

## **1. Introduction**

Title: The Narrative of the Baptist Association of South Africa and its Significance for the Indian Baptist Church in Kwa Zulu Natal

### **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this research is to produce an in-depth study of the historical narrative of the Baptist Association of South Africa, a predominantly ethnic organization in Kwa Zulu Natal and its significance for the development of the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa. Indian Baptist narrative has not been given much prominence by church historians. The available records of this narrative appear in non-academic literature and are written mainly by laypersons with a few appearing in thesis and dissertations. These few academic writings do not fully reflect the socio-political forces that influenced the marginalization of this narrative. The researcher will provide a post-colonial narrative of history. In a world of post-colonial and post-modernist deconstruction of the meta-narrative, I want to propose a historical narrative of a particular people in a particular time that can serve not only as an important narrative to that people but as a critique of that meta-narrative that will hopefully expose its distortions and shortcomings.

Baptist mission in South Africa took place in the context of colonialism. Generally, in critiquing colonialism, scholars almost always criticized the West. Sugirtharajah (1998:16) contends that postcoloniality involves once colonized “Others” insisting on taking their place as historical subjects. He further asserts that unlike other

theoretical practices such as feminism and structuralism, postcolonial discourse is not about the West, but about the colonized “Other.” The narrative of the Baptist Association of South Africa is that “Other.” While this study focuses on this narrative, this narrative, as mentioned earlier, took place within a colonized and apartheid history. What sets this narrative apart from other narratives is that it uses postcolonial hermeneutics to interpret the narrative.

Rangiah, the founder of the Indian Baptist church in South Africa, was influenced by colonialism to a certain degree concerning his understanding of the Bible. However, on the issue of mission, he reflected an indigenous approach, which this research will address. Additionally, a critique of Rangiah’s influence of colonialism established that he was not exposed to the critical reflections of this phenomenon both in India and in South Africa. Largely the general membership of the current Baptist Association of South Africa has managed to insulate itself from the critical discourse generated by postcolonial critical theory.

A section of this research will also examine Rangiah’s understanding of the Bible and Bible themes. What hermeneutical principles guided his understanding and interpretation of the Bible and its themes? In the interpretation of the Biblical text, interpreters have often relied on critical theories as well as literary theories to make clear the Bible and the Bible’s textuality. Sugirtharajah (1998:ix) contends that even social science methods have also been applied to Biblical studies, but he points to a relative neglect of one of the most challenging, critical and controversial theoretical categories of this time, namely postcolonialism. The study will examine to what

extent Rangiah and the Baptist Association of South Africa neglected such a critical category.

In Rangiah's defence, theology, according to Dyrness and Karkkainen (2008: 683), is a relatively new dialogue partner with postcolonial theory, though Dyrness and Karkkainen adds that the conversation is quickly developing. Therefore Rangiah, who was reared in a colonial context, came to another colonial context and did not have the opportunity to fully engage this postcolonial theory. However, Rangiah represented a people, who, in India, were influenced and divided by the caste system. There are claims that this phenomenon influenced Rangiah's ministry in South Africa. These claims will be critically examined.

In addition, there will be an evaluative element, as no one else from the perspective of the Indian Baptist has or is countering the dominant Baptist history. The research will further critically evaluate the sequence of events of the Baptist Association of South Africa in the light of the transformation that is taking place in South Africa.

## **1.2 Describing the problem or issue**

The four main population groups in South Africa consist of Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Indians. Each of these groups has its unique history. Unfortunately, the histories of these people of colour were marginalized and often ignored. The colonial apartheid missiological paradigm made people of colour believe that their 'stories' were not important.

The narrative of the South African Indian Baptists was not academically recorded. The South African Baptist historians who represented the dominant Baptist organization did not adequately include the contributions of Black, Coloured and Indian Baptists in South Africa. The history of South African Indian Baptists is submerged in that of white Baptists and is written from a colonial and paternalistic perspective. In this way, its impact and importance is skewed or minimized. Furthermore, very little of this history appears in the curriculum at South African theological institutions.

Taylor (1987: xxi) in his book *Altarity*, writes about the suppression of minority voices by the dominant forces. He suggests that the systematic exclusion of the significance of difference in what he calls the “other” will according to him undoubtedly result in the politics of appropriation and domination. This phenomenon was evident in South Africa where the history of BASA, which represented a minority Baptist organization, suffered such a fate. Taylor (1987: xxi) further contends that the written history of nineteenth century colonial mission has been predicated on various themes of subordination of ancient culture, and socio-religious conversion of the colonized people. Additionally he states that subordination provided control over the silenced subjects.

Within the Indian Baptist church itself, not many took the initiative to document the contributions of Indians to the development of the Christian faith in South Africa. The few academics who did document these contributions have some limitations, which this study will critically evaluate. A significant omission in their writings is the role of

women. Consequently, the important role of women has not been fully recognized by the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa.

Furthermore, the vast majority of the South African Indian population depended on the oral transmission of its history. This was done through story-telling and sermons.

### **1.3 The key research questions**

This study is an attempt to answer the following research questions in order to solve the research problem, namely the under-representation of Indian Baptist history in South African Baptist history. The following key research questions will be critically examined.

1.3.1 Why are South African Indian Baptists important?

1.3.2 Why is the history of the Baptist Association of South Africa important to South African Christian history?

1.3.3 What is the significance of the work of the three Indian-born missionaries to the Baptist Association of South Africa and what role did women play in this organization?

1.3.4 How did the Baptist Association of South Africa respond to unity amongst Baptists in post-apartheid South Africa?

1.3.5 What was the contribution of the Baptist Association of South Africa to the formation of the South African Baptist Alliance?

1.3.6 What strategy did the Indian Baptists generate and how did they impact the spiritual, social, cultural and political development in South Africa?

## 1.4 Motivation

In the late 1800, natives from India arrived in South Africa to work as indentured labourers on the tea and sugar estates in the then Natal Colony. Among this group of labourers were about 150 Telugu-speaking Baptists. They settled in the Natal North Coast where they worked on Sir Leigh Hullett's Tea Estate in Kearsney near Stanger. The need for a Telugu missionary became very evident as the work of an English minister among them was impeded due to language and cultural barriers. These Indian Baptists organized themselves and decided to write to the Telugu Home Missionary Society in India requesting a Telugu-speaking Baptist minister to lead the work in South Africa. In 1903, Rev. John Rangiah accepted this invitation to South Africa to work among the Telugu Indians. The result was the formation of the first Telugu Baptist Church in Africa, which gave birth to the Telugu Indian Baptist Mission in South Africa. This organization underwent a number of name changes over the years but the history, tradition and legacy of the heroes and heroines of this organization over the last 100 years are solidly grounded in the 'soil' of Africa and, in particular, South Africa. The historical relationship between the Indian Baptists and India as well as the American Baptist Churches, USA had not been fully developed. Not much was known about the specific American Baptist organization that contributed to the development of the church among the Telugus in India, which in turn sent its own Telugu missionary to South Africa. Only a few within the Indian Baptist organization knew about the historical roots which grew between the American Baptist Churches, USA and the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa. This knowledge was limited to a general understanding of a foreign Baptist organization. After Rangiah's death, virtually all communication between the

American Baptist Churches and the Telugu Home Missionary Society ceased. I am interested in investigating this relationship. Another US-based Baptist organization, the Southern Baptist Convention, worked with the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa came later in the early 1980s. This segment of the historical development will also be examined.

In 2000 I initiated a partnership between the American Baptist Churches, USA and the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa. In 2001, at the invitation of the American Baptist Churches, USA, I attended an International Mission Conference in Wisconsin, USA. This conference focused on the participation of American Baptist missions around the world. It was at this conference where a discovery was made that the American Baptist Churches, USA was the organization that was responsible for the arrival of John Rangiah in South Africa in 1903. Baptist historians have not adequately documented the narratives of South African Baptist Indian History. Furthermore the available mission history is unfortunately not fully and accurately represented in the historical records. This is a good example of how South African Indian Baptist history had been ignored. Reclaiming the history of the Indian Baptist work in South Africa is noteworthy in the context of the multiple levels of colonization and the three centuries of institutional racism in South Africa. At the heart of these two systems of oppression was the dehumanization of peoples in Africa, Asia and the Americas. During my studies at a prominent Baptist institution in South Africa I discovered how little of Indian Baptist history was reflected in the curriculum of a mission course.

This research will include the contribution of American Baptists, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Telugu Home Missionary Society in India. The pioneering work of Rev. John Rangiah, the founder of the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa, was greatly influenced by the American Baptist Church, USA. His relationship with this organization dates back to their founding of a Baptist Church in India among the Telugu-speaking people. Some of his correspondence with this church is available in the archives at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, USA. The records of the Southern Baptist Convention's missionary work in South Africa among the Indians can be accessed in Nashville, Tennessee, USA as well. With this in mind, a large part of this research has been done in the USA. It will form part of the larger quest in South Africa, with regard to the reclaiming and rewriting of the narrative of the Baptist Association of South Africa so that it includes the narratives of people of colour. The researcher, a native of South Africa who is of Indian descent, believes in the scholarly necessity of what Michel Foucault (1980: 80-81) refers to as "the insurrection of subjugated knowledge". The study will also contribute to a better understanding of the theological, social, and cultural development the Baptist Association of South Africa made in South Africa.

### **1.5 Hypothesis**

The action and theology of the dominant church in South Africa were influenced by colonialism and apartheid, which led to the distortion and marginalization of the history of people of colour, namely Indian Baptists. The researcher will show how this reality influenced the development of the Baptist Association of South Africa.



## 1.6 Methodology

A few academic theses and dissertations have been written on this subject. Two Doctoral and one Master of Divinity theses by South African Indians include the history of the Indian Baptists in South Africa. These will be critically examined. I also gather information from micro narratives such as newsletters and brochures that highlight the histories of the Indian Baptists in South Africa. The recording of oral history will also form part of the data gathering process. Interviews with the descendents of the leaders as well as current members of the Indian Baptist church will be conducted. These descendants of John Rangiah and members live mainly in the province of Kwa Zulu Natal. An evaluation of the findings and statistics will be undertaken.

This study will apply insights of a methodological discourse called postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory, or “postcolonialism,” Dyrness and Karkkainen (2008: 683) examines the impact of European colonization on colonized societies. This theory addresses issues such as race, gender, identity, globalization and power relations. Sugirtharajah (1998: ix) describes postcolonial theory among other things as controversial. Marginal, non-Western historians are confronting and critiquing the colonial ideology and its underlying assumptions. Dyrness and Karkkainen (2008: 683) calls this a form of resistance discourse from the margins and that it undercuts those discourses that have supported colonizing attitudes, unmasking the Western ideologies behind colonial theories and texts.

## 1.7 Scope of the Research

The scope of this research spans the years from the late 1800s to 2006. The research will not examine the narrative of the Baptist Mission of South Africa, which is another Indian Baptist organization with John Rangiah as the founder, although the history of the Baptist Mission of South Africa is part of the Indian Baptist history and shares a cultural and ethnic heritage that is similar to the Baptist Association of South Africa. Nor will this study include the contributions of every leader of the Baptist Association of South Africa since its inception in 1914.

## 1.8 Review of literature

No major works on the narratives of the South African Indian Baptist exist. The following have written dissertations on South African Baptist History. Dr Charles Dayadharum, a former South African pastor now living in the United States of America, wrote a PhD dissertation, *The Role of John and Theophilus M. Rangiah in the Baptist Missionary Enterprise among Asian Indians in South Africa*. Dayadharum demonstrates in his research that John and Theophilus Rangiah were key persons in the initiation of Baptist work among Indians in South Africa from 1903 to 1947. He further discusses the homogenous and indigenous principles that the Rangiahs applied in their missionary work in South Africa. Dayadharum's study is located within the disciplines of Church History and Missiology and as such he provides a descriptive historical analysis of South Africa Indian Baptists up to 1947. His missiological observations and evaluation of Rangiah's mission work are noteworthy

given the fact that the Rangiahs were from a developing country that was influenced largely by Western and Eurocentric mission principles (Dayadharum 1999:1).

There are however limitations in Dayadharum's research. He does not fully locate this history of the Indian Baptist Church within the socio-political history of apartheid South Africa, significantly given the adverse effects this ideology had on people of colour. His treatment of apartheid received very little attention in his research. Furthermore the colonial missiological paradigm was not critically examined. Finally his research is confined to a specific period of the South African Indian Baptist church, 1903 to 1947.

This research will differ from Dayadharum's dissertation in its scope. He writes about the contributions mainly of John and Theophilus Rangiah to the Indian Baptist church in South Africa. I will go beyond the Rangiahs' tenure as missionaries and include the period up to 2006. Even the period from 1903 to 1947 does not fully reflect the history of South African Baptist Indians. An inclusive history representing men and women as well as the effects of apartheid on the Indian population will be examined.

Another fellow South African, Timothy Paul, now deceased, did another piece of research in this field. He, by his own testimony, declared in his doctoral dissertation, *From Telugu Baptist Church to open church: A study of the Indian Baptist Missionary Enterprise in South Africa*, that the main purpose of his dissertation was hermeneutical, i.e., "to understand the history of the present generation and then study it in retrospect to its initial establishment and finally coming to the present

generation.” In his research Paul showed how the Indian Baptist Churches in South Africa grew from conservative Telugu churches, to ethnic Indian churches, and finally to open Indian churches. Paul, unlike Dayadharum, who provided very little background to the socio-political history, discusses the social dynamics that were at play between the Telugus and the Whites in apartheid South Africa. Paul wrote from a layman’s perspective and thus lacked any theological reflection. Furthermore, his study tends to be located within the discipline of sociology as he focuses mainly on the social forces that were brought to bear on the Indian Baptist population (Paul 1990: 1).

Since the present study will be written from church historical and missiological perspectives, it will take into consideration the effects of societal influences on the South African Baptist population, but will include historical analysis as well as a missiological and theological examination of this mission of South African Indian Baptists. It is here that this study differs from Paul’s research.

David Newton Nathaniel, a native of India who arrived in South Africa in 1951 as a missionary to the Indians, wrote a thesis for his Master of Divinity degree at the former University of Durban-Westville, South Africa. In *The Origin and Development of the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa 1900-1978*, Nathaniel provides a good historical account of the Indian Baptists in South Africa from 1900 to 1978. A distinct feature of his thesis deals with the schism that took place in the Indian Baptist church in South Africa. He examines the notion of unity between the two factions within the Indian Church and provides a theological basis for unity (Nathaniel 1979: 1).

Here, too, this thesis will differ from Nathaniel's thesis primarily in its scope. He wrote about the Indian Baptists from the period 1900 to 1978 and about the need for reconciliation between two ethnic factions within the Indian Baptist church. The researcher will provide an expanded history that will include the period beyond 1978 and will incorporate significant historical events such as the membership of the Baptist Association of South into the Baptist World Alliance, All Africa Baptist Fellowship and the American Baptist Churches, USA. The participation of the Indian Baptists in the unity process amongst Baptists of all races in South Africa will also be included in this study.

The book *Rekindling the Fire*, by Rev. Brian Naidoo, a native South African Indian pastor, chronicles the Indian Baptist work in South Africa. He also narrates his personal journey to India where he makes acquaintances with fellow Baptists. Naidoo draws the historical data mainly from brochures and newsletters that the Indian Baptists wrote (Naidoo 2003:1).

Several brochures and newsletters were written by leaders of the South African Indian Baptist Church. These men included M. Rangiah, grandson of the pioneer missionary to the Indians, Noah Moses Israel, K. Daniel, Daniel Philip, Vijay Nathaniel, N. Timothy, Paul Daniel and Jacob and Cornelius. These brochures and newsletters address mainly the history of the South African Indian Baptists. They are well written narratives of men and women who have contributed to the work of the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa. However since almost all of them wrote from a lay perspective, the narratives lack critical theological reflection, except in Paul Daniels, a trained pastor who writes as a person who is well informed. His critical

analysis of the dominant Baptist history, being the white Baptist Union of South Africa, is worth examining. However his writings appear in newsletters and brochures and not in scholarly publications (Daniels 1993:2).

Most of the laypersons who recorded the history of the Indian Baptists wrote with the intention of preserving the legacy, traditions and customs of the Indian Baptists in South Africa. There is very little critical reflection of its ministry. This research will critically evaluate the narrative of the Baptist Association of South Africa and ministry in the light of the social transformation taking place in South Africa. This study will also critique the unity process currently taking place in South Africa amongst Baptists. The participation of Indian Baptists will be examined in the light of Scripture.

## **1.9 Outline**

### **1.9.1 Chapter One – Introduction**

The research will focus on a specific Indian group in Kwa Zulu Natal called the Baptist Association of South Africa. Its narrative and significance for the Indian Baptist Church in Kwa Zulu Natal will be examined. Chapter one will lay the foundation for the research. It will include the description of the problem, methodology, motivation for the study and a review of the literature written on this subject. Significantly, it will answer the key research question, why is South African Indian Baptist important?

### **1.9.2 Chapter Two - Europe, America, Asia and Africa in Global Missions**

In this chapter, an overview of the Baptist Mission narrative, which includes four continents, Europe, North America, Asia and Africa will be provided. Here I will show how The American Baptist Churches, USA, played a significant role in the Indian Baptist work in India and how this resulted in an indigenous missionary being sent by Indians in India to Indians in South Africa. This chapter will answer the key research question, why is the history of the Baptist Association of South Africa important to South African Christian history?

### **1.9.3 Chapter Three - Beginnings of Indian Baptist Work in South Africa**

There are three sections in chapter three. In section A the beginnings of Indian Baptist work in South Africa will be studied, starting with the life and work of Rev. John Rangiah, the pioneer of the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa. In section B I will provide a description of Rangiah's understanding of the Bible and Bible themes. The significance of this focus will provide the basic elements which influenced this church in South Africa, and will also provide insight with regards to socio-political questions. On this level, the study will analyze the impact of the Bible and Biblical themes on his theology and on the Indian Baptist Church in South Africa. Section C will study the contributions of women and other Indian Baptists. In this chapter the study will attempt to answer two key research questions: What was the significance of the work of the three Indian born missionaries to the Baptist Association of South Africa and what were the roles women play in this organization?

#### **1.9.4 Chapter Four -The Baptist Association of South Africa in the New South Africa**

In 1994 a new era dawned in South Africa. The socio-political landscape changed. It was a new beginning for South African Baptists. Baptists from the four main racially divided groups - the Baptist Convention of South Africa, which was the organization for Blacks; Baptist Union of South Africa, the organization for Whites; Baptist Association of South Africa and Baptist Mission of South Africa, both being Indian organizations; and the Afrikanse Baptiste Kerk, an Afrikaans oriented organization - began conversations on reconciliation and unity. The participation and contribution of the Baptist Association of South Africa will be critically examined. This chapter will attempt to answer the research question, how did the Baptist Association of South Africa respond to unity amongst Baptists in post-apartheid South Africa?

#### **1.9.5 Chapter Five – The Baptist Association of South Africa and the South African Baptist Alliance**

This chapter will examine the minutes of the meetings of the South African Baptist Alliance, as well as its formation prior to this watershed moment. The chapter will trace the events, bilateral meetings and consultations that took place among the various organizations. The key research question is what was the contribution of BASA in the formation of the South African Baptist Alliance?



### **1.9.6 Chapter Six - Ministry Strategies of the Baptist Association of South Africa**

Chapter six will analyze the ministry strategies the leaders of the Baptist Association of South Africa generated and used and their impact on the spiritual, social, cultural and political development in South Africa. What strategy did the Indian Baptists generate, and how did they impact the spiritual, social, cultural and political development in South Africa? This is the key research question this chapter will attempt to answer.

### **1.9.7 Chapter Seven - Conclusion**

This chapter will include a summary of each previous chapter. It will clearly state the importance of recognizing the 'stories' of Christian missions, particularly those of minorities. The significance of the narrative of the Baptist Association in Kwa Zulu Natal and its significance for the Indian Baptist Church in Kwa Zulu Natal will be emphasized.

## Chapter Two

### Europe, America, Asia and Africa in Baptist Global Missions

Baptists share a deep conviction that the Christian faith must be shared with all peoples and nations. In keeping with this conviction, Baptists have engaged in global missions since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This chapter will chronicle the history of Baptist missions in four continents: Europe, America, Asia, and Africa. It will also examine the historical development of Baptist missions on these continents. In each of these continents, I will discuss significant Baptist persons and organizations including William Carey and Adoniram Judson. I will highlight two mission organizations, The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the American Baptist Churches, USA (ABC). In addition, the researcher will discuss the American contributors Luther Rice and Samuel S Day. Finally, the research will provide an overview of missions in South Africa.

From a broad perspective, it is important to begin with an overview of Christian Missions in general. Myers (2003: 16-17) in his book *Exploring World Mission* traces the general historical roots of Christian mission. He maintains that these are found in six periods. The first is the Apocalyptic-Early Church (CE 33-200); the second, in Greek-Patristic Orthodoxy (CE 200-500); the third, in Christendom-Medieval Roman Catholic (CE 600-1400); the fourth, in Reformation-Protestant (CE 1500-1750); the fifth, in Modern Mission Era (CE 1750-1950) and the sixth, in an emerging mission paradigm for the third millennium (CE 1950 to the present). Since the Reformation, almost all mainline denominations have participated in world mission. In the six periods Myers (2003:16-20) discusses, denominations in western countries have

sent their missionaries mostly to developing countries. Therefore the conclusion can be drawn that western countries were a mission force as far as Christian missions are concerned. Baptists were a part of this movement. Has that changed? This research will show how non-western countries such as India and South Africa contributed to global mission. More specifically, it will examine in chapter 3 the narrative of the Baptist Association of South Africa and its significance for the Indian Baptist Church in Kwa Zulu Natal. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the continent that dominates mission studies, as far its origin and influence is concerned, is Europe.

## **2.1 Europe**

Europe was in the forefront of initiating missions to other countries. It occurred in what Myers called the Reformation-Protestant period (CE 1500-1750). Reference is commonly made to the William Carey era of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Carey is widely regarded as the father of the modern missionary movement. Interestingly, Brian Stanley (1992:4) places Germany's engagement in foreign missions before the Modern Missionary Period; he dates the German missionary engagement in foreign countries back to 1706. He further states that there were Moravian missionaries sent to the West Indies and the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Estep (1920:2) in his book *Whole Gospel Whole World, The Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1845-1995*, provides a historical account of Baptist Mission history. He also provides timelines for this history, which began in

1731 and ended in 1850. This helps to put Baptist Mission history into a global perspective. Estep's recording of this history largely concentrates on the contributions of the English to missions in India, with very little reference to the Germans. This is understandable, as Estep is a Baptist representing the Southern Baptist Convention and the Germans were not Baptists. It is important in a study of mission history, however, to recognize that omission of such information often skews history. The researcher contends that this was the case in South Africa, where important information and the contribution of a person and a people were omitted or inadequately recognized. This research will examine this later (Estep 1994).

Charles Dayadharum in his PhD thesis, *The Role of John and Theophilus M. Rangiah in the Baptist Missionary Enterprise Among the Asian Indians in South Africa* points to William Carey as the one who opened the door for other countries, to British, Canadian and American missionaries to India. While this is true to a certain extent, to be historically accurate almost 55 years before William Carey was born the two previously mentioned missionaries from Germany arrived in India with the Christian faith. Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plutschan were the two German Missionaries who arrived in India on 19 July 1706. Although occupying a very limited tract in that country, the obligation of bringing the blessings of Christianity within the reach of its inhabitants was acknowledged by them several years before it was admitted by Great Britain (Sherring 1884:4). While these two European missionaries did contribute to global missions, it was William Carey who played a very significant role paving the way for the movement of missionaries from America to India. He was thus known as the "Father of the Modern Missionary movement."

### 2.1.1 William Carey

William Carey was born at Paulerspury near Northampton on 17 August 1761. He was an avid reader of books on science, history, and voyages. At the age of 14, he was an apprentice to a shoemaker. Hervey (1882:1) states that among the great beginnings of modern Christian progress was the meeting between a Baptist minister and Andrew Fuller, an Englishman in Moulton, England, which resulted in discussions on missions. At this shoe shop, Carey had hanging on the wall a large map of the world on which he had written important information about religion and population. He showed great interest in acquiring knowledge of the world and its people.

Carey's interest in world missions gained momentum. He wrote a pamphlet entitled, *An Inquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. In 1792, he preached a sermon, "Expect Great Things from God; Attempt Great Things for God." On 2 October 1792, as a result of Carey's sermon, the *Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathens* was formed (Miller 1952: 37). By this time Carey was inspired further by the reading of Captain Cook's voyages to other lands to spread the Christian faith. In 1792, Carey's formation of the "Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel among the Heathens" marked the birth of the modern mission movement (Miller 1952:37). On 13 June 1793, Carey set sail for India on the Danish Kron Princessa Maria (Woodall 1951:24).

Carey (1994:6) argued that all Christians and not only the apostles were obligated to proclaim Christ to the heathen. He writes, "*If the command of Christ to teach all*

*nations be restricted to all the apostles, or those under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, then that of baptizing should be so too; and every denomination of Christians, except the Quakers, do wrong in baptizing with water.”* During this period, many in the Baptist denomination in England opposed his proposal of foreign missions. It is recorded at a meeting in 1798 that when Carey asked whether the command given by Christ to the apostles to teach all nations was not obligatory on all ministers, Dr. John Ryland, the minister at this meeting responded, “Sit down, young man. You are a miserable enthusiast to ask such a question. If God wants to convert the world, He can do it without your help.” Various historians have given slightly different versions of Ryland’s response to Carey, but the essence of his communication to Carey was one of discouragement. Estep (1920:7) claims that the response was characteristic of both the man and the hyper-Calvinism predominant among the Particular Baptists at that time. There were those who shared Carey’s views on Christ’s command to teach all nations and were highly critical of the theology held by the Particular Baptists. One such critic was Andrew Fuller, who believed that if this theology had continued unabated among the Particular Baptists, Carey’s vision would have perished and possibly the denomination as well. Fuller became a critic of the theology advocated by the Particular Baptists.

Carey was up against the odds, as many did not fully embrace his understanding of sharing the Christian faith globally. Jonathan Edwards, an American, assisted Carey’s cause. Edwards made a significant contribution to the understanding of evangelism in his book, *Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will*. He wrote on how one could reconcile evangelism with Calvinism. The insight from the reading of this book

at that time began to spread to others among the ministers of the Particular Baptists and resulted in a change of their views on evangelism.

On examination of Carey's understanding and participation in foreign missions, it must be noted that he engaged critically in theological reflections on the biblical texts on missions. Those who did not share his views confronted him on this issue, but his conviction and perseverance won the day. Today he is recognized as a very significant person, particularly in the study of Protestant missions. The high value that most historians place on William Carey's contribution is justified given the impact his contribution and legacy has made to Protestant missions globally. Many historians and missiologists have acclaimed him as a significant person in Protestant world missions.

The more recent missiologist Denton Lotz (2003), in the book, *Proceedings of the Summit on Baptist Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, asserts that Carey, made a major contribution to missions. Because of this, the next century became the Great Century of Christian missions. Lotz (2003:1) further states that at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the modern missionary endeavour was propelled into cooperative action through the Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1910. Hervey (1882: xiii) claims, "Before the day of Carey, no attempt was made to call general attention to the duty of Christians to herald universally the Great Salvation." The importance of William Carey in Missions is critical to the understanding of global missions in the Baptist denomination.

Carey did stand up against the social evils of the day such as Sati (widow burning) and child sacrifice. He encouraged the British government to pass laws against such practices which were considered sacred religious practices. On the other hand, Dharmaraj (1993:53) has challenged traditional thinking on Carey's work in India. He argued that Carey was not very sensitive to the local people's economic needs. It seemed that Carey was less willing to speak against the political and economic oppression in India.

What this chapter describes is mission from Europe and North America. The former occurred during the colonial era and as such, it was colonial mission. While there were many positive developments concerning European mission in developing countries, there were some concerns. Dharmaraj (1993:xix), in referring to European mission in India, describes colonial mission as primarily a cultural, political and missiological phenomenon. He contends that this mission expressed European collective ideas and the colonizers administrative and political practices, rather than something which expressed only a pure, visionary reflection of the natural spontaneous movement of the Wesleyan Revival in the eighteenth century. He cites various examples of how culture and colonial mission influenced India during William Carey's work as a missionary in that country. One such example is the indigo industry:

To a post colonial historian the indigo industry is painfully significant for additional reasons. The history of the indigo industry can be traced to the exploitation of the colonizers but also to the missionaries' association with the indigo planters. It laid the foundation for the monetary investment of the British people in India, and for the intertwining of colonial monetarism and missionary evangelism.



Dharmaraj (1993:53) also laments the poor wages that the workers received even under Carey. Carey believed that his work as manager of the indigo factories was providential and that it helped support his mission. The income generated from this work, enabled him to establish the Serampore Mission. While this was helpful to Carey's mission and family needs, Dharmaraj (1993: 53) asserts that the native workers who laboured long hours under him were paid anywhere from two and a half rupees a month which was extremely low. Carey (1836:187), in writing to a fellow missionary from England, named Fountain about the cost of living in India, stated that a single person would need at least sixty rupees a month to have his basic needs met. Conventional Baptist historiography hardly discusses the experience of the victims of colonialism. Dharmaraj (1993: 53) does praise the work of Carey, but states that his character shows a limited understanding of a less privileged but violently colonized people. He also cites Carey's lack of interest to speak on behalf of the economically victimized. Carey, like John Philip, a missionary in South Africa had good intentions but found themselves trapped in the ideology of imperialism (Villa-Vicencio 1988:44).

Notwithstanding the relationship between colonialism, economics, and mission on the mission fields, the study of Protestant mission provides insights into how the Christian faith was communicated on the mission fields and recorded in mission literature. In addition, one has to recognize the role William Carey played in global missions, particularly within the Baptist contribution to missions in Europe, American, Asia, and Africa. Carey, an Englishman, paved the way for global missions. The English also played a role in influencing the Americans in global missions.

## 2.2 America

The participation of America in Global missions came about largely because of an unsuccessful attempt by the English to convert the Telugus of India to the Christian faith. Sherring (1884:4) claims that as early as 1805, the General Baptists of England made a feeble attempt to establish a mission among the Telugus of India by sending out the Rev. Sutton. He took up a position in Orissa, India. Apparently, because of the lack of success, the undertaking was abandoned by the withdrawal of Rev. Sutton, their only missionary. It would appear that Rev. Sutton himself never lost confidence in the mission, in as much as thirty years afterwards, when in the United States, he urged the American Baptists to take up what the English Baptists had given up on. It is important to note that the British played an important role in influencing the Americans to engage in Baptist missions in India. He stated (Teloogoo Mission 1888: 19)

The population is immense; they are a noble race, the country always accessible, the government favourable, the language beautiful, expense moderate intercourse with the people unrestrained, and a beginning made. In my opinion you better consider well before you abandon your present ground, you will never recover if you do.

The American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society (ABFMS) did take up Sutton's call to work among the Telugus and sent a number of missionaries to India for this purpose. The ABFMS was a very significant force in India as far as the establishment of mission work and the development of the Telugu people as a Christian force is concerned. A very significant missionary, Adoniram Judson, played a pioneering role in this process.

### 2.2.1 Adoniram Judson

Adoniram Judson graduated from Brown University, USA in 1807. He later attended Andover Theological Seminary, USA and in February 1810, he resolved to devote his life to the cause of Foreign Missions (Hervey 1882:108). Adoniram Judson, at twenty five years of age, startled the American Baptists and challenged world mission by offering to be the one to go. On 19 January 1813, Adoniram Judson wrote (1994:32) from India that, *“Should there be formed a Baptist Society for the support of missions in these parts, I should be ready to consider myself their missionary.”* Judson’s call to Americans to world mission, particularly to Burma and India, fortunately was heeded. In 1835, this resulted in the establishment of mission stations in these countries. A mission station was established in India where the Christian faith continued to spread. This mission was called the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society. The research will provide a brief sketch of this Society with reference to significant figures whose names are now recorded in the annals of American Baptist Church History. Their contributions and concerns for the Telugus in India will be included.

The role of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the American Baptist Churches (ABC) in the USA are but two of the larger American Baptist organizations that contributed to global mission that impacted South Africa. In the next section, the research will discuss these two Baptist organizations. The main reason is that these two organizations have a relationship with the Baptist Association of South Africa. The research will provide a general overview of the SBC and the ABC and their participation in global missions.

### **2.2.2 Southern Baptist Convention, USA**

The Southern Baptist Convention was formed in 1845. It had two main mission boards—the Foreign Mission Board and the Domestic Mission Board (now North American Mission Board). The Foreign Mission Board, in Richmond, VA., held its first commissioning service in 1846. It is reported that more than 15,000 missionaries were appointed, about one-third of that number still serve today. After Southern Baptists assumed support for some missionaries in China, the denomination's missionary efforts grew gradually. The Civil War and the south's agrarian economy made support difficult, and, between 1861 and 1943, debt hampered the board. Considerable growth in the board's overseas work did not occur until after World War II.

Since its organization in 1845 in Augusta, Georgia, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has grown to over 16 million members who worship in more than 42,000 churches in the United States. Southern Baptists support about 5,000 home missionaries serving the United States, Canada, Guam and the Caribbean, as well as sponsoring more than 5,000 foreign missionaries in 153 nations of the world (Southern Baptist Convention 2009).

Empowered by the support of the Cooperative Program founded in 1925, and by an enlarged worldview, Southern Baptists reached 1,000 missionaries in 1955. Under the 25-year leadership of Baker James Cauthen global expansion continued, reaching 3,000-plus missionaries in 94 countries by 1980.

In 1976, the SBC initiated the Bold Mission Thrust as an effort to evangelize the world by A.D. 2000. From 1981 to 1992, Keith Parks, an SBC officer, led its International Missionary Board (IMB) to adopt new, innovative strategies to reach restricted nations and peoples that have not heard the Christian faith. In 1961 other initiatives such as the Missionary Associate Program were introduced for those not qualified for career appointment. The Journeyman Program that was designed for young college graduates began in 1965 and later expanded into the International Service Corps. In addition, the number of IMB volunteers has increased, topping 30,000 in 2000.

In 2004, IMB workers and their Baptist partners overseas reported a record 607,132 baptisms and 99,495 overseas churches. Church membership overseas in 2004 was a record 7.4 million. In the early 1980s, the SBC sent a missionary couple Rev. and Mrs Dwight Reagan to South Africa. Their Convention assigned them to work among the Asian Indians of Kwa Zulu Natal (formerly known as Natal). Their work spanned some 20 years and included church planting, organizing of youth camps, seminars and workshops, and facilitating theological education. Although the Reagans were assigned to work with the Asian Indians in South Africa, their official point of reference was the Baptist Union of South Africa. BUSA was the only recognized Baptist organization in South Africa. Other Baptist organizations depended on the BUSA on matters pertaining to receiving of missionaries, application to the State for marriage license for their ministers as well as representing them internationally. Neither the BUSA nor the South African government fully recognized the BASA.

### **2.2.3 American Baptist Churches, USA**

The second largest Baptist organization in the USA is the American Baptist Churches, USA. Its organization began in the United States in the 1600s and grew out of the Puritan-Reformist movement in England, although other congregations emerged from established British churches in the colonies. Roger Williams and John Clarke in Rhode Island founded the earliest Baptist churches in 1639 and 1645, respectively. These Baptists experienced persecution for not allowing infant baptism. The number of Baptist churches began to grow significantly after the American Revolution. In 1907, the Northern Baptist Convention was formally organized. It became known as the American Baptist Convention in 1950 and assumed its present name in 1972. Today it is called the American Baptist Churches, USA. The ABC, USA has as one of its subsidiary departments the International Ministries, which co-ordinates its mission activities globally (Faithstreams 2009).

The website of ABC, USA states, "The American Baptist Churches are healthy missional churches that nurture devoted disciples of Jesus Christ who live their lives in mission and ministry for the healing of the world through the love of God." This statement reflects the organization's strong emphasis on missions both locally and globally (American Baptist Church, USA: 2009).

In 2001, when the researcher was the president of the BASA, he discovered a part of the BASA history while attending an International Missions Conference in Wisconsin, USA in 2001 that was unclear and to a large extent lost. This was in connection with

the relationship between the BASA and the ABC. He learned that through the ABC's mission work in India, John Rangiah converted to the Christian faith and it was the same John Rangiah who responded to an invitation and came with his family to Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa in 1903 to work amongst the Telugu speaking Indians as their missionary. After a meeting with American Missionaries of the ABC at Conference at Wisconsin, the researcher learned that they knew the church that John Rangiah attended in India and he felt it was important to establish a partnership between the BASA and the ABC. This was done because he wanted the ABC's role in the narrative of the BASA, though indirect, to be acknowledged and documented. The research will now discuss the role Asia played in Baptist missions.

### **2.3 Asia**

The American Baptist Church played a very significant role in missions in Asia. On 19 January 1813, Adoniram Judson, after challenging his denomination to embark on global missions, announced his plan to go to Asia as a missionary. In 1835, mission stations in Burma and India were established. This mission was called the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society (ABFMS). A brief sketch will follow of this Society with reference to significant figures whose names are now recorded in the annals of American Baptist Church History. Their contributions and concerns for the Telugus in India will also be included.

### 2.3.1 American Baptist Foreign Mission Society

Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice prompted the organization of a missionary society to engage in missions. This organization became known as the American Baptist Missionary Society. Baptists joined to enter a number of countries. Burma was entered because of the Society's immediate association with the Judsons. Other countries such as China, Hong Kong, and Japan became mission fields. India was also identified as a mission field. Both Judson and Rice encouraged missionary work in India. The missionary society that had a part in it clarified its purpose (Brackney 1983:170) as that of:

Carrying into effect the benevolent Intentions of our  
Constituents, by organizing, a plan for eliciting, combining,  
and directing the Energies of the whole Denomination in one  
sacred effort, for sending the glad tidings of Salvation to the  
Heathen, and to Nations destitute of pure gospel-light.

With this purpose statement, it became clear at that time that the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society emphasized the spiritual need as being the primary focus. Although the meeting of social needs was accepted as an important responsibility of believers who were expected to show the love of Christ to others, the sharing of the gospel came first as the essence of the church's mission to the world. Although the spiritual need was emphasized, the work in the field in India reflected a very balanced approach to mission work. The Americans met the many social needs of the Telugu people. It is very easy to articulate the missionary purpose of the church but when one finds oneself in a context of poverty and hunger, one has to reflect very carefully on what it means to have a balanced approach to mission work. Many schools, hospitals, and dispensaries were established to take care of the social needs of the Telugu people in India. According to statistics in 1866



in Ongole, India, there were about 13,794 patients and the Society had a hospital in this village to cater to the physical needs of these Telugu people. On many occasions, Mission Boards in the home countries had very little clue about the realities on the mission field and sometimes were very narrow in their theology. Here the American Baptist Foreign Missionaries demonstrated their willingness to embrace the social needs of the Telugus without having as their goal the salvation of these people. Dana M. Albaugh (1962:127) puts it very succinctly by stating that we must also try to achieve a proper balance between our deepest faith and our ministry to human need. He goes on to say that it is not enough to proclaim a limited gospel and that the gospel must express itself in meeting human need and in building a new order of relationships.

India was open to the Gospel and the question was, “Who was going to take up that challenge of becoming a missionary to the Telugus of India where there were both spiritual as well as social needs?” In 1835, the American Baptists took up the challenge and commissioned missionaries to this mission field in India. Rev. and Mrs. Samuel Day responded to that challenge.

### **2.3.1.1 Rev. Samuel S. Day**

In 1835 Rev. Samuel S. Day, his wife and eleven others sailed on the ship *Louvre* to this Telugu field in India. Day was born in Ontario, Canada, and attended the Hamilton Literary and Theological Seminary. In 1835, he was appointed missionary to the Telugus (Shenston 1888:12). In early February 1836, the Days arrived in India and then proceeded to Vizagapatam where they commenced with their study of the

Telugu language. The following year in 1837, this couple travelled about 120 miles visiting about 40 villages, of which one-half had probably never before seen a missionary or even a Christian. Rev. Day recognized the huge responsibility that was his in terms of the mission to the Telugu people. He repeatedly made requests to the American Baptist Convention for more workers for India. He writes (Jacob and Cornelius 1953:53), "...Now, my heart sinks, or swells with a kind of desperation, my hands grow weak, or are nerved for a moment as by despair. Where are the young brethren I left in Hamilton, pledged to the foreign field? Have the heathen no claim?"

His request was accepted, and on 9 March 1840, Rev. S. Husen and his wife arrived in India to assist the Days. Having received assistance from the Husens, the Days worked hard in the spreading of the Gospel among the Telugus. Several tours were made in the early part of 1839; Rev. Day in one day is recorded as distributing 3500 tracts and 500 portions of scripture. Both he and Husen attended two festivals that were celebrated by the Telugu people. Here too, they distributed tracts and portions of scripture. It is here in Nellore that mission work was established and regular reports of the work were submitted to the American Baptist Convention in the USA.

In 1846, Rev. Day took ill and returned to America. During this period, the mission in Nellore was left in the care of the Telugu leaders. Here it is important to mention the leadership the Telugus gave to the mission. It is reported (Shenston 1888:18) "The native assistants in the sole charge of the mission are reported as 'steadfast, faithful, and diligent.' On his return, he learned that the executive Committee of the American Baptist Convention was discussing the propriety of abandoning the mission. This was the second attempt by the Board to discontinue the mission among the Telugus

(The History of the Telugu Mission: 1893:45). Both of these attempts failed, and in 1848 a decision was made by the Board to send the Days back to Nellore. Mr and Mrs Jewett accompanied the Days to Nellore.

### **2.3.1.2 Layman Jewett**

Mr and Mrs Jewett worked amongst the Telugus, travelling from village to village. The natives in their tours of the villages assisted them. It was a custom at the mission house where they resided that at the beginning of each New Year, an early morning prayer be held on the top of a hill overlooking Ongole, which later became their mission bungalow. This place of prayer became known as Prayer Meeting Hill. In the March 1936 issue of *The Watchman Examiner*, J.A. Curtis (1936: 322) wrote about the significance of this place of prayer. Later, in John Rangiah's mission in South Africa, he also identified a hill in Kearsney, the headquarters of the Indian Baptist work where he spent many hours praying. That hill became known as Gospel Hill.

Jewett later acquired a house and land for the mission in Ongole. In Ongole Jewett baptized the first convert to Christianity called Obulu. Obulu became and remained a faithful preacher until his death in 1880. Due to ill health, Jewett and his family had to leave the Telugu mission and returned to the United States.

In appraising the work among the Telugus, one cannot ignore the social forces that were at play. The Telugus learned the administrative skills, the strong emphasis on social and educational programs and the fervour and passion for mission and

evangelism. The other noteworthy influence was the movement of these people towards self-sufficiency. Perhaps the greatest stride that the Telugu people took was to establish their own Mission Society, which came to be known as the Telugu Home Missionary Society. This Society sent John Rangiah as its own missionary to South Africa.

Prior to Rangiah's arrival in South Africa, he received his education at schools established by the American Baptist Foreign Society in India. Those Telugus that came to South Africa on the indentured labour system that was offered by the British in South Africa also received their education at the same school. One of these men was Mr D. Benjamin, an educated Christian. The Americans stressed the development of the indigenous workers for evangelism and Christian service. It is important to note that the Americans had a goal to have an indigenous pastor for every church established as well as a teacher for every village, a strategy that John Rangiah employed in his work among the Telugus in Kwa Zulu Natal (NIBA News: 1953:15) Americans were also concerned about the economic and spiritual welfare of the Telugus. In 1867 when a famine hit India, the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society's Rev. J.E. Clough entered into a contract with the authorities to cut a canal, which gave employment for six months to many thousands of Indians. He employed his Indian preachers to supervise these workers with the understanding that they would preach, talk, and read to them as often as circumstances would allow. As a result, many converted from Hinduism to Christianity. It is recorded that during the latter part of June 1878, Clough baptized thousands of Telugus, and this resulted in the growth of the Baptist Church in India.

According to statistics, the membership of the Ongole Church rose to 12804 (Wood, Lipphard and Doris 1930:167).

The origin of Baptist missions had its roots in Europe, where two Germans in 1706 went to India to engage in mission work. The British, through the contribution of William Carey, started the modern missionary movement in the 18<sup>th</sup> century influencing the Americans to take up the challenge to go to India to work among the Telugus. Through the formation of the Telugu Baptist Home Missions Society, the Telugus of India became a self-sufficient mission organization and sent a missionary family to Africa in 1903.

## **2.4 Africa**

African history in the early 1960s, according to Gaily Harry (1970: v), was a minor adjunct to European studies. Africans were believed to have undergone a series of experiences which had never been recorded, and as a result their past could not be recovered. Whilst this is largely true when examining European studies on Africa, American studies on the continent do reflect the experiences of Africans, particularly in the slave trade era in the United States of America. In this section, the research begins with a general overview of Baptist missions in Africa and will proceed to set the context for the historical development of Baptist missions in Africa with special emphasis on the Baptist Association of South Africa in Kwa Zulu Natal.

According to Brain Stanley (1992: 106-122) British Baptist missions in Africa included countries such as Cameroon and Congo (1992: 439-439). On the other

hand, American Baptist Mission in Africa included Liberia (Gammell 1849: 244). The history of missions in Africa not only includes the contribution of Europeans but of a black clergyman, Lott Carey. He was an African American slave. In 1821, Carey was ordained in Virginia, USA and sent as a missionary to Liberia in Africa (Gammell 1849: 244-247).

Did the Europeans play a role in missions in South Africa? In South Africa, there are five Baptist organizations, namely the Baptist Association of South Africa (BASA), The Baptist Mission of South Africa (BMSA), The Afrikanse Baptiste Kerk (ABK), the Baptist Convention of South Africa (BCSA), and the Baptist Union of South Africa (BUSA). A brief historical overview of each of the organization follows.

#### **2.4.1 The Baptist Union of South Africa (BUSA)**

According to Hudson-Reed (1983:15), a handful of Baptists left Britain in 1820 to come to the Cape Colony. These settlers maintained close contact with their home churches and founded the first Baptist church in Grahamstown. The early pioneers of the BUSA churches were Mr. and Mrs. J. Temlett, Mr. John Miller and Mr. William Shepherd, Mr. And Mrs. Trotter and Mr. And Mrs. Prior. William Miller was elected and inducted as minister of the first Baptist church in Grahamstown. Their meeting place for worship was a hut built with wattle and daub. In 1823, according to Hudson-Reed (1983:15), a permanent building was erected in St Bartholomew Street, Grahamstown, and in October 1977, when the BUSA celebrated its Centenary, it was declared a National Monument.

A second influx of immigrants was to play a very important part in Baptist beginnings in South Africa. They came from Germany in 1857 and were essentially military in character. On 15 April 1861, the first Baptist church of German origin was formed at Frankfort. The work grew at an amazing rate because the German Baptists followed the motto “every Baptist a missionary”. New churches were formed throughout South Africa. On 11 July 1877, the Baptist Union of South Africa was formed. The BUSA carried on with missionary zeal. This was confirmed by John N Johnson (Hudson-Reed 1977:34), who recorded the words of Rev. R. Matterson on 1 June 1887, at the at the BUSA Assembly. Matterson read an address on behalf of the Dutch Reformed, Congregational, Presbyterian and Wesleyan Methodists in which he stated (1977:34)

From the beginning it has also been in the forefront of missionary enterprise. You have the honour to belong to the Church of William Carey and Andrew Fuller, and a noble succession of Christian men and women of like large-heartedness, who have won signal triumphs for the Cross of Christ in other lands.

The role of William Carey, the Baptist from England is recognized by the three major denominations in South Africa as an important person in missions. It was through the influence of William Carey that South African White Baptists began to show interest in missions.

In 1892, the South African Baptist Missionary Society (SABMS) was formed. The purpose of this organisation was to get missionaries from England to witness to the “natives”. Many Blacks were converted. Between 1898 and 1918, Black members of the BUSA grew from 172 to 4185. Ministry also spread to the Coloured and Indian people. Many of the missionaries who came to work among the Blacks, Coloureds,

and Indians were from England and Germany. The BUSA sent missionaries to many parts of the world, including Malawi, Algeria, Botswana, Mauritius and other African countries. The first Indian Baptist to be sent as a missionary to a foreign country was Rev. Edward Moses and his so-called coloured wife, Mrs. Vivian Moses.

#### **2.4.2 The Baptist Convention of South Africa (BCSA)**

William Mashologu, a Black spiritual leader, started black Baptist churches wherever he opened Black schools. The National Black American Baptists aided him. Later, German missionaries and British settlers also started missionary work among blacks. However, their mission enterprise and the colonization policy were complementary to each other. The missionaries' job was to evangelise the 'natives' but also to make them subservient to the British crown. Missionaries became promoters of racial segregation as they felt that separate churches for settlers and Africans was necessary.

The Baptist Union, which was the only recognized Baptist Body in the country at that time, remained passive when the state, in 1957, proposed an additional clause to the Apartheid laws barring Blacks from attending churches in the so-called white areas. Even the policy of the Missionary Society (formed in 1892) was racist as whites dominated the mission field and church work. However, in the 1960s, the motto of this society was "Evangelization of the Bantu by the Bantu". Bantu Pastors were employed to evangelize Bantu communities. The Baptist Union appointed White missionaries to oversee the Bantu Pastors. Black churches rejected this policy because of the dominating attitude of many white missionaries. In 1987, the majority



of Blacks in the Baptist Union broke away from the BUSA and formed the BCSA (Hoffmeister and Gurney 1990:34).

### **2.4.3 The Afrikanse Baptiste Kerk (ABK)**

The South African Afrikaans speaking Christians are important members of the Christian community. Their faith, history, tradition, and culture are well documented in South African church history. Among this population group are Baptists whose presence can be traced to the 1800s. Hudson-Reed (1983:207-232), in his book *By Taking Heed*, records that the ABK had its roots in the 1800s. Jacobus Daniel Odendaal, who was baptized by a German minister in 1867, played a significant role in the formation of the Afrikanse Baptiste Kerk. In the early days, before the formation of the ABK, a previous body called the Afrikanse Baptiste Vereeniging did not last long. (Reed further records that the Afrikanse Baptiste Vereeniging was short-lived.) Today the ABK is still in existence and has churches throughout South Africa.

### **2.4.4 The Baptist Mission of South Africa (BMSA)**

The Baptist Mission of South Africa has a history similar to the Baptist Association of South Africa. Unfortunately, in 1914, BASA and BMSA suffered a schism, though the organizations have enjoyed a cordial relationship with each other since then. A significant leader of the BMSA is Rev. V.C. Jacob, who arrived from India in 1911 and worked as a missionary among the Indians of Kwa Zulu Natal (Brain 1983:156). The BMSA sent its first missionary, the Rev. Patrick John, to a foreign country,

Mozambique in the 1990s. He died in 2004 from malaria while still on the mission field.

#### **2.4.5 The Baptist Association of South Africa (BASA)**

Chapter 3 will examine the BASA and its participation in missions. In 1994, Revs T Rhandram and Rodney Ragwan co-led a mission trip to Swaziland. Later, other short-term trips were undertaken to Mozambique, Malawi and India. In 2001, a historic development took place; BASA sent its first missionary family, the Reverends Reggie and Evelyn Maistry and their two young sons, Andrew and Philip, to Malawi (Ragwan 2004:7).

Noah Moses Israel, the grandson-in-law of the pioneer missionary to South Africa, in a presentation to the 2004 Baptist World Alliance in Seoul, Korea, sketched the history of the Baptist Association of South Africa, beginning with North America where a missionary and his wife travelled to Asia and in particular to India. The Telugus received the Christian faith and sent an indigenous Christian missionary and his family to South Africa in 1903. Noah's presentation, however, does fall short because it excludes England's role in this historical narrative. To be more accurate historically, the history of BASA begins in England in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with William Carey. Therefore, the genesis of Indian Baptist Missions is in Europe. America joined this missionary enterprise, which influenced Asia, and finally Africa received a missionary family. Of importance in this historical study is the fact that Africa receives a missionary family from India resulting in the birth of the Baptist Association of South Africa. Later in this chapter, the research will examine

significant persons as well as the various Baptist mission organizations in these continents, which contributed to the spread of the Christian faith globally.

Unfortunately, unlike Lott Carey, who received some recognition for his contribution to Africa and (scholarly literature will testify to this) as a missionary, John Rangiah, the missionary to South Africa, is not adequately recognized in the history of missions in South Africa. Du Plessis (1911:1-494), in recording Christian missions in South Africa, states that South Africa received many missionaries from England, Germany, France, Holland, Scotland, Norway, Portugal and the Netherlands, but he failed to mention this important person, John Rangiah, who came as a missionary to the Indians in South Africa.

Since there is an omission by Du Plessis of Rangiah's arrival in South Africa in 1903 to do mission work among the indentured labourers, it renders the history of missions in South Africa incomplete as it excludes an important segment of the South African population. This pattern of the history of the Indian Baptists receiving inadequate recognition in scholarly literature has persisted since the formation of the Baptist Association of South Africa in 1914 up to the present. The researcher himself, while studying Missions at a Baptist College, observed in the syllabus how minimal recognition was given to the Indian Baptist history in South Africa. The study that is noteworthy within the scholarly literature is J. B. Brain's book *Christian Indians in Natal, 1860-1911* (1983: xv) in which she provides a historiography of South African Indians.

Brain's historiography (1993: xv) provides very insightful information on the Indians who emigrated from India to South Africa. According to her there were over 150,000 people who arrived from India in South Africa at various periods between 1860 and 1911. She cites the reasons for their immigration to South Africa, particularly to the province of Natal, now called Kwa Zulu Natal as periodic famine; poverty; high taxation; poor seasons; plant diseases and borer beetle infestation affecting the coffee plantations of South and Central India; the famines of 1877-8, 1896-7, and 1899-1900; the decline in the rupee and rising prices.

Brain (1983: xvi) also highlights a sociological phenomenon, the caste system. She describes the caste system as fostering "an attitude of reverence to members of the higher castes, of friendliness to those of equal status, and of antipathy to those of lower degree". Those who emigrated to Natal were people from every caste, from Brahmins, of whom only a small number migrated, to pariahs or dalits and all castes in between. Brain also recorded important statistics of the Christian immigrants to South Africa. She lists the year of arrival, ship name, date of arrival, entry number name of immigrant and their father, age, sex, place of origin, denomination and their status after they arrived. She also states that there were some who boarded these ships bound for South Africa who were not indentured labourers. The Rangiah family was among those passengers who boarded a ship in 1902 and arrived in South Africa in 1903 (Brain 1983:154).

The pioneer of the Indian Baptist work is Rev. John Rangiah. He established the first Indian Baptist Church in 1903 on the African continent. In 1910, Rangiah travelled to Edinburgh in Scotland to attend a missionary conference. His interest

was not confined to South Africa; he had a global outlook. A more in depth historical narrative of the Baptist Association of South Africa, which was founded by Rev. John Rangiah, together with his ministry and legacy, will be discussed in chapter three.

The key research question of why are South African Indian Baptists important will be answered in chapter two. The study traced the Baptist missionary enterprise, which had its genesis in Europe and its development in North America, India and South Africa, is very significant. It also provided a brief overview of Christian mission as well as an examination of the role of important persons and organizations in the Baptist missionary enterprise. The research then discussed the contribution of continents such as Europe, America, Asia, and Africa in global missions. It highlighted important individuals such as William Carey, Adoniram Judson, Samuel Day, and the various mission organizations. Finally, it provided a historical overview of five South African Baptist organizations.

In summarising the history of Baptists, their genesis being in Europe, but going on to include countries such as the US, India and South Africa, the following findings were observed. First, this history features the contributions mainly of Caucasian and western persons and the organizations they represent. The roles of India and South Africa are not mentioned as participants in this history. Secondly, even the research on Baptist history has focused mainly on two continents, Europe and America, and their participation in global missions. Thirdly, although these were historical developments in the study of Baptist global mission, there has not been a study that has chronicled this mission narrative involving Europe, America, Asia, and Africa. Finally, and more importantly, this missionary narrative has not included the

historical connection between South Africa and India, which eventually resulted in the formation of the Baptist Association of South Africa. It is the researcher's contention that Baptist mission history is exclusive. Specifically, the roles of India and South Africa, two developing countries, have been excluded. Furthermore, the roles of people of colour have been excluded. This creates an impression that mission is the responsibility of Europeans and Americans and that poorer countries are not important in the missionary enterprise. Given the historical fact that the first Indian Baptist Church in South Africa and in Africa was due to the participation of Indian Baptists from two countries, India and South Africa, it is important to highlight this key development. Finally, it is important to show how Christians who were people of Indian descent from India but living in South Africa cooperated in global missions to form the Baptist Association of South Africa. The next chapter will examine the narrative of the early beginnings of Indian Baptist churches in South Africa.