts.[188]

Lesovsky spoke more favorable of the Christians of Aramaic background. He referred to the Nazarenes, the first who opposed the state religion of the Byzantine Empire. Their Sabbath observance was to him of utmost interest. That their tradition was retained by the Nestorians, who spread it from northern Syria to the Far East, was most remarkable. The Nestorians' rejection of icons, Mary as the theodokos, hell-fire, and abstention from unclean meat, pointed to some affinity with modern Seventh-day Adventism, so did their celebration of the Lord's Supper as a commemoration and their disregard for celibacy. But most important was Islam's concept of the "people of the book", according to Sura 5:85. Lesovsky saw in this group of believers the sabbath-keeping Nestorians, which was to him a further reason to associate Seventh-day Adventism with this oriental church.[189]

But not only theological reasons prompted Lesovsky to support the

Nestorians. Their over-all contribution was most remarkable. Interestingly enough, Lesovsky noticed that Islam became the successor in opposing the political and theological influences of papal Rome. Also the Nestorians' cultural contributions, which so significantly prepared the ground for the golden age in Arab history and Islamic culture, was highly appreciated.[190]

Lesovsky advised, therefore, Seventh-day Adventists to seek affinity with this people, whose history had been suppressed by the systematic falsification of Roman Catholic propaganda. First the crusades and then the wars against the Turks had been used to distort their history. That's why the West had forgotten Syriac-Anthiochian Christianity, which had influenced Western Europe via the Waldensian's, Ireland, and the Moravian Mission.[191]

With these considerations in mind, Lesovsky concluded God had used Islam as a religious, political, and social reform movement. As God had selected Cyrus and Nebuchadnezzar, he also called Mohammed to lead in his cause. Had the Christians in the 7th century not retained their liturgical language, claiming an exclusive form of worship, Mohammed would have had no reason to introduce another religion. Even at the height of the Arab culture, all attempts to introduce an Arabic Bible failed. This negligence prevented Christianity from becoming intelligible to the Arabs, which was Lesovsky's main criticism.[192]

Next, Lesovsky gave due consideration to the question of Christ, which from the western point of view is an obstacle to the Islamic mind. Combining theology and sociology, Lesovsky felt he understood the Muslim's point of view by studying the Middle Eastern family. He observed that through its role of providing support, it emphasizes much more the human concern for protection. Therefore, Islam would be more receptive to the human Christ. But since it does not find him in Eastern Christianity, Islam rejects the divine Christ, too.[193]

Hence, Lesovsky felt that the emphasis given to the divine Christ in the West was not justified. Christ is best perceptable in his servitude and understood in his earthly task. In tracing the development of the concept of the human Christ, Lesovsky indicated that it was not before the time of the Renaissance and humanism, that the human nature of Christ was understood again. In the Reformation Christ appeared anew as an active person. Unfortunately, the name of Jesus was misused again during the Counter-Reformation by Ignatius of Loyola, whose movement eventually

induced into the Roman Catholic Church the teaching of the divine Christ with the teaching of the immaculate conception of Virgin Mary.[194]

Furthermore, Lesovsky noticed that while in one way Christ's divinity was emphasized, in another the origin of sin was contributed to an act of sex. Thus celibacy placed the divine Christ into the liturgy, shifting Christianity from a wrong adoration of Christ to a wrong teaching of God. Lesovsky understood that by rejecting intuitively this point, Islam rejected also the liturgy, the splendor of worship, and icons. To him this act of rejection expressed the need of the human soul for the human Christ. But because Mohammed did not recognize a reformation within oriental Christianity, Islam could not discern the essence of the Reformation and Protestantism either. He believed, therefore, that Islam took itself the role of the Nestorians by pointing to the need of the human Christ and the oneness of God.[195]

While the West stresses today both natures, the Orient still clings to the need of the human. Lesovsky wondered whether or not Islam understood the human nature of Christ rightly, since the Quran does not depict the suffering of Jesus, his hunger, thirst, joy, or temptations. Therefore, the Muslim's comprehension of the Christian's discipleship, which is not wrought by mere human strength, must be very limited.[196]

In commenting on Islam's rejection of Jesus as the son of God, Lesovsky found fault not with the Muslim but with the oriental Christian. The mission to the Muslim should aim at befriending them, as Bethmann had earlier suggested. Not by argumentation but by living Christianity will come the desire to follow the same power. Christ will lead the Muslim to the Scriptures, while the Quran will gradually lose importance.[197]

Lesovsky emphasized also the idea of surrender or turning away from sin. Because Islam considers the West as unclean, it would be important for Seventh-day Adventists to present through their understanding of cleanliness Christianity, at least from a moral point of view.[198]

Lesovsky felt that the cooperation sought by Protestants with the oriental Christians was a great hinderance for a fruitful mission outreach, since Islam was well aware of the mistakes of Eastern Christianity, which the Protestants were reluctant to admit. Thus the Seventh-day Adventists should recognize their specific task among old and new apostates in the Middle East. Its mission should work together with Islam, which has not

acknowledged the sign of Sunday (Re. 9:4) yet, even though Turkey and Persia have already accepted it. As the house of Judah was punished by the Arabs 2 Chron. 21:16 - 18), so Lesovsky felt, the same could be seen in the history of Christianity, where the Arabs, due to their grasshopper-like advance, claimed the Byzantine and Persian Empires, and almost conquered the entire cradle of Christianity and parts of the West.[199]

While Catholicism and Protestantism are thus holding on to a wrong picture, Seventh-day Adventists should take up the role of the Nazarenes who are recognized in the Quran and restore in Islam its keeness which it had possessed under the influence of the Nestorians.[200]

If this attitude is not adopted by the Seventh-day Adventist Mission, Lesovsky argued, it would be doomed to failure, because the Orient rejects anything which is directed against it. The Muslim dislikes a backdoor policy in any disguise, the parable or the naked truth. He expects an equal partnership in which the weaknesses of all participants are exposed. Islam feels that it is called by God and desires to take an active part in the reconstruction of the new world. The mission should, therefore, refrain from interferring in the Muslim's religious realm, which would only encourage social disintegration.[201]

At the World Missionary Conference in Tambaram in 1938 the question of the missions' failure in Islam was raised. But Lesovsky thought he had found the answer, namely, the cooperation with Islam. While the interest in the Orient and in the particularities of Islam were the prerequisite for missions, Lesovsky understood that Seventh-day Adventists should be concerned with oriental studies. Though the source of mission is God himself, he stressed the importance of a thorough preparation which would enable the missionary to work more efficiently in doing God's will. Lack of success indicated God's opposing of the mission because a wrong direction is followed. To be successful, the mission must abandon its preconceived ideas and emotions and allow God's leadership to show the way. To Lesovsky this was most important in the Muslim mission. Since these people developed their own distinctive way, one must acknowledge God's speaking through Islam.[202]

Lesovsky completed his studies and received his doctorate at the University of Vienna in 1938. His dissertation[203] dealt with the problem of education in Syria. With these thoughts on the East he returned to the

Middle East in 1938 hoping to implement some of his ideas which were unique and untested. One year later World War II interferred and brought, as such, not only his work but also the European Mission of Seventh-day Adventists in the Middle East to a standstill.

SUMMARY

The history of the European Seventh-day Adventist Mission in the Middle East reflects the problems it had to undergo as it encountered various political, religious, and socio-cultural questions during the course of it 60 years of history. During its formative stage it was threatened by being dislodged, a danger which was always present while the indigenous base was not yet stabilized. Despite this apparent weakness, recognition must be given to the spirit of survival so characteristic of this small mission-community-in-dispersion. The inherent ability to reshape its destiny must be attributed to strong religious motivations, which coerced the missionaries and their supporters to continue their task, though overwhelming obstacles always endangered their progress.

The strong religious convictions, which encouraged the mission to enter the Middle East as a lay movement, enabled it to retain its position despite disappointments over the lack of forthcoming results and readily available theological affinities with other religious groups. The fact that European Seventh-day Adventism withdrew in 1939 must not be understood as a surrender to difficult conditions, but must be viewed as the consequence of the destruction of the mission's homebase in Central Europe during World War II.

While on one side these strong convictions were helpful in entering the difficult terrain of the Middle East, they only gradually allowed the mission to come to terms with the new situation, a development which could not be otherwise expected. Thus, the western produced editor-itinerant-preacher model was abandoned much more freely than the theological objections that hindered an approach toward Islam. Changes were only possible at the expense of a heavy financial investment and the sacrificial support given by a few individuals who were willing to stay long enough in order to penetrate the Middle Eastern mind. Therefore, the outcome of the mission's final understanding of the situation as proposed by Bethmann and Lesovsky represented no longer a replica of the mission's western homebase, but portrayed, at least in theory, an independent missiology, which envisioned the mission's character and outreach from a more Middle Eastern perspective. That the implementation of these proposals was hindered by the outbreak of World War II constituted a very unfortunate development.

From the viewpoint of theology, the western produced ideas of the mission were not always appealing to the Middle Eastern mind, though on some points a close affinity with Islam was recognized. Only the prophetic interpretations fulfilled a real need in face of the Armenian persecution in Turkey. Otherwise the mission adapted itself only very slowly to the theological understanding of the area. However, the attempts of Bethmann and Lesovsky were the most outstanding endeavors to bridge the gap. In undertaking their theological investigation, they gradually opened themselves toward Islam and thus were competent to propose a new mission approach. But the pioneer work of men like Bethmann and Lesovsky, who, at least in theory, developed a new strategy, or like Ising and Keough, who ventured new avenues without stipulating on paper their theoretical base, reflected always the work of individual initiative. Therefore, the mission in general was always in danger of falling back on communities of close affinity, due to the lack of an adaptable missiology.

The mission's ability to settle to some extent in the Middle East was also made possible by the support given by some individuals whose sociological and economic embeddedness in the oriental environment gave the mission a firm base. That these forces contributed also to the formation of the mission was not fully recognized by the missionaries and consequently did not receive the necessary attention. In the absence of such considerations, which would have promoted the integration of Middle Eastern Seventh-day Adventism, emigration to other parts of the world was always an attractive possibility.

Though Seventh-day Adventism operated one of the smaller missions in the Middle East, one can clearly recognize an interdependence with other missions, though this may not be easily seen on the surface since the Adventists run their affairs as independently as possible. This phenomenon was apparent during the formative years as well as in the 1920's and 1930's, when the mission gradually projected its attention on Islam. Such contacts were especially noticeable among the leaders and were mainly cultivated in the fields of education and Islamics. On the level of the daily mission encounter, where missionaries and indigenous pastors evidenced a spirit of competition, relations were not as cordial. Contacts, which were in one period more hostile than in others, were at one time marked with agressive competition, while they matured in other periods into cooperation and mutual

respect. Undoubtedly the minority status among the various missions, together with the common mission concern, contributed toward the latter. While this interdependence was evident with the Protestant missions, no such relationship had developed towards the Eastern churches.

Though the Seventh-day Adventist Church originated in an inter-church movement, it lost its inter-denominational character during its maturing process. Interestingly enough, while consolidating its theology in the West, it became involved in foreign missions before it had even grown at home into church-hood. This process was disadvantageous in the Middle East experience. Therefore, its mission between 1879 and World War I lacked the necessary theological and ecclesial support at home, which is necessary to stabilize a mission abroad. Only after World War I, when the church had consolidated itself somewhat in the West, did the mission gain a better understanding of itself and of the Middle East as well. Among the previous missionary generations mainly Keough's and Ising's search for a proper mission outreach was of significance until a more mature outlook emerged with the service of the better prepared missionaries. The homebase must be lauded for its selection of better qualified missionaries, while the mission deserves credit for producing some outstanding individuals, who competently penetrated the Middle Eastern mind.

For the European Seventh-day Adventist Mission, as for any other mission organization, the Middle East was certainly a difficult testing ground. As a church which claims a universal truth and global responsibility, it was challenged to re-examine its call while encountering perplexing obstacles within the period of 60 years. Its successful settling and gradual adaptation in some areas of the Middle East shed light upon its strength but also on its weakness. However, its peculiar theological outlook and its readiness for open discussion attested to its strength. That this process was discontinued by the sudden outbreak and consequences of World War II was not primarily the fault of the mission itself.

FOOTNOTES

[1]For a more detailed discussion on Millerism see Whitney R. Cross, The Burned-Over District. The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800 - 1850 (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1950), pp. 287 - 321. The importance of Millerism to the development of early Seventh-day Adventism was discussed by Konrad F. Mueller, Die Frühgeschichte der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten bis zur Gemeindegründung 1863 und ihre Bedeutung für die moderne Irenik (Marburg/Lahn: N. G. Elwert Verlag, 1969), 206 pp.

[2]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual (n.p., 1973), p. 21.

[3]For a detailed discussion on the development of Seventh-day Adventist theology see Le Roy Edwin Froom, Movement of Destiny (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publ. Ass., 1971), 700 pp.

[4]The various views that led finally to an open conflict have been discussed by A. V. Olsen, Through Crisis to Victory, 1888 - 1901. From the Minneapolis Meeting to the Reorganization of the General Conference (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publ. Ass., 1966), 320 pp. See also the study by Erwin Roy Gane, The Arian or Anti-Trinitarian Views Presented in Seventh-day Adventist Literature and the Ellen G. White Answer (Andrews University: unpubl. thesis, 1963), pp. 104 - 110.

[5]The position E. G. White is holding as a prophet among Seventh-day Adventists has been reviewed by T. Housel Jemison, A. Prophet Among You (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Ass., 1955), pp. 203 - 411.

[6]B. Ed. Pfeiffer, "The Role of the Midwest in the Development of the Church," Review and Herald, 153, 26 (June 24, 1976), 13.

[7]For further informations on the Millerite papers see Le Roy Edwin Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publ. Ass., 1954), Vol. IV, pp. 621 - 641.

[8]See Ellen G. White's account on the establishing of the press in Life Sketches of Ellen G. White. Being a Narrative of Her Experience to 1881 as Written by Herself; with a Sketch of Her Subsequent Labors and of Her Last Sickness Compiled from Original Sources (Mountain View, Calf.: Pacific Press Publ. Ass., 1915), pp. 125 - 128, 136 - 144.

[9]Ellen G. White warned early not to colonize in one particular place such as Battle Creek, Mich. See her Testimonies for the Church (Mountain View, Calf.: Pacific Press Publ. Ass., 1948), Vol. II, pp. 113 - 116, 635.

[10]For a discussion on the development of the S. D. A. Church organization see C.C. Crisler, Organization. Its Character, Purpose, Place, and Development in the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publ. Ass., 1938), 265 pp.

[11]Donald Curtiss Bozarth, An Investigation of the Development of the Concept of Seventh-day Adventist Missions, 1848 - 1874 (Andrews University: unpubl. thesis, 1956), pp. 31 - 38.

[12]Russel J. Thomas, Seventh-day Baptists. Their Legacy to Adventists (Mountain View, Calf.: Pacific Press Publ. Ass., 1971), pp. 9 - 23.

[13]Jacob Michael Patt, The History of the Advent Movement in Germany (Stanford University: unpubl. thesis, 1958), pp. 47 - 75.

[14]Irmgard Simon, Die Gemeinschaft der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten in volkskundlicher Sicht (Münster: Verlag Aschendorff, 1965), pp. 48 - 50.

[15]M.B. Czechowski, Thrilling and Instructive Developments, an Experience of Fifteen Years as Roman Catholic Clergyman and Priest (Boston, 1861), pp. 13 - 225.

[16]Jean Vuilleumier, "Premiers jours de l'oeuvre en Europe. Un prêtre polonais passe au protestantisme," (Dammarie-les-Lys, n.d.), pp. 1 - 15.

[17]Ibid.

[18]E. Frauchiger, "Aus dem kleinsten Lande der Reformation," AS, 36, 16 (15. 8. 1930), 248.

[19]White, Life Sketches, op. cit., pp. 206 and 213.

[20]Heinrich Erzberger, "Aus dem Leben eines Pioniers," (unpubl. article, n.d.), pp. 3 and 4. Frauchiger, op cit., p. 249.

[21]James White, "European Mission," Review and Herald, (4.1.1870), p. 14; (12. 7. 1870), p. 32; (4. 10. 1870), p. 128. Bozarth, op. cit., pp. 83 - 86.

[22]James Erzberger, "Communication from Bro. Ertzenberger," Review and Herald, (2. 9. 75), p. 76; J. N. Andrews, "Meeting of Sabbath-keepers in Neuchâtel," Review and Herald, (24. 11. 1874), p. 172. Bozarth, op. cit., pp. 85 - 86. Erzberger's name appeared also in the literature as 'Ertzenberger' and 'Erzenberger'.

[23]Bozarth, op. cit. p. 87.

[24]Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists. With Reports of the European Missionary Council of 1883, 1884, and 1885, and a Narrative by Mrs. E. G. White of Her Visit and Labors in These Missions. (Basle, Imprimerie Polyglotte, 1886), p. 16 f.

[25]Gordon Balharrie, A Study of the Contribution Made to the Seventh-day Adventist Movement by John Nevins Andrews (Andrews University: unpubl. thesis, 1949), pp. 52 - 74.

[26]Historical Sketches, op. cit., pp. 12 and 45.

[27]L. R. Conradi, Die dritte Engelsbotschaft unter dem deutschen Volk (Basel/Hamburg: Internationale Traktatgesellschaft, 1891), pp. 11 and 25.

[28]Ibid., pp. 21 - 22.

[29]The European Seventh-day Adventist Mission entered Persia in 1911. For a résumé see the following unpublished research paper: Kenneth Harding, "The First Thirty Years of the Development of Seventh-day Adventist Mission Work in Iran, 1911 - 1941," (Andrews University, Mich., 1974), 50 pp. Also consult R. Rühling, Quer durch Persien (Hamburg: Advent-Verlag, n. d.), 93 pp.

[30]Conradi, op. cit., p. 20.

[31]"Auszüge aus Missionsbriefen," ZW, 1 (Jan. 1895), 3 - 4.

32 H. P. Holser, "Die dritte Engelsbotschaft in der Türkei," ZW, 1 (Nov. 1895), 81 - 82.

[33]"Missionsbericht," HW, 42, 5 (1925), 34 - 35.

[34]H. P. Holser, "The Message in Turkey," GCB, 1, 10 (2. 12. 1895), 271 - 272.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Z. G. Baharian to H. P. Holser, Letter, HW, 9, 24 (15. 12. 1892), 190 - 191. Z. G. Baharian, "Bericht aus der Türkei," HW 14, 21 (2. 11. 1897), 166.

[38]H. P. Holser, "In Asiatic Turkey," GCB, 1, 19 (4. 3. 1895), 458.

[39]H. P. Holser, "Türkei," ZW, 1 (Sept. 1895), 66 - 67. H. P. Holser, "Die dritte Engelsbotschaft in der Türkei," ZW, 1 (Nov. 1895), 81 - 82.

[40]Ibid.

[41]E. Frauchiger, "Aus der Levante-Union," ZW, 17, 12 (19. 6. 1911), 245 - 247; 17, 13 (3. 7. 1911), 260 - 262. Dr. V. Pampaian, "Erewan, Transkaukasus," ZW, 12, 7 (2. 4. 1906), 115. C. and A. Voigt, "Ein Jahr in der Levante," ZW, 17, 22 (20. 11. 1911), 463 - 464.

[42]Frauchiger, Ibid.

[43]Z. G. Baharian to H. P. Holser, Letter, HW, 9, 24 (15. 12. 1892), 190 - 191. "Auszüge aus Missionsbriefen," ZW, 1 (Jan. 1895),3 - 4. C. Voigt, "Aus der Levante-Union," ZW, 17, 20 (16. 10. 1911), 416 - 417).

[44]H. P. Holser, "Bericht aus der Türkei," ZW, 4 (Jan. 1898), 2 - 3.

[45]"Das Verlagswerk in der Levante im Jahre 1912," ZW, 19, 8 (21. 4. 1913), 212.

[46]"Bericht von Z. G. Baharian," HW, 13, 17 (1. 9. 1896), 133 - 134.

[47]L. R. Conradi, "The Mediterranean Mission," GCB, 4, 6 (9. 4. 1901), 160.

[48]L. R. Conradi, "Reiseerfahrungen," ZW, 6 (Dec. 1900), 135 - 136.

[49]J. H. Krum, "Zweite Reise durch Kleinasien," ZW, 9 (2. 3. 1903), 43 - 44; (9. 3. 1903), 57 - 58. J. H. Krum, "Zweite Reise durch Konstantinopel und Bithynien," ZW, 9 (17. 8. 1903), 152 - 153; (7. 9. 1903), 166 - 167.

[50]Ibid.

[51]J.H. Krum, "Zweite Reise durch Kleinasien," ZW, 9 (2. 3. 1903), 38 - 39.

[52]L. R. Conradi, "Aus dem Orient," HW, 25, 23 (7. 12. 1908), 197.

[53]C. Voigt, "Bericht über die erste allgemeine Versammlung der Gemeinden des Türkischen Missionsfeldes," ZW, 16, 24 (19. 12. 1910), 409 - 411.

[54]C. Voigt, "Bericht des Verlagshauses in Konstantinopel," ZW, 18 (6. 5. 1912), 181. "Das Verlagswerk in der Levante im Jahre 1912," ZW, 19, 8 (21. 4. 1913), 212.

[55]C. Voigt, "Der Balkankrieg," ZW,18, 24 (16. 12. 1912), 491 - 492. Louise Kalfa, "Kriegserfahrungen in der Türkei," ZW, 26, 23/24 (Dec. 1920), 257 - 258.

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