Broadening the Boundaries of Church-Sect Theory: Insights from the Evolution of the Non-schismatic Mission Churches of Seventh-day Adventism

Ronald Lawson
Queens College, CUNY

Introduction

Church-sect theory, when applied, as it typically has been, to sects in single societies where they began schismatically, has proved to be full of insights concerning the development of sects/new religious movements (Pope 1942; Yinger 1946, 1957; Wilson 1970, 1990; Stark and Bainbridge, 1985). My own research on Seventh-day Adventism in the U.S., where it originated, has confirmed the usefulness of the theory yet again (see below). But how useful is the theory in understanding the development of a sect that spreads internationally through missionary activity or migration, as Adventism and many others have? This question has been largely neglected, even though such groups – such as Pentecostals, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Adventists – are some of the most rapidly growing religious groups in the world today, as were others – such as Catholics, Methodists, Anglicans, Baptists – before them. Indeed, Christianity was taken to almost all developing countries via missionaries, while immigration accounts for the origin of the "mainline churches" in such developed countries as the U.S., Australia and New Zealand.

This paper extends the theory of sect development by showing, through comparative analysis of Adventists, Witnesses and Pentecostals, that the developmental trajectories of foreign mission churches controlled from a national home base are influenced by the trajectories followed by their home religious bodies. It also suggests that the trajectories of mission churches not controlled by home religious bodies are far more responsive to differing local circumstances.

This thesis is put forward in two steps:

1. Data concerning the trajectories taken by mission sects are presented for a variety of countries. It is shown that the trajectories of these sects in these countries where they did not begin schismatically differ considerably from sect to sect, and are often similar to those followed in their home bases, where their origins were schismatic[1]. That is, whether or not a sect's origin was schismatic is not a key factor shaping its trajectory.

2. These patterns are explained through comparing data concerning the profiles developed by the global religious groups with their structure. It is shown that where the structure is centralized and hierarchical, as is the case with both Adventists and Witnesses, the patterns developed at home are exported as part of the mission program, so that the trajectories followed by each group as it expands internationally are predictable, although they vary from one group to another according to their different organizational cultures. On the other hand, there is considerable international diversity in the trajectories followed internationally by non-centralized groups such as Pentecostals, which vary much more according to the differences in the local cultures they encounter.

Research Methods

The research reported here is part of a large study of Adventism, which has included over 3,000 in-depth interviews with church administrators, teachers, hospital administrators and medical personnel, pastors, students, and leading laypersons in 55 countries in all twelve divisions of the world church. The countries were chosen to represent the diversity of the international church, paying greater attention to those where it is more established and/or experiencing rapid growth.

The U.S. was researched first since this was where Adventism originated and is the location of the General Conference, its world headquarters. I conducted interviews at the General Conference and local administrative centers – the North American Division, all eight unions, and many local conferences – the 12 universities and colleges, several academies (high schools), the major hospitals, both publishing houses, the media center, and at a great variety of urban, suburban, rural and institutional churches representing all major racial groupings. Canada was also covered, although less intensively. Travel itineraries covering the other 53 countries were laid out in detail. In general, interviewees were chosen to fit the key categories listed above.

I prepared an interview schedule of core questions for each category of interviewee (church administrator, college teacher, etc.). These covered such areas as personal background; information concerning the unit they represented; changes and issues where they were located as well as their perceptions of changes and issues more broadly within the church; specific questions focusing on issues of particular interest to the study such as Adventist-state relations and tensions between rapidly growing regions in the Developing World and the General Conference; etc. When an interviewee proved to be especially knowledgeable concerning something that was particularly relevant, that was pursued further.

Other interviewees were chosen because they had particular knowledge about topics that were of special interest to the research or had been participants in past situations or events. These were usually asked in detail about that topic.

I received extraordinary cooperation because of the Adventist respect for academics and my status as an Adventist. Even when interviewees were initially reserved or suspicious, these problems were almost always overcome quickly because of my knowledge of the issues and of Adventist jargon. Interviewees said repeatedly that they were telling me things that traveling General Conference leaders never hear because I asked the "right" questions, promised confidentiality, and was not a threat to their careers.

Interviews were recorded verbatim on laptop computers because I found that respondents were less reticent then than when confronted with a microphone; this also avoided the cost of transcribing tape recordings. The typical interview was between two and three hours in length, with some notably longer.

Data concerning earlier decades were culled largely from secondary sources. Considerable relevant historical research has been completed, in part because Adventist universities and colleges have strong history departments (dating from the early Adventist concern with prophetic fulfillment) and in part because of interest beyond Adventism in the Millerites and in such topics as religion under the Nazis and in the Soviet Union[2]. This material is available in books, dissertations, college papers, and articles in such journals as Adventist Heritage. I also used original documents available in the General Conference Archives and the "Heritage Rooms" at Adventist universities. Much of the data concerning more recent

decades comes from my oral history interviews; I have also drawn extensively on periodical articles to explore more recent pronouncements, practices and attitudes, on the statistics assembled by the General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, and on official surveys of Adventists.

Interview data and field notes were elaborately indexed using indexing software, which allows for all information relevant to a segment of a paper or chapter to be pulled out for analysis. The content of relevant articles from Adventist periodicals and books and other secondary sources were also indexed.

In order to keep the confidentiality of interviewees, as promised, the convention adopted is to refrain from citing their names when they are quoted except when they are major figures in the church.

The Adventist data utilized in this paper are drawn from interviews, periodical articles, and secondary sources. The comparative data concerning Jehovah's Witnesses and Pentecostals have been culled from secondary sources.

Theoretical Foundation

The operationalization of church-sect theory was clarified by Stark and Bainbridge who, building on the insights of Johnson (1963: 542) and standing on the shoulders of Yinger (1946: 18-34) and Wilson (1973: 19), argued that it is best conceived of as measuring a single summary variable, the "state of tension" between a religious group and "its surrounding sociocultural environment" (1985: 23). For them, tension is marked by three elements: difference, antagonism, and separation, which together describe "a single concept" (1985: 49-50). Because the level of tension is graduated, this variable measures a continuum between the poles of sect and denomination. Over time, sects tend to lower their tension with society, and thus to move from at or near the sect pole of the continuum towards the denominational pole. Stark and Bainbridge defined sects as schismatic (1985: 24-25), following the usage of Troeltsch ([1911] 1931) and Niebuhr ([1929] 1957)[3].

This formulation of the theory has proved very useful in predicting and understanding the evolution of Seventh-day Adventism in the U.S. During its early decades[4] Adventism was highly sectarian and in considerable tension with its environment. Marked differences from American society, such as its insistence on observing Saturday as its Sabbath when a six-day week was almost universal, its expectation that the return of Christ and end of the world as we know it was imminent, diet restrictions (vegetarianism, no alcohol, coffee, or tea), life-style prohibitions (no dancing, theater, gambling, card playing, smoking, or reading of fiction), a commitment to "dress reform" and abstinence from jewelry and make-up, and a refusal to take up arms when conscripted, set Adventists apart. Its view of itself, as God's Remnant people, the one true church and chosen vehicle of God's final message to the world in the last days, and its declarations that other religious groups were "apostate" and had become "the whore of Babylon", its brazen challenges in its evangelistic meetings to clergy of other denominations, and its expectation of persecution from other churches in collaboration with the state, all tended to create bitter, mutually held, antagonisms. These barriers were reinforced by the extent to which Adventists separated themselves from the rest of society. Ties among Adventists were close, for their lives were usually centered around their church, the subculture it created and fostered, and its mission; they attended church-run schools, often worked for church institutions, and were frequently drawn by educational opportunities and economic and social ties to live in what became known colloquially as "New Jerusalems" or "Adventist Ghettos." Their separation was also strengthened by practices, such as their dietary and social prohibitions, and rules, such as endogamy, that made it difficult and/or uncomfortable to associate

with others. Not only did Adventist peculiarities attract scorn, but their Sabbath observance caused problems with employers and their refusal to bear arms had legal repercussions.

However, the level of tension between Adventists and American society has lowered sharply and ever more rapidly in recent decades. The growth and accreditation of their educational and medical institutions has required participation in society and provided opportunities for upward mobility; Adventist medicine has become increasingly orthodox, and many of its hospitals have prospered and won friends; the coming of the five-day work week removed many of the major problems surrounding Sabbath observance; and Adventist dietary and smoking prohibitions have won increasing credibility as a result of medical research. At the same time, Adventism has lowered levels of antagonism with others: it has pursued good relations with governments, switched its stance on military service, allowed expectations of persecution to diminish, and sought better relations with other churches (Lawson1995a: 337-38; 1996b). That is, church-sect theory has once again proved insightful when applied to a religious group in a single society where it began schismatically as a protest against prevailing orthodoxy[5].

Because my research focuses on international Adventism, which is now active in 204 of the 230 countries recognized by the United Nations, this posed a dilemma, for while Adventism began schismatically in the U.S., it was imported to all the other 203 countries through missionary endeavor. Moreover, most of Adventism's rapid growth in recent decades has been concentrated in the latter countries, with the result that the proportion of its world membership located in the U.S. has declined steeply: only 8.7% of the 9.3million members lived there at the end of 1996 (General Conference 1997).These facts raised the question of whether church-sect theory is applicable to religious groups which have been imported into a society rather than beginning there schismatically.

While the literature is silent on this matter, the later work of Bryan Wilson can be brought to bear on it. Wilson has frequently pointed out that the sects, or new religious movements, of recent decades (he uses the terms interchangeably) have rarely risen in a dialectical sense against a dominant church or churches (1973: 12; 1982: 90-91). That is, their origins have not been schismatic[6]. Moreover, he adds, with the loosening of church-state ties in Europe, the explicit renunciation of them in the U.S., and the removal of the social functions of yesteryear from religion, churches and denominations in many countries are entering confrontations with the state and raising criticisms of its actions in ways that are reminiscent of sect-state tensions (Wilson 1988). Noting that these observations moved beyond the modifications to church-sect theory already made in the U.S.[7], Wilson began to work towards a more relativistic view of the typology and a further reformulation of it. Since "sects are now more universal than churches," he focused his prime attention on the former, explicitly broadening the term to include new religious groups whose origins were not schismatic (1982: 91)[8].

In Magic and the Millennium, Wilson's massive comparative study of "new religious movements arising among less-developed peoples following cultural contact with westerners," he "deliberately...looked for continuities between sectarianism in western countries and the new sectarianism of the third world"(1973: 1,2). His method was to attempt to apply the seven categories of sects which he had derived earlier from data in the Developed World ([1963]1969: 364) to the new sects in the Developing World[9]. He found that the "new religious movements among the less-developed peoples have much in common with the sects that have arisen in Christendom since the Reformation" [1973: 4]. He noted that most of the sects he had studied in either the Developed or the Developing Worlds had not (yet) evolved into churches or denominations – the direction of change which has been the focus of church-sect theory since

Niebuhr modified Troeltsch's original formulation. However, he argued that some of the new sects in developing countries had mutated from one category of sect to another, and that there were patterns here.

In an analysis that foreshadowed the Stark and Bainbridge reformulation of church-sect theory, Wilson based his typology of sects on their dominant "response to the world" – since a "sectarian movement always manifests some degree of tension with the world" – rather than on such factors as doctrine or degree of institutionalization, which can ossify and are less relevant to non-Christian sects (1973: 17, 19). "[W]hen sects do persist, they always undergo processes of mutation" ([1963] 1969 : 371): "response to the world may change without specific doctrinal changes, perhaps in relation to changed social circumstances experienced by sect members such as social mobility, recruitment of the second generation, changed reactions of the wider society, the process of institutionalization, or other internal or external factors"(1973: 20-21); "the response of the founders towards the outside world becomes difficult to maintain for successive generations...all organizations are prone to suffer an attenuation in commitment to their original values" ([1963]1969: 371, 372).

Although Wilson's typology had seven categories, he found that most of the new religious movements in developing countries fell originally into two of these: Thaumaturgical, or "magical," and Revolutionist, or urgently apocalyptic (1973: 53-54,484). Most likely to mutate to a degree where they change category are the revolutionist sects, because "intense revolutionism is difficult to maintain. The expectation that the world is to overturn through supernatural action is necessarily subject to repeated postponement"(1973: 36). They may actually mount a rebellion, or simply keep waiting. In the latter instance, their expectation of the cataclysmic event may be sustained through the addition of new converts, "fervent for what is, to them, a new vision" (1973: 37). However, if they become isolated and dependent on internal recruitment, they may become more devotional and withdrawn – and mutate to the Introversionist category (1973: 37,48). If a sect comes to focus heavily on conversions, it may mutate to the Conversionist category – and then there is the possibility that it may mutate again, as Wilson had noted many times in developed countries, "into a more specifically denominational mold" (1973: 49).He also found examples of mutations from thaumaturgical to conversionist sect, and then on to denomination. That is, Wilson recognized that new religious movements in developing countries could, over time, become the dominant, or one of the dominant, religious groups in the societies where they are active – they could mutate eventually to the category of a church or denomination.

Wilson's Magic and the Millennium was the first major application of church-sect theory to the Developing World. However, to employ the distinction made by Stark and Bainbridge, his sample was made up mostly of innovative groups, together with some that had broken schismatically from missions: he did not focus at all on imported mission groups, which are the subject of this paper. We turn now to an exploration of the data concerning the trajectories taken by the latter.

The Trajectories of Local Mission Churches

Adventists

Seventh-day Adventists expanded their network of foreign missions rapidly during the final quarter of the nineteenth century, and "as the twentieth century dawned, [they] had initiated work on all of the continents and in most of the major nations of the world" (Schwarz 1979: 231). In general, they were received rather differently in different regions. In the countries of what is now known as the developed

world, such as most of Europe, Australia and New Zealand, and South Africa, where Christianity was religiously dominant, Adventists were stigmatized as heretical and sectarian because they were small and different. Their growth over time in these parts has been relatively slow, with the result that Adventism there is now made up mostly of second-generation members, who have often experienced less rapid upward mobility than their American counterparts because of the paucity, lower quality, and frequent lack of accreditation of their church-run educational institutions. That is, although Adventism has lowered tension with its social environments in these segments of the Developed World, the process has often proceeded more slowly than in the U.S.

However, Adventism in the Developing World contrasts sharply with that I the Developed World. In general, it has been growing much more rapidly: its evangelistic strategies have been increasingly successful there in recent decades, and it has experienced strong growth in many countries (see Tables 1 and 2). Consequently, even though it is now a century since Adventist missionaries first established a presence in many of these countries, its members there continue to be predominantly first generation converts. Researchers such as Niebuhr have argued that a membership made up mostly of converts will be highly committed and sectarian ([1929] 1957). Given this situation, then, together with the fact that missionaries have typically been more conservative than their fellow members in the homeland, placing greater emphasis on the peculiarly Adventist teachings, we would expect Adventism in these developing countries to be much more sectarian, with higher tension between it and society than in the Developed World.

Table 1

Seventh-day Adventist Membership by Continent:
1960 and 1995

CONTINENT	1960	%	1995	%	INCREASE
Africa	241,575	19.4%	2,902,171	32.9%	1101.4%
South America	140,717	11.3	1,610,668	18.3	1044.6%
Asia	171,71	13.8	1,497,676	17.0	772.2%
Mid.America[15]	111,861	9.0	1,331,835	15.1	1090.6%
North America[16]	332,400	26.7	838,898	9.5	152.4%
Europe	190,801	15.3	336,269	3.8	76.2%
Oceania[17]	56,064	4.5	286,199	3.2	410.5%
World Totals[18]	1,245,125		8,812,555		607.8%

Sources: General Conference 1961, 1996.

Table 2

Seventh-day Adventist Membership, Developed vs Developing Worlds: 1960 and 1995

	1960	%	1995	%	INCREASE
Developed World[19]	553,592	44.5%	1,234,037	14.0%	122.9%
Developing World[20]	691,533	55.5%	7,578,518	86.0%	995.9%
World Totals	1,245,125		8,812,555		607.8%

Sources: General Conference 1961, 1996.

Many American Adventists saw votes at recent General Conference Sessions[10] as confirming this expectation. The most emotional issue at the last two Sessions has concerned whether to allow the ordination of women ministers. In 1990 this was voted down by a 3: 1 margin, with strong opposition from the delegates representing the Developing World, who were observed to often vote as blocs. In 1995, when the North American Church requested a variance allowing it, and only it, to ordain women, this was also defeated by a majority of better than 2: 1, again with strong opposition from the Developing World. Many Americans were bitterly disappointed by these votes, seeing them as reflecting a conservative, sectarian theology dominant among Adventism in the Developing World.

However, I would argue that these votes reflect not so much a sectarian theology, but the male-dominated cultures in much of the Developing World, and that the theology they invoked to support their inclinations was handed to them in advance of the votes by conservative Americans with a literalistic biblical hermeneutic (Lawson 1995c). Indeed, the data suggest that Adventism in the Developing World is, over all, much less sectarian – it shows much less in tension with society – than expected, for it is increasingly following a trajectory which is similar in many ways to that taken in the U.S. It is already far less sectarian than American Adventism was when it had a similar proportion of first generation converts among its membership. Several factors contribute to this situation:

1. Adventists were initially much less separated in the developing world than in the developed world because of the way in which they were received there and their institution-centered mission strategy. Although the missionaries were sent there by what was seen in the U.S. as a small schismatic sect, and the Adventist penetration often brought complaints from the "historic churches"[11] – that their doctrine was "heretical", that they were "sheep-stealers" (Wilson [1963] 1969: 378;Assimeng 1986: 223) – their targets, the local people, did not distinguish between the various missions, seeing them "as part of the process of western cultural importations, rather than as special brands of them" (Assimeng1986: 53). Adventism found a religious context that was explicitly pluralistic, where it had no need to set itself over against an indigenous established church or religious orthodoxy, advantageous. From the outset it was often less separated: unlike Adventists in America, who typically avoided friendly, cooperative contact with other religious bodies, missionaries frequently joined ecumenical "mission councils" and "councils of churches"

because these negotiated issues that were important to missions with colonial authorities (Assimeng 1986: 222-25). Moreover, because it shaped its mission proselytizing strategies around institutions – initially grade schools and clinics, then adding high schools and hospitals, and finally colleges and universities – these helped Adventism build an increasingly positive reputation for itself over time, and thus to involve itself more deeply in these societies (Assimeng 1986: 53). That is, the tensions between Adventism and these environments were lower – Adventism was less sectarian.

2. Adventists have experienced widespread upward mobility, and new members are attracted to Adventism because it is seen as offering such opportunities. In spite of the fact that those who preach and teach Adventism are usually conservative members who emphasize that the world will soon end, one of the ingredients in the attraction of many of the converts is the prospect of upward mobility. In the Highlands of New Guinea, for example, where a veritable people movement is pouring into Adventism, the newcomers say that they are joining because God is blessing this church, and the evidence for this is that Adventists get rich! The tradition of measuring wealth in terms of how many pigs a person owns continues to some extent, even though this wealth is highly expendable, given the cultural demand that a "wealthy" person throw parties for his extended kin. The Adventist prohibition against keeping pigs (since they are regarded as unclean) and participation in parties (because of their association with alcohol and with spirit worship) has had the effect of freeing members from their cultural obligations to kin and of fostering individualism, and has thus prepared them ideally for the emerging capitalist economy. Even though the bulk of the Adventist membership in Papua-New Guinea is in the Highlands, almost all the ministers there have to be recruited from coastal areas: the Highlands youth prefer to go into business (interviews).

Converts have also been drawn to Adventism because its system of parochial education offers members opportunities for advancement. Adventist missionaries made education the keystone to their evangelization, and therefore gave highest priority to developing schools: "for [Latin American]peasants who desired a school for their children, an Adventist teacher complete with salary was a powerful inducement; in exchange, he organized them into a congregation" (Stoll 1990: 103). Schools taught literacy, which was essential if the people were to read the Bible and study Adventist doctrine: "Elementary literacy was part of the prerequisites for baptism" (Nyaundi 1993: 108); they were also the means of preparing workers for the church. However, the people quickly realized that education was the key to upward mobility in rapidly changing societies. Missionaries soon complained that their graduates frequently took the higher paying secular jobs that were available rather than filling church positions. One wrote from East Africa that the Adventist educational institutions there were "largely a waste of training effort and money. ... [It is not our purpose to train teachers] to provide the government and other agencies with educated help" (Flaiz 1950: 30).

This trend continued as the Adventist Church added the higher layers to its educational system, and educational administrators now bemoan the fact that the vast majority of students enroll in programs, such as computer science and accounting, where there are few opportunities for church employment, rather than preparing to serve the rapidly expanding church. A striking confirmation of this pattern occurred at the Adventist University of Eastern Africa, in Kenya, which was founded in 1978, in the early 1980s.Students there, complaining that having the church's

name on their degrees would limit their employment opportunities, staged demonstrations and strikes which eventually forced the University Council to change the institution's name to the "University of Eastern Africa" (interviews).

The patterns of upward mobility resulting from church-provided education vary from one country to another because of differing economic conditions. Adventist educational institutions are less likely to offer avenues for widespread upward mobility where they lack government accreditation or their programs are severely limited, or where almost all church members are too poor to go away from home for education. However, some degree of upward mobility is frequent. Interviewees in southern Mexico frequently explained that the peasant members had no chance of traveling to the Adventist university in the north or of affording tuition and board at the academy in the south. However, they credited the church's emphasis on tithing and a simple, healthy lifestyle with encouraging them to steward their resources and to complete the available grades at the local public schools more frequently, with the result that their houses were typically better than average and they had the confidence to engage in evangelism (interviews). In India, where university graduates often find it impossible to secure positions which utilize their qualifications, members who enroll in the Adventists' Spicer College accrue special advantages, for all graduates from there are offered church employment. Moreover, many of them use their qualifications and church contacts as a means of securing entry to the U.S.: more than half of the college's graduates in recent years have migrated (interviews).

However, there is evidence that the widespread belief that Adventism provides important opportunities for upward mobility is becoming more myth than reality. This is especially the case to the extent that church schools are seen as the central engine of this process, for Adventism is growing so rapidly in much of the Developing World that it is impossible for the Church to keep up with the demand for educational institutions. In Kenya, for example, where mission schools supported by government "grants-in-aid" were previously the only source of education, most Adventists are now educated in government schools and those who go to the remaining church schools receive an inferior education (Nyaundi 1993: 241-2). This situation is repeated in many parts of Africa. Since the image of Adventism as a vehicle for upward mobility has been so important in attracting converts to Adventism, it seems likely that the tarnishing of this image must eventually impact Adventist growth and retention rates.

Nevertheless, the widespread concern for, and experience of, upward mobility among Adventist members in the Developing World has left them with an experience that is closer to that of American Adventists than the predominance of converts and the emphasis on sectarian teachings among the missionaries would lead us to expect.

3. Adventism is emerging as a political presence. The rapid growth of Adventism and the upward mobility that members have often experienced have transformed Adventists into a political presence in parts of the Developing World. This is especially the case in Jamaica and in Papua-New Guinea and other island groups in the South Pacific, where there have been several Adventist members of cabinet, in Micronesia, where the president of Palau is a church member, and in Uganda, where the vice-president (who was formerly the prime minister) is also an active Adventist. These developments took the leaders at church headquarters in the U.S. by surprise, for Adventists have rarely walked the corridors of political power in this country (interviews). That

is, the missions sponsored by the denominations and churches of the U.S. and Europe, which had typically arrived in these countries in advance of the Adventists[12].

A similar process has occurred at a more local level in other countries where the Adventist presence is more geographically concentrated. This is the situation among the Aymara of Peru, in the highlands around Lake Titicaca. Here Adventism brought education and literacy, and so many conversions followed that it became the largest Protestant group in the country. However, their education was not politically and economically relevant while the old, Catholic-dominated social system remained intact. When population growth outran available land, forcing a shift from subsistence agriculture to a money economy as Aymara took wage labor on the coast, Adventists were presented with an opportunity: since they were better educated, they were able to find better jobs on the coast, and consequently accumulated capital. When local government was reorganized and secularized, and thus opened to non-Catholics, only they were educationally ready to take advantage of these changes. A small group of Adventists subsequently emerged "as the power elite in the community"(Lewellen 1979: 245; Martin 1990: 224-25; interviews).

Political participation to this extent is a sign that Adventists have become heavily involved in their societies and are not the objects of widespread antagonism. That is, it indicates that they have moved a considerable distance from sectarianism.

4. Adventists have established close relations with governments and other mission churches. In other parts of the Developing World, from Latin America to Africa to Asia, Adventists have moved, often successfully, to reduce political tensions with governments. They have been especially successful in establishing relationships with authoritarian regimes. These have often involved "exchange relationships": Adventists have sought liberties(freedom to evangelize, freedom to observe their Sabbath, protection of their institutions) and favors (such as accreditation of their schools, facilitation of their projects through the granting of permits or duty-free import of equipment) and, in return, have been willing to help legitimate or otherwise assist the regimes. In other instances, it seems as if Church leaders have merely enjoyed a sense of importance from rubbing shoulders with the powerful. I cite only a few of the possible examples:
   a. In Chile, General Pinochet, when President, was invited to visit the Adventist college there, which was greatly disadvantaged by not having accreditation. He was greeted in a welcoming ceremony before television cameras, during which the college president offered a prayer in which he thanked God for sending Pinochet to save the nation. This occurred at a time when the President was under considerable attack from the Catholic Cardinal for his human rights violations. In return for this legitimation, the college received accreditation and Adventists became known in Chile as "friends of Pinochet" (interviews).
   b. In Guatemala, when Robert S. Folkenberg, who is now the world President of the Adventist Church, was located there as the leader of the Adventist Church in Central America, he knew General Fernando Romeo Lucas Garcia, the military dictator, so well that he would visit him at the Presidential Palace, and was the first Protestant leader to be given a state farewell reception when he was moved to a new position (interview).
   c. In Kenya, Adventists have fostered a close relationship with the regime of President Daniel Arap Moi, who in return arranged to provide them with land and a charter for their University of Eastern Africa. In 1988, when the General Conference staged its Annual

Council in Nairobi, the speech of the then world president, Neil Wilson, was reported in the press under the headline, "SDA head lauds Kenya for upholding freedom" (Nyaundi 1993: 209). This public support was offered to Moi at a time when he was under attack from the National Council of Churches of Kenya for brutalizing opposition leaders and attempting to make constitutional changes designed to help him retain power in spite of his growing unpopularity.

d. In South Korea, rather than protesting against the military regimes of Presidents Park and Chun, Adventists were cooperative and loyal, appreciating the stability and social control imposed by the regimes, and their campus remained extraordinarily quiet at a time when university students on other campuses were staging frequent political protests. This was appreciated by the presidents, who accredited the college, which then expanded dramatically (interviews).

It was noted above that Adventist missionaries typically joined the ecumenical organizations representing mission bodies in Africa. In Latin America, however, they initially stood aloof from other Protestant missions, dismissing the other fundamentalists as apostate and, in turn, being seen as legalistic and heretical because of their strong focus on Adventist doctrinal and behavioral peculiarities. Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, however, the new indigenous leadership sought acceptance as evangelical Christians, and were successful in winning a measure of this (Stoll, 1990: 103).

Adventists have thus frequently demonstrated a wish to be involved rather than separate. In courting good relations with governments and other churches they have set out to prove that they are cooperative, not antagonistic, and to assuage any hostility or suspicion towards themselves.

Table 3

Adventist Growth:
The Time Taken to Add Each Million Members, 1848-1996

SIZE	TIME TAKEN	DATES
1 million	107.1 years	1848-1955
2 million	14.7 years	1955-1970
3 million	7.9 years	1970-1978
4 million	5.1 years	1978-1983
5 million	3.3 years	1983-1986
6 million	2.7 years	1986-1989
7 million	2.3 years	1989-1991
8 million	2.4 years	1991-1994
9 million	2.3 years	1994-1996

Source: Yost 1995:28, updated.

5. Socialization of new members has decreased sharply. Beginning in the early 1980s, Adventist leaders placed much greater emphasis on growth, promoted evangelism as a major proselytizing strategy, and pressured pastors and evangelists with high goals for new converts. As a result, the growth rate for the world membership increased sharply, from 69.6% during the decade1970-

1980 to 92.4% during 1982-1992 (derived from General Conference 1993).(See Table 3.) The bulk of this increase occurred in developing countries. The most dramatic change in procedures as a result of the adoption of this new policy occurred in Africa, where would-be converts had previously been required to be members of a baptismal class for two years before being admitted[13], but are now typically baptized at the end of a three-week evangelistic campaign. Although the period of classes previously required in other parts of the world was not usually as long as in Africa, the typical length of study before baptism has been reduced sharply there also. Moreover, post-baptismal nurture largely disappeared, as pastors were forced to turn their attention to attracting the next wave of prospective recruits (interviews).

A factor isolated by Wilson is significant to this explanation. He found that those sects which he defines as Revolutionist, or Millennialist, tend to move much more slowly from sect towards denomination than those he defines as Conversionist. This is because the former demand that converts have considerable knowledge before they are admitted, while the latter add new members rapidly without a great deal of prior training and socialization (Wilson [1959] 1967). In terms of this analysis, Adventism in the Developing World has shifted sharply towards becoming a Conversionist sect over the past decade or so: the grounding of converts in the sectarian teachings and separating lifestyle of Adventism is now often much weaker than it was in earlier decades. According to Wilson, such a change is likely to reduce sectarianism and foster denomination-like characteristics.

6. Member commitment has weakened significantly. Given the role of opportunities for personal advancement in attracting converts in the Developing World and the pattern of reduced socialization of converts flowing from the competition for growth statistics, it is not surprising that the apostasy rate is high. The official statistics show an apostasy rate that was equal to 26.7% of conversions in the Developing World during 1995. However, interview data suggest that this is a serious undercount. This is because the system of record-keeping, which was designed in the U.S., often proves too complex for those who must report from churches where the standard of education is lower, especially when pastors who can show notable growth are rewarded and they can be penalized when the growth rate is considered low. Consequently, the one datum these churches can be relied on to report accurately is the number of baptisms. Deaths and apostasies are likely to be ignored, while transfers often result in people being counted as members by two or more congregations. There is no doubt that the apostasy rate is a serious problem. For example, during the three years before my visit to Kinshasa, capital of the Congo, two evangelistic campaigns had resulted in 1,500 baptisms. However, at that point only 50 of these, a mere 3.3%, were still attending church (interviews). The data indicate that this kind of situation is common.

There is a cultural factor in Africa which amplifies, and helps explain, the seriousness of "the apostasy problem" there. Africans often do not share the Western understanding that commitment to one faith precludes adherence to others: "In Africa, it is very rarely the case that a person is exclusively a member of only one religious movement at any particular time, and very few movements succeeded in imposing the exclusivity principle" (Assimeng 1986: 16).Indeed, many Africans see advantages in identifying with several religious groups, for this in effect gives them multiple insurance policies, or access to different kinds of magic that will be effective in varying circumstances. Consequently, some persons who respond to the call of an Adventist evangelist to be baptized, and who thereby become members of the Adventist Church, may

respond similarly some months later to an invitation from a Pentecostal preacher. In Latin America, also, several recent studies have reported patterns of multiple loyalties and serial affiliation among Protestants (Gooren 1996; Stoll 1993: 8,9; Rostas and Droogers 1993: 10-11; Burdick 1993: 7).

During the early years of Adventist missions in Africa, it was the practice to insist that converts and those preparing for baptism withdraw from their villages and form a new Adventist village that was built around the church and church school (Nyaundi 1993: 93-94, 108-17). This had the effect of strengthening ties to the church. However, that practice is now a thing of the past: in Kenya it was ended by government legislation in the late 1940s. The long period of training in baptismal classes was also designed to cement commitment; however, as noted above, this has also been abandoned.

Given the evidence of widespread limited commitment among Adventist members – with poor socialization, focus on opportunities for career advancement, multiple memberships, and high apostasy rates – it is not surprising that many members have proved willing to compromise the standards of their faith rather than face difficulties. The major test for Adventists has usually been observance of their Sabbath on Saturday. American Adventists who were fired for refusing to work when scheduled on that day have fought the issue all the way to the Supreme Court (Lawson 1997). However, African students reported that when they were faced with the problem of classes and exams being scheduled on that day – which is a regular occurrence at all educational levels in the former French and Belgian colonies (for example, the Congo, Rwanda, the Cameroun, the Ivory Coast) and is also increasingly an issue in such former English colonies as Nigeria and Ghana – most of them participated rather than risk educational penalties (interviews). Adventists in many other countries, ranging from Korea to Eastern Europe, have frequently made similar choices. Indeed, in Korea and India so many members spend Saturday mornings at their jobs that churches have arranged special worship services for them on Saturday afternoons (interviews).

The weakening of commitment among members lessens tensions with society, since this renders them more ready to compromise and therefore less different – and thus less sectarian.

To summarize the discussion to this point: Adventism is growing so rapidly in much of the Developing World that it is still largely a first generation religion there. However, contrary to what this fact might lead us to expect, it is not stridently sectarian in tone. Indeed, to invoke Stark and Bainbridge's three markers of tension between a sect and its sociocultural environment, it is typically far less different, antagonistic, or separated from society than when its American forebears included a similar proportion of first generation converts.

Witnesses

This is not to argue, however, that the trajectory followed by Adventists is typical of all imported religious groups in the Developing World. Assimeng's study of Jehovah's Witnesses in parts of Africa, for example, finds that they were, and are, the most apocalyptic of all the imported Christian groups, they have remained much more separate from other religious groups and from government, and, since they refused to build and operate schools, they have not provided their followers with a means for upward mobility(1986: 53-113). In some countries in particular, such as Zambia and Malawi, their "relationship with political authorities...has been characterized by acute strain" (1970: 112). Here, then, is a group,

which Wilson would classify, like early Adventism, as a Revolutionist sect, which has remained highly sectarian, and which has therefore followed a totally different trajectory from Adventism, even though both originally shared the same category and were, in their origins, extended kin (Lawson 1995b: 351-2).

Pentecostals

Yet another extraordinarily different trajectory has been taken by Pentecostals. Wilson classified them, in developed countries, as a Conversionist sect ([1963] 1969: 365); however, when imported to Africa and Latin America they mutated to Thaumaturgical. Assimeng found that "Their concern with salvation and the advent tends, in day-to-day practice, often to be eclipsed by their distinctive teachings of Holy Ghost power, spirit blessings and physical manifestations – particularly glossolalia. These charismata – and especially the 'gift' of divine healing – have been popularly embraced in Africa where traditional religion was itself strongly thaumaturgical, instrumental and expressive" (1986: xiii). In Nigeria, where the impact of Pentecostalism has been greatest, it took on a number of indigenous characteristics: for example, it seemed to confirm from Scripture the traditional witchcraft theories of disease (Assimeng 1986: 150). Similarly, in Mexico "many rural pastors are former shamans who, in effect, continue to divine and cure under the new religion, as a more effective source of power and legitimation. In Haiti...Pentecostal healing tends to validate belief in voodoo..." (Stoll 1990: 113). Martin concludes that it "became truly indigenous..." (1990: 231).

The data, then, demonstrate that the trajectories taken by mission churches differ considerably from sect to sect. The following section shows that for some sects they follow the patterns set in their home bases.

Global Profiles

What is the explanation of these differing patterns? The connections between imported religious groups and their sponsoring global organizations can play a key role in shaping the trajectories taken. When the structure of a global church, and its relationship with its national branches, is centralized and hierarchical, as with Adventists and Witnesses, its influence can be compelling. In this case, the central organization is likely to export the patterns of the relationships between the religious group and its surrounding environment that were first developed in the group's home base.

Adventists

It was shown above that during its early decades the Adventist Church in the U.S. was in "considerable tension with society," but that this tension was then gradually reduced. This section of the paper will examine how some foci of tension were relaxed – and then how the patterns established in these key instances were exported to Adventism in the Developing World as an integral part of its mission program. It will then contrast this pattern with those developed by Witnesses and Pentecostals.

Early Adventism was marked by apocalyptic urgency: it taught and believed that the Second Coming of Christ and the "end of the world" was imminent. This expectation meant that it rejected the American Dream, a position that starkly separated Adventists from mainstream Americans. Adventists were also notably different from others in their insistence that God expected them to keep Saturday as the Sabbath, as a holy day free from secular work or other activities, and in their declaration that they were conscientiously opposed to participation in war. It was impossible for Sabbatarians to find employment in most occupations when the six-day week was well-nigh universal, while the decision to forbid participation in the military during the American Civil War placed them among a small deviant minority

and subjected them to scorn and questions concerning their loyalty (Brock 1974: 23; Graybill 1978: 4-8). The tension between Adventism and American society extended to its relations with the state, for its apocalyptic led it to expect persecution from an alliance formed between other churches and the Federal Government. When members were arrested in several states for working on Sunday, this was interpreted as evidence that the predicted attack was being readied, for the arrests were seen as challenging the freedom of Adventists to observe their Sabbath on Saturday, and therefore as a religious/political issue (Bull and Lockhart 1989: 48; Butler 1974: 173-77). That is, the tension felt by Adventists involved all three elements isolated by Stark and Bainbridge: separation, difference, and antagonism.

However, as Adventism set about building educational and medical institutions, and then gaining accreditation for them, it gradually put down a stake in society, provided a means for its members to achieve upward mobility, and embraced the American Dream. Meanwhile, it began to see the time until the Second Coming of Christ as lengthening, and the threat from the U.S. government as less immediate: the tension with the state was beginning to relax. Consequently, when the National Reform Association launched a campaign in the 1880s to extend the Sunday sacredness "blue laws" already in effect in some states to the national level, Adventists, rather than rejoicing because what they had prophesied was about to be fulfilled, abandoned their usual apolitical stance and set out vigorously to combat the initiative. The rationale given for their decision to fight to postpone what was to them a harbinger of the apocalypse was that thereby they would gain more time to preach its imminence (Butler, 1974: 196-98).

These shifts in position prepared the way for the gradual transformation of the Adventist position on military service during the twentieth century. As Adventists moved from being conscientious objectors to "conscientious co-operators" (Editorial 1941), trained by military officers in advance of their conscription for service in medical units in the armed forces, the Adventist Church developed a close alliance with the U.S. military. Many Adventists became militant patriots, scorning conscientious objectors, until ultimately, in 1972, Church leaders removed their insistence that members not bear arms (Lawson 1996a).

Their changing position on military service mirrored shifts in Adventist attitudes towards the U.S. government as a whole. Legislation introducing a five-day working week in the 1930s removed many of the problems surrounding Sabbath observance. When, during World War II, the Supreme Court strengthened religious liberty and Roosevelt declared freedom of religion one of his four basic freedoms, the editor of the official church paper commented that the persecution that Adventists expected clearly lay further in the future (Editorial 1943). In the decades following the War, the Adventist Church accepted government aid for its institutions, and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency became a conduit for the distribution of large amounts of USAID funds, which in effect made it an arm of U.S. foreign policy (Morgan 1992; Syme 1973: 120-143; Lawson 1996b; interviews).

The cumulative impact of these changes was dramatic: the tension between the Adventist Church and American society had been substantially reduced. Adventists had become comfortable, patriotic Americans.

Meanwhile, the patterns that had created these changes were being transferred to Adventists abroad. Some of these were exported as a result of conscious decisions by church leaders, who then promoted them throughout the church structure; others were imported as church leaders in the different regions of Adventism copied or modified practices from the American church.

One of the patterns that soon marked Adventism everywhere was the centrality of its institutions, especially schools, colleges, hospitals, publishing houses, and health food factories. Church leaders arranged for these to be built everywhere because they were at the center of Adventism's evangelistic outreach. However, the institutions soon performed the additional functions that they served in the U.S., such as providing opportunities for the upward mobility of members and involving Adventism with government bureaucracy and more broadly in the society.

Adventists abroad also changed their stance on military service. However, here they modified the practices adopted in the U.S. to fit the options open to them. Their prime consideration came to be avoiding conflict with the state as much as possible. Since a noncombatant option (serving unarmed in a medical unit) was not usually available in non-English speaking countries, this meant serving as ordinary soldiers, with weapons and patriotism[14]. Germany became the prototype of this. During World War I, Adventists there, moved both by their patriotism and a realization that the Imperial government would not countenance a noncombatant option, reduced tension by choosing to serve as combatants, a reversal of their earlier stance. This resulted in a bitter schism and the disfellowshiping of the pacifist "two percent" who insisted on maintaining high tension with the state over this issue (Sasn.d.: 14; Hartlapp 1993; Sicher 1977: 12). During the Nazi period, Adventists went out of their way to show a cooperative attitude, afraid that their observance of the Sabbath and certain food prohibitions would result in their being confused with Jews. Consequently, they expressed enthusiastic support for Hitler, most of their conscripts bore arms willingly even though they had been accorded the right to opt for orderly and medical duties, and some of them reported pacifist "Reformed Adventists" to the authorities in order to distance themselves from them (Blaich 1993; Decker 1968; Sicher 1977; King1982: 89-119, 147-179). More recently, church leaders in Argentina explained to me that they had had no qualms about encouraging their youth to train as soldiers, and thus avoiding the conflict and penalties the Witnesses had faced there, because "Argentina avoids wars." However, these soldiers had then found themselves fighting and dying in the Falkland Islands War with Britain(interviews). The new principle of conflict avoidance also often led Adventists to compromise over the Sabbath, especially in the military and when school and university examinations were scheduled on that day (Lawson 1995b: 358).

The switch in the American church's policies towards participation in the military and with the Federal Government inspired the transformation of Adventist relations with the governments of other countries. A policy of avoiding trouble was replaced by a search for advantages via the establishment of exchange relationships. These policies were actively encouraged and pursued by the leaders of the world church in the U.S. For example, Neil Wilson, President of the General Conference in the 1980s, intervened personally in both the USSR and Hungary, where schismatic Adventist groups discontented with the Adventist history of close relations and compromises with the state were an irritant to political leaders. In both cases he gave his blessing to the compromising church and announced the principle that the official branch of the world church was that recognized by the state. His intervention in the USSR resulted ultimately in approval from the Council on Religious Affairs for the creation of an Adventist seminary outside Moscow (Wilson and Lohne [1979]1981: 46; Reiners n.d.; interviews). It was noted above that Wilson had also fostered close relations with the Kenyan regime and that his successor and earlier pursued a similar policy while head of the church in Central America.

This is not to say that the trajectories taken by these national churches were shaped solely by their ties to the General Conference, for there were local factors at work also. For example, the product of the interaction between Adventist norms and the familial and cultural systems of the New Guinea Highlanders

was not foreseen, but by promoting the economic prosperity of many Adventists it raised the status of Adventism in society. Moreover, some of the results of actions by the General Conference which had the effect of reducing tension between Adventism and these societies were in fact unintended consequences: leaders were caught by surprise when rapid growth in some countries raised Adventists to political prominence, and it was not the intention of those who initially decided to build schools in order to train church workers that this would result in upward mobility among members. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that in recent decades the leadership of the world church has made reducing tension between their church and its national environments a priority. For example, several of the Adventist leaders in the countries of Eastern Europe stated that their superiors within the global church administration during the Communist years had instructed them to give precedence to fostering good relations with their governments in order that visiting members of the church hierarchy would be able to get visas, even if this required behavioral compromises such as encouraging members to send their children to school on the Sabbath in order not to antagonize government officials (interviews). When General Conference President Wilson was asked in an interview about his dream for the Church, his reply was that it should "grow numerically and financially, and in terms of world acceptance and influence" (Coffin 1986: 9). This statement signifies a remarkable change since the time, 120 years earlier, when Adventist leaders lived in expectation of a wave of persecution from the state which would then usher in the end of the world.

Witnesses

Although the patterning of the relationships between Jehovah's Witnesses and their surrounding societies is strikingly different from that which has held sway among Adventists, it was shaped similarly: the relationship of their national churches to their central organization, the Watch Tower Society(WTS), was crucial. This trajectory was established initially in the U.S., where the WTS oversaw the shaping of the Witnesses as what Yinger has defined as an "established sect" (1946: 22-23).

Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the International Bible Students, as the Jehovah's Witnesses were originally known, taught an urgent apocalypticism. Since he and his followers believed that they were living at the denouement of the world's history, they, like the Adventists, were separated from mainstream American society because they rejected the American Dream. However, the urgency of their apocalyptic was not allowed to fade with time: rather than postponing it, they several times set dates when the Second Coming was expected, which helped to maintain their radical millenarianism, and they interpreted major world events, such as the beginning of World War I in 1914, as confirmations of their predictions. The fact that they had neither educational institutions nor a professional clergy, and that they actively discouraged members from pursuing higher education, inhibited them from achieving upward mobility and then embracing the American Dream.

The Witness belief system also created antagonism between them and the state: since they were already citizens of God's kingdom, they could not recognize secular authority. Russell saw the nations involved in World War I as demonically controlled, and attacked other churches bitterly for acting as recruiting agents for the military. In 1918, after Russell's death, the new president, J.F. ("Judge") Rutherford, and seven other WTS directors were charged with sedition and sentenced to prison terms of 10 and 20 years. This early antagonism, rather than being allowed to wane with time, was instead heightened by Rutherford, who bitterly attacked the powers of politics, commerce, and religion, "the three chief instruments of the Devil," and then announced a new interpretation which declared that since governments were demonic,

members were no longer obliged to obey human laws unless they were in harmony with God's (Penton 1985: 70,139).

Several Witness norms marked them as different, heightening tensions with both government and the broader society. Many members were arrested during World War I because, as conscientious objectors, they refused to serve when conscripted. When Rutherford added new rules in the 1930s forbidding members from saluting the flag and honoring the national anthem, this led to the harassment of Witness children in their schools, a Supreme Court decision in 1940 that they must salute or face expulsion from public schools, and, subsequently, a sharp increase in mob violence against Witnesses – until the Supreme Court reversed its ruling in 1943 (Bergman 1990a, 1990b; Penton 1985: 143; Beckford 1975: 35). Witnesses continued to go to prison for refusing military service during World War II and again during the draft that extended from the Korean War through the Vietnam War. The WTS insisted that its members be intransigent: even though the law now offered them the option of doing Civilian Public Service in place of military service, they were instructed to refuse this also, on the ground that it was also conscription, or face excommunication (Franz 1983: 101-102). During the period 1933-1951, a total of 18,866 Witnesses were arrested and there were about 1,500 incidents of mob violence against them in the U.S. (Penton 1985: 77).

Under the strongly centralized rule of the WTS, tension between American Witnesses and their surrounding society had not abated to any discernible degree: they remained highly sectarian – an established sect.

The close connection to the WTS played a powerful role in shaping a similar trajectory in Africa. For example, it was the WTS that decided that Witnesses should "eschew all association and co-operation with other missionary bodies," so that they stood aloof from the Mission Councils there; that refused to build schools even though Africans requested them; that developed the policy that adherents should not recognize secular authority and imposed prohibitions against singing national anthems, saluting flags, voting, and entering armed forces, which greatly heightened tensions between Witnesses and newly independent states following decolonization (Assimeng 1986: 53, 218; 1970: 100). Such decisions had the effect of keeping Witnesses separate, of protecting their peculiarities or differences, of bolstering antagonisms against them – of maintaining their sectarianism.

However, as with Adventists, there were also local factors at work. For example, the WTS could not have foreseen that its baptismal ritual would be seen as magical in Central Africa, a factor which helped their growth there (Assimeng 1986: 251). It was not responsible for the fact that its missionaries were excluded from that region, and especially from Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) for decades, so that their faith was spread by poorly trained Africans who had been converted while itinerant workers in South Africa. The preaching of these men, over whom the WTS could have little control, ironically led the movement to be regarded as a manifestation of early nationalist stirrings for self-determination in the region – a reputation which heightened its tensions with the colonial administrators (Assimeng 1970: 112). Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the WTS, by arranging the export of the patterns which it had developed in the U.S., had played a major role in creating and maintaining sectarian national religious bodies in high tension with their societies.

Pentecostals

In contrast with both Adventists and Witnesses, the trajectories followed by Pentecostals were shaped by the fact that, rather than having a single centralized global organization, they had several umbrella organizations, each itself usually a collection of independent groups. Moreover, their early stages were typically "marked by strong, determined personalities whose influence was more catalytic than institutional" (Petersen 1994: 24). The loose structure allowed for a great deal of local independence – and ultimately, as noted above, for the national groups to be seen as "truly indigenous," often embracing the thaumaturgical preoccupations of the indigenous religion and culture, such as the African concern to rid communities of misfortune frequently manifested in witch-hunting cults (Assimeng 1986, 137-43). That is, while Pentecostals have often mutated, as Wilson suggested, from conversionist sects where they originated to thaumaturgical sects in the Developing World, they continue to exhibit tension with their environments, to remain sectarian. In Latin America this is in part because their membership is predominantly poor, and there is little evidence that it has fostered much upward mobility among its adherents. However, if, as some analysts expect, this pattern will change with time, Pentecostal groups may then denominationalize (Martin 1990: 231; Stoll 1990: 116).

Conclusion

This paper, accepting that church-sect theory has proven useful in understanding and predicting the evolution of schismatic religious groups such as Adventism in the U.S., asked whether the theory is also relevant to the dynamics of such groups in countries to which they were exported through missionary endeavor. It has compared the trajectories followed by Adventism, the Witnesses, and Pentecostalism in the Developing World, where all have been growing rapidly.

The theory, as modified to include new religious organizations that did not begin schismatically and more complex patterns of mutation over time, was shown to be pertinent to the evolution of religious groups introduced through missionary endeavor. It also proved useful in accounting for the profiles developed by global church organizations in those cases – Adventists and Witnesses – where their umbrella organizations are structurally centralized and hierarchical.

Adventism has considerably reduced tension between itself and its surrounding sociocultural environments over time, both at the national level and, collectively, internationally. Weber's "Protestant Ethic" applies extremely well to the Adventist experience, whether it be in America, New Guinea, Kenya, or Peru, in spite of the traditional Adventist expectation of both persecution and apocalypse. The resulting upward mobility has subsequently helped to erase the urgency of these expectations. Adventist culture places a high value on success, whether defined as numerical growth, widespread upward mobility among its members, or the flowering of exchange relationships with governments. All of these are linked, for each is contributing to sectarian liberalization.

The Witnesses, on the other hand, have maintained high tension both locally and globally. They continue often to incite persecution against themselves while they eagerly await the apocalypse.

Pentecostals contrast strongly with these examples. They exhibit much greater variety because the absence of a single centralized umbrella group has allowed the local churches to blend much more closely with the environments in which they have found themselves.

References

Assimeng, Max. 1970. "Sectarian Allegiance and Political Authority: the Watch Tower Society in Zambia, 1907-1935." *Journal of Modern African Studies, 8*: 1 (April), 97-112.

Assimeng, Max. 1986. *Saints and Social Structures*. Legon, Ghana: Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Bainbridge, William Sims. 1997. *The Sociology of Religious Movements*. New York: Routledge.

Beckford, James A. 1975. *The Trumpet of Prophecy: A Sociological Study of Jehovah's Witnesses*. New York: Wiley.

Bergman, Jerry. 1990a. "Introduction," in Jerry Bergman (ed.), *Jehovah's Witnesses I: The Early Writings of J.F. Rutherford*. N.Y.: Garland.

Bergman, Jerry. 1990b. "Introduction," in Jerry Bergman (ed.), *Jehovah's Witnesses II: Controversial and Polemical Pamphlets*. N.Y.: Garland.

Blaich, Roland. 1993. "Religion under National Socialism: The Case of the German Adventist Church." *Central European History, 26*(3): 255-280.

Brock, Peter. 1974. "When Seventh-day Adventists First Faced War: the Problem of the Civil War." *Adventist Heritage, I*(1): 23-27.

Bull, Malcolm, and Keith Lockhart. 1989. *Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream*. San Francisco: Harper and Row.

Burdick, John. 1993. *Looking for God in Brazil: The Progressive Catholic Church in Urban Brazil's Religious Arena.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Butler, Jonathan M. 1974. "Adventism and the American Experience," in Edwin S. Gaustad (ed.), *The Rise of Adventism: Religion and Society in Mid-Nineteenth Century America*. New York: Harper and Row, 173-77.

Coffin, J. 1986. "My Dream for the Church" [an interview with Neal C.Wilson]. *Adventist Review*, January 23: 8-11.

Decker, Edward Thomas. 1968. "Weiss Juden: The Story of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Third Reich." Master of Arts Thesis, Department of History, University of Denver, Denver, Colorado.

Editorial. 1941. *Review and Herald*, July 24.

Editorial. 1943. *Review and Herald*, July 22.

Finke, Roger, and Rodney Stark. 1992. *The Churching of America, 1776-1990*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press

Flaiz, T.R. 1950. "Medical Missionary Objectives", *Ministry, 23*: 5, May.

Franz, Raymond. 1983. *Crisis of Conscience*. Atlanta: Commentary Press

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. 1961. *98th Annual Statistical Report – 1960*. Takoma Park, D.C.: Office of Archives and Statistics.

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. 1993. *130th Annual Statistical Report – 1992*. Silver Spring, MD: Office of Archives and Statistics.

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. 1996. *133rd Annual Statistical Report – 1995*. Silver Spring, MD: Office of Archives and Statistics.

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. 1997. *134th Annual Statistical Report – 1996*. Silver Spring, MD: Office of Archives and Statistics.

Gooren, Henri. 1996. "Religion, Poverty, and Family Life: Small-Scale Entrepreneurs in Guatemala City." Paper read at the meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, New York City.

Graybill, Ron. 1978. "This Perplexing War: Why Adventists avoided military service in the Civil War." *Insight*, Oct.10: 4-8.

Hartlapp, Johannes. 1993. "Military Service – A Comparative Study between the New Testament Teaching and the Attitude of German Adventists." Master of Arts Thesis, Postgraduate School of Theology, Newbold College campus, Andrews University, Bracknell, England.

Johnson, Benton. 1963. "On Church and Sect." *American Sociological Review, 28*: 539-549.

King, Christine Elizabeth. 1982. *The Nazi State and the New Religions: Five Case Studies in Non-conformity*. New York: Edwin Mellen.

Lawson, Ronald. 1995a. "Seventh-day Adventist Responses to Branch Davidian Notoriety: Patterns of Diversity within a Sect Reducing Tension with Society." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 34*(3): 323-341.

Lawson, Ronald. 1995b. "Sect-State Relations: Accounting for the Differing Trajectories of Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses." *Sociology of Religion, 6*(4): 351-377.

Lawson, Ronald. 1995c. "Women and Ordination within International Seventh-day Adventism." A paper read at the meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, St Louis, October.

Lawson, Ronald. 1996a. "Onward Christian Soldiers?: Seventh-day Adventists and the Issue of Military Service." *Review of Religious Research, 37*(3): 97-122.

Lawson, Ronald. 1996b. "Church and State at Home and Abroad: The Evolution of Seventh-day Adventist Relations with Governments." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion, 64*(2): 279-311.

Lawson, Ronald. 1997. "Seventh-day Adventists and the U.S. Courts: Road Signs Along the Route of a Denominationalizing Sect." A paper read at the meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, Toronto, Canada, August.

Lewellan, Ted. 1979. "Deviant Religion and Cultural Evolution." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 18*: 3 (September), 243-51.

Martin, David. 1990. *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Morgan, Douglas. 1992. "The Remnant and the Republic." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago Divinity School.

Niebuhr, H. Richard. [1929] 1957. *The Social Sources of Denominationalism.* Cleveland: Meridian.

Nyaundi, Nehemiah M. 1993. *Religion and Social Change: A Sociological Study of Seventh-day Adventism in Kenya*. Lund, Sweden: University of Lund Press.

Penton, M. James. 1985. *Apocalypse Delayed*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Petersen, Douglas. 1994. "The Formation of Popular, National, Autonomous Pentecostal Churches in Central America." *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, 16*(1): 23-48.

Pope, Liston. 1942. *Millhands and Preachers*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Reiners, Sidney. N.D. *Betrayal in Budapest*. Grand Rapids, MN: Christians in Crisis.

Rostas, Susanna, and Andre Droogers. 1993. "The Popular Use of Popular Religion in Latin America: Introduction." Pp. 1-16 in *The Popular Use of Popular Religion in Latin America*, edited by Susanna Rostas and Andre Droogers. Amsterdam: Center for Latin American Research and

Documentation (CEDLA). CEDLA Latin American Studies, Vol.70.

Sas, A.C. N.D. *In Defense of the Law of God*. Roanoke, VA: Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement Publishing House.

Schwarz, R.W. 1979. *Light Bearers to the Remnant*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.

Sicher, Erwin. 1977. "Seventh-day Adventist Publications and the Nazi Temptation." *Spectrum, 8*(3): 11-24.

Stark, Rodney, and William Sims Bainbridge. 1985. *The Future of Religion.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Stoll, David. 1990. *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Stoll, David. 1993. "Introduction: Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America."Pp. 1-19 in *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America*, edited by Virginia Garrard-Burnett and David Stoll. Philadelphia: Temple University Press

Syme, Eric. 1973. *A History of SDA Church-State Relations in the United States*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.

Troeltsch, Ernst. [1911] 1931. *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*. New York: Harper Torchbooks. Translated by Olive Wyon. (Two volumes.)

Wilson, Bryan R. [1959] 1967. "An Analysis of Sect Development." Pp.22-45 in B.R. Wilson, *Patterns of Sectarianism*. London: Heinemann.

Wilson, Bryan R. [1963] 1969. "A Typology of Sects." Pp.361-83 in Roland Robertson (ed.), *Sociology of Religion*. Baltimore: Penguin.

Wilson, Bryan R. 1970. *Religious Sects*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Wilson, Bryan R. 1973. *Magic and the Millennium*. New York: Harper and Row.

Wilson, Bryan R. 1982. *Religion in Sociological Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, Bryan R. 1988. "The Functions of Religion: A Reappraisal." *Religion, 18*: 199-216.

Wilson, Bryan R. 1990. *The Social Dimensions of Sectarianism: Sects and New Religious Movements in Contemporary Society*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Wilson, Neal C., and Alfred Lohne. 1981. "A Letter to Soviet Adventists." *Spectrum, 11*(4): 45-46 [dated October 31, 1979].

Yinger, J. Milton. 1946. *Religion in the Struggle for Power*. Durham,N.C.: Duke University Press

Yinger, J. Milton. 1957. *Religion, Society and the Individual*. New York: Macmillan.

Yost, F. Donald. 1995. "Changes Ahead? The Numbers say 'Yes'!" *Dialogue, 7*(2): 28-29.

Notes

1. While neither Adventists nor Witnesses originated from a split within a single denomination, their origins were broadly schismatic. Adventism grew directly from the Millerite Movement, and the Witnesses indirectly from it – that is, it was born later, but its founder, Russell, was heavily influenced by former Millerites and by Millerite exegesis. While "Miller had not intended to lead multitudes out of the standard denominations, ...this was the net effect of his movement" (Bainbridge 1997: 107). Adventists inherited some of the Millerites, and they, and later the Witnesses, continued to recruit in like manner.
2. On the other hand, social science departments at Adventist colleges are typically weak, so that there has been little sociological research.
3. However, since Stark and Bainbridge were aware from the recent proliferation of what some were calling new religious movements that not all groups begin schismatically, they gave a new definition to a previously imprecise term, labeling these "nonschismatic deviant religious groups" as cults. They noted these could originate either through innovation within the culture or via importation from abroad. Stark and Bainbridge recognized that although sects and cults differ in their beginnings, once formed they are similar in their high tension with society. Moreover, cults, like sects, can potentially lower that tension and ultimately become denominations or even "the dominant tradition" (1985: 24-26).Their attention to imported cults was prompted by the prominence at that time of such groups as "Moonies" and "Hare Krisnas;" however, they focused primarily on those formed within the U.S., such as Scientologists. Although their concept of an imported cult potentially included Christian mission churches, in their discussion of "Europe's receptivity to cults and sects" and "missionaries to Europe" they applied the term only to groups defined as cult movements in the U.S., and ignored American-born sects that had been imported to Europe, such as the Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses (1985: 475-505).

Moreover, Finke and Stark, in their exploration of why the imported Methodists and Baptists became the "winners...in our religious economy", surpassing the "old colonial mainline" denominations (who had also been imported, only earlier), referred to the former as upstart sects, not cults (1992: 70). That is, Stark and his collaborators have been inconsistent in their use of the term "sect" in these instances: rather than following the distinction put forward in Stark and Bainbridge (1985: 24-25), they have in fact used the term similarly to the broadened definition adopted by Wilson and in this paper. See below.

4. The latter half of the nineteenth century and, to a gradually decreasing extent, up until about World War II. The Seventh-day Adventist Church was formally organized in 1863. It traces its roots to the Millerite movement of the 1830s and 1840s, and to the failure of Christ to return as predicted by William Miller in 1844.

5. Church-sect theory has typically been applied to religious groups in a single country, although some recent work has suggested that this is not necessary so. Both Stark and Bainbridge's survey of sects and cults imported to Europe (1985: 475-505) and Finke and Stark's discussion of nineteenth century Methodists and Baptists as upstart sects in the U.S. (1992) implied that sects could operate in multiple countries. Moreover, Finke and Stark's treatment of American Roman Catholicism as an upstart sect raised the possibility that a group that was a church or denomination in one country could concurrently exhibit sectarian qualities in another environment (1992: 143).

6. Since he has found that schismatic and non-schismatic groups evolve similarly, Wilson chooses to avoid attempting to use different terms for them.

7. However, as indicated in Notes 3 and 5 above, Stark and his collaborators were also in the process of building on similar observations (Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Finke and Stark 1992).

8. The wish of some researchers to continue to distinguish between schismatic and non-schismatic groups, together with their reluctance to follow the lead of Stark and Bainbridge in applying the term cult to non-schismatic groups because of the perjorative meaning given the term as a result of the activities of the Anti-cult Movement, led to the widespread acceptance of the term "new religious movement" for new non-schismatic groups in developed countries. I regard this as unfortunate, for it isolates this research from the theory and earlier research bearing on sects. Given the finding that the dynamics of the new groups are similar, whether or not their origins are schismatic, I favor applying Wilson's broadened use of sect to such groups. However, these are not the subject of this paper.

9. This schema was an elaboration of his original four categories ([1959] 1967: 44-45).

10. Meetings of delegates representing the various regions of the world church every five years, which are the highest legislative body in Adventism.

11. That is, the missions sponsored by the denominations and churches of the U.S. and Europe, which had typically arrived in these countries in advance of the Adventists.

12. There are currently three Adventist members of Congress, which is the highest such number to date.

13. They had often also been exposed to Adventism during several years in church-run schools.

14. The major exception to this policy of compromise occurred in South Korea, where Adventists were persuaded to train for and seek positions in medical units, even though there was no military policy guaranteeing them such an option, as a result of serving besides Americans during the Korean War. Two of the Adventists who were not successful in securing such a position were

executed on the front lines when they refused to use their weapons during the war, and dozens of others faced long terms of imprisonment (Lawson 1996a).

15. Mexico, Central America, Caribbean
16. U.S.A., Canada, Bermuda.
17. Includes Australia and New Zealand, slow growth areas, as well as many Pacific-Island groups with rapid growth.
18. Includes 8,839 members in the Middle East not listed above in 1995.
19. North America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand.
20. The rest of the world.