

Fredrik Franson (1852–1908): Promoter of Mission in Southern Africa

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Abstract

Fredrik Franson (1852–1908), a dual citizen of Sweden and the USA and an international revival evangelist, is among the most significant mission founders and mobilisers of the Holiness Movement during the last quarter of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Within 22 years he founded 15 faith missions, four free-church federations in Europe and North America and several independent churches in the USA, New Zealand and Australia. This article focuses on the episodes of his life relating to southern Africa, namely the sending of the first missionaries of the *Free East Africa Mission*, the *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America*, and the founding of the *Evangelical Church* in Swaziland in 1893. Furthermore, it deals with Franson's evangelistic campaigns in southern Africa, his visits to mission stations, participation in mission conferences and his partnership with Andrew Murray, Worcester, between spring 1906 and summer 1907. The article closes with a brief reflection of the lasting impact of Franson and his missionaries in southern Africa.

Keywords: Fredrik Franson; Andrew Murray; Malla Moe; Holiness Movement; Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America; Evangelical Church in Swaziland



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Introduction

Few people might know that the *Evangelical Church* in Swaziland, founded in 1893 by the *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America*, owes its existence to the Swedish-American revival evangelist and mission mobiliser, Fredrik Franson.

Even fewer might be aware that the leading figure of the Holiness Revival in South Africa, Rev. Andrew Murray, invited numerous international Christian leaders to visit South Africa, to support his efforts in evangelism and mission mobilisation. Among them was Fredrik Franson, who travelled across the countries in southern Africa preaching and speaking from April 1906 to August 1907. Who was Fredrik Franson and in what respect was he a promoter of Christian mission in southern Africa?

Swedish Disciple of Moody

Franson was born on June 17, 1852 on a small farm in Pershyttan, a south-western Swedish province of Värmland as the eighth of nine children. The most striking features of his school time were his pronounced language skill in Latin, Greek and German and his vital interest in mathematics and theology. Due to the economic crisis in Scandinavia the coal mine of Nora was closed in 1868, which led the Franson family to emigrate to the USA. They sold their house and land, paid their debts and left Sweden for North America (Torjesen 1984, 421).

The big turn in the life of Franson occurred when his family became part of the *First Swedish Baptist Church* at Estina in Saunders County, Nebraska, where in 1871 Franson decided to follow Christ. A bit later, Estina went through a time of revival in which Franson was encouraged to confess Christ publicly. Soon he was asked to serve as lay preacher. In 1875, then 23 years old, he was installed as secretary of the *Scandinavian Baptist Convention of Nebraska, Western Iowa and Dakota* (Reifler 2018, 37).

Latest in autumn 1876, Franson became part of the team of Dwight Lyman Moody (1837–1899) in Chicago, one of the most renowned evangelists of the 19th century, founder of the *Chicago Avenue Church* (today known as *Moody Memorial Church*), the *Moody Bible Institute* and the *Northfield Seminary for Young Ladies* (Princell 1909, 16). Moody's evangelistic preaching in Great Britain and in the USA led thousands to believe in Christ. Franson's involvement in Moody's 1875–1876 city campaigns opened up entirely new opportunities for Franson to proclaim the Gospel. Under Moody's guidance, he was systematically introduced to the method of contemporary mass evangelism, through which people found new life in a personal decision for Christ. Franson's active participation in Moody's four-months evangelistic city campaign in Chicago from October 1876 to January 1877, led him to the heart of the North American revival movement (Gustafson 2001, 207; Moody 1900). Franson later became known as Moody's Swedish disciple (Thörnberg 1954, 153).

Franson conducted his first independent evangelistic campaign in Swede Bend, Iowa, at the age of 24. Further evangelistic crusades followed in Minnesota and Nebraska. On August 4, 1878, Franson became a member of Moody's *Chicago Avenue Church* and received official certification as an independent interdenominational evangelist (Fiedler 2018, 55). Franson was the first missionary sent out by *Chicago Avenue Church* (Flood 1985, 11; Gustafson 2004, 107ff). This laid a solid foundation for his future 30-year period of evangelistic activities in the whole world. Franson remained a member of the *Chicago Avenue Church* for the rest of his life. Until the beginning of June 1881, Franson evangelised in the states of Minnesota, Utah, Colorado and Nebraska and founded several churches (Reifler 2018, 37–39).

Mission Mobiliser and Mission Founder

In the summer of 1881, Franson began his evangelistic work in the Scandinavian countries, Germany and France. The major evangelistic campaigns were followed by follow-up meetings in which people who decided to follow Christ were cared for by a trained team of counsellors and steps were taken to integrate them into the local Christian community.

Franson was convinced of the urgency of worldwide evangelism and mission. He also realised that he could not carry out this task alone. Therefore, he wanted to win as many Christians as possible from different social classes to evangelise in their own cultural context and for missionary service worldwide. To realise this vision, he offered evangelistic courses. Franson trained new converts in evangelistic courses for personal evangelism in order to prepare them to communicate Jesus Christ in their own culture. Some of the participants later became mission leaders and/or missionaries. From 1884, these evangelistic courses became an integral part of the concept of strengthening the revival in the Scandinavian countries, later in Germany, in the USA, and partly also in China (Franson 1884). They led to the planting of numerous churches, four free-church federations and 15 missionary societies (Reifler 2018, 149–152).

Franson's evangelistic courses also served to recruit mission leaders, Bible colporteurs, full-time male and female preachers, as well as to train local and international evangelists and to dispatch missionaries to faith missions around the whole world. Franson's evangelistic work made him a mission mobiliser and founder of new faith missions in Europe and in the USA for a social class that had so far hardly found any access to the classic mission societies; among them many artisans, seamstresses, nurses, midwives, farmers, factory workers, employees and members of the army (Reifler 2018, 84).

Franson's interest in world mission goes back to the famous May Meetings in London 1882, where he gave the opening address to the 79th Annual Conference of the *Sunday School Union* (1882, XVI) and was accepted into the British section of the *Evangelical Alliance* (Proceedings 1882). Through his participation in the May Meetings in the

Exeter-Hall in London, Franson became familiar with the work of many British faith missions and Christian ministries and thereby gained a new vision for the challenge of worldwide missionary work (Fiedler 2018, 51).

Franson's visit to Switzerland from March to October 1886 served mainly for personal recreation and at the same time led to a reorientation with regard to the unreached people groups, which had not been reached by the Gospel so far. Until then, Franson's activities were limited to evangelism in the USA, Scandinavia, England and German-speaking areas. Now his vision was expanded, leading to a focus of his activity on the predominantly non-Christian societies (Reifler 2018, 49–50).

Between 1884 and 1889 Franson continued evangelising in Europe, offering evangelistic courses to enable Christians to serve in their own context, to recruit new missionaries mainly for China and to found new missionary societies: *Norwegian Mission Covenant* in 1884, *Swedish Holiness Union* and *Norwegian Evangelical Orient Mission* in 1887, *Danish Mission Covenant* and *Free Mission Covenant of Finland* in 1888, the *Free East Africa Mission* in 1889, the *German China-Alliance-Mission*, today called Alliance-Mission and the *Swiss Alliance Mission* in 1889, today called *SAM global* (Reifler 2018, 238–239).

After nine years in Europe and the Middle East, Franson returned to the USA on September 7, 1890. On October 14, 1890, Franson conducted his first North American evangelistic course at *Pilgrim Church* in Brooklyn, New York. Fifty women and men participated in this training. This evangelistic course is regarded as the beginning of the *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America*, today called *The Evangelical Alliance Mission*. These 50 first missionaries were all sent to China. As Franson also recognised the need to bring the Gospel to unreached peoples throughout Asia and Africa, he recruited a total of 62 additional missionaries through *The Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America* until April 1892. Eight were sent to Swaziland, the remainder to Japan, the Himalayan region and China (Reifler 2018, 64–66).

Franson organised a functional home committee in the USA, which assured the connection between local churches, church federations and his missionaries in southern Africa. The committee also maintained transnational connections to the *China Inland Mission* and the other national *Alliance Missions* in the Scandinavian countries, continental Europe and the rest of the world (Torjesen 1984, 534). The national missionary societies founded by Franson in Europe kept their administrative independence.

Founding	Name	Origin and Progress
1884	<i>Det Norske Misjonsforbundet</i> (Norway)	Emerged from the Lammers Free Churches in Norway (1856)
1884	<i>The Evangelical Free Church of North America</i> (USA)	
1887	<i>Helgelseförbundet</i> (Sweden)	1997 fusion with <i>Evangeliska Frikyrkan</i>
1887	<i>Den Norske Kinamisjon</i> (Norway)	Today <i>Evangelisk Orientmisjon</i> and part of the <i>OMF International</i> (Norway)
1888	<i>Det Danske Missionsforbund</i> (Denmark)	
1888	<i>Fria Missionsförbundet i Finland</i> (Finland)	Since 1923 <i>Suomen Vapaakirkko</i> (Finland)
1889	<i>Den Frie Østafrikanske Mission</i> (Norway)	Since 1899 part of <i>Det Norske Misjonsforbundet</i> (Norway)
1889	<i>Deutsche China-Allianz Mission</i> (Germany)	Since 1892 <i>Allianz-Mission</i> (Germany)
1889	<i>Schweizer Allianz Mission</i> (Switzerland)	Since 2017 <i>SAM global</i> (Switzerland)
1890	<i>The Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America</i> (USA)	Today <i>The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM)</i> (USA)
1895	<i>Finska Alliansmissionen</i> (Finland)	Since 1923 <i>Suomen Vapaakirkko</i>
1897	<i>Svenska Mongolmissionen</i> (Sweden)	Since 1951 <i>Svenska Mongol-och Japanmissionen</i> , since 1982 part of <i>Evangeliska Östasienmissionen</i> , today <i>OMF International</i> (Sweden)
1899	<i>Vandsburger Diakonieverband</i> (Germany)	From which emerged the <i>Deutscher Gemeinschafts- und Diakonieverband</i> and the <i>Marburger Mission</i> (Germany)
1900	<i>Kvinnliga Missionsförbundet</i> (Finland)	
1900	<i>Svenska Alliansmissionen</i> (Sweden)	
1901	<i>Det Norske Misjonsallianse</i> (Norway)	
1902	<i>Scandinavian Seamen's Mission</i> (Australia)	
1903	<i>Scandinavian Seamen's Mission</i> (China)	
1906	<i>Armenian Spiritual Brotherhood</i> (Armenia)	<i>Armenian Brotherhood Bible Churches</i> (Armenia)

Figure 1: Missionary societies and free-church federations founded by Franson (Reifler 2018, 238–239)

World Evangelist

Franson's first world tour (1892–1895) took him to numerous European countries, where he was able to deepen his contacts with churches, congregations and missionary societies. It also made it possible for him to visit biblical sites in Turkey and Palestine. During his onward journey to Asia he read on Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Shintoism (Reifler 2018, 68–72).

Franson's second world tour (1902–1908) also took him to southern Africa. He had previously visited the Pacific Islands, planted churches and missionary societies in New Zealand and Australia, held training conferences in China, visited Japan and participated in the first Korean revival in 1903. He had travelled to the Himalayas and India, traversed almost all Middle Eastern countries and participated for six weeks in the revival in Marash, Armenia. He then proceeded via Egypt and Uganda to southern Africa, where he spent 16 months. After his evangelistic campaigns in southern Africa, Franson continued his world tour through South America, Central America and the Caribbean. He reached his adopted country, the USA, in 1906, where he died exhausted a short time later at the age of 56 (Reifler 2018, 79–83).

This review of Franson's life was necessary to contextualise his involvement with and recruitment of missionaries for southern Africa and his activities in southern Africa. The following section will examine each episode in more detail, namely sending missionaries from Norway to southern Africa, from the USA to Swaziland, and his own visit to Swaziland and South Africa.

Sending Missionaries from Norway to South Africa

Franson's first involvement with Africa emerged from his acquaintance with Paul Peter Wettergreen (1835–1889). Wettergreen had served as missionary with the *Norwegian Mission Society* in Zululand from 1861 to 1870. After his separation from the *Church of Norway*, he was rebaptised and founded a congregation of *The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church* in Arendal in 1877, which he led until 1888. Wettergreen attended one of the evangelistic training courses Franson held in mid-1888 (Hale 1997, 177).

Influenced by Franson's vision to evangelise the world before the return of Jesus Christ, Wettergreen invited Norwegian believers to donate for the foundation of a free Norwegian mission in East Africa (*Missionæren*, 1888) and in January 1889 during a sermon in Larvik, publicly called for the formation of this mission (*Missionæren*, 1889). Despite its geographically misleading name, the *Free East Africa Mission* was established in 1889 for the purpose to evangelise the unreached indigenous people of southern Africa. In practice its 10-year influence was limited to the Natal area (Hale 1997, 177).

In the beginning of 1889, Franson travelled to Malmö (Reifler 2018, 58) to attend the farewell service of Rev. Paul Peter Wettergreen and his two sons Jacob (1866–1889)

and Olaf (1867–1926), who were born in Zululand and trained at Moody’s Bible school in Mount Hermon, Massachusetts in the 1880s (Hale 1991, 239). The Wettergreens left Malmö with Franson in 1889 and started the mission project in southern Africa (Reifler 2018, 58). Unfortunately, Paul Peter Wettergreen suffered a severe stroke in July 1889 while en route from Europe to southern Africa and passed away (Hale 1997, 180). His two sons became leaders of the *Free East Africa Mission* in Durban, South Africa. Franson benefitted from these contacts when he visited southern Africa in 1906–1907. The small *Free East Africa Mission* was integrated into her older sister organisation, the *Norwegian Mission Covenant* in 1899 (Fiedler 2018, 52).

Recruiting and Sending Missionaries from the USA to Swaziland

While working as an independent evangelist and mission mobiliser in the USA (1890–1892), Franson also had contacts to some African-American believers. Motivated by the vision to bring the Gospel to the unreached ethnic groups in Africa, he presented a plan to the board of directors of the newly established *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America* to inspire American churches to engage in missionary work in Africa. He first considered Angola, but then heard about the populous Zulu tribe in southern Africa (Hale 2008, 141–158).

Franson’s vision for southern Africa reached a new phase with his sending of missionaries to Swaziland in 1892. The first group of missionaries were sent to the interior of mostly unevangelised Swaziland: Andrew Haugerud, Sofus Nielson, Paul Gullander, Augusta Hultberg, Carl Poulson, Emma Homme, Lizzi Jørgensen, Bernt K. Moe and Malla Moe (Gallagher 2016, 1544–1545).

The fransonian missionaries, led by Andrew Haugerud, sailed via London to Durban before reaching the mission station of the *Free East Africa Mission* at Ekutandaneni, where they tried to learn the Zulu language (Hale 1998, 227–250).



Figure 2: Franson and the first group of missionaries for Swaziland (Olson 2014)

The most remarkable among them was Malla Moe (1863–1953), born in Hafslø, Norway. After the death of her parents she had emigrated to Chicago in 1884 where she attended *Moody Avenue Church*. There she met Franson. Malla Moe originally planned to study for two years at *Moody Bible Institute*. However, Franson influenced her to move out as quickly as possible to the mission field in South Africa and encouraged her to attend his two-week evangelistic crash course in January 1891 in Chicago (Nilson and Sheetz 1956, 11–26). Therefore, Malla Moe left for southern Africa without having received any formal biblical, theological or missionary education and immediately engaged in the study of the Zulu language.

After some initial difficulties in adapting to the Zulu culture (Hale 2008, 147f), she decided to adopt personal evangelism from home to home as her missionary method. She lived together with an African co-worker in a simple Zulu hut. Close to Mhlosheni and Nhlangano in the southern region of Swaziland she founded the *Bethel Mission Station*. Right from the beginning of her evangelistic ministry, she worked in close partnership with African Christians. After her retirement she continued her itinerant evangelism ministry in the interior of Swaziland and Tobogoland with her famous “Gospel wagon” and tent. Malla Moe founded large churches, installed African pastors and supervised their ministry. She exercised the position of a bishop although she was never ordained and never accepted this title (Renninger 2013).

While on her last home assignment in the USA, Malla Moe recruited Magnus Dale, Florence Pearl Christensen, Art Jensen and his wife, in order to establish a Bible Institute in Swaziland. In honour of the founder of the *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America* and promoter of missions in southern Africa, the Bible Institute received the name *Franson Memorial Bible School* (Wright 2014).



Figure 3: Malla Moe and her “Gospel Wagon” (*Fylkesarkivet i Sogn og Fjordane* 2018)

Malla Moe is an example how, without formal theological, linguistic or anthropological preparation, the North American missionaries sent by Franson to southern Africa learned Zulu in Natal and evangelised and founded numerous churches and congregations in Swaziland. She held excellent contacts to the “Queen Mother of Swaziland, Madvolomafishatanyana” and became the “white Child to the queen” (Sonene 2014, 106). The missionaries also engaged in social and diaconal activities. Some of the female missionaries offered basic medical care; others established schools. In 1893 the missionaries of the *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America* founded the well-known *Franson Christian High School* in Mhlosheni, Shiselweni in honour of Franson (FCHS 2018).

For the *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America* in Swaziland, the founding of schools was one of the most significant methods of her expansion. This was very common among the classical mission societies in Africa, and was then also adopted by faith missions. Through this concept the missionaries contributed to the economic growth, political stability and social development of the area.

Evangelist and Mission Mobiliser in Southern Africa

Franson had been invited to visit South Africa by Rev. Andrew Murray (1828–1917), renowned author of the Holiness Movement from the *Dutch Reformed Church* in Worcester (Torjesen 1984, 122). Already in May 1900, Franson planned to reach southern Africa via Holland, Portugal and Spain where he held evangelistic meetings. He reached as far as North Africa and was ready to cross the Sahara. Unfortunately, the second Boer War made it impossible for Franson to continue his journey to South Africa. He changed his plans and travelled instead through Greece, Bulgaria and Russia to Finland and back to the USA (Reifler 2018, 74–75).

A visit to southern Africa was finally possible during Franson's second world trip (1902–1908). Coming from East Asia he reached Egypt. He left Egypt in March 1906 by boat towards South Africa. He used the port calls in Mombasa (Kenia), Zanzibar (Tanzania), Beira and Lourenço Marques (Mozambique) to gain a first impression of missionary activities, remaining challenges and the development of growing national churches (Reifler 2018, 79).

In late April 1906, Franson arrived in Durban, where within two months he familiarised himself with the church and missionary activities of the *Norwegian Lutheran Church*, the *Scandinavian Free Church*, the *Swedish Holiness Union* in Durban, Port Shepstone and Pietermaritzburg, the ministry of the *Swedish Church* in Dundee, the mission station of the *Swedish Independent Baptist Union* at Vryheid and diverse ministries of the *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America* in southern Africa (Torjesen 1984, 765). He also preached in several *Dutch Reformed Churches* at Greytown, as reported in *De Vereeniging* from 31 May to 12 July 1906.

In June 1906, Franson attended the annual field conference of his *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America*. The conference took place on the mission station Bethel in Swaziland. At that time Malla Moe was on furlough in the USA. The rest of the missionaries of the *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America* in Swaziland were able to attend the conference (Torjesen 1984, 767). Franson's report on this missionary conference gives insight into their early missionary activities among the Zulu:

There is a large field for our mission in Swaziland, and many more workers are needed. Missionary Dawson, who is assisted here by the Misses Emelie Forbord and Anna Slatum, two Spirit-filled missionaries, is giving energetic and perspective leadership to the far-flung work. Our conference here in Swaziland, which just ended, was indeed a very fine one. To see the one group of believers after the other from the different stations arrive here in Bethel singing was a very uplifting sight. Saturday was a special day. We had the joy that day of baptizing fifty-six persons, individuals who already for some time had been confessing their intention to follow the Lord. The Scandinavian Alliance Mission in South Africa now has 456 communicants (fall-aways not counted), and about an equal number who have adopted Christian customs and way of life. The Mission has

28 partially or fully supported evangelists, 50 self-supporting evangelists and workers, 4 main stations, 40 outstations, and 11 foreign missionaries. (Franson 1906)

Franson's letter confirms the establishment of four mission stations, from which systematically most of the Zulu villages were reached with the Gospel. It also shows that the North American missionaries fostered the principle of self-propagation, self-government and self-support of growing indigenous African churches. To achieve these principles, they trained national evangelists who were supported financially mainly by Zulu Christians.

In the middle of July 1906, Franson travelled to Durban, preached to white immigrants and black Africans and carried out an evangelistic course (Torjesen 1984, 769). In September and October 1906, Franson held meetings in Witwatersrand and in a *Dutch Reformed Church* in Johannesburg. He offered Bible-studies from 9 to 12 in the morning (Franson, 1907a). Franson's studies focused mainly on personal evangelism and prophetic themes, as reported in *De Vereeniging* on 4 October 1906 ("Pastor Franson").

While Franson was staying in the area of Johannesburg and Transvaal, A. W. Baker, a former prosecuting attorney from Natal and colleague of Mahatma Gandhi (Majmudar 2005, 101), founder and director of the interdenominational *South African Compounds and Interior Mission* (Hexham and Poewe 1997, 130), generously sponsored 16 mission halls for Franson's evangelistic campaigns. Franson wrote about these multi-ethnic evangelistic activities: "I have now had glorious evangelistic meetings in several of these halls, and thereby I have had the opportunity to bring the Gospel to representatives of most of the black tribes throughout South Africa. Zulus, Basutos, and peoples from Portuguese East Africa are particularly well represented here" (Franson 1906).

From mid-November 1906 until February 1907 Franson travelled through the Orange River Colony, visiting and preaching among other cities in Bethlehem, Kroonstadt, Brandfort, Ladybrand, Ficksburg and Bloemfontein (*De Kerkbode* 1907, "Pastor Franson").

The last six months of his South Africa ministry Franson spent in the Cape Province. Andrew Murray, at that time 79 years old, invited him to preach in the *Dutch Reformed Church* in Worcester, a rural centre north east of Cape Town. The church hosted about 150 young people from the YMCA who attended Franson's Bible course. *De Kerkbode* from Cape Town gave an informative report on Franson's Bible course, mentioning structure, methods, masterful use of illustrations, inductive Bible studies, discussing the themes of vocation, commitment, prayer and opportunities of intercultural mission. Some of the participants volunteered to enter into full-time Christian ministries where ever the Lord wanted them to serve (*De Kerkbode* 1907, "Tien-daagsche Bijbelstudie").

After the Bible course in Worcester, Franson continued his evangelistic meetings in the *Dutch Reformed Churches* in the province of Cape Town. According to Torjesen (1984,

773–774), more than 500 people attending Franson’s meetings “found peace with God” between Pentecost and Ascension 1907.

In the *Dutch Reformed Churches* of South Africa Franson’s mobilisation for world missions was stepped up by the visit of the founder of the *Sudan-Pionier-Mission* and the *Sudan United Mission*, Karl Kumm (1874–1930) in June 1907 (*De Kerkbode* 1907, “Dr Kumm”). Torjesen (1984, 776) concludes that most likely Franson and Kumm met at that time in the residence of Rev. Andrew Murray. Historically, there is no proof of this hypothesis, as Torjesen cannot point to any written sources.

Franson spent the last two weeks of his stay in South Africa in Cape Town, the place where the European colonisation took its start. There he preached among Danish, English, German, Swedish and Norwegian immigrants. On August 18, 1907 he held a remarkable lecture among Jewish Zionists about biblical eschatology, which in his opinion “was well received” (Franson, 1907b).

Franson stayed in South Africa for a total of 16 months, preaching, encouraging, teaching, equipping and challenging both missionaries and nationals (Wright 2014).

On August 20, 1907 Franson left South Africa with the SS Norfolk to Buenos Aires. He crossed the South Atlantic and preached in almost every Latin American country and in the Caribbean. Exhausted, he reached the USA in 1908, where he passed away shortly after his arrival (Swanson 1908, 51–59).

The lasting Impact of Franson and his Missionaries in Southern Africa

The *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America*, founded by Franson, led to the establishment of the *Evangelical Church* in Swaziland. More than 3 000 participants attended its 120-year jubilee in December of 2013. In 2018, the *Evangelical Church* in southern Africa counted 112 churches in Swaziland, 132 in South Africa, 78 in Mozambique and one in Lesotho (Magagula 2013). The *Evangelical Church* in Swaziland today also maintains primary and high schools, hospitals and clinics, a Bible institute and community centres. Swaziland’s Prime Minister, Sibusiso Dlamini, comes from the *Evangelical Church* in Swaziland (Olson 2014). The mission agency, nowadays called *TEAM*, works in the Kingdom of Lesotho and in Swaziland, strengthening the education of African Christian leaders (TEAM 2018a&b).

In the broadest terms, Franson can be considered having a share in the long-term social impact of mission and religious change on societies around the world. The sociologist, Robert D. Woodberry (2012, 39), claims that countries which benefited from the input of Protestant mission societies in the last quarter of the 19th century, are “more economically developed today, with comparatively better health, lower infant mortality, lower corruption, greater literacy, higher educational attainment (especially for women), and more robust membership in nongovernmental associations.”

Conclusion

Franson was one of the most significant mission mobilisers and mission founders of the Holiness Movement in the last quarter of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. His lasting impact on southern Africa lies in the sending of missionaries to southern Africa that contributed in the last 130 years to growing and independent indigenous African churches, the establishment of hospitals and clinics and the foundation of a functioning school system, from which in Swaziland three prime ministers emerged.

Hardly any other contemporary mission leader was as well informed as Franson about the spiritual and missionary situation in southern Africa, and connected globally with mission agencies of diverse countries and denominations. During his 16-months visit to southern Africa, Franson's multi-ethnic ministry focused mainly on the Boers, Scandinavians, English and Zulu.

During the last weeks of his time in South Africa in the Cape Town area, he engaged in specific evangelistic efforts among Danish, English, German, Swedish and Norwegian immigrants. This shows his vital interest in people-group evangelism. Just before leaving for Latin America, Franson held a lecture among the Jewish Zionists, which in his own opinion was well received.

Franson's ministry between 1906 and 1907 in southern Africa was accompanied by local awakenings in the churches among the Zulu, Boers, Scandinavians, Jews, Chinese and Indians. Franson also supported the educational mandate as an instrument to strengthen the indigenous African churches and missions. Beyond racism and with full equality of women in teaching, preaching, counselling and leading churches, as seen especially in the ministry of Malla Moe in Swaziland and Tobagoland, Franson contributed with his holistic approach of mission to the extension and growth of the revival and missionary movement in southern Africa.

Autobiographic Notes

- Corresponding author, Hans Ulrich Reifler, retired in 2014 after 23 years as professor of Missiology and New Testament Studies at Theological Seminary St Chrischona, Basel, Switzerland. This article builds on his doctorate completed in 2018, titled "On the Missiology of Fredrik Franson (1852–1908): Eschatology, Missionary Methods and Transnational Networking" under the supervision of Prof. Dr Christof Sauer at ETF Leuven, Belgium.
- Christof Sauer wrote his own doctoral thesis at the University of South Africa on the history of one of the faith missions in Africa. He has since supervised several doctorates in theology on mission history as a contract promoter at the University of South Africa. He helped shape this material into a scholarly article in English.

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