

VU Research Portal

Worship as a Formative Practice

Cornou, M.E.

2016

document version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in VU Research Portal](#)

citation for published version (APA)

Cornou, M. E. (2016). *Worship as a Formative Practice: The Worship Practices of Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren in Emerging Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930)*. [PhD-Thesis – Research external, graduation internal, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam].

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

E-mail address:

vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT

**Worship as a Formative Practice:
The Worship Practices of Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren
in Emerging Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930)**

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad Doctor aan
de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam,
op gezag van de rector magnificus
prof.dr. V. Subramaniam,
in het openbaar te verdedigen
ten overstaan van de promotiecommissie
van de Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen
op dinsdag 29 november 2016 om 11.45 uur
in de aula van de universiteit,
De Boelelaan 1105

door

María Eugenia Cornou

geboren te La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentinië

promotoren: prof.dr. G. Harinck
prof.dr. J. Witvliet
copromotor: prof.dr. C. van der Kooi

DEDICATION

This dissertation is gratefully dedicated to my mother, Sara, and to the loving memory of my father, Roberto (1944-2014), for their endless love, support, and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisors, Prof. Dr. George Harinck, Prof. Dr. John D. Witvliet, and co-advisor Prof. Dr. Cornelis van der Kooi, for their guidance and wisdom, which greatly helped me in the time of research and writing of this thesis. I have been immensely blessed by their mentorship throughout all this process; the wise insights, expert advice, continuous encouragement, and human qualities made this dissertation not only possible but an enjoyable learning experience. I could not have imagined having better advisors for my doctoral study.

I wish to thank the members of my dissertation committee: Prof. Dr. Lester Ruth, Prof. Dr. Fred van Lieburg, Prof. Dr. Marcel Barnard, Dr. Stuart Blythe, and Prof. Dr. Hans de Wit, for their careful reading of this dissertation and for their valuable comments.

Also I thank my colleagues and friends at the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship; in particular, my deepest gratitude is to Dr. Emily Brink for her guidance and enthusiasm and to Kristen Verhulst for her precious friendship and support.

My sincere thanks also goes to all the people and institutions in Argentina whose precious support made possible to conduct this research: to Dr. Daniel Bruno and Patricia Pighini, from the Historical Archives of the Argentine Evangelical Methodist Church; to the Rev. Juan Gatinoni, Dr. Pablo Andiñac, and Prof. Pablo Sosa, for their advice on Argentine Methodism; to Silvio Camacho, from the Argentine Baptist Historical Archives and International Baptist Theological Seminary's Library; to Dr Carlos Villanueva, to my dear mentor Dr. Pablo Deiros, to my good friend Pablo Lewczuk, and to the memory of Dr. Arnoldo Canclini (1926-2014), from the International Baptist Theological Seminary (SITB), for their support during this

dissertation; to ISEDET, for giving me access to its library and especial collections; and to Dr. Alberto F. Roldán, for his valuable insights on the Free (Plymouth) Brethren in Argentina.

Last but not the least, I would like to express my heart-felt gratitude to my family in Argentina, for their love, support, and continuous encouragement; Leandro, Liliana, Gerónimo, Paulina, Facundo, Daniela, Lucía, Malena, and Sarita: ¡muchas gracias! And above all, I would like to express my deepest indebtedness to my husband, Valdir Xavier de França; none of this would have been possible without his love, concern, patience, and strength.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	viii
ABBREVIATIONS	ix
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTERS	
1. HISTORY OF WORSHIP AS A FORMATIVE PRACTICE	5
1.1 Worship and liturgy: definition of terms and concepts	5
1.2 History of worship practices: methodological considerations	8
1.3 Worship and formative practices: the Christian practice approach.....	13
1.4 The interplay of worship, theology, and ethical praxis.....	19
1.4.1 Worship and Theology.....	19
1.4.2 Worship and ethical praxis.....	25
1.4.3 Worship and culture.....	28
1.5 Conclusion	31
2. THE HISTORICAL, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONTEXT OF EMERGING PROTESTANTISM IN ARGENTINA	33
2.1 Argentine historical context	33
2.1.1 Conquest and colonial times (1516-1810).....	33
2.1.2 <i>Criolla</i> age: from independence to national organization (1810-1880).....	35
2.2 The emergence of Protestantism in Argentina	44
2.2.1 Historical antecedents: First Protestants in the Río de la Plata.....	44
2.2.2 The emergence of Methodism in the Río de la Plata	48
2.2.3 The emergence of the Baptists in Argentina.....	53
2.2.4 The emergence of the Free Brethren in Argentina.....	60
2.3 Historical sources and interpretations	65
2.3.1 Historical sources.....	65
2.3.2 Dominant historical interpretations on Protestantism in Latin America	67

2.4	Conclusion.....	75
3.	METHODIST WORSHIP	76
3.1	People.....	76
3.2	Piety.....	78
3.3	Time	81
3.3.1	Weekly calendar.....	81
3.3.2	Annual calendar	85
3.3.3	Lifetime.....	88
3.4	Place	93
3.5	Prayer	100
3.6	Preaching.....	104
3.7	Music.....	111
3.8	Conclusion.....	114
4.	BAPTIST WORSHIP	119
4.1	People.....	119
4.2	Piety.....	121
4.3	Time	123
4.3.1	Weekly calendar.....	123
4.3.2	Annual calendar	126
4.3.3	Lifetime and occasional services	127
4.4	Place	134
4.5	Prayer	140
4.6	Preaching.....	142
4.7	Music.....	146
4.8	Conclusion.....	153
5.	FREE BRETHREN WORSHIP.....	156
5.1	People.....	156
5.2	Piety.....	159
5.3	Time	161
5.3.1	Weekly calendar.....	161

5.3.2	Annual calendar	167
5.3.3	Lifetime.....	170
5.4	Place	177
5.5	Prayer	182
5.6	Preaching.....	185
5.7	Music.....	189
5.8	Conclusion.....	193
6.	THEOLOGY AND ETHICS IN FORMATIVE WORSHIP PRACTICES: INTERPRETATIVE ANALYSIS	195
6.1	Preliminary considerations.....	195
6.1.1	Theology and worship: historical background.....	195
6.1.2	Theology in hymns	198
6.2	Theology in evangelical worship practices	205
6.3	Worship practices and formation for Christian life.....	213
6.3.1	Worship and individual morality	214
6.3.2	Worship and social ethics	221
6.3.3	Worship and culture.....	230
6.4	Conclusion.....	231
	GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK	236
7.1	Introduction	236
7.2	Research Findings	236
7.3	Contributions of this dissertation	240
7.4	Recommendations for future research.....	241
7.5	Limitations of the study.....	242
7.6	Final conclusion	243
	SUMMARY.....	245
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	249

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure

1. Seven categories of worship..... 9

Table

1. Comparison of hymns in common in each denominational hymnal..... 178
2. Comparison of hymns included in each main section of the Free Brethren's hymnbook with hymns included in Baptist and Methodist hymnals..... 179

ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	American Bible Society
BFBS	British and Foreign Bible Society
CEBA	<i>Convención Evangélica Bautista Argentina</i>
EB	<i>El Expositor Bautista</i>
EE	<i>El Evangelista</i>
EESA	<i>El Estandarte Evangélico (de Sud América)</i>
FMB	Foreign Mission Board (of the Southern Baptist Convention)
HE	<i>Himnos Evangélicos</i>
HSE	<i>Himnos Selectos Evangélicos</i>
IEMA	Iglesia Evangélica Metodista Argentina
MEC	Methodist Episcopal Church
SBC	Southern Baptist Convention
SC	<i>El Sendero del Creyente</i>

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a perceptible increase in studies on Latin American Protestantism. The extraordinary growth in the last five decades of Pentecostalism in Latin America, a world region that for centuries has been predominantly Roman Catholic, became a religious and social phenomenon that attracted the attention of researchers from varied academic fields. Among the new bibliography that emerged as a result of such great interest are some scholarly works on Protestant history in Latin America that added up to histories traditionally authored by Protestants, which ranged from rigorous academic research to hagiographic accounts.

In this panorama, the number of historical studies on Protestantism significantly drops when the scope narrows to Argentina. In general, these historical investigations have tended to focus on institutions and main characters but, noticeably, little attention has been given to unveiling the history of the main communal activity Christians do together: worship. Two major reasons could explain this omission. First, most Protestants in Argentina belong to non-liturgical churches; and second, Liturgical Studies is still a developing academic field in Protestantism in that country. Therefore, this dissertation aims to fill a gap in Argentine Protestant historiography, examining the worship practices of three evangelical groups in emerging Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930): Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren.

The selection of these three groups was based in their relevance for this research. While Protestantism emerged in Argentina as a marginal phenomenon resulting from European immigration and circumscribed to foreigners, moved by their conversionist ideals, Methodists, Baptists, and Free (Plymouth or Christian) Brethren, decided to use the Spanish language in their

worship services. Concurrently, the adoption by the three groups of the same geographical strategy of expanding their work to the main cities put them in a place of greater influence than the Protestants who choose to remain as ethnic communities and the mission organizations who concentrated their evangelistic efforts in the agricultural towns.¹ The fast urbanization of the nation in this historical period favored the consolidation of Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren as historical referents in emerging Protestantism in Argentina.

The historical period here studied was chosen for several reasons. The period opens in 1867, when the Methodist Church in Argentina initiated regular worship services in the Spanish language, thus becoming the first Protestant group in worshipping in the vernacular. The election of 1930 as the ending date considers the following parameters: 1) the “ending of a pioneer era,” with the death of the precursors of Spanish preaching in the country — the Plymouth Brethren John Henry Ewen (d.1924), the Baptist Pablo Besson (d.1932), and the Methodist John F. Thomson (d.1933); 2) the military-coup in Argentina in 1930 that, linked to powerful sectors of Roman Catholicism, changed drastically the previous context that had favored Protestantism to develop in the country;² and 3) the world financial crisis in 1929, and the Mission Conferences in Panama (1916), Montevideo (1925) and La Habana (1929) that challenged already established Protestant mission practices in all Latin-America.³

Framed by a Christian practice approach and formative worship theory, this dissertation seeks to answer the following questions: 1) What were worship practices like in emerging Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930)? 2) What were the theology and ethics embodied and

¹ See Arnoldo Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años de protestantismo argentino* (Buenos Aires: FIET, 2004), 333.

² *Ibid*, 330.

³ See Norman Rubén Amestoy, “Los cambios en el Protestantismo Latinoamericano. Del Congreso de Panamá a la Habana (1916-1929),” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* VII (2012): 187-205.

shaped by those worship practices, with attention to their formative power in that particular social, cultural, historical, and religious context?

In order to answer these questions, this dissertation is organized into six chapters, as follows.

Chapter 1 will introduce the theoretical framework by clarifying terminology, reviewing the state of the question regarding worship theory and its relationship to theology and ethics, and surveying some of the foremost scholarly works on formative worship.

Using a historical-narrative approach, chapter 2 will describe the historical context in which Protestantism emerged in Argentina, drawing attention to the conditions that favored the appearance, establishment, and diffusion of local Protestantism in the midst of social transformations occurring in tension between tradition and modernity. A brief history of the beginnings of the work of each denomination in the country will be also recounted, alongside the identification of some of their main characters, concluding with general considerations on historical sources and dominant lines of historical interpretations.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are the heart of this investigation; they will describe the findings of documentary research, offering a descriptive narrative of worship practices developed in emerging Protestantism in Argentina. Each one of the three groups targeted in this investigation has its own chapter: chapter 3 will describe common worship practices in the Methodist Church, while chapters 4 and 5 will deal with worship practices among Baptist and Free Brethren congregations, respectively. To facilitate comparative analysis these three chapters will present their results following a similar pattern.

Lastly, chapter 6 will offer an interpretative analysis of the theology and ethics embodied in the worship practices described in previous chapters, pointing to their formative power in the

building of individual and communal Protestant/evangelical identity in contrast to the pervasive Roman Catholic religiosity.

This research augurs to not only add new scholarship on an understudied topic but also to create a broader reflection on the intersection of practical and constructive theology. More specifically, it promises to contribute to studies in liturgical theology, missiology, the history of Protestantism in Argentina, and Argentine history in general. The research methodology and the analytical work developed in this project may also serve as a model for future investigations and encourage reflection on the implications of liturgies as formative practices in other Protestant contexts.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORY OF WORSHIP AS A FORMATIVE PRACTICE

1.1 Worship and liturgy: definition of terms and concepts

Worship and *liturgy* are two related words whose connotation may vary slightly in different contexts of use, so before undertaking this investigation we will clarify the terminology to be employed in these pages.

Considering its etymology, the word “worship” derives from *weorthscipe*—the Anglo-Saxon term for honor, suggesting that “worship is an action of honouring one who is worthy.”⁴ In the Christian perspective, *worship* carries this implication, but it is considered more than a human activity of honoring God as its object of adoration; it is understood as an encounter. “Worship might be described as a performative action in which the Church and God participate. [It is] . . . an event by which God is known and Christ communicated.”⁵ John Witvliet emphasizes this dimension when he defines Christian worship not as “an act of self-achievement, an act in which we set out to impress a deity. Nor is worship an act of obedience to placate a deity. Instead, worship is more like a personal covenantal encounter between the church and its Lord, all made possible through the work of the Spirit.”⁶

⁴ David Ferguson, “The Theology of Worship. A Reformed Perspective,” in *Worship and Liturgy in Context: Studies and Case Studies in Theology and Practice*, eds. Duncan B. Forrester and Doug Gay (London: SCM, 2009), 71.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ John D. Witvliet, “The Cumulative Power of Transformation in Public Worship. Cultivating Gratitude and Expectancy for the Holy Spirit’s Work,” in *Worship that Changes Lives: Multidisciplinary and Congregational Perspectives on Spiritual Transformation*, ed. Alexis D. Abernethy (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 42.

This encounter is not the result of a human enterprise but an act of response to God's initiative, "For worship, after all, is not primarily something that we do. It is a response to what God has already done and is still doing."⁷ As Kevin Irwin observes:

In the act of worship we both speak to God and listen to his word. . . . Worship involves doing, acting, and symbolizing on our part, but this doing is based on what God has done and does in our lives, how God acted and acts in our world, and which symbols God has used and uses to communicate his love for us. Christian worship is our response to the profound mystery of God's seeking us so that we might share the very life of God in the community of the Church.⁸

The importance of these conceptualizations of worship as an encounter between the Church and the Triune God and as a response to God's initiative lies in the recognition of the active work of God in worship. Even though the focus of this dissertation on worship practices could be perceived as too ecclesiocentric or too oriented to human action as the primary dynamic in the liturgical event, the concept of worship here adopted certainly implies "an awareness of God's initiative" and the acknowledgment of "the divine action in liturgy—what God does among us and for us."⁹

A second important term in this work is *liturgy*. It comes from the Greek word *λειτουργία*, whose basic meaning was "service for the people," an expression that in cultic usage referred to a public "benefit for the service rendered to the gods" and which in the first century Jewish world was understood as a priestly "service to God for the good of the people."¹⁰

⁷ John Macquarrie, *Paths in Spirituality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 15.

⁸ Kevin Irwin, *Liturgical Prayer and Spirituality* (New York-Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1984), 26.

⁹ Michael B. Aune, "Liturgy and Theology: Rethinking the Relationship. Part I, Setting the Stage," *Worship* 81 no.1 (January 2007): 47. A broader discussion on schools of history and liturgical theology, contrasting ecclesiological with theological emphasis, can be found in this essay by Aune, and in its second part, Michael B. Aune, "Liturgy and Theology: Rethinking the Relationship. Part II, A Different Starting Point," *Worship* 81 no. 2 (March 2007): 141-69.

¹⁰ Paul V. Marshall, "Liturgy," *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, ed. Erwin Fahlbusch et al., vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI-Leiden: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company-Brill, 2003), 324.

Joyce Anne Zimmerman comments that from its origins and in its theological and practical use, the word *liturgy* “has a narrower meaning” than *worship*, liturgy being most commonly understood as “performance of rituals.” In this sense, she adds that “while all liturgy is worship . . . not all worship is liturgy. . . . In other words, liturgy is a subcategory of worship.”¹¹

Liturgical scholars like Joseph Jungmann and Gordon Lathrop propose a wider use of this term in contrast to its traditional understanding. Jungmann affirms that the word “liturgy” should not be restricted to designate priestly actions according to liturgical books. Liturgy is “the divine worship of the Church” and “in consequence, public worship—worship which is done for or by the community.”¹² Similarly, Lathrop states, “whatever our Christian assembly does when it gets together, whatever pattern of communal action we follow, written or unwritten, that is our liturgy.”¹³

These statements are good examples of the fact that contemporary liturgical scholarship has broadened the traditional connotation of the word *liturgy* while still keeping a distinction between the words *liturgy* and *worship*. As Dwight Vogel observes, “Worship as a human activity appears in both individual and social expressions. It does not have to be corporate in nature. Liturgy is corporate by definition; worship is not. Liturgy involves ritual action; worship may or may not.”¹⁴

¹¹ Joyce Ann Zimmerman, *Worship with Gladness: Understanding Worship from the Heart* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2014), 20.

¹² Joseph Jungmann, *Public Worship: A Survey* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1957), 1.

¹³ Gordon W. Lathrop, *Central Things: Worship in Word and Sacrament* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2005), 8.

¹⁴ Dwight Vogel, “Liturgical Theology: A Conceptual Geography,” in *Primary Sources of Liturgical Theology: A Reader*, ed. Dwight Vogel (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2000), 6.

Historically, Protestants have been reluctant to use the term *liturgy*. Interestingly, as noted by James F. White, given its connotation as the work of the people, “the word liturgy is most congenial to Protestants.”¹⁵ In any case, its use is becoming more frequent in Protestant scholarship, and it is usually employed in accordance with what has been noted above, as synonymous for public common worship. It is in this sense that both the noun *liturgy* and the adjective *liturgical* will be used in this dissertation, although, in general, *worship* will be the preferred term.

1.2 History of worship practices: methodological considerations

As James F. White observes, “The study of Protestant worship has usually been conducted by methods derived from the study of Roman Catholic worship.”¹⁶ In practice, as both Roman Catholicism and Protestant “high churches” have adopted common written liturgical texts, both historical research and liturgical theology tend in general to be text-oriented.¹⁷ This approach presents some challenges, for the purpose of this study revolves around Protestant groups that have set aside printed liturgical texts and, with some exceptions in Methodism, have eschewed fixed and prescribed ritual in exchange for promoting extemporaneous forms of worship.

Because of this particularity, it is important to use appropriate methodological strategies to achieve the intended aim of this dissertation. First, this investigation will use a methodology

¹⁵ James F. White, *Protestant Worship and Architecture: Theological and Historical Considerations* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 23.

¹⁶ James F. White, *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* (Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1989), 13.

¹⁷ See, for example, Joyce Ann Zimmerman, *Liturgy as Language of Faith: A Liturgical Methodology in the Mode of Paul Ricoeur's Textual Hermeneutics* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1988), 33-35. A wider discussion can be found in Martin D Stringer, *A Sociological History of Christian Worship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1-6.

that moves from liturgical texts to worship practices, consequently “considering the total event of public worship as it occurs in local churches and not as analyzed in textbooks.”¹⁸ Second, it will adopt a methodology that moves from the emphasis on text to look “‘beyond the text’ in an effort to understand the tacit and informal dimensions of worship practices in their social, cultural, and ecclesial settings.”¹⁹ And third, it will employ a methodology that moves from the text to the people as the “primary liturgical document,” appealing to non-traditional primary sources that reflect different people’s worship experiences and beliefs.²⁰

The choice of this particular methodology requires a phenomenological understanding of Christian worship that establishes the criteria for the identification of which “outward and visible” worship practices will be primarily surveyed in this investigation.²¹ To this end, this work will draw upon James F. White’s suggested list of “chief components of the perennial structures and services” that define Christian worship from this perspective.²² The central category is “people,” and then, there are two sets of three components each: circumstances of worship—piety, time, place—and acts of worship—prayer, preaching and music.”²³

¹⁸ White, *Protestant Worship*, 15.

¹⁹ Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, *American Methodist Worship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), xi. This work and Stringer’s “A Sociological History of Christian Worship” are good examples of this movement.

²⁰ Lester Ruth, *A Little Heaven Below: Worship at Early Methodist Quarterly Meetings* (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Book, 2000), 11. Besides this work, other good examples of this movement can be found in Susan J. White, *A History of Women in Christian Worship* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2003). For more on the non-traditional sources and methodologies for writing a history of worship, see Karen Westerfield Tucker, “Methodist Worship,” in *T&T Clark Companion to Methodism*, ed. Charles Yrigoyen Jr. (London-New York: T&T Clark International, 2010), 240-56.

²¹ James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 3rd. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 2000), 18. The term “phenomenological” as used here follows James F. White, who describes his own methodology as a “phenomenological approach,” for it aims to study the “whole phenomenon of Christian worship,” or in other words, “what Christians usually do when they come together for worship.” This “phenomenological approach” considers worship as an event, and focuses not only in texts but in actions used in Christian worship.

²² *Ibid*, 20.

²³ White, *Protestant Worship*, 15-16.

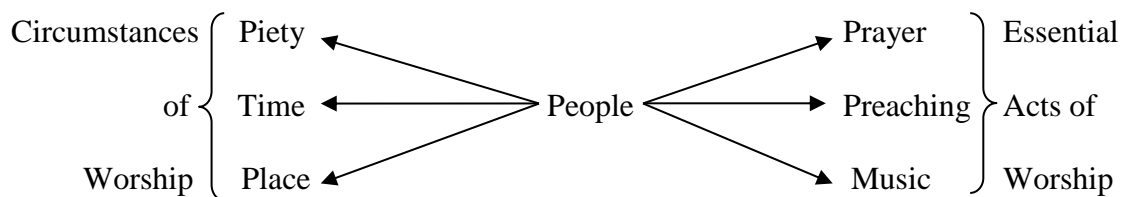


Figure 1. Seven categories of worship²⁴

The first category is “people” because in a phenomenological approach to history “the primary liturgical document in any period is the worshipping community itself.”²⁵ This is of great relevance with regard to the primary sources that will be used as well as to the importance of understanding the “social realities of what was happening to people in times of liturgical change.”²⁶

Second, “piety” is the category that leads the circumstances of worship. Piety, or the “ways people relate to God and to each other,” is both formed by liturgy and a main disposition that shapes the experience of worship. The other two categories of circumstances of worship are “time” and “place.” On the one hand, the church shows what is “most important to its life by the way it keeps time.”²⁷ Under “time” we will consider worship practices related to three main cycles of liturgical time: weekly, yearly, and lifetime, including in this last one the rites of

²⁴ Figure adapted from White, *Protestant Worship*, 16.

²⁵ James F. White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), 14.

²⁶ White, *Protestant Worship*, 16.

²⁷ Hoyt L. Hickman et al., *The New Handbook of the Christian Year: Based of the Common Lectionary*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1992), 17.

passage. On the other hand, “place” will deal with worship spaces: architecture, design, objects and function, as the “whole space in which things occur shapes their meaning.”²⁸

The other set of components consists of three essential acts of worship: prayer, preaching, and music. In “prayer” the focus will be on modes, language, motifs and voices, frequency, and private and public practice. Under “preaching” attention will be paid to form, function, actors, main emphases, use of the Scriptures, and communication strategies. And finally, music in worship services will be explored. The core of this section will be the study of hymnals, as they are a major source of liturgical texts, while congregational singing represents the main form of people’s active participation in public worship services.

This phenomenological approach has guided some prior historical work on Protestant worship.²⁹ Among the most prominent examples is Karen B. Westerfield Tucker’s *American Methodist Worship*, which exhaustively describes worship in American Methodism through its history, demonstrating how changes in worship reflected the transformation experienced by American society in parallel to the Americanization of Methodism. Other relevant work in this same perspective is Lester Ruth’s *A Little Heaven Below*, in which, through the study of worship practices in quarterly meetings in early American Methodism, the author counters traditional historical interpretations to reveal the richness and complexity of its liturgical practices in a

²⁸ White, *Protestant Worship*, 19. For an extensive study on liturgical architecture see White, *Protestant worship and church architecture*.

²⁹ For more examples on the use of this phenomenological approach in other historical periods and Christian traditions different from the ones studied in this dissertation, see Lester Ruth, Carrie Steenwyk, and John D. Witvliet, *Walking Where Jesus Walked: Worship in Fourth-Century Jerusalem*, The Church at Worship (Grand Rapids, MI-Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010); Walter D. Ray, *Tasting Heaven on Earth: Worship in Sixth-Century Constantinople*, The Church at Worship (Grand Rapids, MI-Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012); and Lester Ruth, *Longing for Jesus: Worship at Black Holiness Church in Mississippi 1895-1913*, The Church at Worship (Grand Rapids, MI-Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013).

process he assesses as “positive inculturation.”³⁰ A similar approach has been employed by Christopher Ellis in *Gathering*, a remarkable study on British Baptist worship, stressing patterns, themes, and values in the context of the wider Free Church tradition.³¹

To date, there are no academic works on the history of worship in Argentina that employ this particular methodology. The subject has been very seldom addressed in local scholarship, and investigations generally revolve around specific worship practices. For example, on the history of church music the most comprehensive study is the dissertation by Bruce Muskrat which underscores the varied influences of European and local leaders, and primarily of North American missionaries, on music ministry among Baptists in their first century in Argentina.³²

From a wider perspective, also note Cecilio McConnell’s history of Spanish-language hymnody, which includes a brief descriptive section on hymnals and hymn composers from the Río de la Plata region (Argentina and Uruguay).³³ On church architecture, see Mirtha Coitinho’s book on the influence of Freemasonry in the design of church buildings in nineteenth century Methodism in Uruguay.³⁴ A comprehensive study of the history of worship in the South American context is *Evangelical Worship in Brazil* by Carl Hahn, which demonstrates that Protestants in that country practiced a very simple liturgy shaped by their resistance to pervasive

³⁰ Ruth, *A Little Heaven Below*, 18.

³¹ Christopher J. Ellis, *Gathering: A Theology and Spirituality of Worship in Free Church Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 2004).

³² See James Bruce Muskrat, “The Development of Music Ministry among the Baptists of Argentina (1881-1981)” (D.M.A. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary-School of Church Music, 2001)

³³ See Cecilio McConnell, *La historia del himno en castellano* (Buenos Aires: Casa Bautista de Publicaciones, 1963)

³⁴ During the period covered by this dissertation, Argentina and Uruguay were considered a single district. See Mirtha E. Coitinho, *Testigos de un silencio: metodismo y masonería en el Uruguay del siglo XIX* (Montevideo: Editorial Planeta, 2009)

Roman Catholicism.³⁵ Also with Brazil as its main focal point, Wilhelm Wachholz introduces a brief history of Mainline Protestant worship in Latin America, emphasizing its foreign origins in both European immigrant communities and North American missionary endeavors.³⁶ Beyond different methodological approaches and scopes, all the aforementioned works foreshadow a crucial issue for this dissertation: the impact of the foreign influence on the emergence of local worship practices in Argentina.

In this regard, a final work that deserves to be mentioned is *Liturgy in Migration*, edited by Teresa Berger, and in particular its chapter on liturgical and hymnological migrations in Methodism by Karen Westerfield Tucker.³⁷ Even though this case study focuses on Methodist migration from the United States to Asia, it unveils the tendency of the second-generation church to retain the liturgies of the originating denomination; a valuable insight for this investigation, especially in its study of Argentine Methodism.

1.3 Worship and formative practices: The Christian practice approach

The adoption of the aforementioned phenomenological approach to worship, whose central focus is the historical study of worship practices, involves a deeper understanding of the broader concept of Christian practice. The latter has been revisited in new scholarship emerging in the last four decades in the field of practical theology—and more specifically in Christian

³⁵ See Carl Joseph Hahn, *Historia do culto protestante no Brasil*, trans. Antonio Gouvêa Mendonça (São Paulo: ASTE, 1989)

³⁶ See Wilhelm Wachholz, “Mainline Protestants in Latin America,” in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, ed. Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen Westerfield Tucker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 651-660.

³⁷ Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, “Methodism’s ‘World Parish’: Liturgical and Hymnological Migrations in Three Ecclesiastical Generations,” in *Liturgy in Migration: From the Upper Room to Cyberspace*, ed. Teresa Berger (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012), 131-154.

education and liturgical studies—and became the core concept of the Christian practice approach. Very heterogeneous, its diversity reflects differences in scholarly fields, methodologies, philosophical influences, and even the religious affiliations and theological backgrounds of its proponents. Yet, beyond differences, there is a concurrence of common foundations and tenets in the Christian practice approach

First, the Christian practice approach emerges as a response to the crisis of the Enlightenment project of modernity, which can be summarized as “the triumph of reason and the mastery of the human mind over the external world.”³⁸ Kathleen A. Cahalan, drawing upon Lakeland’s typology of postmodern Christian responses to modernity, identifies the Christian practice approach with the “countermodern” response, which radically rejects the modern project and seeks answers looking backwards to premodern Christianity: “Wisdom from the past is the most vital element in creating a way of Christian life in a secular postmodern context. There are few alternatives for Christians but to search for a way of life that is grounded in the long tradition of Christian thought and practice.”³⁹

Second, this approach takes a critical stance toward Cartesian epistemology. A good example of this position is found in the work of Debra Dean Murphy. She argues that Enlightenment objectivist epistemology, which has been largely influential in Protestant Christian education, considers education as a curriculum-oriented process of transferring content from teacher to pupil. In this paradigm, knowledge “is perceived as a kind of repository of

³⁸ Paul Lakeland, *Postmodernity: Christian Identity in a Fragmented Age* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997), 13.

³⁹ Kathleen A. Cahalan, “Three Approaches to Practical Theology, Theological Education, and the Church’s Ministry,” *International Journal of Practical Theology* 9 no.1 (July 2005): 76.

neutral facts,” and the ultimate goal of education is conceived as “the mastery of these facts.”⁴⁰

In contrast, drawing on Augustine, Murphy argues that the goal of knowledge in Christian perspective is formation (*conversion* and *transformation*), which requires moving from epistemology to ontology, or in other words, from a cognitive knowledge (knowing *that*) to a performative knowledge (knowing *how*).⁴¹

Third, the Christian practice approach rejects separating theory and practice. A direct implication of this epistemological shift is the recognition of the “intimate connection between knowledge and action, between learning and bodily practice.”⁴² “Practice” is a privileged way of knowing in doing, and being in knowing/doing. From a Christian perspective this understanding of knowledge implies a deep unity between doctrine and Christian practice, and overall “knowledge's intimate connection to action, to doing, to practice, to habit, and to ritual means that what we know cannot be separated from who we are or, within the confessional language of the church, who we hope to be.”⁴³ As Dorothy C. Bass notes, “*practices resist the separation of thinking from acting*, and thus of Christian doctrine from Christian life.”⁴⁴

Fourth, this approach proposes a reconceptualization of *practice*. This term may be understood in several ways, and differences are even evident among proponents of the Christian practice approach. For example, Dorothy Bass and Craig Dykstra argue that at least three

⁴⁰ Debra Dean Murphy, “Worship as Catechesis: Knowledge, Desire, and Christian Formation,” *Theology Today* 58, no. 3 (October 2001): 321.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 323.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 324.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 323.

⁴⁴ Dorothy Bass, “Introduction,” in *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*, eds. Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 6.

different perspectives may be found among proponents. One is represented by Kathryn Tunner, for which “‘practice’ can be almost any socially meaningful action” that has an “improvisational character” and “involve non-elites in the production of meaning.”⁴⁵ The second is a more traditional view that conceives practices as “the ascetical and spiritual disciplines and exercises by which people deliberately seek to become more attuned to the sacred.”⁴⁶ The third perspective is a conceptualization of practice that draws upon the moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre and his idea of “social practices,” defined as “complex social activities that pursue certain goods internal to the practices themselves.”⁴⁷ Bass and Dykstra opted for the latter conception, but reframed it in a Christian perspective in which practices are “theological and thus normed not only internally but also through a responsive relationship of Christian practices to God.”⁴⁸ In the words of Bass, “Christian practices are patterns of cooperative human activity in and through which life together takes shape over time in response to and in the light of God as known in Jesus Christ.”⁴⁹

Fifth, the Christian practice approach stresses the high significance of the communal dimension of Christian practices. In this regard Dykstra says that “practice is not the activity of a single person. One’s person’s action becomes practice only insofar as it is participation in the

⁴⁵ Craig Dykstra and Dorothy C. Bass, “A Theological Understanding of Christian Practices,” in *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*, eds. Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 20.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Dykstra and Bass, “A Theological Understanding,” 20.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 20-21.

⁴⁹ Bass, “Introduction,” 3.

larger practice of a community and a tradition.”⁵⁰ Then practice is “inherently cooperative;” it requires that people engage in a *common* practice. Dykstra makes clear that even though practice usually happens when people are together in place and time, it should not be reduced to a group activity; for example, individual prayer is a cooperative practice because even when praying alone, we pray “as participants in the praying of the church.”⁵¹ Finally, for Dykstra practice is rooted in a sustained tradition: it involves “participation in a cooperatively formed pattern of activity that emerges out of a complex tradition of interactions among many people sustained over a long period of time.”⁵² In summary, in the Christian practice approach, “*practices are social, belonging to groups of people across generations*—a feature that undergirds the communal quality of the Christian life.”⁵³

Sixth, Christian practices are *formative* and “have sufficient depth to forge a common sense of identity among the members of a community and to shape the character of individual participants.”⁵⁴ “As a cluster of activities within which meaning and doing are inextricably interwoven,” says Bass, “practices shape behavior while also fostering practice-specific knowledge, capacities, dispositions, and virtues.”⁵⁵ As a result, those who actively engage in these practices are formed in a particular understanding of God, the world, and themselves.

⁵⁰ Craig Dykstra, “Reconceiving Practice,” in *Shifting Boundaries: Contextual Approaches to the Structure of Theological Education*, eds. Barbara G. Wheeler and Edward Farley (Louisville, KY: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1991), 37.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Bass, “Introduction,” 6.

⁵⁴ Richard Robert Osmer, *The Teaching Ministry of Congregations* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2005), 91-92.

⁵⁵ Dorothy C. Bass, “Ways of Abundant Life,” in *For Life Abundant: Practical Theology, Theological Education and Christian Ministry*, eds. Dorothy C. Bass and Craig Dykstra (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 29.

Finally, in the Christian practice approach worship is the Christian practice par excellence and therefore is a fundamental *formative practice*. According to Murphy, “For Christians, worship is the site at which our formation and education are initiated and completed (insofar as they can ever be complete). What we *do*, how we *act*, in the liturgical assembly shapes us in particular and powerful ways and is both formative of identity and catechetical in the most basic sense.”⁵⁶ Likewise, liturgical practice “does have a privileged place in the formation, development and expression of doctrine.”⁵⁷

John Witvliet explores how this formation happens and what is formed in us through worship. He first argues that the shaping of Christians’ souls is the work of the Holy Spirit, so any attempt at explanation cannot exhaust the subject.⁵⁸ Still, he considers that besides explicit messages communicated in worship, liturgy forms Christians “in a quiet, more subterranean way, through the bodily gestures, sensory perceptions, and language it invites us into.”⁵⁹ Then he addresses the question about the essence of formation through Christian worship. Here he claims that “the nature of what is formed in us is wonderfully complex: in worship we practice certain convictions, perspectives, emotions, relationships, and virtues. This formation is as rich and wondrous as sanctification itself, a wondrously fulsome process by which the Spirit grows new dimensions of holiness and Christlikeness in every aspect of our lives.”⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Murphy, “Worship as Catechesis,” 324-25.

⁵⁷ Maxwell E. Johnson, *Praying and Believing in Early Christianity: The Interplay Between Christian Worship and Doctrine* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013), 23.

⁵⁸ Witvliet, “The Cumulative Power,” 44.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 48-49.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 50.

In sum, worship practices are the quintessential Christian *formative practices*; they bear meaning that is appropriated while doing, so that through active engagement in liturgy Christians are formed in a particular understanding of God, of others, and of themselves, and of what it means to live a Christian life in this world. This perspective, in concurrence with the adopted phenomenological approach, will inform the historical study and the interpretative analysis of this dissertation.

1.4 The interplay of worship, theology, and ethical praxis

1.4.1 Worship and Theology

The formative role of worship has been extensively explored in recent liturgical scholarship, with special regard to the relationship between liturgy and theology. Discussions primarily emerged in the context of the Liturgical Movement and its efforts toward liturgical renewal. If liturgy should be revised, decisions had to be made on to how to deal with theology in this process; redefining the relationship between liturgy and theology was considered key in giving to liturgy its own theological voice.

Looking for responses in the liturgical life of the earlier ages of the Church, scholars rediscovered an old adage used by a disciple of Augustine of Hippo, Prosper of Aquitaine (390-455), in a writing against Pelagians: “*ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*” (“the law of prayer determines the law of belief”). Even though there is much debate on the original and historical use and the actual meaning of this maxim, its abbreviated form—*lex orandi, lex credendi*—became an axiom generally employed to sustain the precedence of liturgy over belief.⁶¹

⁶¹ For an extensive exegetical analysis of Prosper’s adage, see Johnson, *Praying and Believing in Early Christianity*, 1-23; Paul Victor Marshal, “Reconsidering ‘Liturgical Theology’: Is There a Lex Orandi for All

Based on the longer formula, Aidan Kavanagh highlights the importance of the usage of the verb *statuat*, which for him “subordinates the law of belief to the law of worship.”⁶² Kavanagh equates liturgy with an encounter with God, and argues that belief is the consequence of this experience: “Therefore Christians do not worship because they believe. They believe because the One in whose gifts faith lies is regularly met in the act of communal worship.”⁶³ Kavanagh recognizes that “the law of belief does indeed shape and influence the law of worship.”⁶⁴ Yet he emphasizes that “the maxim does not say this, nor does it need to. It says only that the latter *constitutes* or *founds* the former.”⁶⁵ Kavanagh’s perspective—influenced by Alexander Schmemmann and continued by David Fagerberg—represents the most radical and pervasive line of interpretation of this adage in a one-way direction, where liturgy (liturgical texts) determines dogma (theology).⁶⁶

Furthermore, Kavanagh deepens this concept to conclude that *lex orandi* not only establishes theology; it *is* theology. In his words, “An assembly’s liturgical act is not a new species of theology among others. It is *theologia* itself.”⁶⁷ Liturgy is a form of theology he calls *theologia prima* (primary theology) to differentiate it from the theological reflection on liturgy,

Christians?” *Studia Liturgica* 25 (1995): 129-150. Also see Kevin Irwin, “Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi—Origins and Meaning: State of the Question,” *Liturgical Ministry* 11 (Spring 2002): 57-69.

⁶² Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1984), 91.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Besides the cited work of Kavanagh, this concept is deeply explored in David W. Fagerberg, *What Is Liturgical Theology?* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992)

⁶⁷ Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 75.

or *theologia secunda* (secondary theology).⁶⁸ Kavanagh privileges the place of the first over the second, characterizing primary theology in these terms:

A liturgical act *is* a theological act of the most all-encompassing, integral, and foundational kind. . . . It is *proletarian* in the sense that it is not done by academic elites; it is *communitarian* in the sense that it is not undertaken by the scholar alone in his study; and it is *quotidian* in the sense that it is not accomplished occasionally but regularly throughout the daily, weekly, and yearly round of the assembly's life of public liturgical worship.⁶⁹

This position has been questioned by other liturgical scholars and it seems to be particularly problematic for Protestants, who historically had sought “to establish doctrinal control over worship,” and for whom “the critical primacy of the doctrine in relation to liturgy” has remained as a central concern.⁷⁰ For example, Methodist scholar Charles Hohenstein brings attention to the fact that *lex orandi* “necessarily includes the beliefs which people bring with them to the liturgy,” and, consequently, “*lex orandi* is informed and determined by *lex credendi*.”⁷¹ Similarly, Paul Bradshaw remarks:

When believers come to worship on a Sunday morning, they do not come with their minds a *tabula rasa*. On the contrary, they bring their religious attitudes and expectations already formed by secondary theology, as a result of the catechesis that their particular ecclesiastical tradition has given to them over the years; and they usually participate in a

⁶⁸ Based on this distinction, Kavanagh argues that if liturgy is in fact primary theology, then “*orthodoxia*” should be considered as “right worship,” a concept that in a context dominated by church officials was replaced by “correct doctrine,” or “*orthopistis*” (right believing), or “*orthodidascalia*” (right teaching), and where “*lex supplicandi legem statuat credendi*” was “effectively reversed, with the law of belief founding and constituting the law of worship.” Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 82-83.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁷⁰ Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life: A Systematic Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 219.

⁷¹ Charles R. Hohenstein, “‘Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi’: Cautionary Notes,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (September 1997): 141. In this same article the author points to another issue that I consider of high importance when studying worship in the Free Church tradition: what constitutes *lex orandi* for them? In Hohenstein’s view, from his Methodist tradition in which worship “is only loosely based on official liturgical texts,” the bases of *lex orandi* should necessarily include “rites, prayers and hymns beyond the officially published texts.” (p.157). The focus of this work on “worship practices” is an attempt to address this concern.

liturgical rite that itself has been shaped and honed by secondary theological reflection in order to give expression to certain doctrinal convictions.⁷²

Addressing this tension, Methodist theologian George Wainwright proposes a reciprocal interpretation of the interplay between worship and doctrine:

The Latin tag *lex orandi, lex credendi* may be construed in two ways. The more usual way makes the rule of prayer a norm for belief; what is prayed indicates what may or must be believed. But from the grammatical point of view it is equally possible to reverse subject and predicate and so take the tag as meaning that the rule of faith is the norm of prayer: what must be believed governs what may and should be prayed. The linguistic ambiguity of the Latin tag corresponds to a material interplay which in fact takes place between worship and doctrine in Christian practice: worship influences doctrine, and doctrine worship.⁷³

While among Orthodox and Roman Catholic liturgical scholars the interpretation that subordinates theology to liturgy is pervasive, among their Protestant peers there seems to be more consensus on the understanding of a “reciprocal relation” between worship and belief.⁷⁴ Or, in other words, on a “two-way street” where “doctrine plays just as much of a part in affecting how we ‘read’ liturgical practice as liturgy does in supplying a source from which we may formulate Christian doctrine.”⁷⁵

This debate involves broader implications on matters of normativity. For example, the dominant perspective, based on its distinction between primary and secondary theology, differentiates *liturgical theology* from *theology of worship*.⁷⁶ In this regard Alexander

⁷² Paul Bradshaw, “Difficulties in Doing Theological Liturgy,” *Pacifica* 11 (June 1998): 191.

⁷³ Wainwright, *Doxology*, 218.

⁷⁴ Paul Waitman Hoon, *The Integrity of Worship: Ecumenical and Pastoral Studies in Liturgical Theology* (Nashville-New York: Abingdon Press, 1971), 86.

⁷⁵ Bradshaw, “Difficulties in Doing Theological Liturgy,” 189.

⁷⁶ The different use of similar terminology by different authors may lead to some confusion. Here we will employ the most common use of these terms. An example of a slight variation in terminology can be found in the work of Gordon Lathrop, who instead of using “liturgical theology” only for primary theology, calls both theologies “liturgical theology,” and then makes a distinction between *primary liturgical theology*, for which “the meaning of the liturgy resides first of all in the liturgy itself,” and *secondary liturgical theology*, whose task “is to articulate the

Schmemmann argues that “theology of the liturgy” considers the liturgical experience as “a necessary object of theology,” “which has to be defined and evaluated within accepted categories,” and which “supplies theology with ‘data’” but employs a method that is “independent of any liturgical context.”⁷⁷ In contrast *leitourgia* is “the unique expression” of the faith and life of the Church and “the basic *source* of theological thinking, a kind of *locus theologicus* par excellence.”⁷⁸ Consequently for Schmemmann, “liturgical theology is the elucidation of the meaning of worship.”⁷⁹

Christopher Ellis observes that in this view the object of study in the theology of worship is worship itself, in contrast to liturgical theology, whose focus is the theology manifested in worship.⁸⁰ Thus, “while a theology of worship is the use of theology to study worship, liturgical theology is the study of worship in order to study the faith of the Christian community.”⁸¹ Notwithstanding, in this perspective both the theology of worship and liturgical theology concur in a tendency to prescription. On the one hand, the theology of worship involves a critical assessment of liturgy in the light of theological and biblical norms. On the other hand, “as a

Christian faith as it comes to expression in a communal gathering, as such faith is the meaning of the meeting” and “to help us all see in the concrete form of liturgy what the Christian church itself may mean and what it believes more deeply.” Gordon. W. Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 5, 8. For a comprehensive analysis of different uses of the term “liturgical theology” see Kevin W. Irwin, “Liturgical Theology,” in *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship*, ed. Peter E. Fink (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1990) 721-33.

⁷⁷ Alexander Schmemmann, “Theology and Liturgical Tradition,” in *Worship in Scripture and Tradition*, ed. Massey H. Shepherd Jr. (New York- Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 166,168.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 166, 169.

⁷⁹Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, trans. Asheleigh E. Moorhouse (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996), 14.

⁸⁰ See Ellis, *Gathering*, 19.

⁸¹ Christopher J. Ellis, “Duty and Delight: Baptist Worship and Identity,” *Review & Expositor* 100 (Summer 2003): 331.

manifestation of Tradition in which the *lex orandi* is seen as the bearer of *lex credendi*,” *liturgical theology* “inevitably presents a vision which claims to order worship and not merely reflect it.”⁸²

Bradshaw critically observes that the dominant interpretation has “a much too ready tendency to move from description to prescription.”⁸³ In contrast, he argues that “stating what Christians actually believe by examining what they say and do in their worship is not the same thing as using that evidence to say what Christians ought to believe.”⁸⁴

For the purpose of this investigation, the analysis of the formative nature of worship practices will assume that the relationship between theology and worship is reciprocal; therefore, liturgy will be conceived as an ecclesial practice that both shapes and expresses the theology of a particular community or congregation, while simultaneously theology models and is embodied in its worship practices and also provides a frame to theologially interpret liturgy. The adoption of this approach resists liturgical normativity and, accordingly, even though this work will resort to liturgical theology, it will intentionally avoid moving from description to prescription.⁸⁵

⁸² Ellis, *Gathering*, 247-48.

⁸³ Bradshaw, “Difficulties in Doing Theological Liturgy,” 187.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Schmemmann thus explained his own methodology for doing liturgical theology: “First, to find and define concepts and categories which are capable of expressing as fully as possible the essential nature of the liturgical experience of the Church; second, to connect these ideas with that system of concepts which theology uses to expound the faith and doctrine of the Church; and third, to present a separate data of liturgical experience as a connected whole as, in the last analysis, the ‘rule of prayer’ dwelling within the Church and determining her ‘rule of faith.’” (Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 14). The methodology adopted in this dissertation shows similarities with his first two steps (a phenomenological description and a theological interpretation) but its conclusions will be just descriptive and will not claim any normativity.

1.4.2 Worship and ethical praxis

Though considering the relationship between worship and theology is essential in understanding formative worship practices, it is also crucial to examine the role played by liturgy in ethical formation. Kevin Irwin addresses this matter, introducing a variation of Prosper's adage *lex orandi, lex credendi* through the addition of third term: *lex vivendi*—the law of living—to identify “what has traditionally been implied as the ethical consequence of liturgical participation.”⁸⁶ This reformulation seeks to emphasize that “Christian liturgical practice is not only oriented toward Christian belief but also toward the life of Christian persons and communities in and with the world.”⁸⁷ This way, the addition of *lex vivendi* makes possible “to consider both liturgy and theology as forms of Christian practice that, together, we must hold in critical tension with ethical praxis.”⁸⁸

Similarly, Don Saliers annexes to Prosper's axiom the term *lex agendi*, or law of ethical action.⁸⁹ For him, “*How* we pray and worship is linked to *how* we live—to our desires, emotions, attitudes, beliefs and actions.”⁹⁰ Saliers claims that a Christian moral life could not be understood “simply as conformity to a set of rules;” it requires a new understanding of “ourselves in the

⁸⁶ Kevin Irwin, *Context and Text: Method in Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1994), 331.

⁸⁷ E. Byron Anderson and Bruce T. Morrill, “Introduction,” in *Liturgy and the Moral Self: Humanity at Full Stretch before God: Essays in Honor of Don E. Saliers*, eds. E. Byron Anderson and Bruce T. Morrill (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1998), 4-5.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁸⁹ Don Saliers, *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 187.

⁹⁰ Don Saliers, “Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 72 (1979), 174. (Work reprinted as “Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings.” In *Liturgy and the Moral Self: Humanity at Full Stretch before God: Essays in Honor of Don E. Saliers*, edited by E. Byron Anderson and Bruce T. Morrill, 15-35. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1998).

world and how we ought to live in relation to society, the neighbor and self.”⁹¹ This Christian moral life is constituted by a set of affections and virtues that, grounded in the mystery of Christ, provide the “motives and wellsprings of desire and action.”⁹² For Saliers, it is in corporate worship where these affections are remembered and expressed, articulated and rehearsed, and where it is shaped “how we understand ourselves in the world and how we ought to live in relation to society, the neighbor and the self.”⁹³

Likewise, philosopher James K. A. Smith argues that human persons are not primarily thinking or believing creatures but affective, desiring, liturgical animals, who are defined fundamentally by what they love. These desires are “shaped and molded by the habit-forming practices” in which they participate, which embed a vision of what a good life is and consequently form people’s identities by training their hearts through their bodies.⁹⁴ In sum, for Smith “every liturgy constitutes a pedagogy that teaches us, in all sorts of precognitive ways, to be a certain kind of person.”⁹⁵

Moral formation in worship involves both personal and social ethics. Christian Scharen claims that the relationship between worship and social ethics has been relatively neglected in

⁹¹ Ibid, 179. From a different perspective the issue of worship as moral formation is also addressed by Orthodox Armenian scholar Vigen Guroian, who finds some limitations in the use of the term “moral formation” and suggests that liturgy should point to holiness as a “greater formation, conversion and transformation.” Vigen Guroian, “Moral Formation and Christian Worship,” *The Ecumenical Review* 49 no.3 (July 1997): 372-78. Guroian also explores the relationship between worship and ethics in “Seeing Worship as Ethics: An Orthodox Perspective,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 13 no. 2 (Fall, 1985): 332-59.

⁹² Don Saliers, *The Soul in Paraphrase: Prayer and Religious Affections*, 2nd ed. (Cleveland, OH: OSL Publications, 1991), 9.

⁹³ Saliers, “Liturgy and Ethics,” 18, 23.

⁹⁴ James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2009), 25.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

discussions on church and public life, even though liturgy and ethics scholars are increasingly agreeing on recognizing “that Christian worship shapes people and communities committed to a broader public good, to acts of justice and peace in the world.”⁹⁶ Among the latter, Stanley Hauerwas has been largely influential, sustaining a radical understanding that “liturgy is not a motive for social action, it is not a cause to effect. Liturgy *is* social action.”⁹⁷ For Hauerwas, “Christianity is not fundamentally a system of belief,” but a “new polis;” a community “shaped by the story of how God is with us.”⁹⁸ Therefore, “Christianity is mostly a matter of politics.”⁹⁹ In this sense, it is through liturgy that the church forms “resident aliens” who are not simply called to do the right things but are expected to be holy.¹⁰⁰ “Such holiness,” affirms Hauerwas, “is not an individual achievement but rather comes from being made part of a community in which we discover the truth about our lives.”¹⁰¹

The relationship between ethics, politics, and Christian worship is also the subject of Bernd Wannewetsch’s *Political Worship*.¹⁰² In this work, the author claims that the ethical dimension of worship (“ethics springing from worship”) not only forms the ethics of individual believers but a “social form of life” of a community, where its members find the basis of their

⁹⁶ Christian Scharen, *Public Worship and Public Work: Character and Commitment in Local Congregational Life*, Virgil Michel Series (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004), 10.

⁹⁷ Stanley Hauerwas, *Christian Existence Today: Essays on Church, World and Living in Between* (Durham, NC: The Labyrinth Press, 1988), 107.

⁹⁸ Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1989), 30.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Stanley Hauerwas, *In Good Company: The Church as Polis* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 155.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² See Bernd Wannewetsch, *Political Worship: Ethics for Christian Citizens*, Margaret Kohl, trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)

political existence.¹⁰³ In this sense he argues that what he means by “political worship” is “the fact that in the proper sense *every* public service of worship in which a Christian congregation engages has a specifically political character, since it is the assembly of ‘Christian citizens’” that follows “a particular political form of life that is determined by the ‘law of the Spirit’ (Rom. 8:2).”¹⁰⁴ As a result, this political worship is a “lived ethos;” a form of life which, independently of the form its liturgy takes, provides a moral grammar that shapes Christians in a new language of faith that trains them in a renewed capacity for moral judgments and thus forms them for the political life outside the church.¹⁰⁵

This point will be especially relevant for the interpretative analysis on ethics in liturgy and ethical formation through the particular worship practices of the three evangelical groups studied in this work. As a cautionary note, it is important to anticipate that, beyond some tendency among scholars to idealize liturgical ethics with corresponding prescriptive implications, the intended interpretation in this work will be exclusively of a descriptive nature without any pretention of normativity.

1.4.3 Worship and culture

The interplay among theology, ethical praxis, and worship does not take place in a vacuum; beliefs, values, symbols, and rites are essential components of culture, and henceforth this final section will consider the relationship between worship and culture.

¹⁰³ Wannewetsch, *Political Worship*, 4-5, 123.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 18, 32-40.

Drawing upon cultural anthropology, Anscar Chupungco defines culture through three of its components: values, patterns, and institutions.¹⁰⁶ Cultural values are those principles “that influence and give direction to the life and activities of a community and its members.”¹⁰⁷ Cultural patterns involve how members of a society think and how they express concepts through language, rites and different forms of art.¹⁰⁸ And cultural institutions are traditional rites celebrated by the family, neighborhood, or the entire community to commemorate particular events of individuals’ life cycle or seasonal, religious or historical occasions.¹⁰⁹

In this sense, Christian worship is intrinsically a cultural event with its own values, patterns and institutions that relate to components of the surrounding culture in different ways. Probably one of the better documents that deals with this issue is The Nairobi Statement of the Lutheran World Federation.¹¹⁰ Even though its purpose is to orient churches toward a healthy and balanced perspective on worship and culture, it introduces useful categories for the analytical endeavor of this dissertation.

Any historical analysis of cultural formation mediated through worship practices will likely find features that, albeit to different degrees, represent the following four categories.

¹⁰⁶ Anscar J. Chupungco, “Reenvisioning ‘Liturgy and the Components of Culture,’” in *Worship and Culture: Foreign Country or Homeland?* ed. Gláucia Vasconcelos Wilkey (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014), 69.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 70-74.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 74-75.

¹¹⁰ For the complete text of the Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture see “Appendix,” in *Christian Worship Worldwide. Expanding Horizons, Deepening Practices*, ed. Charles E. Farhadian (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 285-290. Or see “The Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture,” in *Worship and Culture. Foreign Country or Homeland?* ed. Gláucia Vasconcelos Wilkey (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014), 137-142. Also available in <http://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/nairobi-statement-on-worship-and-culture-full-text/>.

Worship is *transcultural* when its elements transcend particular cultures; for example, readings from the Bible, reciting ecumenical creeds or the Lord's Prayer, and baptizing in water in the Triune name. Worship is *contextual* when the meaning of its components is encoded and re-expressed in the language of the local culture. Worship is *cross-cultural* when it shares liturgical elements across cultures. And worship is *counter-cultural* when its liturgical practices resist and seek to transform those components of the surrounding culture that are inconsistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

To date, there are no published academic works that specifically and simultaneously address the abovementioned subjects in Argentine Protestant history. Still, on the particular topic of worship and theology in the light of a wider discussion on social ethics, it is worthy to note Alberto Roldán's doctoral dissertation on the social views expressed in Free Brethren's theological discourse in Argentina (1882-1955). This work includes an excursus that comprises a concise Christological analysis of Brethren hymnody that underscores its implicit docetism.¹¹¹ On the relationship between worship, theology and culture in the broader Latin American context, see Dinorah Mendez' *Evangelicals in Mexico*, an investigation on Mexican hymnody where she concludes that the most widely accepted hymns, songs, and psalms among Mexican evangelicals are those that successfully communicate theological content in ways that are relevant for the local culture.¹¹² A valuable essay on Latin American worship, theology and culture is *Worship and Culture in Latin America*, written by Peruvian scholars Samuel Escobar

¹¹¹ See Alberto F. Roldán, "Comprensión de la realidad social en el discurso teológico de los Hermanos Libres en la Argentina (1882-1955)" (Ph.D. diss., ISEDET, 1996), 342-345.

¹¹² See Dinorah B. Méndez, *Evangelicals in Mexico: Their Hymnody and Its Theology* (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang S.A., 2008)

and Miguel Angel Palomino.¹¹³ Departing from an analysis of a new contemporary paradigm in evangelical and Pentecostal worship in Latin America, they look back to consider the historical roots of the emergence of Protestantism in the region, and conclude with some guidelines to revise the Latin American theology of *culto* (worship), acknowledging the tension between cultural relevance and theological soundness. All these works address topics that, with different levels of depth, will be discussed in this dissertation.

1.5 Conclusion

This dissertation aims to study worship practices among Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren in the emergence of Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930). For this purpose, worship is here conceived as an encounter between the community of believers and its Lord in response to God's initiative. This worship is manifested through practices, which in this investigation are considered as intrinsically formative, both theologically and ethically. Worship practices are informed and shaped by doctrine, and simultaneously they embody and express particular theological beliefs. Likewise, they form a community and its members in a unique self-understanding, in certain values, affections, and particular views of the world and the Christian life that inform and model their ethical praxis. Maxwell Johnson synthesized this complex dynamic in these words: "Christians act morally or ethically because of what they believe, and what they believe is continually shaped by worship, by how they are formed by the words and

¹¹³ Miguel A. Palomino and Samuel Escobar, "Worship and Culture in Latin America," in *Christian Worship Worldwide: Expanding Horizons, Deepening Practices*, ed. Charles E. Farhadian (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 107-130. An expanded version of this work in the Spanish language has been published by Palomino; see Miguel A. Palomino *¿Qué le pasó al culto en América Latina? La adoración en las iglesias evangélicas* (Lima: Ediciones Puma, 2011).

the acts of worship, by the divine encounter with the God of grace and love mediated in the liturgy via its spoken words, texts, gestures, and sacramental signs.”¹¹⁴

This dissertation will describe the most common worship practices among the aforementioned Protestant groups in that particular place and time and will seek to disclose theological and ethical meanings embedded in those practices and their consequent formative influence in the construction of a unique evangelical identity in a largely Roman Catholic context. This analytical interpretation will be only of descriptive nature, intentionally leaving to the reader any critical assessment or prescriptive response.

¹¹⁴ Johnson, *Praying and Believing*, 98.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORICAL, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONTEXT OF EMERGING PROTESTANTISM IN ARGENTINA

2.1 Argentine historical context

The emergence of Protestantism in Argentina is intimately connected with social, political, and economical circumstances in the country that, particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century, created a unique and propitious setting for new religious ideas.

2.1.1 Conquest and colonial times (1516-1810)

To understand the historical context of the period between 1867 and 1930, it is necessary to look back at the colonial times. Spaniards first arrived at the Río de la Plata region in 1516.¹¹⁵ After a failed first attempt, in 1580 they founded a settlement that would become the city of Buenos Aires. From there they extended their domain to the north and, simultaneously, from Lima to the southeast and from Chile to the east, thus gaining control over a large part of actual Argentina.¹¹⁶

During the first two centuries in the Americas, the Habsburgs established an authoritarian colonial system imbued with the ideals and values of late medieval feudalism: the supreme authority of the king, and beneath him, the hierarchy of the nobility based on and granted by the ownership of the land. In this process, the Roman Catholic Church played a leading, dominant

¹¹⁵ “Río de la Plata” is the name of the river that constitutes part of the border between Uruguay and Argentina. Both countries’ capital cities, Montevideo and Buenos Aires, are located on the river coast. In an extended use, Río de la Plata refers to the region around the river and these two cities.

¹¹⁶ Patagonia, which represents almost half of the country’s total area, was never conquered by the Spaniards and remained under the control of native tribes until 1885, when the Argentine army added these territories through a very controversial military campaign named “The Conquest of the Desert” (1878-1885).

role in structuring and consolidating this traditional order while helping to regulate the habits and customs of the colonized society.¹¹⁷ Though this regime was imposed over all Spanish territories in the Americas, it was weaker in the southern cone. The south's geographical remoteness, the lack of precious metals and stones, and the absence of a dense population of productive native peoples made it less attractive to colonizers. Consequently, a colonial society of significance never flourished during these early times. This had consequences in several areas. Very early on, Buenos Aires surreptitiously broke the monopoly established on its port; pirates and smugglers—mostly from Protestant countries—were frequent visitors to these coasts, and this illegal trade helped to develop a small and rich local bourgeoisie composed of some Spaniards and their children born in America—the *criollos*.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, this early contact with diverse foreigners imprinted on the local population a more open mindset that favored the entrance of new ideas and created a more tolerant spirit.

Along with this, the marginal location and the poverty of this region did not allow the construction of important church buildings as in other places in the continent, which had been fundamental in consolidating the power and influence of the Church. “Temples were very humble, and most of them faced the challenge of surviving and funding the minimum necessary

¹¹⁷ Amestoy suggests that the changes brought to Western Europe by the Reformation had an indirect impact on the Spanish colonization of the Americas, where the Roman Church aimed at the restoration of the monopoly of Roman Christianity that was collapsing in the European continent. To this end, it was believed to be essential to preserve the theocratic medieval order. See Norman R. Amestoy, “Ideas para repensar la historia del Cristianismo en América Latina,” *Teología y cultura* 7 no.12 (December 2010): 5-10.

¹¹⁸ Spaniards brought to the Americas a social system of *castas*; a complex hierarchical way to structure society based on socio-racial classification. At the top of this social pyramid were the Spaniards, followed by the *criollos*, children of Europeans born in the Americas, without any other racial mix. These two groups held the better positions and concentrated the wealth. At the bottom, there were the natives (Amerindians) and even a bit lower, the African slaves. In the middle, all possible racial mixes were named and ranked; those who were whiter were above the others.

for pastoral care and liturgical celebrations.”¹¹⁹ As a result, Buenos Aires mostly received less educated priests, which in this particular context resulted in a less religious people when compared to other Latin American societies.

The arrival of the Bourbons to the Spanish throne in 1700 initiated a period of change in their domain in the Americas. The economic growth of Buenos Aires around its port, added to the new influences of Physiocratic economic thought—which believed that the wealth of the nations was based on the surplus-value of the agriculture—turned this remote village into a strategic place. As a result, the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata was created in 1776, with Buenos Aires as its capital city. This brought prosperity to the region but also resulted in tensions among different factions with opposing economic interests. The Church gained ground, and by the end of the colonial times social life in the major cities revolved around the liturgical calendar and the religious feasts.¹²⁰

2.1.2 *Criolla* age: from independence to national organization (1810-1880)

Political upheaval in Europe soon had its impact in the Spanish colonies in the Americas. Napoleon’s invasion of Spain, holding Spanish king Ferdinand VII captive, created the conditions for independence movements, also influenced by the ideals of the French and American revolutions. Thus, in Buenos Aires, on May 25, 1810, a committee composed of nine members—both Spaniards and *criollos*—claimed rule over the territories of the Viceroyalty of

¹¹⁹ Roberto Di Stéfano and Loris Zanatta, *Historia de la Iglesia Argentina. Desde la Conquista hasta fines del siglo XX* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2009), 169.

¹²⁰ A rich description of Catholic worship practices during the end of the colonial times can be found in Di Stéfano and Zanatta, *Historia de la Iglesia Argentina*, 168-78.

Río de la Plata in absence of the King. Six years later, after fighting a war of independence, on July 9, 1816, national independence was declared.¹²¹

Argentine historian José L. Romero called the period between 1810 and 1880, the “*criolla*” age; a period when the country was ruled by *criollos*, who basically tried to keep the social order inherited from the colonial system but who couldn’t solve internal conflicts of ideas and interests, which resulted in violent power struggles and civil wars.¹²² Meanwhile, a long period of fluid and growing commercial relations with Great Britain started. New business opportunities appeared, which attracted some British subjects to immigrate to Argentina — people who in almost all cases, were Protestants.¹²³

In 1825 a Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation was signed with Britain; it manifested the British recognition of Argentina as an independent nation, and also included an article that granted the British residents the freedom to practice their religion publicly. Nevertheless, it was implicit that this benefit was only for the foreigners and that they should not proselytize among the locals. Thus, to a certain extent, the text of this Treaty broke “the absolute monopoly of Catholicism allowing the introduction of dissident cults in the United Provinces.”¹²⁴ The same day of the signature of the Treaty (February 2, 1825), the Anglican Church in the

¹²¹ The name that the country took at that time was *Provincias Unidas del Río de la Plata* (United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata). The National Constitution of 1853 added the names *Confederación Argentina* (Argentine Confederation) and *República Argentina* (Argentine Republic), the latter of which has been most commonly used since then.

¹²² See José L. Romero, *Breve historia de la Argentina. Nueva edición aumentada y actualizada* (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2002), 17.

¹²³ Research on the topic affirmed that by the eve of World War I, and with the only exception of their investments in the United States, British investments in Argentina were the largest made in any country outside the British Empire. See Henry S. Fern, “Beginnings of British Investments in Argentina,” *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 4 no. 3 (1952), 341.

¹²⁴ Abad de Santillán, quoted in Celso Román Lorenzo, *Manual de Historia Constitucional Argentina. Vol.2* (Rosario: Editorial Juris, 1997), 49.

country was legally created, and on May 6, 1831, its first church building was inaugurated, becoming the first non-Catholic church ever built in Argentina.¹²⁵

Soon after, other churches asked for equal treatment to that given to the Anglicans, intending to serve the diverse immigrant communities that had started settling in Buenos Aires and the surrounding areas. For example, on April 25, 1835, the Scottish Presbyterians inaugurated their first church building, followed by the Methodists on January 8, 1843 — in both cases, these were the first church of each denomination in South America.¹²⁶ Meanwhile, other Protestant groups settled in Patagonia —a region then beyond the rule of the State— such as the Anglican mission in Tierra del Fuego in 1862 or the conformist and non-conformist Protestant Welsh in Chubut in 1865.

The adoption of the National Constitution in 1853, which favored European immigration following Juan Bautista Alberdi's principle “to govern is to populate” and the pacification of the country with the effective union of all Argentine territory in one nation in 1862, initiated a period of profound social and economic transformation that would reach its zenith in the following three decades.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ This building is known as the Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist. In 2000 it was declared a national and artistic monument. For more details on the history of this church, see Arnoldo Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 75-86 and Juan Francisco Lutteral and Nicolás Hilding Ohlsson, “Historia de la Iglesia Anglicana en Argentina,” accessed April 20, 2015, <http://www.anglicana.org.ar/images/descargas/Resumen%20Historia%20de%20la%20Iglesia%20Anglicana%20en%20Argentina.pdf>.

¹²⁶ The story of the first Methodist church in Argentina is narrated in chapter 3. For more details on the history of the first Presbyterian Church see Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 101-10.

¹²⁷ Juan Bautista Alberdi (1810-1884) was a renowned Argentine lawyer and intellectual who wrote a book that substantially influenced the content of the National Constitution of Argentina of 1853. He emphatically supported a demographic policy consisting of promoting European immigration intended to solve what he believed was one of the biggest problems of the country at that time: the small population of an immense territory. He summarized this thought under the motto “*gobernar es poblar*” (to govern is to populate), which became his most famous quote. See Juan Bautista Alberdi, *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización política de la República Argentina (1852)* (Buenos Aires: Red Ediciones S.L., 2012), 16-22; 159-66.

1.3 The “alluvial” age (1880-1930)

José L. Romero named this period of Argentine history, started in 1880, as “alluvial Argentina,” alluding to what he believed was a decisive and fundamental phenomenon: “the metamorphosis that immigration produced in the Argentine society.”¹²⁸ Between 1870 and 1914, Argentina recorded the highest positive net migration rate in its history; of a total number of 7,412,100 immigrants who arrived in Argentina, 3,341,500 stayed permanently.¹²⁹ That meant a deep social transformation in a country that, according to the first national census, by 1869 only had a total population of 1,877,490 inhabitants. As summarized by Blanca Sanchez Alonso: “Argentina was second only to the United States in numbers of immigrants, and in no other country did immigration have such an impact compared to the size of the native population.”¹³⁰

This first wave of massive European immigration (1880-1914) corresponded with the coming to power of the “Liberals” (1862-1916). Their biggest challenge was the stabilizing of the political system and the acceleration of the process of economic growth and modernization.¹³¹ In order to accomplish these goals they consolidated the agro-export model of

¹²⁸ José L. Romero, quoted in Carlos Altamirano, “José Luis Romero y la idea de la Argentina aluvial,” *Prismas- Revista de historia intelectual* (2001): 314.

¹²⁹ Calculations are based on figures from Maurizio’s survey, where they were rounded to the thousands. Roxana Maurizio, “Migraciones internacionales en Argentina: un análisis de sus determinantes y de su relación con el mercado de trabajo,” *Migraciones internacionales, Booms, Crisis Económicas y Desarrollo. El caso latinoamericano* (Santiago de Chile: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2008), accessed April 22, 2015, http://www.mininterior.gov.ar/provincias/archivos_prv25/Migraciones_Argentina_Maurizio.pdf

¹³⁰ Blanca Sanchez-Alonso, “Making Sense of Immigration Policy: Argentina, 1870-1930,” *Economic History Review* 66 no.2 (2013): 601.

¹³¹ After independence, the fall of the centralist structures held by the Spanish regime created in Argentina, as in the rest of Latin America, a process of territorial fragmentation that led to decades of violent conflict between different regional leaders. The liberal response to this problem was to strengthen a centralized administration that favored the consolidation of an oligarchic rule in detriment of popular representation. For an extended analysis, see Gabriel L. Negretto and José Antonio Aguilar-Rivera, “Rethinking the Legacy of the Liberal State in Latin America: The Cases of Argentina (1853-1916) and Mexico (1857-1910),” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 32 no.2 (May 2000): 361-97.

development that initially proved to be successful. Argentina became “the fastest-growing economy in 1880-1930,” fundamentally due to the advent of railways that significantly lowered the cost of transportation. This made Argentine’s products more competitive in the world market and turned the country into “the granary of the world.”¹³² By 1910, there were 23,994 km (14,909 miles) of railroad lines, mainly financed by British capital, built with British technology and workforce, and exploited by British companies.¹³³ Railroads also favored the expansion of lands for cultivation, which attracted more European immigration. Therefore, railroads indirectly played a fundamental role in the expansion of Protestantism, which was linked to the arrival of particular immigrant communities. Railroads also contributed to Protestant diffusion in a more intentional way; the 1908 report of the British and Foreign Bible Society stated that “nearly all the railway companies grant tickets at half-price to the servants of the Bible Society.”¹³⁴

Massive European immigration brought changes to the religious field. As just noted, during this period a significant number of Protestant churches and denominations arrived accompanying different ethnic communities: The Baptists (originally Swiss and French, 1881); The Dutch Reformed Church (1889); The Argentine Evangelical Lutheran Church (Volga Germans, 1905); The United Evangelical Lutheran Church (originally German, 1908); The Sweden Lutheran Church (1917); The Armenian Evangelical Church (1918); The Norwegian

¹³² Arie M. Kacowicz, *Globalization and the Distribution of Wealth: The Latin American Experience, 1982-2008* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 147.

¹³³ For a comprehensive analysis see Julian S. Duncan, “British Railways in Argentina,” *Political Science Quarterly* 52 no.4 (December 1937): 559-82 and Raymond H. Pulley, “The Railroad and Argentine National Development, 1852-1914,” *The Americas* 23 no.1 (July 1966): 63-75.

¹³⁴ *The Hundred and Fourth Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society for the Year Ending March MDCCCXVIII* (London: The Bible House, 1908), 360.

Evangelical Church (1920); The Evangelical Congregational Church (Russian and German, 1924); The Slav Evangelical Church (1926).

With the limited statistical information available, knowing the size of Protestant community in Argentina during this entire period represents a challenge. Between 1867 and 1930 only three national censuses were held (1869, 1895 and 1914) and only one of them asked the religion question. According to the Census 1895, the population of Argentina was counted as 4,044,911: 99.1 % was Roman Catholic; 0.7% was Protestant (26,750), 79.1% of which was foreign-born.¹³⁵ Almost all Argentine Protestants were the children of the Protestant immigrants born in Argentina.¹³⁶ Nearly half of all Protestants lived in the city of Buenos Aires and the other half were mostly concentrated in three provinces: Buenos Aires, Entre Rios y Santa Fe.¹³⁷ The Census 1895 also showed that there were 1,019 Roman Catholic and 68 Protestant church buildings in Argentina; 25 of the latter belonged to the Welsh immigrant colony settled in Chubut, Patagonia.¹³⁸

The total population as per 1914 was 7.903.662; it almost doubled in two decades, mainly as the result of European immigration. Population estimates for 1930 was 11,930,000, of which my estimate is that Protestants might have been roughly 143,000; the increase mainly resulted

¹³⁵ Categories in this field were 4: Catholic; Protestant; Israelite (sic); Other.

¹³⁶ *Segundo Censo de la República Argentina: Mayo 10 de 1895, Tomo 2* (Buenos Aires: Taller Tipográfico de la República Argentina, 1898), 122

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ *Segundo Censo de la República Argentina: Mayo 10 de 1895, Tomo 3* (Buenos Aires: Taller Tipográfico de la República Argentina, 1898), 78-80.

from Protestant immigration and birth rates among Protestant families, and to a much lesser extent, to conversion.¹³⁹

European immigration also had a major impact on the Argentine Roman Catholic Church. The largest numbers of immigrants came from a Catholic background; Italians and Spanish constituted “78% to 90% of the total number of immigrants from 1880 to 1910,” with the Italians being “about half of all those who settled in Argentina during the period.”¹⁴⁰ Similarly to the Protestants, with these Catholic immigrant communities also arrived their priests, who represented new religious orders: Passionists (1874, from Ireland), Salesians (1875, from Italy), Redemptorists (1883, from Germany; later from Poland), Lasallians (1889, from France and Spain) and the Capuchin Brethren (1898, from Italian and Spain), among others.¹⁴¹ As a result of massive Catholic immigration, not only local Catholicism was revitalized but the foundations of the modernization of the Argentine Catholic Church were laid under a more Roman model.

Still, “alluvial” Argentina was the result of the project sustained by the Liberal elites that governed the nation from 1880 until 1916. Central to their agenda was complete separation between Church and State. Accordingly, in the 1880s they passed an important set of secular laws: secularization of cemeteries (1883), civil registry (1884), secular public common education (1884), and civil matrimony (1888). This model of secularization implied the “emancipation of

¹³⁹ The estimate takes into account the results from Census 1947, which resumed the religion question. This Census showed that Protestants were 2% of the total population (310,633). If annual growth were constant, the annual compound rate would be of aprox.0.05%, which for 1930 would represent around 1.2%. *IV Censo General de la Nación, Tomo 1* (Buenos Aires: Dirección Nacional del Servicio Estadístico, n/d), 83.

¹⁴⁰ Samuel L. Baily, “The Italians and Organized Labor in the United States and Argentina, 1880-1910,” *International Migration Review* 1 no.3 (Summer 1967), 59.

¹⁴¹ The only Argentine Catholic saint, Héctor Valdivieso Sáenz (1910-1934), also known as San Benito de Jesús, belonged to the lay Order of La Salle.

political and civil institutions from religious institutions” and “the unyielding defense of religious freedom in a cosmopolitan sense.”¹⁴² The Catholic Church “protested against the reforms, and the tension led to breaking off [diplomatic] relations between the Argentine government and the Holy See in 1884.”¹⁴³ Protestants, for their part, adhered to these initiatives held by the anticlerical faction, comprised of the Liberal elites, most of whom were also Freemasons.¹⁴⁴ This led to an widespread understanding that tended to assimilate Protestant identity to Liberal ideology—a notion that Sidney Rooy echoes in the following quote: “From its earliest moments in Latin America, Protestantism inserted itself into the liberal project, opposing anything that represented backwardness: the pre-capitalist mindset, Catholicism, and autochthonous cultures.”¹⁴⁵

Liberals achieved the goal of political stabilization, modernization, and economic growth but failed to grant popular democratic participation and economic redistribution, which resulted in social discontent and increasing internal conflict. The rising middle class and the emerging industrial proletariat pushed for political representation; in 1916, after a political reformation,

¹⁴² Roberto Di Stefano, “Disidencia religiosa y secularización en el siglo XIX iberoamericano: cuestiones conceptuales y metodológicas,” *Proyecto Historia* no. 37 (December 2008): 173.

¹⁴³ Paula Seiguer, “Estado laico y pluralización religiosa: la participación protestante en el debate público en torno a las leyes laicas en la década de 1880,” (Paper presented at VI Jornadas de Historia Política: Argentina, siglos XIX y XX, Universidad General de San Martín, July 7-8, 2011): 6.

¹⁴⁴ In fact, a large number of Liberal rulers and intellectuals belonged to a Freemason lodge. For example, between 1862 and 1930, 9 of 14 presidents of Argentina were Freemasons. On the political influence of Freemasonry, see Alcibíades Lappa, *La masonería argentina a través de sus hombres*, 2d. ed. (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos de Impresora Belgrano, 1966); Pilar González Bernaldo, “Masonería y revolución de Independencia en el Río de la Plata: 130 años de historiografía,” in *Masonería, Revolución y Reacción*, IV Symposium Internacional de Historia de la Masonería Española, coord. José Antonio Ferrer Benimeli (Alicante, Instituto Alicantino Juan Gil-Albert, 1990), 1035-54.

¹⁴⁵ Sidney Rooy, “Religious Tolerance and the Arrival of Protestantism in Latin America,” *Journal of Latin American Theology: Christian Reflections from the Latino South* 6 no.2 (2011): 58.

Hipólito Yrigoyen became the first president elected by popular vote.¹⁴⁶ But the young and promising political party that came to power —*Unión Cívica Radical*— could not reverse the situation, which was aggravated by the negative economic impact of World War I, the Great Depression, and the arrival of a second large wave of immigrants running away from devastated Europe. Growing social unrest, class conflict, protests, strikes, and infighting within the governing party were a recipe for disaster. On September 6, 1930, a military coup backed by the conservative oligarchy overthrew President Yrigoyen; this coup “launched the military into the political arena and thereby set the stage for the institutionalization of chronic instability.”¹⁴⁷ The nationalist faction that came to power reclaimed the tradition and values of the Hispanic cultural heritage that in essence were Catholic. The Catholic Church, which had been under a process of reorganization and modernization since the beginning of the twentieth century, found then its opportunity to fight back the Liberal project and regain lost terrain. This alliance introduced the symbolic notion that merged the concepts of nationality and religion, equating the ideas of an Argentine nation with a Catholic nation, or, in other words, opposing the idea of Catholic nation to foreign wickedness. Thus, the foundations were laid for what scholars would later call “the myth of the Catholic nation.”¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ The Saenz Peña Law of 1912 established the universal, secret, and compulsory male suffrage. Women were granted the right to vote only in 1947.

¹⁴⁷ Deborah Lee Norden, *Military Rebellion in Argentina: Between Coups and Consolidation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 21.

¹⁴⁹ “The myth of the Catholic nation” is an expression that refers to an ideological and mythical concept of national-Catholic identity shared by the Catholic Church and the military, who believed in recreating the nation under the ideal of a Catholic State (“national-Catholicism”). These ideas, which inside the Church had been maturing since the beginning of the century, culminated when an alliance between these two sectors led to the military coup of 1930, a period that generated the conditions for the emergence of Peronism. For more on this topic see Loris Zanatta, *Del Estado liberal a la Nación católica. Iglesia y Ejército en los orígenes del peronismo, 1930-1943* (Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, Buenos Aires, 1996) and Loris Zanatta, *Perón y el mito de la nación católica: Iglesia y Ejército en los orígenes del peronismo 1943-1946* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1999).

2.2 The emergence of Protestantism in Argentina

2.2.1 Historical antecedents: First Protestants in the Río de la Plata.

The early times of Protestant emergence in the Río de la Plata, rather than being identified with a particular denomination, were linked to the English-speaking immigrant community of non-Catholic Christian faith.¹⁵⁰ During the first decade after the May Revolution (1810), occasional worship services were held in British ships by British chaplains or captains, usually to perform wedding ceremonies between British citizens.¹⁵¹

The first lay Christian worker ever in Argentina was a Scottish Baptist: James (Diego) Thomson (1788-1854).¹⁵² He arrived in Buenos Aires in 1818 as a representative of the Lancastrian School Society (founded by William Wilberforce and also known as the British and Foreign School Society) and very soon after he also became an agent of the British and Foreign

¹⁵⁰ The first record of a Protestant service in actual Argentine territory was held in 1577 in Puerto San Julián (Patagonia), and led by Francis Fletcher—the chaplain of Sir Francis Drake’s fleet and the first Protestant minister on Argentine soil. Curiously, it was the same place where the first Catholic mass ever was celebrated on April 1, 1520, by Magellan’s expedition. Drake’s fleet had to stay in Puerto San Julian for almost two months of that winter; in the meanwhile, they celebrated communion at least two times, and Drake preached a sermon on unity and obedience. See Sir Francis Drake, *The World* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1854), XXIV, 66-67, 234-36. Besides this episode, the only Protestant worship services in colonial times were held outdoors in Buenos Aires, during the first British invasion of the Río de la Plata (1806) by the British troops in Plaza de Mayo. As they didn’t have a chaplain, services were conducted by an officer—Colonel Pack—who read from the Book of Common Prayer. See Ben Hughs, *The British Invasion of the River Plate, 1806-1807. How the Red Coats Were Humbled and a Nation Was Born* (South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2013), 57.

¹⁵¹ See Arnoldo Canclini, *Sí, quiero. Historias y anécdotas del matrimonio en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 2005), 209-10.

¹⁵² The most complete resources in Spanish on Thomson’s biography are: Juan C. Varetto, *Diego Thomson, apóstol de la instrucción pública e iniciador de la obra evangélica en la América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta Evangélica, 1918) and Arnoldo Canclini, *Diego Thomson: Apóstol de la enseñanza y distribución de la Biblia en América y España*. (Buenos Aires: Asociación Sociedad Bíblica Argentina, 1987). In English, Thomson’s letters were gathered and printed as James Thomson, *Letters on the Moral and Religious State of South America* (London: James Nisbet, 1827). Also a good analysis of Thomson’s life in English could be found in Donald R. Mitchell, “The Evangelical Contribution of James Thomson to South American Life, 1818-1825” (Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1972). For a more comprehensive list of resources on James Thomson see <http://www.jamesdiegothomson.com/bibliography/>, accessed April 13, 2015.

Bible Society.¹⁵³ He stayed in Buenos Aires until 1821, and in this brief period he initiated the public school system in the province, establishing 16 public schools. He also distributed hundreds of New Testaments in Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and German.

In a letter dated on September 1, 1820 from Buenos Aires, James Thomson wrote about his intentions of starting “our Church” and “to take a room where we can meet together on the Lord’s Day.”¹⁵⁴ He also shared his concern about the “infant cause” and his plans to open a “Sabbath-school” for the English children, for which he asked “twenty or thirty of the hymnbooks used in the Sabbath Evening Schools in Edinburgh.”¹⁵⁵ Thus, on November 19, 1820, James Thomson led the first Protestant worship service ever held in Argentina. It was celebrated at an English businessman’s home, Mr. George Dickinson, with a total attendance of nine males—the majority of whom were Methodists.¹⁵⁶ The service was conducted in English and consisted of an exposition of the Scriptures, exhortations, and prayers.¹⁵⁷ A few months later, in July 1821, Thomson left Buenos Aires and continued his prolific ministry in other Latin American countries.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵³ A. Canclini clarifies the common misunderstanding of stating that Thomson arrived in Argentina as a representative of both British Societies. In fact, Thomson started his relation with the British and Foreign Bible Society four months after his arrival, when he realized that despite a ban on selling Bibles, there was some openness for this activity. Arnoldo Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 45. He was officially appointed a BFBS agent in 1824. Bill Mitchell, “Diego Thomson: A Study in Scotland and South America (1818-1825),” accessed April 13, 2015, <http://www.jamesdiegothomson.com/diego-thomson-a-study-in-scotland-and-south-america-1818-1825/>

¹⁵⁴ James Thomson, “Circulation of the Scriptures in Buenos Ayres,” *New Evangelical Magazine* (1820): 122-23, accessed April, 13, 2015, <http://www.jamesdiegothomson.com/blog/2013/12/26/buenos-aires-1st-september-1820>

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ John Morrison Reid, *Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church Volume 1* (New York-Cincinnati: Phillips and Hunt-Hitchcock and Walden, 1879), 246.

¹⁵⁷ This is according to a report given by Methodist pastor Dallas D. Lore in 1851, quoted in Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 48.

¹⁵⁸ Even though James Thomson was a Baptist layman, his Christian views seem to have been more ecumenical. Among his books, he published a book of liturgy intended to be useful to Christians beyond

But even without Thomson, this small congregation remained together. In July 1823, two Presbyterian missionaries from the United States — Theophilus Parvin and John C. Brigham— arrived in Buenos Aires and took the lead of that group. Brigham continued his trip to Chile, but Parvin— later joined by William Torrey, another Presbyterian missionary from the United States— remained in Argentina, devoted to “the building up of a congregation among the three or four thousands of English and Americans” who resided in Buenos Aires at that time.¹⁵⁹ Meanwhile, two other Protestant ministers arrived: John Armstrong in 1825 —a British reverend who founded the first Anglican Church of Buenos Aires— and William Brown in 1826 —a Scottish Presbyterian minister that came to serve a colony of Scottish immigrants in the interior of the province of Buenos Aires.

In 1832, the Presbyterians from the United States closed their missionary work in Argentina, and it would not be reopened in that century. The group that had been started by Baptist James Thomson and that was later led by Presbyterians Parvin and Torrey, managed to survive. In 1836, with the arrival of John Dempster, the first American Methodist Episcopal missionary to Río de la Plata, this congregation became the First Methodist Church of Buenos Aires —and the first Methodist church in all South America.¹⁶⁰

The story of this congregation provides a good example of how unimportant denominationalism was in early Protestantism in Argentina. Without denying theological or

denominational differences: *Union Liturgy* (London: James Nisbet, 1837); and three books of written prayers: *Family and Individual Prayers* (Montreal: Campbell and Becket, 1840); *Incense for the Christian Altar* (London: Partridge and Oakey, 1850); *Incense for the Private Altar* (London: Partridge and Oakey, 1850).

¹⁵⁹ *The Christian Advocate* (January 1828): 38.

¹⁶⁰ John Dempster was James Dempster’s son —a preacher sent to North America by John Wesley— who later became renowned for his contributions to theological education, being involved in the creation of Boston University School of Theology and Garrett Evangelical Seminary.

ecclesiological differences, “the first Churches considered each other as sisters and when the evangelizing Missions arrived, they carried out numerous activities together, especially those with evangelistic emphasis.”¹⁶¹ Awareness of the importance of interdenominational cooperation and mutual influences among denominational leaders and organizations is of particular relevance for this investigation. Also of great significance is the role liturgy played in forging this unity; the similar structure of the worship services across denominations—which they all named *culto* and tended to replicate European and American free church worship practices—made possible “spiritual communion” among denominations and “allowed the organization of jointly worship services without any difficulty.”¹⁶²

In the same vein, it is also worth noting that Protestants in Argentina usually called themselves “*Evangélicos*.” This was not an exclusive Argentine phenomenon but it occurred in all Latin America. John Mackay explained the rationale behind this option as follows:

It is profoundly significant that Protestant Christians in the Southern continent prefer to call themselves “Evangelicals,” rather than “Protestants.” It is not that they are unaware of the theological implications and historic witness of Protestantism, or that they are ashamed of being known as Protestants. Their preference, however, for being known as “*Evangélicos*” is twofold. In the first place, the associations which many years ago became associated to the term Protestant in religious cultural circles in the Hispanic world, tended to be of purely negative and derogative character. In the second place, it was easier for Latin American Protestants to render positive and meaningful witness in their environment if the name they bore did not appear to suggest mere protest or dissent, but affirmed positively the truth for which they stood, a truth which constitutes the very core of the Christian religion.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ Arnoldo Canclini, “Unidad y diferencias entre evangélicos argentinos (1825-1945),” *Revista Evangélica de Historia Vol.1* (2003): 29.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁶³ John Alexander Mackay, *The Latin American Churches and the Ecumenical Movement* (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, Division of Foreign Missions, 1963), 23.

The extended use of the common name “Evangelical” helped to develop a Protestant sense of unity and became a main component of a common non-Catholic religious identity.

2.2.2 The emergence of Methodism in the Río de la Plata ¹⁶⁴

As stated above, the formal origin of the Methodist Church in Argentina dates back to 1836, with the advent of missionary John Dempster, sent by the Missionary Society of the Episcopal Methodist Church (MEC).¹⁶⁵ During this time, Methodists were allowed by the Argentine government to exclusively work within the foreign community. Even when their initial members were, to a large extent, British traders and employees of British companies, the organization of the church was carried out by American missionaries, who led the denomination until 1932.¹⁶⁶ Consequently, the Methodist Church in the Río de la Plata resembled American Methodism much more than English Methodism.¹⁶⁷

While the first Methodist church was inaugurated on January 3, 1843, the time of Methodist expansion started with the arrival of Superintendent William Goodfellow in 1857.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ In emerging Methodism in South America, the Río de la Plata region was considered one mission field without distinction between Argentina and Uruguay. The Methodist Church remained a bi-national organization until 1969. See Mortimer Arias, “Historia Metodista ¿Por qué y para qué?” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 2 (2004): 16-18.

¹⁶⁵ Reid, *Missions and Missionary Society*, 248.

¹⁶⁶ In 1932 the Annual Conference of the River Plate elected its first Argentine bishop. It was only in 1969 that the Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina (IEMA) became a national autonomous organization.

¹⁶⁷ Early British Methodist worship combined a strong Eucharistic piety with enthusiastic hymn singing and extemporaneous prayer and resulted from the blend of different Christian traditions: Anglican, Puritan, Moravian, and Patristic, “seasoned with a strong dose of pragmatism.” In early American Methodist worship, the influence of the Free Church tradition was stronger and the Anglican weaker, a pattern that was also shaped by the frontier experience where the main liturgical elements were evangelistic preaching, extemporaneous prayer, and fervent hymnody, while Eucharistic piety was displaced from the center. See James F. White, “Traditions of Protestant Worship.” *Worship* 49, no.5 (May 1975): 280.

¹⁶⁸ The Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church abandoned the mission work in the River Plate, which remained in the hands of lay leaders until it was resumed in 1857.

He had been given the especial mission of starting the work in the Spanish language, which could finally be concretized in 1867 by John F. Thomson, “the Paul of South America.”¹⁶⁹

John Francis Thomson (1843-1933) was born in Scotland but emigrated to Buenos Aires with his parents when he was 8 years old, which made him fully fluent both in English and Spanish. His mother was a Presbyterian and his father sympathized with Methodism; once in Buenos Aires they joined the Methodist church. In 1860 Thomson had a personal experience of conversion during a sermon by Rev. Goodfellow, who became his spiritual mentor. Soon Thomson manifested a divine call “to preach.”¹⁷⁰ Goodfellow made the arrangements for him to study at Ohio Wesleyan University, where he earned a Doctor of Divinity degree. During his stay in the United States he married Goodfellow’s niece, Helen, with whom he returned to Buenos Aires to serve as a MEC missionary in October 1866. Soon he started Bible study and prayer meetings in Spanish in the house of a school teacher and also a Sunday school for children—the first one in the Spanish language in all of South America.¹⁷¹ In 1867, John F. Thomson initiated Sunday worship services in the Spanish language, thus becoming the first Protestant minister to continually preach in that language in the nation. His ministry extended to Montevideo, Uruguay, and then back to Buenos Aires, where he served as a pastor, lecturer and evangelist until his “enforced retirement” in 1918.¹⁷² After a long and fruitful ministry, he died in 1933.

¹⁶⁹ *EESA*, April 21, 1898, 1.

¹⁷⁰ Quoted in Juan C. Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata: Juan F. Thomson* (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1943), 47.

¹⁷¹ The school teacher’s name was Fermina León de Aldeber. For more details on this period of Thomson’s ministry, including a brief biography of Mrs. Aldeber, see Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 49-51.

¹⁷² Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 297.

Methodist work between 1867 and 1916 coincided with the rise to power of the Liberals. During this time, Methodists committed to fighting for religious rights for minorities, secular laws, and freedom of conscience. They understood that a secular state was essential for the expansion of the Protestant faith and Christian moral values that could totally transform Latin America. Education, and distribution of Bibles and Christian literature were fundamental for this endeavor, as was the founding of prestigious Methodist schools (e.g. *Colegio Americano de Rosario*, in 1874; *Colegio Ward*, in 1913) and the creation of a denominational publication, *El Estandarte Evangélico*, which aimed to “preach and defend the evangelical truths, and that will never compromise with error, not allowing anyone to deceive the humble people using the Christian name.”¹⁷³ In this context the Methodists also consolidated a “strategic alliance” with the Freemasons that would last until mid-twentieth century.¹⁷⁴

The period 1916-1930 was marked by emerging conversations inside Latin American Protestantism about their mission in this part of the world. The World Mission Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 had excluded Latin America from their plans, considering that it was already a Christian territory and that missions should concentrate on non-Christian lands. In response, the “Congress on Christian Work in Latin America” was organized in Panama City in 1916 to deal with matters of cooperation of mission agencies and Christian churches in Latin America.¹⁷⁵ Underlying feelings toward North American paternalism had started to surface, and

¹⁷³ “predicar y defender las verdades evangélicas, y nunca contemporizará con el error, no permitirá que nadie engañe a la gente humilde usando el nombre de cristianos.” Quoted in Daniel Bruno, “Abordaje y periodización para una historia del metodismo en Argentina,” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* no. 7 (2012): 24. For a comprehensive history of the first 50 years of Colegio Ward, see Floreal C. Bonano, *Historia del Colegio Ward. Edición conmemorativa del 50° aniversario* (Buenos Aires: Methopress Editorial y Gráfica, 1963).

¹⁷⁴ Bruno, “Abordaje y periodización,” 24.

¹⁷⁵ Full records of this Conference were published as *Christian Work in Latin America. Survey and Occupation. Message and Method. Education* (New York: Committee on Cooperation in Latin America. The Missionary Education Movement, 1917).

would become more evident in the following regional mission conferences: Montevideo in 1925 and Havana in 1929. The Montevideo conference was only for South American churches, and the two main issues that came out—the relation with the Roman Catholic Church and the Social Gospel movement—would start setting a divide among “‘modernists’ and ‘fundamentalists’”.¹⁷⁶ The Havana Conference was dominated by discussions on the meaning of being a Protestant in Latin America and of being a Latin American Protestant; emerging Latin American Protestant leaders had to deal simultaneously with Roman Catholic accusations of serving American interests and of seeking to de-catholicize and “to destroy the foundational elements of our nationality,” and with the need to Latinize Protestantism in Latin America.¹⁷⁷ It was not a coincidence that in this context a movement for the nationalization of the Methodist Church in Argentina emerged in 1917.¹⁷⁸

The latter was also a response from Argentine leaders to incipient signs of church growth stagnation. For the year 1867, there were about 7 organized Methodist congregations. Twenty years later, in 1887, this number raised to 14. In 1893, Methodist expansion reached its peak: they had 27 congregations, having almost doubled its size in just five years. In 1910 there were 48 congregations in the Río de la Plata region (Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay), which proved a sustained growth although tempered when compared to the decade 1880-1890. Since 1910s Methodist expansion started to slow down and showed some signs of stagnation: in 1920 there

¹⁷⁶ Amestoy, “Los cambios del protestantismo latinoamericano,” 194.

¹⁷⁷ “Carta pastoral colectiva del episcopado boliviano con motivo de la propaganda protestante, 1948,” quoted in Carlos Mondragón, *Like Leaven in the Dough. Protestant Social Thought in Latina America, 1920-1950*, trans., Daniel Miller and Ben Post (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011): 55.

¹⁷⁸ A comprehensive analysis of this frustrated attempt may be found in Daniel Bruno, “‘Por una iglesia con alma nacional’: nacimiento y ocaso de un sueño. El frustrado intento de nacionalización de la Iglesia Metodista en la Argentina, 1917-1919,” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 1 (2003): 109-153.

were 52 Methodist congregations (only 4 new congregations in 10 years). In 1927 the latter trend was confirmed: only 1 congregation was added, totaling 53 local congregations.¹⁷⁹ By 1922, the total membership of the Methodist Church in Argentina, including probationers, numbered 6,189, and by 1935, the number of members and probationers reached 7,004.¹⁸⁰

In a context of growing nationalism in Argentina during the first decades of the twentieth century, some native leaders believed that stagnation was due to the dominance of American church leadership which favored the general perception of Methodism as a foreign religion.¹⁸¹ A first attempt for the nationalization of the church failed but it led to an “event of historical importance:” the election of the first national bishop, Juan E. Gattinoni (1878-1970) in 1932.¹⁸² However, it was not until 1969 that the Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina (IEMA) became a national autonomous organization.

¹⁷⁹ Miguel A. Alba, “Difusión del Protestantismo en la ciudad de Buenos Aires (1870-1910). El caso metodista,” *Teología y cultura*, accessed June 23, http://teologos.com.ar/historia/difusion_del_protestantismo_daniel_ochoa.pdf. If the average congregation membership were similar to estimates for the Baptists and Free Brethren, that is 50 or 60 members per congregation, the total number of Methodists for 1927 may be counted as roughly 2,600/3,200.

¹⁸⁰ *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1922* (New York, NY: Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1922), 606; and James C. Quarles, *Christ in the Silver Lands* (Richmond, VA: Foreign Mission Board- Southern Baptist Convention, 1937), 129.

¹⁸¹ See Tomás Chami Rouvroy, “El metodismo en Argentina: de iglesia extranjera a iglesia nacional. Implantación, difusión y compromiso social, desde el siglo XIX hasta la última dictadura militar.” XII Jornadas Interescuelas/Departamentos de Historia. Departamento de Historia, Facultad de Humanidades y Centro Regional Universitario Bariloche. Universidad Nacional del Comahue, San Carlos de Bariloche, 2009: 8

¹⁸² A. Guillermo Tallon, *Historia del metodismo en el Río de la Plata, 1836-1936* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta Metodista, 1936), 27. As stated in this paper, the word “national” in the context of Protestant leadership usually referred to someone that was not an American or British missionary. In this particular case, Juan E. Gattinoni was born in Italy from where his family emigrated when he was a child. He served as a Methodist bishop in Argentina from 1932 to 1944. More biographical information on him can be found in Carlos T. Gattinoni, *Viejo roble que los vientos no derriban* (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1981). A brief autobiographical account in English is in the General Archives of the United Methodist Church can be found in <http://catalog.gcah.org/publicdata/files/4642/gattinoni-bishop-john-ermette.pdf>, accessed May 4, 2015.

2.2.3 The emergence of the Baptists in Argentina

Of the three Protestant groups surveyed in this dissertation, the Baptists were the more heterogeneous in their origins; Baptist work in Argentina resulted from three streams: European forerunners; North American missionaries sent by the Southern Baptist Convention; and the “native workers” —Argentines and immigrants who became church leaders, usually as the result of the ministry of the first two groups.

2.2.3.1 “Pre-history” of the Baptists in Argentina

Several decades went by before the first organized Baptist group arrived in Argentina as part of a colony of 150 Welsh immigrants to Chubut, Patagonia (1865). But the hard conditions they faced and the remoteness of their location in a land still in control of the natives in those initial years, resulted in an isolated Baptist community that could not be considered as the initiators of the Argentine Baptist movement. A similar case happened with Baptist German speaking immigrants from the Russian Volga that arrived in 1878, although in this case, their congregations later joined the Argentine Baptist Convention, so becoming integrated into the national Baptist movement.¹⁸³

2.2.3.2 *The European stream*

The historical merit of pioneering Baptist work in Argentina is attributed to a group of Baptists that came as immigrants from Switzerland, and more specifically to their first pastor, the Swiss reverend, Paul Besson (1848-1932).¹⁸⁴ Baptists with Swiss roots were a rarity in Latin

¹⁸³ Representatives of this group established their first Baptist church in 1894, in General Ramirez, province of Entre Rios.

¹⁸⁴ Argentine Baptists date their origin from July 25, 1881, the day when Paul Besson first disembarked in Buenos Aires, Argentina. See, for example, “Cincuenta Años de Vida Denominacional,” *EB*, July 15, 1931, 1.

America; also atypical was the fact that their first worship services were held in the French language and not in English.

Paul Besson was son of a pastor of the Swiss Reformed Church and a devout mother of Waldesian origin. He studied theology under world-renowned scholars of his time, first at the University of Neuchatel and later when he completed his graduate studies in Leipzig; undoubtedly this outstanding education had a deep impact on his personality and on his ministry. Missionary Robert Elder summarized the influences of these renowned scholars on Besson:

Under . . . Luthardt . . . he gained a clear intellectual grasp of the stupendous truth of justification by faith. Under Godet . . . he assimilated the principle of liberty of conscience, which was destined so deeply to affect his career. Under Secretan his keen philosophical mind was developed, and Bovet laid foundations of his knowledge of Hebrew and its concomitants. In the Liepsic University, Delitzsch and Tischendorf initiated him into the textual criticism of the Bible, and so prepared him to produce a Spanish version of the New Testament which will be an abiding contribution to evangelical scholarship in that language.¹⁸⁵

On October 12, 1870 Besson was ordained as a pastor of the Swiss Reformed Church, but his spiritual journey and his convictions on separation between church and state took him into a deep change: joining the Baptists in France. He was working there as an evangelist when he received a “Macedonian call” from Argentina: Mathieu Floris, a former member of Besson’s church in France who had emigrated to Esperanza (Hope) —an agricultural colony in the province of Santa Fe, wrote him a letter pleading with him to send someone to pastor a small group of French-speaking Baptists just settled there and to preach the gospel to the surrounding population. Besson couldn’t find a good candidate and understood that God was calling him to that foreign land, so had Paul been guided by the Spirit to change his plans and go to Macedonia (Acts 16:6-10).

¹⁸⁵ Robert Elder, “Pablo Besson of Argentina,” *The Baptist Quarterly* 7 no.1 (January, 1934): 27-28.

In 1881, Besson arrived in Buenos Aires. After one year of pastorate in Esperanza, Besson moved to Buenos Aires in 1882 to advocate for religious freedom and secular laws. There he first started a preaching service in French —that continued regularly until 1925, and soon he initiated worship services in Spanish.¹⁸⁶ Thus, without an official date of birth, the first Baptist Church in Argentina —*Del Centro* Church—was born. Besson pastored this congregation until his retirement in 1927. Among his many other contributions was his fight for religious freedom, secular laws and liberty of conscience, and his translation of the New Testament from the Greek into Spanish. Published in 1919, it was the first New Testament translation ever produced in Latin America.

Even though Besson is considered the forerunner of Baptist work in Argentina and the most prominent figure of this stream, there were other European missionaries, mostly from Britain, who also made a great contribution to the movement in its initial times. Among them were George Graham and Frederick Lister Newton, two British Baptist independent missionaries who worked in the interior of the province of Buenos Aires; Robert S. Hosford, an Irish missionary who started the Baptist work in Rosario —a growing city that at the end of the nineteenth century had the busiest exporting port in Argentina, which attracted many new European immigrants— and Robert M. Logan, an Irish missionary who had been sent by the Christian and Missionary Alliance and later joined the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB). Similarly, Robert Elder, a missionary born in New Zealand who had studied in England

¹⁸⁶ A. Canclini claimed that Besson’s decision to start a worship service in Spanish was not the result of an institutional strategy or a premeditated step, but a spontaneous attempt to reach out to some boys who were misbehaving during the services in French. In any case, this event turned the Baptists from a church of immigrants to a missionary church, a journey that, at that point in time, only the Methodists had started. See Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 237.

at Spurgeon's College and who came to Argentina supported by Spurgeon's church as a missionary of the Evangelical Union, later became a missionary of the FMB.

2.2.3.3 *The North American stream*

American missionaries started their work in Argentina in 1903 with the arrival of Sidney McFarland Sowell (1871-1954).¹⁸⁷ Unlike most countries in Latin America, the Baptist movement in Argentina was not started by American missionaries. When Sowell arrived there were already three Baptist "Bessonian" congregations; but American missionaries should be credited for organizing and expanding the denominational work.

Born in Virginia, at a young age Sowell felt called by God to be a missionary. He studied at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, where he met a classmate called Joseph L. Hart. They contacted the FMB in Richmond about their interest in serving as missionaries in Argentina. Even though they were rejected at first, they persevered and finally the FMB opened a new mission field in Argentina. Sowell was the first missionary sent to this nation, soon joined by others: Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hart (1904); Mr. and Mrs. King W. Cawthon (1904); Mr. and Mrs. Frank Fowler (1904), who had the honor of being the first Baptist missionary from Florida; Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Spight (1905), who later became the first president of the Evangelical Baptist Argentine Convention; Mr. and Mrs. James M. Justice (1908), who later became the first president of the Baptist Seminary in Argentina between 1912 and 1917; and the brothers James C. Quarles (1908) and Lemuel C. Quarles (1910), who with their wives initiated Baptist work in Uruguay.

¹⁸⁷ An extended biography of Sidney Sowell was written by his son Benjamin. See Benjamin L. Sowell, *Por sendas de gloria y humildad: vida de Sidney McFarland Sowell* (Buenos Aires: Junta Bautista de Publicaciones, 1969). For a brief biographical account on Sowell, see William Lowery Cooper, "Sidney McFarland Sowell: Mighty Man of Faith," *Baptist History and Heritage* 3 no. 99 (July 1968): 99-103, 123-124.

American missionaries maintained cordial relations with Besson and with “Bessonian” church leaders, but they pursued their own ministry.¹⁸⁸ By the end of 1908 they had planted five small churches that came together to found the Argentine Evangelical Baptist Convention (CEBA) following the Convention model adopted by other “brethren of the same faith and order in different parts of the world.”¹⁸⁹ On the same occasion the brand new Convention decided to take over the publishing house that had been inaugurated in 1908 and was already printing tracts and a magazine called *El Expositor Bautista*.¹⁹⁰ In 1909 this periodical became the official denominational publication.

Historian J. Anderson, who served as FMB missionary in Argentina for seventeen years in a later period, introduced this peculiar comment on the creation of the Argentine Baptist Convention: “As strange as it seems, the Bessonian churches were not invited. They were fiercely independent and feared any extra-ecclesial entity. Those original churches were spiritually united to the missionary-initiated churches, but they feared organic union in any type of ecclesiastical body.”¹⁹¹ However, by 1912 all the “Bessonian” churches had joined the Convention, inaugurating a time of closer collaboration between these two streams. This did not mean that they submitted to the ideas of the American missionaries; in fact, they brought to the

¹⁸⁸ Anderson wrote about this relationship in a revealing footnote: “In a personal interview with Sowell’s son, Benjamin, this author found out that the Richmond Board was a bit wary about the orthodoxy of Besson, and was not sure of his fidelity to Baptist principles.” Justice C. Anderson, *An Evangelical Saga: Baptists and Their Precursors in Latin America* (Longwood, FL: Xulon Press, 2005), 193.

¹⁸⁹ Twenty-three representatives from these five churches met on December 31, 1908 and January 1, 1909. That explains the differences among historians in dating the creation of the Convention in 1908 or 1909. In fact, the first minutes were dated 12/31/08, and the official name and constitution were adopted on 1/1/09. See *Actas de la Primera Convención Evangélica Bautista Argentina* (December 31, 1908):1.

¹⁹⁰ Thomas Spight, “Annual Report of the Argentine Mission,” in *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1909* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1909): 88.

¹⁹¹ Anderson, *An Evangelical Saga*, 197.

CEBA their own perspectives. Different ideas and influences persisted among Argentine Baptists, which has been reflected in their unique identity. In the words of Anderson: “Argentine Baptists have never been hyper-denominationalists like Baptists in the United States. Baptist churches have exchanged members with the Union, the Alliance and even some of the Plymouth Brethren congregations without requiring rebaptism. This explains the more ecumenical, evangelical nature of Baptists in Argentina.”¹⁹²

In 1912 the American missionaries started the Theological Training School that later became the Baptist Theological Seminary. After the brief presidency of James Justice, Sidney M. Sowell led the Seminary for the following 25 years (1918-1942). Even though Besson was the brightest scholar among the Baptists in Argentina, he was never invited to teach in the Seminary—more evidence of a certain uneasiness between the two groups. Nevertheless, his influence pervaded in such a way that the Argentine model of theological education reflected the two streams: the “Bessonian,” which promoted the controversy against Catholicism and Protestant modernism and believed in winning over the society through discussing ideas from the top down; and the “Sowellian,” which was more focused on evangelism and on social transformation from the bottom up.¹⁹³

2.2.3.4 *The “native” stream*

A third stream that shaped the Baptist movement in Argentina emerged from the other two and added to it some new features. It was comprised of a group of leaders usually referred to “native workers”—an expression that could be misleading. It was initially used by American

¹⁹² Ibid., 192.

¹⁹³ See Daniel Carro, “Sidney McFarland Sowell: Pastor Evangelizador (1918-1942),” in *Forjadores de Obreros* (Buenos Aires: Seminario Internacional Teológico Bautista, 1992), 26.

missionaries to name the first generation of converts in Argentina that manifested a call to Christian ministry, and it was later used to describe those pastors who were not American missionaries. However, this term did not denote ethnicity or nationality, since most of the “native workers” were European immigrants or their descendants born in Argentina.¹⁹⁴

In this sense, there were many “native pastors” who made an outstanding contribution to the national Baptist work in Argentina; they were men whose “activity opened up the way for the period of the great pastorates, i.e. ministries extending over several decades in the same congregation, which built up the churches with solid teaching so they developed a clearly defined identity.”¹⁹⁵

Among them, the two that best represented this stream during this period of time were Juan Crisóstomo Varetto (1873-1953) and his son-in-law, Santiago Canclini (1900-1977). Varetto was born in Argentina of Italian descent. He was converted through the preaching of the Methodist pastor John F. Thomson in 1894 and soon became a preacher and a colporteur. Sometime later he joined the Baptists, being the first Argentine pastor ordained by this denomination. On that occasion Thomas Spight, then president of the CEBA, wrote about him: “He is a most eloquent preacher, and has a very attractive personality.”¹⁹⁶ His ministry as a preacher and soon after, as a writer and evangelist, made him a main character not only among the Baptists but among the Evangelicals in Argentina and in Latin America. Varetto was the first

¹⁹⁴ For instance, missionary J.C. Quarles included under this name pastors from Slavic countries, Germany, the Netherlands and Latvia, although he highlighted that the majority of them were Spanish, Italian, and Argentines of Italian descent. Quarles, *Christ in the Silver Lands*, 85-86.

¹⁹⁵ Arnaldo Canclini, “Panoramic View of the History of Baptists in Argentina,” trans. Tony Coates, *Baptist Quarterly* 36 no. 3 (July 1995): 128.

¹⁹⁶ Thomas Spight, “Annual Report of the Argentine Mission,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1909* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1909): 86.

Argentine evangelist who preached internationally, and he was the initiator of radio evangelism in Argentina in 1929.¹⁹⁷

Santiago Canclini was converted at a young age through the ministry of Varetto. Even when most of his own ministry developed after the historical period here studied, Canclini was ordained in 1927 to succeed the prestigious Paul Besson as the pastor of *Del Centro* Church and led this congregation for the next 25 years. Santiago Canclini would take many responsibilities in the denomination, including becoming the first Argentine president of the Baptist Seminary.

In its own way each stream contributed to Baptist expansion in Argentina. At the arrival of the Southern Baptist missionaries in 1903, the European stream had already 3 established congregations. The American missionaries planted 5 new churches, which in 1909 formed the Argentine Evangelical Baptist Convention. Ten years later, in 1919, there were 24 churches with 1,330 members, and twenty years later, in 1929, the Convention was made up of 55 churches with 3,332 members.¹⁹⁸

2.2.4 The emergence of the Free Brethren in Argentina

The selection of this group for this investigation is due to its influential role in the formation of the “missionary” Protestantism in these lands. In the words of Arnaldo Canclini:

“Possibly this is the denomination that has given higher priority to missionary work in Argentina. . . . and what is more remarkable, is that probably this country [Argentina] was the only one, or almost the only one, where at some point they could be considered the largest. . . . Moreover, their ideas on ecclesiology, Christian ethics and other aspects heavily impacted on all the evangelicals. Their views on the church, ministry, eschatology (with dispensational interpretation), biblical literalism and its practical application, the place of women (or the lack of such), and other issues influenced or were

¹⁹⁷ The biography of Juan C. Varetto was written by his daughter Agustina. See Agustina Varetto de Canclini, *Juan C Varetto: embajador de Cristo* (Junta de Publicaciones de la Convención Evangélica Bautista del Río de la Plata, 1955).

¹⁹⁸ Elder, “Argentine Mission Annual Report 1930,” 164.

discussed in all circles even through the wide dissemination the C.I. Scofield Reference Bible has had until now.”¹⁹⁹

The Brethren missionaries that came to Argentina were part of a movement “of spiritual renewal” that emerged from the Anglican Church in Dublin and south west England between 1827 and 1831, aimed to recreate the model of the Primitive Church.²⁰⁰ In the words of Piepkorn, “The early adherents were unhappy about the baleful effects of the intimate connection that existed between the Established Church and the government, about what they considered unspiritual ecclesiasticism and dead formalism in worship, and about the denominationalism that divided Christians from one another.”²⁰¹ Often called “Plymouth Brethren,” they rejected any name that could resemble an institutionalized church: they called themselves “Christian Brethren,” their congregations, “assemblies,” and their church buildings, “halls.” They refused to adopt a denominational structure, and their radical understanding of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers led them to refuse having ordained and paid clergy. Bible literalism, dispensational eschatology, a simple worship centered on the Lord’s Table, radical separation from the world and their missionary zeal were hallmarks of this movement.

In 1848 they divided into two groups: “Exclusive” and “Open” Brethren, mainly on differences about the interpretation of discipline and partaking of the Lord’s Supper.

¹⁹⁹ “*Quizás sea la denominación que más ha dado a la Argentina un lugar prioritario en el trabajo misionero. . . y lo que es más notable, posiblemente sea este país [Argentina] el único o casi único en que, en algún momento, podían considerarse de los más numerosos. . . Además, sus ideas sobre eclesiología, ética cristiana y otros aspectos pesaron mucho sobre todo el pueblo evangélico. Sus conceptos sobre la iglesia, el ministerio, la escatología (con su interpretación dispensacionalista), el literalismo bíblico y su aplicación práctica, el lugar (o la falta de tal) de las mujeres, y otros puntos influyeron o fueron debatidos en todos los círculos, incluso por la amplia difusión que, hasta la actualidad, tiene la Biblia con notas de C.I. Scofield.*” Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 250.

²⁰⁰ Tim Grass, *Gathering to His Name. The Story of the Open Brethren in Britain and Ireland* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 3.

²⁰¹ Arthur Carl Piepkorn, “Plymouth Brethren (Christian Brethren),” *Concordia Theological Monthly* 41 (1970): 165.

Missionaries who came to Argentina belonged to the second faction, known in the United Kingdom as “Open Brethren” and as “Free” Brethren” (*Hermanos Libres*) in Argentina.

The history of the Free Brethren in Argentina started in 1882 with the arrival of John Henry Ewen (1855-1924).²⁰² Ewen was born in England, and at a young age felt the divine calling to missions. During his preparation for missionary service at the East London Institute, founded by and led by Henry Grattan Guinness, he strongly believed God was guiding him to Argentina.²⁰³ In a personal meeting with Dr. Guinness, he shared about this call; to his surprise, Guinness had a letter on his desk asking for missionaries to be sent to Argentina. This coincidence confirmed his call, and soon after Ewen and his wife arrived in Buenos Aires on their own account, trusting in the promise of financial support that never came.²⁰⁴

His work was mostly personal evangelization and itinerant ministry with the Bible-carriage. Impeded by poor health, he had to return several times to England; however, he used those opportunities to draw the attention to South America. “His accounts on the people's needs were unforgettable and as a result, many workers came to these republics.”²⁰⁵ Among them were

²⁰² The date of arrival is uncertain. Free Brethren historian Carlos Bisio argued that no immigration records could be found to state a certain date for Mr. and Mrs. Ewen’s arrival, and that there are no other primary sources on this regard. The only sources that mention the year 1882 as the initiation of Free Brethren work in Argentina are from later accounts by W. Payne and E. Gray. See, Carlos Bisio, *Nuestros primeros pasos* (Buenos Aires: Fundación Cristiana de Evangelización, 1982), 27-28.

²⁰³ Grattan Guinness was an evangelist who joined the Open Brethren when he married his wife, Fanny. Concerned by what they considered a lack of evangelistic vision, they opened a training school for missionaries in East London. The Guinnesses were connected in different ways to several faith missions. See, Grass, *Gathering to His Name*, 270.

²⁰⁴ Clifford narrated this situation in a brief biography on the occasion of Ewen’s death. See, Jaime Clifford, “J. Enrique L. Ewen. Un ‘pioneer’ de la obra evangélica,” *SC*, July 1924, 163-66. No other references could be found on how his ministry was supported or on his affiliation to any mission society.

²⁰⁵ “*Sus narraciones de las necesidades del pueblo eran inolvidables y como resultado de ello, varios obreros vinieron a estas repúblicas.*” Jaime Clifford, “J. Enrique L. Ewen. Un ‘pioneer’ de la obra evangélica,” *SC*, July 1924, 165.

the two Brethren forerunners: William Charles Kirby Torre (1853-1923) from Birmingham, and William Smith Payne (1870-1924) from Dublin.

Torre was the second Free Brethren missionary in Argentina and the man who structured and organized the work of the Free Brethren there. He was the first of a long list of tent-maker missionaries working for the British railroads.²⁰⁶ After learning Spanish, Charles Torre founded the first Free Brethren congregation in the country, “the first assembly that gathers only to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”²⁰⁷ Compelled by the urgent need and inspired by the legacy of George Müller, he and his wife founded an orphanage in Quilmes. He was also responsible for starting a printing house (*La Imprenta Evangélica*) that would print *Hosanas al Señor* (children’s songbook for Sunday school) and the Free Brethren hymnal *Himnos y Cánticos del Evangelio*—co-edited by Torre and Payne.

Historian of religion Susana Bianchi argues that the “strong proselytism” of the Free Brethren “introduced innovations” later used by other groups—even by Roman Catholics—such as the Bible-carriage, tract distribution, open air-meetings, and tent preaching.²⁰⁸ In fact, except for the Bible-carriage that was brought by Ewen, the other innovations—tract printing,

²⁰⁶ The long list included missionaries who were part of the senior staff of the British Railroads, like Walter B. Pender, who was treasurer of the Pacific Railroad, and others like Ernest Airth, Frederic Coleman, George Spooner, James Pender, James Kirk, Robert Hogg and Nigel Darling. See, Alberto F. Roldán, “Historia y posicionamientos sociopolíticos de los Hermanos Libres en la Argentina (1910-1937 y 1945-1955),” *Revista Evangélica de Historia no.1* (2003): 76.

²⁰⁷ “*la primera asamblea que se reúne tan solamente al Nombre de nuestro Señor Jesucristo.*” “William Charles Kirby Torre,” *SC*, October 1923, 243. There are no records indicating a date when this congregation was born. They first gather in a private home and later in a rented hall. The first property bought for this congregation was located at 850 Salado Street and was built with donations by an assembly in Dublin. Again no certain dates are known, but according to Bisio’s research, it should have been after 1892. See, Bisio, *Nuestros primeros pasos*, 37-38. In 1909 they moved into a larger hall on a piece of land donated by Charles H. Walker, a British engineer and business man whose firm constructed the port of Buenos Aires—and where Charles Torre worked as accountant. The new church building was located at 1750 Brazil Street. This congregation still worships in this location under the name Assembly of Brazil Street, although its official name is *Iglesia Cristiana Evangélica Brasil 1750*.

²⁰⁸ Susana Bianchi, *Historia de las religiones en Argentina. Las minorías religiosas*. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2004), 85.

open-air meetings and tent preaching— were introduced in Argentina by Torre.²⁰⁹ In 1906 he became the field assistant-agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society for Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay, where he served until his death in 1923.

William Payne and family arrived in Argentina in 1892, and after a brief stay with the Torres and the Ewens, Payne established his base in Córdoba from where he launched an itinerant work of evangelization and colportage to northern Argentina; Payne was also the pioneer of evangelical work in Bolivia.²¹⁰ Other of his important contributions was his involvement in the creation of *El Sendero del Creyente* (1910) and the initiation of the Annual General Conference (1910). Due to the particular characteristics of this movement's ecclesiology, both the magazine and the conference played a key role in their organization and doctrinal identity. In the words of Alberto Roldán, “in practice, the Organizing Committee of the General Conference shall exercise control and will act as a mean of doctrinal unity and discipline” and “very soon *El Sendero* will become the main instrument for believers indoctrination, thereby strengthening the “theological line” dictated annually in the General Conferences.”²¹¹

The missionary labor initiated by Ewen, Torre, and Payne was continued by other missionaries, some of whom will be mentioned in this dissertation. Among them, the one that contributed in a very significant way to Free Brethren worship was James Clifford (1872-1936).

²⁰⁹ The classical work of Monti attributed to Torre the starting of open air meetings and organizing the first tent-meeting, held in Quilmes in 1897. Daniel P Monti, *Presencia del Protestantismo en el Río de la Plata durante el siglo XIX* (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1969), 236. On the work of Torre through the printing press, see Bisio, *Nuestros primeros pasos*, 38-40.

²¹⁰ Payne wrote his memories on this missionary endeavor. See, Will Payne and Chas T.W Wilson, *Missionary Pioneering in Bolivia, with Some Account of Work in Argentina* (London: H.A Raymond-Echoes of Service, 1904).

²¹¹ Roldán, “Comprensión de la realidad social,” (Ph.D. diss.), 91-92.

Clifford was born in Scotland in a very poor family, and after becoming an orphan at a very early age was raised as a Presbyterian by his maternal grandmother, a direct descendant of John Knox. After a personal experience of conversion, he joined the Open Brethren assemblies, where he listened to the testimonies of Ewen and Payne on their work in Argentina. Following a divine call to these lands, he arrived in Buenos Aires in 1896. During his long ministry as an evangelist and pastor, he also served as the first editor of *El Sendero del Creyente* and was a prolific hymn writer, authoring around 150 hymns.²¹²

In their first years of ministry in Argentina, the Free Brethren got the highest numerical growth compared to the Baptists and the Methodists. According to missionary Ernest Grey, when he arrived in Argentina in 1905, there was only one assembly with approximately 40 members in Buenos Aires, and a total of 7 assemblies in the entire country. By 1911, there were 47 evangelical congregations worshipping in the Spanish language in Argentina, 23 of which belonged to the Brethren.²¹³ By 1932, after 50 years of mission work in Argentina, there were over 100 Free Brethren's assemblies with around 5,000 members.²¹⁴

2.3 Historical sources and interpretations

2.3.1 Historical sources

Writing on the history of worship among churches that resisted fixed patterns and promoted extemporaneous practices, especially for prayer, requires moving beyond traditional and long-established methodologies in this field and appealing to non-traditional sources that

²¹² See Alejandro Clifford, *Un hombre bueno. Biografía de James (Jaime) Clifford* (Córdoba: El Amanecer, 1957), 22, accessed April 26, 2015, <http://tesorodigital.com/contenido/biografia-e-historia/>

²¹³ See Bisio, *Nuestros primeros pasos*, 57-58.

²¹⁴ See Bisio, *En torno a nuestros primeros pasos*, 10.

reflect different people and communities' worship practices, experiences and beliefs. The main primary sources in this investigation can be categorized into five groups: autobiographical accounts, missionary reports and letters, church records, denominational publications, and denominational hymnbooks.²¹⁵ A clarification is necessary with regard to autobiographical materials. A good number of missionaries and pastors used to keep personal journals or books of notes, but only a few wrote and published their own biographies, which in most cases were partial and focused in the missionary enterprise more than on their personal worship and spiritual experiences. But most commonly, access to these primary sources is through biographies, most of which were written by family members or very close disciples who were also eyewitness of their stories. Thus, traditional boundaries between primary and secondary sources are sometimes blurred. Another explanation that should be given here is on the importance of denominational periodical publications for this investigation. In emerging Protestantism in Argentina, the religious press was one of the privileged institutions in forming, promoting, and transmitting knowledge on Christian doctrine and denominational practices and values, and in creating and consolidating a Protestant identity.²¹⁶ Each group surveyed here published its own magazines in Argentina: *El Estandarte Evangélico* (Methodist, since 1883); *El Expositor Bautista* (Baptist, since 1909); and *El Sendero del Creyente* (Free Brethren, since 1910).²¹⁷ These publications not

²¹⁵ Argentine Brethren's historian Carlos Bisio published a comprehensive list of primary sources useful for further historical studies on this evangelical group. See *Contribución bibliográfica para el estudio de las Iglesias Cristianas Evangélicas de la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Instituto Bibliográfico Antonio Zinny, 1982.

²¹⁶ See, Paula Seiguer, "El espacio del protestantismo proselitista en Buenos Aires. El caso de William Morris, 1895-1932", in coords. C.Touris y M.Ceva, *Los avatares de la nación católica. Cambios y permanencias en el campo religioso en la Argentina contemporánea* (Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2012): 51-66.

²¹⁷ Even when the Free Brethren should not be labeled as a traditional denomination, in reality they were considered as other evangelical denomination in Argentina, and in the same way, even when *El Sendero del Creyente* was not an official denominational publication, in actuality it served as the authoritative voice of the group.

only provide access to the authoritative voice of their leaders through their articles but also through chronicles sent by local congregations accounting their church life. Also, each one of these three groups edited and published in Argentina their own denominational hymnbooks: *Himnos Evangélicos* (Methodist, 1876), *Himnos y Cánticos del Evangelio* (Free Brethren, 1916), and *Himnos Selectos Evangélicos* (Baptist, 1923).

Most primary sources used in this investigation were originally written in the Spanish language and, except when indicated, their translation into English are my own. The original Spanish quotations, especially the primary sources in chapters 3 to 6, can be found in the corresponding footnotes.

2.3.2 Dominant historical interpretations on Protestantism in Latin America

The earliest historical works on Protestantism in Latin America in general, and in Argentina in particular, emerged from inside the Protestant community, with the aim to preserving its memory and affirming its singular identity in a largely Catholic society. The Protestants produced a large number of biographical accounts that, even though they could be suspected of hagiographic nuance, provide valuable sources of information. Broader denominational histories or histories of Protestantism in Argentina usually followed a chronological narrative perspective that tended to be more descriptive than analytic.

But significant transformations impacted this field when in the late 1960s some renowned scholars—mostly sociologists and sociologist of religion—began academic research motivated at first by the interest of understanding the striking growth of Latin American Pentecostalism.²¹⁸

²¹⁸ The first work of this kind was research by Emilio Willems, *Followers of the New Faith, Culture Change and the Rise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chile* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967); followed by the investigation of Christian Lalive d'Épinay *El Refugio de las masas. Estudio sociológico del protestantismo chileno* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacífico, 1968). Both agreed that the growth of Pentecostalism was due to its capacity to attract and help displaced internal migrants to adjust to urban life, but they disagreed in the final assessment. While for Willems Pentecostalism was a positive force that helped individuals to move into modernity, for Lalive d'Épinay it was a continuation of the old patriarchal system, where the pastor now replaced the role of the

Soon after, other socio-historical investigations of Protestantism in Latin America appeared, and their conclusions pervaded the vast majority of the following studies produced on the matter; only more recently have scholars started questioning some of them. Therefore, these assumptions could provide interpretative guidelines for this project, but they could also be debated or challenged here.

2.3.2.1 *The perspective of Protestantism as an “alien” movement in Latin America*

Lalive d’Epinay argued that “the two major channels of penetration of Protestantism” were “communities of European immigrants for whom a Protestant faith served several social functions including that of providing the social cement of the group and guarding its culture and language”, and the missionaries.²¹⁹ While the first “did not manifest any proselytizing zeal,” the “Protestantism of missions” saw Latin American peoples as “pagans disguised as Christian,” so the latter became “the source of Protestant expansion in the subcontinent.”²²⁰ He concludes that “the introduction of Protestantism in this continent was to be the exclusive work of foreigner supported by foreign organization.”²²¹

Even though Lalive d’Epinay’s work is recognized as the first scholarly investigation that seriously pointed to the foreign nature of Protestantism in Latin America, this idea was not original. There is an antecedent in the book *El Protestantismo en America Latina*, by the Jesuit

old *patron*. In any case, these works strongly influenced subsequent studies, connecting “the growth of Evangelical Protestantism and social change.” Christian Lalive d’Epinay, “Toward a Typology of Latin American Protestantism,” *Review of Religious Research* 10 no.1 (Autumn 1968): 6.

²¹⁹ Lalive d’Epinay, “Toward a Typology,” 6.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

priest Prudencio Damboriena (1962).²²² Aimed to denounce “the Protestant threat” and “the infiltration of Protestant sects” backed by the United States, Damboriena set up some assumptions that pervaded this historical field: “the alliance of Liberals, Freemasons and Protestants that led to the entrance of the latter in Latin America; the importance of the United States as the source of Protestant missions; and the alien character of Protestant traditions in relation to the countries where it was implanted.”²²³ Following this argument it has been commonly stated that Latin American Pentecostalism was the first popular Protestant movement in the region, both in size and in reaching out the lower social class.²²⁴

However, it is clear that Damboriena’s ideas were biased and influenced by the questionable assumption that Catholicism was a constitutive element of the national identity and hence, Protestantism was alien, and even anti-national. In strictly historical terms, Catholicism was also a foreign faith brought by the Spanish conquerors, and in the Argentine case it was a religion that was invigorated and revitalized by the same wave of European immigration that brought the first Protestant churches and denominations. Notwithstanding, it is also true that after centuries of Roman Catholic religious monopoly, Catholicism permeated the local culture in such a strong way that the distinction between religion and culture became blurred. In this sense, it was inevitable that the anti-Catholic traits typical of emerging Protestantism in Argentina were perceived as alien to local culture.

²²² See Prudencio Damboriena, *El Protestantismo en America Latina* (Freiburg: International Bureau of Social Research Feres, 1962).

²²³ “Paula Seiguer, “Los inicios de un debate: el lugar del protestantismo histórico en la Argentina,” *Iberoamericana* 9 no. 34 (2009): 164.

²²⁴ Paul Freston, “Latin America,” in *Encyclopedia of Protestantism Vol. 3*, ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand (New York: Routledge, 2004), 1071.

2.3.2.2 *The perspective of the two streams of “foreign” Protestantism in Latin America*

The assumptions that emerged from the works of Damboriena and Lalive D’Epinay, reached greater diffusion in the seminal work of Villalpando (ed.), Lalive D’Epinay and Epps, which, in the same way noted above, advanced towards a distinction between two groups of Protestant churches in Latin America. On one hand, they argued that there were “immigration” or “transplanted” churches, which were brought by different European immigrant communities and whose main activities were intended to preserve the socio-cultural and religious heritage without engaging in any proselytism towards the outside. On the other hand, they stated that there was a second group composed by “missionary,” “conversionist,” or “grafted churches;” that is, churches financed from abroad —mainly from the United States— with the purpose of planting churches in Argentina through making converts.²²⁵ Bastian describe them by saying that “this evangelical Protestantism could be defined by three features . . . the authority of the Bible in all matters of faith and life, the experience of conversion, and the practice of evangelization as fundamental dimensions of Christian faith mission.”²²⁶

These categories of “transplanted churches” and “grafted churches” have been used extensively.²²⁷ But more recently, some scholars initiated debates on this pervasive categorization. For example, Paula Seiguer criticized the notion of “transplanted” churches,

²²⁵ For more on this topic see Waldo Luis Villalpando, ed. *Las Iglesias del trasplante. Protestantismo de Inmigración en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Centro de Estudios Cristianos, 1970).

²²⁶ Jean Pierre Bastián, *Breve historia del protestantismo en América Latina* (México: Casa Unida de Publicaciones S.A., 1986), 136.

²²⁷ See, for example Hilario Wynarczyk, “Entre el Legado y los Desafíos: las Iglesias Evangélicas en la Argentina. Dinámica Histórica. Función del Pentecostalismo. Ley de Cultos”, en *Voces del pentecostalismo latinoamericano. Identidad, teología e historia* (Concepción, Chile: RELEP, CETELA y ASETT América Latina, 2003): 29-58; Orlando Costas, *El protestantismo en América Latina hoy: ensayos del camino* (San José de Costa Rica: Instituto de Evangelización a Fondo, 1975); and with slight variations and some criticism, José Míguez Bonino, *Faces in Latin American Protestantism*, trans. Eugene L. Stockwell (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997).

arguing that in reality they were never able to be transplanted because they couldn't replicate the same conditions of their contexts of origin; in fact they had to recreate themselves, adopting the new function of preserving their ethnic-cultural identity but at the same time forming an inevitable new collective identity in a new and different context.²²⁸ Seiguer also affirms that in fact some of those “transplanted” churches engaged in missionary work (e.g. evangelization to the natives) and maintained a fluid cooperation with other “missionary” denominations as parts of a common identity of “‘we’ Protestants or evangelicals.”²²⁹

These commonly accepted categories are of particular interest for this dissertation, since the three groups it studies have been considered “missionary” or “grafted” churches. Beyond any questioning of some of their assumptions, there is an extended scholarly consensus on the foreign nature of Protestantism in Argentina and its intimate relationship with the phenomenon of European immigration.

2.3.2.3 *The perspective of Latin American Protestantism as “societies of ideas” in alliance with Liberals and Freemasons*

The classic assumptions noted above were supplemented by the works of Jean- Pierre Bastian. He argues that “Protestant societies” in Latin America —from their emergence in the nineteenth century until 1950s— were groups that shared “the associative logic of societies of ideas” or “societies of thought;” a concept he drew upon François Furet’s use of Augustine Cochin’s notion of “*société de pensée*.”²³⁰ In his analysis on the social transformation that took

²²⁸ See Seiguer, “Los inicios de un debate,” 165-6.

²²⁹ “un ‘nosotros’ protestantes o evangélicos.” Ibid., 166.

²³⁰ Jean-Pierre Bastian translated into Spanish Cochin’s expression “*société de pensée*” literally as “*sociedad de ideas*” (society of ideas). See, for example, Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Protestantes, liberales y francmasones: sociedades de ideas y modernidad en América Latina, siglo XIX* (Mexico: Comisión de Estudios de Historia de la Iglesia en América Latina- Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1990). In the English translation of François Furet’s book on the French Revolution, where Furet analyses the same Cochin’s notion, this is translated as “philosophical

place during the French Revolution, Furet interprets Cochin's "philosophical society" (*société de pensée*) as "form of social life" opposed to "what the *Ancien Régime* called a corporate entity (*corps*), defined by a community occupational and social interests."²³¹ In contrast, a "philosophical society" was an association of individuals whose membership "was strictly a matter of ideas, and in that sense these societies were a prefiguration of the functioning of democracy."²³²

Similarly, Bastian takes up this concept of "society of ideas" to explain the emergence of Protestantism in Latin America as a new form of association in the midst of a larger society, "that remained corporative and dominated by collective social and political actors," which became particularly attractive for a small minority coming from "social sectors in transition . . . whose precarious economic status had alienated them from the traditional social order."²³⁴ Membership in this type of societies served "as a means for individuating oneself and inculcating democratic practices and values."²³⁵ In sum, Bastian affirms that the emergence of "Protestant societies" in Latin America cannot be understood solely as a new socio-religious phenomenon but as a central piece in the process of modernization in the region, fundamentally because they challenged "mechanisms of power and legitimation linked to the colonial society" and promoted "a radical liberal, anti-Catholic, and anti-oligarchic political culture."²³⁶

societies." See, Françoise Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution*, trans. Elborg Foster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981):166.

²³¹ Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution*, 174.

²³² *Ibid.*

²³⁴ Jean-Pierre Bastian, "The Metamorphosis of Latin American Protestant Groups: A Socio-historical Perspective," trans. Margaret Caffey-Moquin, *Latin American Research Review*, 28 no. 2 (1993): 38.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ Jean-Pierre Bastian, "De los protestantismos históricos a los pentecostalismos latinoamericanos: análisis de una mutación religiosa," *Revista de Ciencias Sociales* 16 (2006): 39, 42.

Likewise, Bastian underscores the pedagogic role played by worship services and other church meetings inside Protestant “societies of ideas”:

A constant pedagogy developed through worship, Sunday school, youth meetings, assemblies and school and civic networks. This pedagogy contributed to a double movement typical of the societies of ideas that consisted in the initiation, instruction and regeneration of member and supporter “people;” such activities flowed into the development of networks of solidarity, united under the common project of toppling the old regime of traditional bonds and corporate arrangements. . . . That resulted in the emergence of a new ascetic religious culture of effort and responsibility within social sectors in transition. . . .²³⁷

In Bastian’s view —pervasive in this scholarly field—Protestant “dissident societies” shared the same ideological space with the Freemasons, both groups supporting the modernizing project of the Liberals and sharing strong anticlerical positions.²³⁸ The relationship between Freemasons and Protestantism in Argentina is still a matter of more research. In any case, according to the sources surveyed for this dissertation, it seemed that of the three groups here studied, the Methodists had closer links with Freemasonry.²³⁹

²³⁷ “Una pedagogía constante se desarrollaba a través de los cultos, de las escuelas dominicales, de las reuniones de jóvenes, de las asambleas y de las redes escolares y cívicas. Esta pedagogía contribuyó a un doble movimiento típico de las sociedades de ideas que consistía en iniciar, instruir y regenerar al ‘pueblo’ de los miembros y simpatizantes; también tales actividades desembocaban en la constitución de redes de solidaridad, unidas en el común proyecto de derrumbar al antiguo régimen de los lazos tradicionales y de los arreglos corporativos. . . . Esto se tradujo por la emergencia de una nueva cultura religiosa ascética del esfuerzo y de la responsabilidad en el seno de sectores sociales en transición. . . .” Jean-Pierre Bastian, “En diálogo con la obra de Lalive d’Epinay. Búsquedas de una sociología histórica del cambio religioso en América Latina,” *Revista Cultura y Religión* (October 2008): 9.

²³⁸ Bastian sustains this idea in several of his works; his most comprehensive analysis on this regard can be found in Bastian, *Protestantes, liberales y francmasones*.

²³⁹ For example, John F. Thomson publicly declared he was a Freemason. In one of his sermons, he literally wrote: “Hace 18 años que soy masón y desde que recibí el grado 18, y juro que nunca he descubierto lo referido en este párrafo—. . . declaro que entre los mejores ministros del Evangelio que he conocido muchos eran masones.” (“I’ve been a Freemason for the last 18 years, when I received the grade 18, and I swear that I’ve never revealed what it is referred in this paragraph: . . . I declare that among the best ministers of the gospel I’ve ever met, many of them were Freemasons.”) The manuscript sermon without date and title, based on Ex.20:19, can be found at IEMA Historical Archives. Also, according to Varetto, J.F Thomson started worship services in Montevideo in a hall owned by the Freemasons. See Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 79. Other interesting investigation unveils Freemason’s influence on the architecture of Methodist buildings in the nineteenth century in Uruguay, including some references

Regarding to the long assumed identification of emerging Protestantism with the Liberal ideology, there are some dissident voices that should be taken into consideration. For instance, for José Míguez Bonino there was “a convergence of interests more than in a similarity of ideas.”²⁴⁰ Also, Paula Seiguer argues that Liberalism in Argentina evolved, and it was not the same in the 1880s, the 1890s, or the 1920s. If 1880s Liberalism were reduced to its anticlerical ideas and to its secularizing agenda, undoubtedly the Protestants were “part of this liberal consensus.”²⁴¹ But when at the beginning of the twentieth century this secularizing agenda went so far as to oppose Bible reading in schools or to promote a divorce law, most Evangelicals found limits to this alliance. A similar case could be noted regarding to modernism. Protestants supported the idea of modernizing the country through “civilized” Christian values—with a high degree of asceticism—against “barbaric” values and customs inherited from traditional colonial society. However, “when toward the end of the [nineteenth] century the romantic liberalism began to show a new positivist-scientific face,” most Evangelicals in Argentina kept their distance from modernism too.²⁴²

to Argentina. See Coitinho, *Testigos de un silencio*. For more on the topic, see Daniel Bruno, “Mission Outside the Walls: The Alliances of Methodism to Defeat the Old Colonial Order Related to Church and State in Argentina, 1880-1890,” *Methodist History* 52 no.4 (July 2014): 197-206.

²⁴⁰ Míguez Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism*, 4.

²⁴¹ Paula Seiguer, “Liberales y protestantes. Breve discusión para seguir reflexionando” (Paper presented at Encuentro del Seminario de Historia Política del Centro de Estudios de Historia Política; Centro de Estudios de Historia Política, Escuela de Política y Gobierno, Universidad Nacional de San Martín, 2008): 6.

²⁴² Daniel A. Bruno, “Las vanguardias silenciadas en el metodismo rioplatense (1896-1924): Francis D. Tubbs y Gabino Rodríguez. La represión del brote ‘modernista’,” *Revista Evangélica de Historia Vol.3/4* (2005-2006): 102.

2.4 Conclusion

Protestantism emerged in Argentina at a unique social, political, and religious juncture. The coming to power of the Liberals inaugurated an era characterized by deep transformations aimed at establishing a modern democracy in the nation. To this end, the Liberals favored European immigration and simultaneously pushed for a secularizing agenda, two strategies they understood as being indispensable to accomplishing the desired changes.

Massive successive waves of European immigration produced an unprecedented social and cultural transformation and opened the door to the arrival of Protestant churches and denominations. The three evangelical groups studied in this dissertation —Methodists, Baptists and Free Brethren—emerged in Argentina in this peculiar context, and with different levels of involvement their interests converged with those of Liberals and Freemasons, especially around the secularization of the state and modern democratization ideals.

The next chapters will explore the most common worship practices of the Methodists, the Baptists, and the Free Brethren in an attempt to discover their formative power in the creation of a peculiar personal and communal identity intimately intertwined with their doctrinal views and with their spirituality.

CHAPTER 3

METHODIST WORSHIP

3.1 People

The history of Methodist worship practices in emerging Protestantism in Argentina starts with the arrival of a people called Methodists. Although initially comprised of British immigrants, American missionaries from the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) were the organizers and who led this denomination until 1932, and as a result local Methodism was largely shaped by American Methodism.

American Methodism was rooted in Wesleyan theology but underwent transformations from its inceptions in American soil and especially during its expansion westward in the nineteenth century. The Americanization of Methodism was deeply affected by the democratic values of that young republic, the ideal of a nation built on Christian principles, the ardent defense of freedom of consciousness, and an optimistic trust in individual and social progress. Liturgically, American Methodism was influenced by the Frontier and the Great Awakenings, adopting a worship style characterized by revivalism: “impassioned evangelistic sermons, participatory music, spontaneous outpourings of praise and prayer.”²⁴³

When American Methodist missionaries arrived in Argentina in 1836, they carried with them these features and mirrored the practices from their American background. The effort to start a denomination that resembled American Methodism is confirmed by their continued use of the Book of Discipline of the MEC, opportunely translated into the Spanish language.

²⁴³ John D. Witvliet, *Worship Seeking Understanding* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics, 2003), 167.

Methodists in Argentina also included new converts, the majority of which were new immigrants from Spain and Italy who arrived in the country between 1880 and 1914. Many of them held democratic and anticlerical ideas that may have been a factor in their attraction to Methodism.²⁴⁴ New converts also included locals, mostly from the poor sectors of the city of Buenos Aires, and to a lesser extent people from the higher classes drawn by Methodist teachings compatible with the modernizing ideals of progress, civilization and democracy. Beyond the heterogeneity of the membership, they were all united around two pillars: conversion of individuals and anticlericalism.²⁴⁵

These features, combined with a shortage of ordained ministers, were essential in shaping a more horizontal ecclesial hierarchy, which became a powerful symbol of a new order in contrast to the Roman Catholic system of rigid authority.²⁴⁶ Lay leadership provided dynamism and enthusiasm and increased the working capacity of this emerging denomination. As Norman Amestoy observes, lay participation was broad and included both “the work of evangelization and the administration of the means of grace.”²⁴⁷ Over the years, laity also took part in directive roles.

Methodists in Argentina also held a countercultural position regarding the role of women in church and society.²⁴⁸ Female ecclesial roles were expanded to a variety of areas such as

²⁴⁴ See Norman Rubén Amestoy, “El pensamiento teológico wesleyano en el Río de la Plata (1870-1900),” *Invenio* 16, no.30 (2013): 15.

²⁴⁵ For more on this see Norman Rubén Amestoy, “Los orígenes del Metodismo en el Río de la Plata: Las Sociedades Metodistas en el marco del Liberalismo (1867-1901),” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* II (2004): 43-81.

²⁴⁶ See Amestoy, “El pensamiento teológico,” 21-22.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 24.

²⁴⁸ For an in-depth case study on culture and female Methodist teaching in Rosario, Argentina see Mark Mcmeley, “The Task of Gender Role Differentiation in Foreign Missions: The Case of American Methodists in Rosario, Argentina, 1870-1880,” in *Cross-Cultural History and the Domestication of Otherness*, eds. Michal Jan Rozbicki and George O. Ndege (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012): 103-15.

education, evangelism, and visitation. An early report by the Committee for the Evangelization of Women concluded that women should not only be evangelized and educated, but pastors should promote in their own congregations “worship services led by Christian women.”²⁴⁹ This position gave women opportunities they would have never have found in Roman Catholicism of that time, and it allowed the emergence of a prolific generation of church female leaders. However, in accordance with American Methodism, women were not considered for pastoral ordination during this period.²⁵⁰

3.2 Piety

The central experience of Methodist piety was conversion, understood as an individual decision that involved a rupture with one’s personal past and with traditional order.²⁵¹ Through conversion, these born again persons acquired a new identity as members of a Protestant body that had the transcendent mission of saving souls while counteracting the harmful influences of the Catholic Church and the old order it represented.²⁵²

Conversion was the initial step in the process of sanctification, a doctrine that in the Río de la Plata region tended to stress a moralistic and individual perspective.²⁵³ At the center of these spiritual experiences were the Scriptures. Their regular study by believers was seen as

²⁴⁹ “cultos religiosos dirigidos por mujeres cristianas.” *Actas de la séptima asamblea anual de la Misión de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal en Sud América. Montevideo, República Oriental del Uruguay, Octubre 4 a 11 de 1888* (Buenos Aires: Mackern y McLean, 1888), 32.

²⁵⁰ See *EESA*, January 2, 1896, 3.

²⁵¹ See Amestoy, “Los orígenes del Metodismo,” 6-7.

²⁵² See Paula Seiguer, “‘Ser de Cristo’: prácticas, ideas y recepción del protestantismo entre los sectores populares inmigrantes en Buenos Aires, 1870-1910,” *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos* 21, no.62 (April 2007): 13.

²⁵³ See Amestoy, “El pensamiento teológico,” 18.

conducive to renewing devotion and communion with God and producing personal growth in holiness; while their single reading by infidels was believed able to produce conversion and life transformation. Testimonies on the extraordinary influence of the Bible in the lives of individuals abounded, which with different words communicated the same message: “This man converted and found peace in his soul through the reading of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. . . . The man had been enslaved to drunkenness, but now he and his wife are faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ.”²⁵⁴

Piety was deeply affected by this new possibility of reading the Bible, a practice forbidden at that time by the Roman Catholic Church to the general public. Bibles in the Spanish language were introduced in Argentina through the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) and the American Bible Society (AMS). The Spanish translation adopted by both Societies was the old Protestant translation originally done by Casiodoro de Reina (1569) and revised in 1602 by Cipriano de Valera —usually known at that time simply as “Valera.”²⁵⁵ This old version was revised several times during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In 1865 the AMS published a revision done by Enrique Pratt and Ángel Mora, while in 1869 the BFBS published the revision that Lorenzo Lucena Pedrosa had done in 1862. Decades later, in 1893, the AMS printed in New York a new revision known as “Versión Moderna.” Yet, the Spanish

²⁵⁴ “*Este hombre se convirtió y halló paz a su alma por la lectura de la Epístola de San Pablo a los Romanos. . . . El hombre había sido esclavo de la embriaguez, pero ahora tanto él como su esposa son fieles testigos de Jesucristo.*” *EESA*, June 10, 1897, 5.

²⁵⁵ To soften Catholic opposition, in some opportunities both Bible Societies printed and distributed Catholic translations with the Apocryphal books, like the translation by Father Scío or by Torres Amat-Petisco. But since 1841 the ABS only published the Reina-Valera Bible, which became the Protestant commonly used Bible in the Spanish language. See Jane Atkins Vásquez, *La Biblia en Español: cómo nos llegó* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2008), 115-118.

Bible version of major impact in the period here studied was Reina-Valera 1909 — a revision resulted from the joint efforts of the AMS and the BFBS.

Free access to the Scriptures meant for new converts a personal encounter with God's own Word. For many of them, Bible reading resulted in a new understanding of salvation and Christian life that required the abandonment of Catholic "idolatrous" practices: "As soon as they began reading the Word of God, they realized that they should get rid of the images of the Virgin and the saints and other idolatrous relics they had worshiped until then."²⁵⁶ True Christian worship was "in spirit and truth," and the veneration of images was idolatry: "Of all sins man can commit, idolatry is undoubtedly the most abominable [sin] to God, and one he has never ceased to severely punish."²⁵⁷

The centrality of Bible reading in Methodist piety in a context where a large majority of new immigrants to the country was illiterate reinforced Methodist commitment to popular education. New converts were encouraged to learn to read and write, first so they could read the Scriptures for themselves, but also to be able to read the newspapers and claim their rights.²⁵⁸ In other words, even when conversion was essentially preached as an individual experience, early Methodist spirituality in Argentina included social and political engagement.

²⁵⁶ "Apenas hubieron principiado la lectura de la Palabra de Dios, cuando vieron que era necesario deshacerse de las imágenes de la Virgen y de los santos y las demás reliquias de la idolatría a que habían rendido culto hasta entonces." Ibid.

²⁵⁷ "De todos los pecados que el hombre puede cometer, el de la idolatría, es sin duda alguna, el más abominable a Dios, y el que nunca ha dejado de castigar severamente." "¡A Luján! ¡A Luján!" *EESA*, March 19, 1896, 91.

²⁵⁸ See Pablo R. Andíañac, "Las Iglesias Protestantes en Buenos Aires," *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 1 (2003): 174.

3.3 Time

3.3.1 Weekly calendar

In 1784 John Wesley published a revised version of the 1662 Anglican Book of Common prayer especially prepared for American Methodists, titled *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America with Other Occasional Services*.²⁵⁹ As Karen Westerfield Tucker claims, “it was from the services for Sunday that the book took its name, indicating Wesley’s preference that the Methodists gather for worship on the Lord’s Day.”²⁶⁰ At the same time, Wesley significantly reduced the number of annual holidays, omitting those which for the American context he considered of “no valuable end.”²⁶¹

In nineteenth century American Methodism, this precedent added to the liturgical pragmatism developed in the frontier and contributed to the primacy of the weekly calendar centered in the Lord’s Day over the annual liturgical calendar. Consequently, when MEC missionaries initiated their work in Argentina, they pursued this ideal and fervently promoted Sunday as a day that should be “specially consecrated to the worship of God.”²⁶²

When the occasion to design Sunday worship services in the Spanish language came, missionaries reproduced the revival style pervasive in America, which was considered suitable for the evangelistic enterprise. The result was a service characterized by its simplicity and

²⁵⁹ See John Wesley, *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America with Other Occasional Services* (London: n.p., 1788).

²⁶⁰ Westerfield Tucker, *American Methodist Worship*, 6.

²⁶¹ Wesley, *The Sunday Service*, 2. For further analysis of Wesleys’ *Sunday Service*’s influence on Methodist liturgy see Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, “Form and Freedom: John Wesley’s Legacy for Methodist Worship,” in *The Sunday Service of the Methodists: Twentieth-Century Worship in Worldwide Methodist (Studies in Honor of James F. White)*, ed. Karen B. Westerfield Tucker (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books-Abingdon Press, 1996), 17-30.

²⁶² “consagrado especialmente al culto a Dios.” *Actas de la Séptima Asamblea Anual de la Misión de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal en Sud América, 1888*, 36.

extemporaneity, intended to avoid any formalism or ritualism that could resemble Roman Catholic practices. The order of worship did not follow a prescribed pattern, although it kept the same simple structure that moved from preliminaries (singing, prayer, testimonies) toward the sermon, the highest point of the service, usually followed by an invitation to conversion and ending with the singing of the doxology and the final benediction.²⁶³

In addition to Sunday worship services, Methodists established Sunday schools, considered to be “a means of spiritual edification to all who attend, both adults and children.”²⁶⁴ Besides the Bible lesson, Sunday schools offered other formative practices in the opening exercises of worship, such as hymn singing, prayer, and reciting of Scriptural verses.

The rarity of becoming a Protestant in this period in Argentina demanded both spiritual maturity of the individuals and congregational support, and in this respect regular church attendance was esteemed indispensable for believers’ permanence in the faith. It was a Christian duty able to prevent spiritual lukewarmness and at the same time to promote congregational unity —another key factor in the retention of members.²⁶⁵ Missionaries and pastors insisted on “not forsaking the assembling,” (Heb. 10:25) appealing to several grounds, from the Sabbatical theological motive to the practical spiritual benefits, and even to the eschatological expectation —because in the end, they said, “I still don’t know how many more Sundays God

²⁶³ This pattern is identical to the one followed by American Methodists under the influence of the revival style. A complete section on this matter is found in Westerfield Tucker, *American Methodist Worship*, 8-12.

²⁶⁴ “*un medio de edificación espiritual para todos los que asisten, tanto para los de mayor edad como para los niños.*” *EESA*, June 21, 1884, 5.

²⁶⁵ See *EESA*, August 16, 1884, 6.

will grant me, and it would be a bad preparation to enjoy the eternal Sunday of the redeemed in heaven, not having made a good use of my last Sunday on earth.”²⁶⁶

In addition, church leaders repeatedly saw the need to teach on expected right behavior in public worship, which included good manners, punctuality, and mutual respect.²⁶⁷ They contrasted this conduct with alleged common misbehavior in Catholic masses, which they attributed to the lack of spirituality resulting from the superficiality of external rites and the unintelligibility of the Latin language.²⁶⁸

The Lord’s Day was considered not only a day for worship but a day for rest. Any day of the week was a good day for worship, but Sunday was *the* special day, the Christian Sabbath. There were two main efforts in this regard. On the one hand was the reinforcement of the proper observance of Sundays by believers, which included the avoidance of commercial activities and amusements on those days.²⁶⁹ And on the other hand was public advocacy for a Sunday rest law, which was finally passed in 1905. The importance of the issue was reflected in the 1901 revision of the Methodist hymnbook, which added a hymn with lyrics by a local composer on the topic “The Lord’s Day”—proving the power attributed to hymnody in congregational formation.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁶ “no sé cuántos domingos me concederá el Señor todavía, y sería una mala preparación para gozar del domingo eterno de los redimidos en el cielo, el no haber aprovechado de mi último domingo en la tierra.” *EESA*, July 25, 1897, 5.

²⁶⁷ See for example, *EESA*, Mayo 7, 1896, 140-141; *EE*, January 20, 1883, 20.

²⁶⁸ See *EESA*, July 1, 1897, 1.

²⁶⁹ See *Actas oficiales de la décima reunión de la Conferencia Anual de Sud-América de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal habida en Buenos Aires, Argentina, Marzo 12 a 18, 1902* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta Metodista, 1902), 48-49.

²⁷⁰ *HE* no.106 (lyrics by Mateo Donati). This hymn was later included in the Baptist Hymnal, *HSE* no. 290.

Even though Sunday was *the* special day for worship, Methodists added midweek services to nurture local congregations fundamentally through prayer meetings, and frequently through Bible study for adults, youth meetings, and meetings of the Epworth league.²⁷¹

The weekly cycle of worship was supplemented with occasional celebration of the Lord's Supper. Methodists considered the Supper of the Lord a sacrament, a sign of grace, and memorial seemed to have been the dominant theological motif.²⁷² The Supper was administered by an elder—an ordained clergy—and observed under both species—bread and wine. The regular practice was to receive communion on one's knees.²⁷³ Anti-Catholic sentiment was present in Methodist teaching on the Lord's Supper, centered on the rejection of the doctrine of transubstantiation:

With the Scriptures in our hands we affirm that Jesus never intended to convince his disciples that the given bread was his own flesh and the offered wine was his own blood. And we can also state, without fearing that anyone can contradict us, that those who participated in that act—those who ate the bread and drank the wine—never in their imagination, thought that they might be eating the Master's body and drinking his blood . . . Taking these words literally . . . is a big absurdity; considering them in its true [spiritual] sense . . . is the most precious symbol of Christianity. . . . But who can believe in a thing such as the bread turns into flesh and the wine turns into blood—the blood and flesh of the Son of God—by the mere utterance of a consecration formula said by the priest? . . . It is completely unnecessary that Christ be in the host to have communion with Him, because it is not the matter but the spirit that must feed us. Moreover, where [in the Bible] are men granted the power to make that transubstantiation? . . . Christ is in heaven, and in the wafer there is only flour.²⁷⁴

²⁷¹ See, for example, *EESA*, June 21, 1884, 5.

²⁷² See “Cristo no está en la hostia,” *EESA*, April 21, 1898, 1.

²⁷³ See, for example, *EESA*, May 27, 1925, 323.

²⁷⁴ “*decimos con el texto de las Sagradas Escrituras en la mano, que Jesús jamás pretendió hacer creer a sus discípulos que el pan que les daba era su propia carne, y el vino que les ofrecía, su propia sangre. Y podemos afirmar al mismo tiempo, sin temor de que nadie pueda contradecirnos, de que los que participaron en aquel acto, que los que comieron el pan y bebieron el vino, ni por la imaginación se les pasó que pudieran estarse comiendo en cuerpo del Maestro y bebiendo su sangre. . . Tomar en sentido literal. . . las palabras. . . es incurrir en el mayor de los absurdos; tomarlas en su verdadero sentido [espiritual]. . . es el símbolo más precioso del cristianismo. . . ¿Pero quién puede creer en tal cosa como que el pan se convierta en carne, y el vino en sangre, en la sangre y en la carne del Hijo de Dios, a la simple pronunciación de la fórmula de consagración del sacerdote? . . . No es absolutamente necesario que Cristo esté en la hostia para estar en comunión con Él, porque no es la materia sino el*

3.3.2 Annual calendar

The annual liturgical calendar was secondary to the weekly pattern, and limited to the main Christian festivities, primarily to Christmas and Easter. This option reflected American Methodist influence, but was reinforced by the local confrontation with Roman Catholicism.

Differences in how to celebrate these holidays were used as formative opportunities to contrast both forms of religiosity:

[We] The Protestants do not have any problem in remembering the birth and passion of the Savior on those dates set by tradition, even when they are vaguely precise and definitely not a divine commandment. But for us, they clearly don't undertake a "pompous magnificence." In other words: for Protestants these holydays are stripped of any comic art and ridiculous fictions, with which the Roman Catholicism has coated them, stealing their forms from paganism.

We hate those things as they are unworthy of a religion of light and truth like Christianity is. . . . As it can be seen, if we celebrate such events, we do it very differently, believing that we are more in accordance with the truth and purity of Christianity.

We believe that Christianity didn't come into the world to make a covenant with our sinful tendencies and weaknesses, but to give us a hand of love and to raise us to God to fight against them. We refuse to exploit human sinfulness.²⁷⁵

Likewise, Methodists made clear that the celebration of Holy Week, the main religious holiday for the local Roman Catholic Church, was secondary to the observance of the Lord's

espíritu el que ha de ser alimentado. Por otra parte, ¿dónde está [en la Biblia] la facultad concedida a los hombres para hacer esa transustanciación? . . . Cristo está en el cielo, y en la hostia lo que hay es harina." "Cristo no está en la hostia," 1.

²⁷⁵ *"Los protestantes no tenemos inconveniente en recordar el nacimiento y pasión del Salvador en los días que la tradición señala, por más que estos sean un tanto de vaga precisión y en modo alguno de mandato divino. Es claro que no asumen para nosotros una "pomposa magnificencia". En otros términos: para los protestantes esos días están despojados del arte cómico, ridículo y de las ficciones de que los ha revestido el catolicismo-romano robando sus modelos al paganismo. Detestamos esas cosas como indignas de una religión de luz y de verdad, cual lo es el cristianismo. . . . Nosotros, como se ha podido observar, si celebramos tales acontecimientos lo hacemos de muy distinta manera y creemos que estamos más en la verdad y de acuerdo con la pureza del cristianismo. Nosotros creemos que el cristianismo no ha venido al mundo para hacer un pacto con nuestras tendencias y debilidades pecaminosas, sino que ha venido para darnos una mano de amor y elevarnos a Dios, luchando contra ellas. Renunciamos pues a explotar los pecados de los hombres." L. Abeledo, "El Aparato en el Culto," EESA, May10, 1884, 2-3.*

Day, because for evangelicals each Sunday was a Resurrection Sunday, and each week was a Holy Week:

While the *Romanist* occupies the entire year touring their calendar of saints, saving a fragment of a week for Christ, the *Christian* is always thinking of Him, Who is all in all. Worldly *Romanist* leaves from Easter Eucharist to return to his sins, worse than the previous year; he continues from weakness to weakness towards the consummation of this debauchery in Carnival, trusting in the atonement that will be made on Easter. But the *Christian* continually seeks “the redemption of all sin” which is both his duty and his privilege.²⁷⁶

The controversial motif was so pervasive that discussions arose even on the legitimacy of Christmas observance. The denominational position on this was published in *El Estandarte Evangélico* where, accepting possible pagan origins of the date, it appealed to the Scriptures and to the Christian tradition to defend its observance: “Is [Christmas] a pagan holiday? Is it a Popish holiday? No, a thousand times, no; it is a Christian [holiday], and a very Christian one.”²⁷⁷ The conclusion pointed to the need to combat the way “the Papists” celebrated Christmas but at the same time it claimed that “opposing its observance just because of the Papists, would be the same thing as opposing the cross of Christ just because Papists also preach of it, or denying the truth of Christianity just because the Papists say they also have it.”²⁷⁸

Methodists in Argentina developed their own annual calendar in which revival meetings held a special place. They used to be held daily for an uninterrupted period of time “to promote

²⁷⁶ “Mientras el romanista ocupa todo el año recorriendo su calendario de santos y santas, reservando el fragmento de una semana para Cristo, el cristiano está pensando siempre en Aquel que es su todo en todo. El romanista mundanal sale de la comunión de la pascua para volver a sus pecados, peor que el año anterior, — sigue de flaqueza en flaqueza hasta consumir la obra con el desenfreno del carnaval, tranquilizándose con la expiación que va a hacerse en la Semana Santa. Pero el cristiano busca continuamente “la redención de todo pecado” que es su deber y privilegio realizar.” *EE*, April 20, 1878, 287.

²⁷⁷ “¿Qué es fiesta pagana? ¿Qué es fiesta papista? No, mil veces, no; que lo es cristiana, y muy cristiana.” A. J. Vidaurre, “Navidad,” *EESA*, January 25, 1894, 6.

²⁷⁸ “oponerse a celebrarla porque los papistas la celebran, sería lo mismo que oponerse a la cruz de Cristo porque los papistas también la predicán, o a negar la verdad cristiana porque los papistas dicen que también la poseen.” *Ibid.*

the conversion of people from inside or outside the church.”²⁷⁹ They were preceded by an extended time of preparation in prayer, both in family devotions and in congregational prayer, all begging God unanimously for a “religious revival.”²⁸⁰ Active involvement of all church members as “a royal priesthood of the Lord” was essential to carry out this “effort,” and it was a formative opportunity for the laity: “We beseech those enrolled as members or probationers of this Church, even at the cost of any sacrifice, to undertake the duty of attending those services every evening, inviting and bringing acquaintances. If we are devoted in mind and faith, God will do wonders.”²⁸¹

Influenced by pragmatism, the success of revival meetings tended to be judged by visible results, such as the number of attendees, new converts, or new probationers.²⁸² But this form of assessment became deceptive; during revivals many people made emotional decisions under the influence of a very eloquent preacher and a highly enthusiastic ambiance but they did not stay in the church for long.²⁸³

²⁷⁹ “*para promover la conversión de las personas, hallándose dentro o fuera de ella.*” EESA, October 12, 1905, 3.

²⁸⁰ “*avivamiento religioso.*” Ibid.

²⁸¹ “*Suplicamos a los inscriptos como miembros o probandos de esta Iglesia, aún a precio de cualquier sacrificio, sientan sobre sí el deber de asistir todas las noches a estos cultos, invitando a sus conocidos y trayéndolos en su compañía. Si hay en nosotros prontitud de ánimo y fe, Dios hará maravillas.*” Ibid.

²⁸² See, for example, *Actas oficiales de la décima reunión de la Conferencia Anual de Sud-América de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal habida en Buenos Aires, Argentina, Marzo 12 a 18, 1902*, 30.

²⁸³ Ibid., 36.

3.3.3 Lifetime

3.3.3.1 Baptism

Of the three groups surveyed in this investigation, Methodism was the only one that practiced paedobaptism. In the early period, infant baptisms were sometimes performed in private homes, either in the child's family home or in the minister's house.²⁸⁴ This practice was more common in places without church edifices, among families living far away from a parish, or when infants were very ill.²⁸⁵ In all cases, baptisms were administered by ordained ministers; thus, in places without a resident pastor they were performed by itinerant missionaries or visiting pastors who usually seized the opportunity to also administer the Lord's Supper.²⁸⁶

Although less frequently, Methodists also practiced adult baptisms, which were only celebrated in public congregational meetings.²⁸⁷ In these cases, some church records included references to the candidate's experience of conversion and, less often, to a baptismal request after having renounced at former baptism in the Roman Catholic Church.²⁸⁸

With the arrival of other evangelical denominations, disagreements emerged on the valid form of baptism, which *El Estandarte Evangélico* addressed by publishing a series of articles defending infant baptism.²⁸⁹ The other point of dissent was on rebaptism of Catholics. To

²⁸⁴ See, for example, *Registro de Bautismos de la Primera Iglesia Metodista Episcopal 1867*, 27, and *Registro de Bautismos de la Primera Iglesia Metodista Episcopal 1868*, 1, 25.

²⁸⁵ See, for example, *Registro de actas bautismos de la Segunda Iglesia Metodista Episcopal de Buenos Aires, 1883*, 31, and *Libro de bautismos de la Iglesia Evangélica Metodista de Rosario, 1889-1895*, 200.

²⁸⁶ See, for example, *Seventy-fourth Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the MEC, 1892*, 46.

²⁸⁷ See, for example, *Libro de Bautismos de la Iglesia Evangélica Metodista de Rosario, 1889-1895*, 214.

²⁸⁸ See, for example, *Registro de actas bautismos de la Segunda Iglesia Metodista Episcopal de Buenos Aires, 1883*, and *Libro de Bautismos de la Iglesia Evangélica Metodista de Rosario, 1882-1888*, 232.

²⁸⁹ See, for example, *EESA*, September 19, 1900, 4-5; October 25, 1900, 1.

study the issue, the Annual Conference of 1901 named a Committee on Baptism which the following year presented a report to the Conference rejecting the practice of rebaptism except when the candidate refused to recognize the previous baptism. It concluded with this statement: “Our Discipline allows adult baptism when requested and also allows the candidate to choose the way of baptism but it says nothing about requiring re-baptism to those who were previously baptized in the Roman Church, and therefore we recommend to pastors to refrain from preaching that Roman Catholics need to be rebaptized.”²⁹⁰

Methodists also differed from other evangelicals in Argentina in their system of church membership. While for the latter membership used to be linked to baptism, Methodists received persons as church members after a period of probation. Daniel Bruno argues that “admission to a Methodist society had two entrances: one ecclesial-theological and the other social. Theological admission is represented by baptism, while social admission is based on the decision made by the interested person and under the acceptance of the organization.”²⁹¹

Despite all these distinctions, Methodists remained in good fraternal standing within the broader evangelical family.

²⁹⁰ “Nuestra disciplina permite el bautismo de adultos que así lo piden y también permite al candidato escoger el modo de Bautismo, pero nada dice respecto de la necesidad del rebautismo de personas antes bautizadas en la Iglesia Romana; y por consiguiente recomendamos á los pastores se abstengan de predicar la necesidad del rebautismo de los católicos romanos.” *Actas oficiales de la decimal reunión de la Conferencia Anual de Sud-América de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal, 1902*, 51.

²⁹¹ “El ingreso a la sociedad metodista tenía dos entradas: una eclesial-teológica y la otra social. La entrada teológica está significada por el bautismo, mientras que el ingreso social está dado por la decisión por parte del interesado y por la aceptación por parte de la institución de ser admitido como miembro.” Daniel A. Bruno, “La Iglesia Metodista como espacio asociativo entre inmigrantes. Estudio de la ‘Misión Evangélica de la Boca’ 1900-1950,” *Cuadernos de Teología* 27 (2008): 212.

3.3.3.2 Marriage

Before 1888—the year when the civil marriage act was passed in Argentina— only Catholic priests could solemnize matrimony. With the advent of non-Catholic immigrants, the Civil Code of 1869 tepidly introduced some rights to religious minorities, establishing that “dissident priests” could solemnize matrimony only if both intending spouses were non-Catholics.²⁹² For this reason Methodist ministers recorded the religious affiliation of the spouses in weddings solemnized before 1888, including statements by the intending spouses similar to this: “We . . . declare that despite our baptism in the religion called Apostolic Roman Catholic, we are dissidents; we do not believe in its characteristic dogmas and we do not recognize its spiritual authority; and in the use of our freedom of conscience, we want to be married according to the rites of the Methodist Church.”²⁹³

The civil marriage act gave the civil court exclusive legal authority to marry, so the extended practice became that spouses had a religious ceremony after the civil one. Consequently, in the religious sphere, matrimony between spouses of different religions remained a serious issue and was emphatically discouraged by both Catholics and Protestants.²⁹⁴ Theologically Methodists based the objection to “mixed marriages” on the Scriptural advice of not being “unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (2 Cor.6:14).²⁹⁵ In practice, this

²⁹² According to Código Civil Argentino de 1869, art. 180-183. The texts of these articles, abrogated in 1888 are reproduced in Canclini, *Sí, quiero*, 306.

²⁹³ “Nosotros . . . declaramos que, no obstante, nuestro bautismo en la religión llamada Católica Apostólica Romana somos disidentes de ella, no creemos en sus dogmas característicos ni reconocemos su autoridad espiritual, y en el uso de nuestra libertad de conciencia deseamos casarnos según los ritos de la Iglesia Metodista.” *Registro de actas de matrimonios de la Segunda Iglesia Metodista Episcopal de Buenos Aires, 1884*, 14.

²⁹⁴ See *EESA*, November 24, 1898, 1-2.

²⁹⁵ “*matrimonios mixtos*.” *Ibid.*

opposition expressed a main pastoral concern of the time: that believers' permanence in faith and holiness might be threatened by this kind of union.

3.3.3.3 *Funerals*

Methodist funerals were likely the most countercultural rites of the life cycle. Methodists did not only oppose to extended popular Catholic customs but adopted practices that reaffirmed their distinctive convictions, both in gestures and words. For example, they abstained from wearing typical mourning dress and praying for the dead person's soul; while on the other hand, they incorporated Bible readings and hymn singing, which was a complete novelty. The shape of a Methodist funeral can be observed in this chronicle:

The service was simple, such as the official body of the church had decided: the church agreed to absolutely omit wearing mourning. . . . At the beginning of the service, hymn 84 was sung, which opens with the words: 'I'm going to heaven . . .' Immediately there was a reading from the first chapter of the book of Ruth . . . [and] hymn 105 was sung, 'Meditate that there is a home.' After that, the minister prayed, thanking God for not having to pray for the deceased, blessing His will, asking for His Spirit upon the hearts of those who are still pilgrims, and asking for consolation and resignation for all the bereaved. There was a reading from 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

Then the congregation sang a hymn:

'Contemplate from the blissful world
The pleasures that God will give us;
We believe this country is beautiful:
But finding ourselves there, how it would look?' ²⁹⁶

The central message of Methodist funerals was the Christian hope in resurrection and eternal life, which contrasted with the extended local belief in purgatory. The epitome of the

²⁹⁶ "El servicio fue sencillo, por resolución del cuerpo oficial de la iglesia: el luto expresivo de duelo en los deudos, creyó la Iglesia que debía prescindir enteramente de él. . . . Se cantó, como principio del servicio, el himno 84, que comienza con las palabras: "Yo voy viajando, sí, al cielo voy..." Se leyó enseguida en primer capítulo del libro de Rut. . . El himno 105 "Meditad en que hay un hogar" fue cantado. El pastor hizo entonces una oración, en la que a la vez agradecía a Dios por no tener que elevar plegaria alguna por el finado, bendecía sus designios, pedía su Espíritu en los corazones de los que aun peregrinamos, y suplicaba consuelo y resignación para los deudos. Se leyeron algunos versos del cap. XV de 1ª Corintios. La congregación cantó el himno: "Contemplemos del mundo dichoso, los placeres que Dios nos dará el país lo creemos hermoso: Mas hallarnos allí, ¿qué será?...". *EESA*, January 27, 1897, 3.

Methodists' distinctive "hereafter doctrines" was the rejection of the popular use of candles in funerals. This custom was so deeply-rooted in local culture that even some converts were reluctant to give it up:

It is common to find people whose names are in the records of an evangelical church . . . and yet have not been fully stripped of their old clothes, or abandoned old habits and customs. . . . The fact is that nowadays it is believed that candles are a must . . . and that they are also very useful for the soul of the deceased. Superstition, aided by ignorance, is capable of believing in a stupid absurdity.

What is the purpose of these candles, and what are they useful for? If it is just to illuminate, there is no need to place them differently from the other lights, in a line on the table where rests the coffin with the remains of the deceased; just put them in the usual places. We don't see any plausible reason why they should be put around the coffin. Do those candles serve any benefit to the body or the soul of the dead person? . . . There is no benefit to the body and much, much less, to the spirit, which needs no artificial lighting. Because, if he has been sincere in his faith . . . his spirit will be illuminated by the light that radiates from the throne of the Eternal, and the light of the candles are useless. . . . It is common that when someone dies in a family, unbeliever relatives come and the first thing they do is to light candles and to put a crucifix in the dead person's hands, and many [evangelicals] fail to raise any objection. . . . Evangelical Christians are Christians in all their practices, or they are nothing.²⁹⁷

This final sentence is indicative of the radical commitment to evangelical teachings and practices expected from Methodist believers, for whom life passages often turned into special occasions to prove the courage of their convictions.

²⁹⁷ "Sucede a menudo hallar personas que tienen sus nombres en el Registro de una Iglesia Evangélica. . . y que, sin embargo no se han despojados por completo del ropaje viejo, ni abandonando los usos y las costumbres antiguas. . . . Pero el hecho es que ahora se cree que las velas son algo indispensable, . . . y que son al mismo tiempo de gran utilidad al alma del difunto. La superstición, ayudada por la ignorancia, es capaz de creer en los estúpidos absurdos. ¿Qué objeto tienen esas velas, y para qué sirven? Si es para alumbrar, no hay necesidad alguna de que se coloquen diferentemente de las demás luces, y en hilera en la mesa donde descansa el ataúd con los restos del difunto, pues basta colocarlas en los sitios acostumbrados. No vemos razón plausible alguna por qué se han de colocar alrededor del féretro. ¿Sirven esas velas de algún beneficio para el cuerpo o el alma del muerto? . . . No es de ningún beneficio para el cuerpo y mucho, muchísimo menos para el espíritu, que no necesita de iluminación artificial. Porque, si ha sido sincero en su fe. . . su espíritu será iluminado por la luz que irradia del trono del Eterno, y la luz de los cirios de nada le sirven. . . . Acontece a menudo en una familia que fallece uno, y los parientes inconversos acuden, y lo primero que hacen es encender velas, y ponerle al muerto un crucifijo en las manos, y muchos dejan hacer esto sin oponer ningún reparo. . . . Los cristianos evangélicos, o lo son en todo, o no lo son en nada." EESA, December 3, 1896, 369.

3.4 Place

Buenos Aires has the historical privilege of being the first South American city where a Methodist church building was erected: the First Methodist Church of Buenos Aires —the “Mother Church of South American Methodism.”²⁹⁸

Inaugurated on January 8, 1843, this temple was the fruit of combined efforts of English-speaking Protestant residents of Buenos Aires and the MEC, whose mission at that time was restrained by the government to the foreign community. This may explain the choice of the Bible text and topic of the temple’s inaugural sermon: “a house of prayer for foreigners in a strange land” (Isa. 56:3-7).²⁹⁹

That original building was demolished after the church moved into a new facility in 1874, but by that time the Spanish-speaking congregation had been born there. So the new and larger sanctuary of the First Methodist Church of Buenos Aires was home to both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking congregations. This new chapel reflected new trends in worldwide Methodism. As Kenneth Cracknell and Susan White argue, “In the big cities of the world . . . and in places where the dominant religious culture was of an elitist character, socially upwardly mobile Methodists were demanding style and elegance in their buildings.”³⁰⁰ Gothic Revival architecture became a hallmark of this shift, and the First Methodist Church of Buenos Aires embraced that trend; it was designed by architect Enrique Hunt in the Gothic Revival style.

Exquisite and refined, its wooden roof was built by Danish sailors who were stranded in Buenos Aires, and its shape resembles the inverted keel of a boat. Its stained glass windows were

²⁹⁸ Seventy-fourth Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the MEC, 1892, 45.

²⁹⁹ See Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 119.

³⁰⁰ Kenneth Cracknell and Susan J. White, *An Introduction to World Methodism* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 194.

imported from England and depict classic images of the Christian tradition, such as the Ark of the Covenant, the Scriptures, and the Lamb. Its furniture consisted of cedar benches placed in a semicircle.³⁰¹ The place for the choir was located in the back next to a pipe organ manufactured by British craftsmen James Alderson Forster and King Joseph Andrews in 1882. With three keyboards and a pedal, and 1,700 tubes distributed in 28 records, this is one of the few antique British organs that can still be found in Buenos Aires.³⁰²

This sophisticated style was costly and suitable for the national capital city, but it could not be replicated when Methodism started to geographically expand following one of the four models identified by Daniel Bruno.

- First, the *institutional model* that sought to build churches in central and visible locations, near city squares and parks, considered as strategic places to compete with the Catholic Church.
- Second, the *model of pastoral care* where Methodist work expanded following the commercial advancement of English and American companies —mainly, the railroads.
- Third, the *model of reaching out neighbors*, in which congregations originated from the gathering of family groups of believers that grew and soon needed a larger meeting place.
- And, finally, the *model of service*, where a congregation was born as the result of a mission work designed to respond to diverse needs of a certain community or neighborhood.³⁰³

³⁰¹ See Marcos G. Vanzini, comp. *Historias curiosas de templos de Buenos Aires*, 2^a ed. (Buenos Aires: Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, 2011), 23-24.

³⁰² See <http://www.giepra.com.ar/570/primer-iglesia-evangelica-metodista-argentina.html>, accessed January 7, 2015.

³⁰³ See Daniel A. Bruno, “La Iglesia Metodista como espacio asociativo,” 207.

In most of these cases, financial constraints and the simplicity of rural or suburban lifestyles resulted in church buildings characterized by their austerity and “decency,” both in the exterior and inside the church buildings; this could also reflect the influence of American Methodism.³⁰⁴ But in the local context, that simplicity drastically contrasted with the expectations of the largely Catholic public, as exemplified in these paragraphs from *El*

Estandarte Evangélico:

Usually, when a Roman Catholic enters into an Evangelical church for the first time, he first looks around—the walls, the ceiling, and the floor—and says to himself: What a church! There is no devotion here! There is not a Christ or a Virgin, or angels, or saints, or altar, or candles, or flowers! And looking around [again], he looks in vain for the holy water, the confessional and the tabernacle and, not finding any of these things, he concludes in his heart that this church lacks of devotion. He wonders: Where do they celebrate mass? Where do they confess? Where do they baptize? Where do they have the Blessed Sacrament? What do they worship? Who do they address their prayers to? . . . Indeed, in the Papists’ temples everything is different. In solemn days, the church looks like a theater; the pomp is superlative: many candles lighted in daylight, silver lamps, gold chalices, altars laden with flowers, richly embroidered silk towels, Christs, Virgins, golden or silvered saints and angels, baptisteries, confessionals, holy water, and perhaps a convenience store with medals, relics, or any other blessed and superstitious objects. And what curious people admire the most is the altar adorned pompously *nec plus ultra*, with a locked monstrance containing the image of Jesus, or a statue of the Virgin or the saint, pompously decorated.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁴ Westerfield Tucker states that American Methodist places of worship had to be austere and functional; “plain and decent” churches were required by the Discipline of several Methodist denominations during the first half of the nineteenth century, although later, when Methodist membership grew in numbers and in resources, church architecture style, especially in larger cities, tended to be more sophisticated. See *American Methodist Worship*, 242-43.

³⁰⁵ “Generalmente, la primera vez que un católico-romano entra en una Iglesia Evangélica, lo primero que hace es mirar a todos lados, las paredes, el techo, el pavimento, y decir consigo mismo: ¡Qué Iglesia! ¡No tiene nada de devoción! ¡No tiene ni Cristo, ni Vírgenes, ni ángeles, ni santos, ni altar, ni velas, ni flores! Y mirando en derredor, busca inútilmente el agua bendita, el confesionario, el tabernáculo, y no encontrando nada de esto, define en su corazón ser una iglesia sin devoción. Se hace interiormente las siguientes preguntas: ¿Dónde celebran la Misa? ¿Dónde se confiesan? ¿Dónde bautizan? ¿Dónde tienen el Santísimo Sacramento? ¿Qué es lo que adoran? ¿A quién dirigen sus oraciones? . . . Verdaderamente, en los templos papistas todo es diferente. En los días solemnes, la iglesia parece teatro, en pompa superlativa: muchas velas encendidas en pleno día, lámparas de plata, cálices de oro, altares cargados de flores, toallas de seda ricamente bordadas, Cristos, vírgenes, ángeles y santos dorados o plateados; bautisterios, confesionarios, aguas benditas, y tal vez, negocio de medallas, reliquias, u otros objetos benditos y supersticiosos. Y lo que despierta más la admiración de los curiosos es el altar mayor, adornado con pompa *nec plus ultra*, en donde está la custodia que contiene cerrado con llaves a Jesús en persona, o alguna estatua de la Virgen, o del Santo titular pomposamente ornada.” Mateo Donati, “El culto. Sistema romano y sistema evangélico,” *EESA*, January 21, 1894, 5.

That article concluded with a fervent defense of the ritual simplicity and true demands of the gospel, which justified Methodists' preference for simplicity in worship spaces and liturgical practices:

Jesus did not come into the world with pomp and money, and he didn't teach a theatrical or pagan worship like the Roman Church, but He preached and prayed in any house, anywhere He was. The purpose of His sermons was repentance, conversion, faith and charity, not pomp and money.

He didn't give us relics or holy water but He gave us His body in sacrifice for our sins. He didn't ask for candles or incense but He asked us to sacrifice our lives for His love and for the good of humanity. He didn't ask for pompous temples but for the candor of our souls. He never asked for only one hour of devotion in church but for a holy life in the world. He does not want the sacrifice of the mass, but he wants us to offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is Christian rational service.³⁰⁶

The rejection of any kind of art, décor, or architectural elements that could resemble Roman Catholicism did not mean lack of awareness of the importance played by worship spaces in Methodists' missionary endeavor: "Here, we are not in a country of heathen or savage people, where people are not able to distinguish a warehouse from a house of worship," —said the 1902 report of the Committee on Self-support.³⁰⁷ Then it added, "We will never instill a serious idea of our Methodist system to these [Catholic] peoples until we can show them decent and appropriate houses for the worship of God."³⁰⁸

³⁰⁶ "Jesucristo no vino al mundo con pompa y dinero, ni enseñó un culto teatral y pagano como el de la iglesia de Roma; mas predicaba y oraba en cualquier casa y lugar que se encontraba. El fin de sus sermones era el arrepentimiento, la conversión, la fe y la caridad, no la pompa y el dinero. No nos dio reliquias, ni agua bendita, más nos dio su cuerpo en sacrificio por nuestros pecados. No nos ha pedido velas, ni incienso, más nos pidió el sacrificio de nuestra vida por su amor y el bien de la humanidad. No nos pidió pompas de templos, más la candidez del alma. No nos pidió una hora de devoción en la iglesia solamente, más una vida santa en el mundo. No quiere el sacrificio de la misa, más quiere que ofrezcamos nuestro cuerpo como sacrificio vivo, santo y agradable a Dios. Este es el culto racional del cristiano." Ibid.

³⁰⁷ "Aquí no estamos en un país propiamente dicho de paganos ni salvajes, donde el pueblo no distinga lo que es de un salón almacén a una casa dedicada al culto de Dios." *Actas oficiales de la décima reunión de la Conferencia Anual de Sud-América de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal, 1902*, 47-48.

³⁰⁸ "Jamás podremos infundir una idea seria de lo que es nuestro sistema metodista en estos pueblos hasta que no podamos enseñarles casa decentes y apropiadas para el culto de Dios." Ibid.

The importance of owning adequate facilities was also demonstrated in the formal services for the laying of a cornerstone and the later dedication of the church building. Again, Methodists in Argentina mirrored the practices of the MEC, which had introduced formal liturgies for these occasions in its 1864 Discipline.³⁰⁹

Of particular historical importance was the laying of the cornerstone of the Second Methodist Church, the first temple in Argentina entirely dedicated to Spanish-language worship services.³¹⁰ It was held on May 14, 1896, with the attendance of more than 800 people.³¹¹ The place was decorated with Argentine, English, and American flags, and the program basically followed the form established in the Discipline³¹²:

Introductory words
Hymn 33 (“Rock of Ages”)
Address
Hymn 54 (“I Trust in Christ”)
Reading from Psalm 132
Hymn 115 (“Onward Christian Soldiers!”)
Reading of the minutes of the ceremony
Placing of elements inside the box (a Bible, the minutes of the ceremony printed on parchment, the plans for the future church, a copy of the Discipline of the M.E.C. and several newspapers)
Brief speech
Reading of the speech on behalf of benefactor
Placement of the cornerstone
Final words of dedication³¹³

³⁰⁹ In 1864, the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States added a form for the service for laying the corner-stone of a church and another for the dedication of the church. See *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1864 with an Appendix* (Cincinnati: Poe & Hitchcock, 1864), 206-223.

³¹⁰ This church is actually known as *Iglesia Metodista Central*.

³¹¹ See *EESA*, May 21, 1896, 161-162.

³¹² There are slight differences between the program published in advance on May 14, 1896, and the chronicle of the event, published a week later. This order reflects the latter.

³¹³ See *EESA*, May 21, 1896, 161-162.

The next year, on October 31, 1897, this church building was formally inaugurated. In this opportunity the liturgy slightly differed from the Discipline and included the participation of ministers from other Protestant denominations as a sign of interdenominational unity.³¹⁴ The order of worship was this:

Introductory words
Hymn 3 (“Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing”)
Prayer
Brief address of gratitude by benefactor
Reading from the Old and New Testament, by guest ministers from other denominations
Reading of hymns
Two short speeches
Financial report by treasurer
Offering
Doxology
Benediction³¹⁵

Two other church buildings located in Lomas de Zamora, a suburb in the southern metropolitan area of greater Buenos Aires, deserve special consideration. One of them was built in 1895 for the use of a local congregation. It was designed under the influence of Gothic Revival architecture but “simple, almost like a peasant version of Neo- Gothic,” and it included elements from other styles, like Romanesque semi-circular arch windows:³¹⁶

This freedom of style has something to do with American influence that was less tied to European styles and more independent not only from architectural traditions but also from political and cultural [traditions]. At the same time, the fact that at the end of the century this community could be considered semi-rural—even most parishioners were employees of the railway— gave both austerity and freedom to the design.³¹⁷

³¹⁴ See *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1864*, 214-223.

³¹⁵ See *EESA*, November 4, 1897, 3.

³¹⁶ “Andiñac, “Las Iglesias Protestantes en Buenos Aires,” 177.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Peculiarly, this building has a triptych stained glass window in its entrance, intended to reproduce the painting “Light of the World” by William Holman Hunt. But in this artwork, original flowers were replaced by native Argentine flowers, a detail that could be seen as an expression of the willingness of this community to adapt to the new country but still in tension with its foreign ties.³¹⁸

The second building is even more curious. While for John Wesley the ideal architecture model was the octagonal building with balconies —because it allowed bringing the “largest number of people close to the preacher at a minimum expense,” —this style was not typical in Argentine Methodism.³¹⁹ However, an octagonal chapel was built in the early twentieth century in the Cemetery of Dissidents in Lavallol, Lomas de Zamora. In this case, it seems that the shape was not chosen to highlight the centrality of preaching —the pulpit was not in the center but on one side— but the centrality of the resurrection, leaving the central area open to display coffins during funerals.³²⁰ A similar idea was reinforced by the location of the chapel exactly in the middle of the cemetery: “Thus, the chapel is not the entry point to the place of the dead but a place of blessing that reaches out to all that rest around it . . . a place where resurrection is celebrated and where everything points in this direction.”³²¹ The symbolism offered by this architectural option reinforced Protestant countercultural formation on funerals and life after death.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ White, *Protestant Worship*, 156. According to Cracknell and White, “Wesley octagons” were also a rarity in American Methodism. See Cracknell and White, *An Introduction to World Methodism*, 195-96.

³²⁰ See Andiañac, “Las Iglesias Protestantes en Buenos Aires,” 176.

³²¹ Ibid.

3.5 Prayer

The constant practice of fervent prayer was a hallmark of Methodism. According to John Wesley, prayer was one of the means of grace ordained of God “to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men, preventing, justifying or sanctifying grace.”³²² As such, Methodist missionaries and leaders greatly encouraged the regular practice of private and public heartfelt prayer, “the most formidable power available to men . . . transforms everything, overcomes everything . . . even God himself.”³²³

As soon as a new church was started, it provided several opportunities for communal prayer, of which the most important were the weekly prayer meetings. They could be held either in the temple or in houses, once believers were taught that their effectiveness relied not on the place but on the hope that “the Spirit of God, as a refining fire, be felt in the assembly.”³²⁴ This expectation was manifested in enthusiast and ardent prayer that created a highly emotional spiritual ambiance.

The testimony by newly arrived missionary Daniel McGurk on his first visit to a prayer meeting in the Spanish language at the First Methodist Church of Buenos Aires illustrates these features: “I’m impressed with the enthusiasm of the people on the spiritual things. . . . I felt the power of the Holy Spirit, although I didn’t understand anything, except for ‘Oh Lord,’ ‘Our

³²² John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 5, 3rd ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1832, 1986), 187. For more on the Wesleys and the means of grace, see Henry H. Knight III, *The Presence of God in the Christian Life: John Wesley and the Means of Grace* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1992) and E. Byron Anderson, “The Power of Godliness to Know: Charles Wesley and the Means Of Grace,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 43 no. 2 (Fall 2008): 7-27.

³²³ “*el poder más formidable que a su disposición tiene el hombre. . . transforma todas las cosas, todo lo vence. . . hasta al mismo Dios.*” EESA, March 19, 1924, 170.

³²⁴ *Missionary Advocate*, March 17, 1868, 92, accessed January 7, 2015, <http://findit.library.yale.edu/bookreader/BookReaderDemo/index.html?oid=11535073#page/1/mode/lup>

Father,' 'Jesus Christ,' and other similar words. I was very pleased to see this fervor in the worship service.”³²⁵

Methodists also held weeks of prayer when the congregation met every day of a certain week to pray together on different motifs and to share testimonies. These meetings proved to offer formative opportunities for the laity, such as Varetto recalls from his first years among the Methodists:

Occasionally, weeks of prayer were held in the temple and in the various annexes, in which a good deal of time was dedicated to listening to the brethren's testimonies of faith. . . . This writer remembers how much those testimonies helped him in his early Christian life and the joy he experienced when trembling and moved, he could share his own testimony. Those brethren spoke of free salvation and of the eternal life they received when they believed in Jesus Christ. . . . They were words of gratitude and praise to the creator of every good gift. . . . Others spoke about their struggles in the Christian life, overcome temptations, answered prayers and the benefits of reading and hearing the word of God. What meetings! What unforgettable weeks! ³²⁶

In addition, as a sign of unity with the Church worldwide, Methodists in Argentina annually observed the universal “Week of Prayer” organized by the Evangelical Alliance during the first full week of each year; a “prayer concert” for believers without denominational distinctions to plead together in agreement before “the throne of divine mercy for the various needs felt in all parts of the world, and to pour out their hearts through praise, for His many and

³²⁵ “Estoy impresionado con el entusiasmo del pueblo en las cosas espirituales. . . . Yo sentí el poder del Espíritu Santo, aunque no entendía nada, excepto, —“Oh Señor,” “Padre Nuestro” “Jesucristo” y otras palabras semejantes. Me dio mucha satisfacción y placer ver este fervor en el culto.” EESA, August 30, 1894, 1.

³²⁶ “De vez en cuando se celebraban en el templo y en los distintos anexos semanas de oración en las cuales se dedicaba una buena parte del tiempo a oír los testimonios de la fe que hacían los hermanos. . . . El autor de estas líneas recuerda cuánto le ayudaron esos testimonios al principio de su vida cristiana, y el gozo que experimentó cuando tembloroso y conmovido, pudo dar el suyo. Aquellos hermanos hablaban de la salvación gratuita, de la vida eterna que habían recibido al creer en Jesucristo. . . . Eran palabras de gratitud y de alabanzas al creador de toda buena dádiva. . . . Otros contaban de sus luchas en la vida cristiana, de las tentaciones vencidas, de las oraciones contestadas, de los beneficios que recibían de leer y escuchar la palabra de Dios. ¡Qué reuniones! ¡Qué semanas inolvidables!” Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 118-20.

precious favors and gifts.”³²⁷ To this end, the Evangelical Alliance prepared each year a daily program for the entire week aimed to be followed by all churches adhering to the initiative. Subjects of prayer usually included: Christian unity, thanksgiving, the growth and holiness of the Church worldwide, the Christian family (the sick, the children, the youth, the immigrants, and the non-believers), the governing authorities, peace and justice in the world, Christian missions, Bible distribution, and the perfecting of the Christian life.³²⁸ Over the years the subjects remained very similar but the order of the daily program evolved from sessions centered on supplication to a tripartite service structured in prayers of gratitude, confession and intercession.³²⁹

Methodist teachings on prayer were also intended to counteract common Roman Catholic practices, like the invocation of the Virgin and the saints, the penitential use of the Lord’s Prayer, and the vain repetition of memorized prayers. Methodists argued that Catholic invocation to the saints as intercessors “before the throne of heavenly grace” was a “gross and fatal error; . . . an anti-Christian doctrine . . . a human invention . . . because it contradicts the essence of Christianity, which teaches that only Christ is the propitiation for our sins . . . our only mediator, our Lord and our God.”³³⁰ The opposition to the penitential use of the Lord’s Prayer was linked to the rejection of the oral confession of sins to a priest. Relying to the “Our Father” as a means

³²⁷ “clamando ante el trono de la misericordia divina por las diversas necesidades que se sienten en todas partes del mundo, así como derramando el corazón por medio de la alabanza, por los favores y mercedes que son muchas y muy valiosas.” *EESA*, January 12, 1899, 1.

³²⁸ See, for example, *El Evangelista*, December 22, 1877, 141-142.

³²⁹ See, for example, *EESA*, March 17, 1926, 110-11.

³³⁰ “pues se opone directamente a todo el espíritu del cristianismo. Éste enseña que sólo Cristo es la propiciación por nuestros pecados. . . nuestro único mediador, nuestro Señor y nuestro Dios.” *EE*, February 9, 1878, 206-7.

of “satisfaction” was seen as an anti-Christian idea; prayer was about communion with God, the only means of expiation was Jesus Christ’s blood, and the Lord’s Prayer was taught by Jesus to his disciples “because it comprised in a few words all human needs, both temporal and spiritual . . . and not to make us to suffer as penitents expiating our faults.”³³¹

The exposition of these alleged errors on prayer was simultaneously a useful way to instruct parishioners, who mostly came from a Catholic background, in sound doctrine:

The papist multitude ignores what Christianity is . . . [Catholics] universally run away from direct communion with God for the forgiveness of sins, which they always seek at the feet of a man who is as much a sinner as they are, or even worse. They kneel down and are enraptured before some image or sculpture, especially if it represents the human mother of Jesus. The endless repetition, and the fast mispronounced words said in an irreverent tone—which could be measured per meter—are all things involved in the gross materialism of their devotion. True prayer is talking to God, to God the Father, such as the incomparable Sunday prayer begins. . . . Our prayers, then, must be addressed to the Father in the name of the Son.

True prayer involves worship, thanksgiving, and above all, and absolutely essential, supplication; because as “we do not know what we ought to pray for,” a preface to all prayer should invoke the help of the Holy Spirit.³³²

Methodists were encouraged to devote to daily time both to family and private prayer. As part of God’s ordinances, they should be practiced by all of those eager to continue in the Church as a means of evidencing their desire of salvation.³³³ In family prayer, the main responsibility

³³¹ “*porque ella abarcaba en pocas palabras todas las necesidades tanto temporales como espirituales del hombre. . . y no para que suframos como penitentes que expían sus culpas.*” *EE*, December 15, 1877, 133-34.

³³² “*La masa de los papistas ignoran lo que es la religión cristiana. . . huyen la comunión directa con Dios, notable y universalmente con respecto del perdón de sus pecados, que siempre buscan a los pies de un hombre tan o más pecador que ellos mismos. Se arrodillan y se extasían delante de alguna estampa o escultura, muy especialmente las que representan la persona humana de la madre de Jesús. Las interminables repeticiones, las palabras veloces, mal pronunciadas y en tono irreverente, y que miden por metro lineal, todo implica el grosero materialismo de su devoción. La verdadera oración es hablar con Dios, con Dios el Padre, como empieza la incomparable oración dominical. . . . Nuestros ruegos, pues, deben dirigirse al Padre en el nombre del Hijo. En una oración verdadera caben la adoración, el agradecimiento y sobre todo, como absolutamente esencial, la petición, porque como “no sabemos lo que hemos de pedir como conviene” como prefacio de toda oración debe invocarse la ayuda el Espíritu Santo.*” Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 122-23.

³³³ See *Las Doctrinas y la Disciplina de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal 1896 con Apéndice. Edición Española* (Santiago de Chile-Buenos Aires: Imprenta Moderna-Imprenta Evangélica, 1899), 32.

was given to the father as “minister,” who was expected to lead with “the mother as a helper,” “side by side surrounded by their tender children,” in asking God’s blessings “upon their home, their church and their country.”³³⁴ Family worship was also considered a fundamental formative experience, especially for young children: “You learn to worship God as you learn many other things; through practice.”³³⁵

Private prayer was intended to be a spiritual exercise to receive God’s support in everyday life: in sorrow and anxiety, in danger and in need, to overcome temptations, and to deal with discomfort.³³⁶ The practice of private prayer was particularly encouraged among the illiterate, because, not being able to resist temptation through the Word of God, they could find in prayer help and assurance of victory.³³⁷

3.6 Preaching

The *Articles of Religion* John Wesley adapted from the Anglican’s in 1784 highlighted the importance of “speaking in the congregation in such a tongue as people understand.”³³⁸ Article 15 said: “It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and Custom of the Primitive Church, to have Public Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments, in a

³³⁴ “*El padre. . . ministro, la madre el ayudante. . . uno al lado del otro, rodeados de sus tiernos niños. . . (invocar sus bendiciones) sobre la casa, sobre la iglesia y sobre la patria!*” *EESA*, September 3, 1896, 279.

³³⁵ “*Se aprende a adorar a Dios como se aprenden tantas otras cosas; por medio de la práctica.*” “El culto en el hogar,” *EESA*, September 15, 1929, 372.

³³⁶ See *EESA*, September 3, 1896, 280.

³³⁷ See *EESA*, June 11, 1896, 180.

³³⁸ *The Doctrines and Disciplines of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 14th. ed. (New York: NY: John Wilson and Daniel Hitt, 1808), 10.

Tongue not understood by the People.”³³⁹ The *Articles* were adopted by the MEC in 1784 and as part of its Discipline they guided the church life and its mission endeavor.

This might explain why the impossibility of preaching in the vernacular language, due to governmental prohibition to Protestant ministers to proselytize the local population, jeopardized the permanence of Argentina as a mission field, though it managed to survive thanks to its ministry among English-speaking residents of Buenos Aires. When that legal restriction was eliminated (1855), the MEC Missionary Society faced other challenges that delayed the starting of vernacular preaching for the next twelve years.³⁴⁰ On May 25, 1867, Rev. John F. Thomson initiated regular Sunday worship services in Spanish, honoring Methodism with the historical merit of having pioneered Spanish-language preaching in Argentina.³⁴¹

Superintendent William Goodfellow so described that memorable occasion:

On last Sunday night Brother Thomson delivered his first sermon in the city in Spanish. The church was full. Of course not many of our own people were present, but a large number of natives were there who heard their first Protestant sermon. There was marked attention and every prospect of good. We have no Spanish Hymn Book, but we had the hymns printed on slips of paper as a programme [sic], and the organ and choir led the large concourse to the tunes of Hebron, Mozart, and Old Hundred. Brother Thomson's fluency and self-command with a new language on his lips surprised everyone, and only the most critical could detect the fact that he was not using his native language. Next Sunday night is our

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ The delay was due to a range of factors, including divisions in the English-speaking Methodist church in Buenos Aires, epidemics of yellow fever and cholera, and difficulties in finding a preacher fluent in the Spanish language. See Reid, *Missions and Missionary Society*, 267-296 and Daniel Bruno, “Un camino de intrigas y misterios. Historia del proceso hacia la primera predicación evangélica en español en el río de la Plata. A 140 años del metodismo nativo,” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 5 (2007): 105-111.

³⁴¹ The date of the service presents some inconsistencies. Traditional Methodist historiography supported the date May 25, 1867 as the inauguration day of worship services in Spanish; a symbolic date due to its coincidence with a main national holiday. However, documents also assert that that first meeting was held on a Sunday, but May 25, 1867, was a Saturday. Daniel Bruno, considering other sources, suggests that it could have been held two weeks later, on June 9, and that the date could have been changed in historical accounts to May 25 at the beginning of the twentieth century to symbolically counteract suspicions of antinationalism. See Bruno, “Un camino de intrigas,” 112-14.

missionary meeting night, and after that we hope to occupy Sunday evening with Spanish preaching.³⁴²

The initiative proved successful. For Henry G. Jackson, the Superintendent who succeeded Goodfellow in 1869, the explanation for the growth of the Spanish congregation lay in “the fact that the preaching has been more controversial in its character, and more calculated to attract attention than heretofore” —a course that seemed to have raised in him some doubts.³⁴³

Baptist pastor Juan Varetto, who was converted and initially disciplined by Thomson and who himself was a renowned preacher, described Thomson’s preaching style in these terms:

Thomson was essentially a polemicist preacher. . . . When he was in the pulpit he disputed even when preaching on a highly spiritual theme, which he could do as well or even better than many others who were not polemicists. Even when praying he seemed to be contending. Their sentences were short and sharp, and penetrated to the depths of the soul as hard thorns. . . . He often confronted a Papist dogma . . . Transubstantiation, baptismal regeneration, limbo, purgatory, auricular confession, worship of images, celibacy and its disastrous consequences, were his main topics and abundant material that had the power to attract the public. . . . His controversy was not merely negative and destructive. So he used the pick-axe to demolish, so he used the trowel to rebuild. He knew how to solidly raise the building of the saving Truth on top of the rubble of error.³⁴⁴

According to Varetto, Thomson’s preaching was extemporaneous but not improvised; he used to prepare his sermons in advance, writing an outline and some ideas, but never reading

³⁴² William Goodfellow, *Missionary Advocate*, August 20, 1867, 39, accessed January 7, 2015, <http://findit.library.yale.edu/bookreader/BookReaderDemo/index.html?oid=11535010#page/6/mode/1up>

³⁴³ *Fifty-first Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Year 1869* (New York, NY: Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1870), 48.

³⁴⁴ “Thomson era eminentemente predicador de controversia. . . . cuando estaba en el púlpito peleaba aunque predicase sobre un tema altamente espiritual, cosa que sabía hacer tan bien o mejor que muchos otros que no eran controversistas. Hasta cuando oraba parecía que estaba peleando. Sus sentencias eran cortas y agudas, y penetraban al fondo del alma como duros agujones. . . . Frecuentemente se afrentaba con algún dogma del papismo. . . . La transubstanciación, la regeneración bautismal, el limbo, el purgatorio, la confesión auricular, el culto de las imágenes, el celibato y sus funestas consecuencias, le proporcionaban temas importantes, de abundante material, que tenían la virtud de atraer al público. . . . Su controversia no era meramente negativa y destructora. Si usaba el pico para demoler, usaba también la trulla para construir. Sobre los escombros del error sabía levantar sólidamente el edificio de la Verdad salvadora.” Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 145-47.

from them.³⁴⁵ And he was talented in using contemporary issues to present the message of the gospel, as Varetto observed: “Sometimes he brought topics to the pulpit that were somehow rare and that seemed unrelated to the purpose of a Christian worship service, such as the death penalty, bullfights, and military service. He used to debate the headlines of the day with enthusiasm and enjoyment. . . . He always formulated his topic so that he could conclude with a serious call to conversion.”³⁴⁶ A statistical analysis of around forty of his sermons delivered in the first ten years of his preaching in Spanish shows that 95 percent of them were based in the New Testament, and 25 percent of the total were from the gospel of John; of his few sermons on the Old Testament, the most used book was the Psalms. Sermons based on the Psalms doubled the number of sermons based on the second most used book of the Old Testament.³⁴⁷ Certainly this use of the Scriptures corresponds to the prevalence of evangelistic emphases in his preaching.

Thomson, like most Methodists of his time, believed in the centrality of the sermon in worship services: “The pulpit is the minister’s throne, and preaching is his greatest duty. . . The choir should not take the place of the pulpit, neither should good music and good singing replace the sermon.”³⁴⁸ He was convinced that controversial preaching was the best fit for work in Catholic nations: “Those who have not been personally in this dispute . . . do not understand the

³⁴⁵ See Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 57.

³⁴⁶ “Llevaba a veces al púlpito temas un tanto raros y que parecían ajenos a la finalidad de un culto cristiano, como el de la pena de muerte, las corridas de toros, el servicio militar. Los asuntos del día solía debatirlos con entusiasmo y provecho. . . Siempre encausaba su tema de forma tal que pudiese terminar con un serio llamamiento a la conversión.” Ibid., 146.

³⁴⁷ See Adam F. Sosa, “La predicación de Juan F. Thomson,” *Cuadernos de Teología* 1, no. 1 (1970), 34-35.

³⁴⁸ “El púlpito es el trono de un ministro, y predicar su gran deber. . . El coro no debe ocupar el lugar del púlpito ni la buena música y el buen canto substituir a la predicación.” Quoted in Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 148.

tactics to be used to defeat our opponents. This is the absolute and simple truth: You cannot preach the Christian faith in these countries *without resorting to polemics*.”³⁴⁹ Undoubtedly, the first generation of local converts was formed in an anticlerical spirit that may have helped to create, by contrast, a new Protestant conscience. As Douglas Ruffle argues, “Our modern sensitivities blanch at the fierce anti-Catholicism of Thomson and his era. Yet . . . Thomson preached a gospel that forged a Christian identity distinct from the prevailing culture.”³⁵⁰

But this was not the only preaching style in emerging Methodism in Argentina. Local work seemed to reflect the two opposing trends that emerged in nineteenth century British and American Methodism: respectability versus revival.³⁵¹ Undoubtedly Thomson incarnated the latter. The former may have been represented by Thomas B. Wood, who initiated services in the Spanish language in Rosario —the second city of importance in Argentina— on April 23, 1871. These are his words on the first and subsequent services, which reveal his concern for respectability and his preference for a non-confrontational approach to preaching:

The occasion had been announced in the daily papers, and curiosity brought together a crowd of people. . . . All classes of Spanish-speaking people were represented, and among them enough of the highest in society to give the whole enterprise a character of respectability . . . and nothing like disorder has ever shown itself at the first and or any subsequent service. . . . Hymns that all can read and understand, tunes in which all are invited to join, prayers in their own language and adapted to the occasion, and sermons that appeal to them as Christians (which they all profess to be) to realize in their hearts and lives the Scriptural privileges and duties of Christianity, all this is entirely new to these people, and some of them are getting permanently attached to it.³⁵²

³⁴⁹ “*Los que no han estado personalmente en esta lucha. . . no comprenden la táctica que debe emplearse para vencer a nuestros contrarios. La verdad dicha con absoluta sencillez es esta: No se puede predicar la religión de Cristo en estos países sin emplear la controversia.*” Quoted in Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 145-47.

³⁵⁰ Douglas W. Ruffle, “Juan F. Thomson: Christian Identity and the Beginnings of Spanish-Language Protestant Preaching in The River Plate,” *Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education* 10 (1994-1995): 56.

³⁵¹ Cracknell and White, *An Introduction to World Methodism*, 194-95.

³⁵² Quoted in Wade Crawford Barclay, *The Methodist Episcopal Church 1845-1939*, vol.3, *Widening Horizons: 1845-95* (New York, NY: The Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, 1957), 769.

Of the two trends, revivalism prevailed, and subsequent denominational leaders endorsed revival as the model for local Methodism. Proof of this is a 1910 report by Superintendent Samuel Craver: After four weeks of “the most notable revival that the churches in this city [Buenos Aires] ever known . . . a new ideal has been set before our Spanish-speaking churches, and all have seen that the revival methods . . . are just as effective and applicable among Latins, once they have been indoctrinated with the gospel of truth.”³⁵³

The strong conversionism of emerging Methodism in Argentina deeply influenced the standards of excellence in preaching, which was mostly valued for its capacity for persuading sinners to repent and believe in the gospel. The common understanding was that this could not be reached by “intellectual or esthetic culture” but by touching the hearers’ hearts and minds through the power of the Holy Spirit.³⁵⁴ Also highly valued was the ability to communicate the message in ways able to move emotions and awaken the audience’s feelings. The following chronicle is an example of the expectations on preaching in early Methodism in Argentina; it corresponds to a quarterly visit made by Superintendent Dr. Charles W. Drees to the congregation in Paraná— the capital city of the province of Entre Ríos, around 300 miles northeast from Buenos Aires— in 1894:

On Sunday morning he preached in English and administered the Lord's Supper infiltrating the hearts of his listeners with the comforting balm of hope, as he knows how to do it, softly and sweetly. It could be seen on the attendees’ faces the feelings that had been awaked in their hearts; because when the eyes begin to color and to wet, this is a sure sign that something impossible to hide is happening in the heart. May the Lord keep those feelings indelible! . . . In the evening, preaching and communion in Spanish were awaiting for him. . . . The sermon was masterful, fully anointed, whose words deeply

³⁵³ *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Year 1910* (New York, NY: Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1911): 402.

³⁵⁴ “*la cultura intelectual o la estética.*” “El predicador y la conciencia del auditorio,” *EESA*, July 26, 1897, 1.

reached into the innermost heart. For three quarters of an hour he kept the attention of the audience without fatigue, preparing their spirits to respectfully meditate on the object of our redemption.

Oh! How easily hearts understand when they are introduced to a Christ overwhelmed with the weight of sorrow and agony for the sins of the world! The respectful way in which the preacher was heard palpably demonstrated that he was playing the sensitive and delicate chord of their feelings. Some souls decided to approach at the communion table in the last moment, driven by the Spirit of God that makes us see wonders.³⁵⁵

In addition to preaching, early Methodism in Argentina resorted to other communicational strategies, including public lectures, which in most cases were of a polemic nature. Again it was Thomson who championed the efforts, but without losing sight of the fact that evangelism was the highest goal to achieve. He used to say, “Scientific or literary conferences can be good in their own place, but they cease to be good if they steal time from true evangelical preaching.”³⁵⁶ In this sense, it is most likely that his involvement in this enterprise was due to its potential to make new converts and to plant new congregations. The foundation of the Methodist Church of Chivilcoy is an example of this type of outcome. Chivilcoy is an agricultural town in the province of Buenos Aires where, in 1887, Thomson started a series of lectures at the Italian Workers’ Hall. His first conference was titled “Liberalism and Papism,” and it attracted the educated population of that town, where the bourgeois and intellectual elites

³⁵⁵ “El domingo dio por la mañana un culto en inglés y celebró la Santa Cena del Señor infiltrando en el corazón de sus oyentes el bálsamo consolador de la esperanza, como él sabe hacerlo, suave y dulcemente. Se podía ver en los rostros de los que escuchaban los sentimientos que despertaba en sus corazones; pues cuando los ojos comienzan a colorearse y a humedecerse es señal evidente de que en el corazón pasa algo imposible de ocultar. Quiera el Señor mantener indelebles esos sentimientos. . . . Y a la noche le esperaba el sermón y la celebración de la comunión en el idioma español. En el local del culto no había más gente. . . . El sermón fue magistral; lleno de unción, cuyas palabras llegaban a lo íntimo del corazón. Durante tres cuartos de hora mantuvo sin cansancio la atención de los concurrentes, preparando los espíritus para meditar con recogimiento en el objeto de nuestra redención. ¡Oh! ¡Cómo se comunican los corazones al presentárseles a Cristo agobiado bajo el peso de los dolores y de la agonía por los pecados del mundo! El recogimiento con que era escuchado demostraba palpablemente que el orador estaba tocando la cuerda sensible y delicada de los sentimientos.” EESA, May 31, 1894, 6.

³⁵⁶ “Conferencias científicas o literarias pueden ser buenas en su lugar pero dejan de serlo si roban tiempo a la predicación de la verdad evangélica.” Quoted in Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 148.

strongly sympathized with Liberal and Freemason ideas. These conferences resulted in the establishment of the Methodist Church of Chivilcoy in 1889, which was the first non-Catholic Christian church in that town.³⁵⁷

3.7 Music

“Methodists have always considered themselves to be a singing people,” says Karen Westerfield Tucker.³⁵⁸ Then she adds, “What prayer books were for some Christians, the hymn books were for generations of Methodists: a source for praise, prayer, devotional meditation, and doctrine.”³⁵⁹ This assertion on Methodism in general proved to be also true for Methodists in Argentina, where congregational hymn singing was never absent from any of their public meetings.

When they only worshipped in English, it was relatively easy to get hymnals imported from abroad. But when they initiated worship services in Spanish (1867) they had to face the challenge of not having available hymnbooks in this language in the region. The creative answer was to resort to some tracts with poems called *Estrella de Belén* (“Star of Bethlehem”), published by the American Society of Tracts, and to utilize them as if they were sheets from a songbook.³⁶⁰ Yet, that was a temporary solution. The centrality of hymnody as a principal formative instrument in Methodist tradition, added to the example set by the Wesley brothers in this regard, might have inspired the early publication of a Methodist hymnbook in the Spanish

³⁵⁷ See Jorge Darío Pascuccio, “Iglesia Metodista, los orígenes del Protestantismo en Chivilcoy,” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 3-4 (2005-2006): 134-39.

³⁵⁸ Westerfield Tucker, *American Methodist Worship*, 156.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁰ See McConnell, *La historia del himno en castellano*, 41.

language in Argentina (1876). *Himnos Evangélicos* also became the first Protestant hymnal in Spanish ever published in the nation. Recognition must be given to its editor, Superintendent Henry G. Jackson, who personally adapted, translated, or originally composed 57 of its 101 hymns. The same year of its release, the mission report recognized this hymnbook as being “extremely useful” and supplying “a felt want.”³⁶¹

The hymnal made such an impact, not only in Argentina but in the entire region, that Jackson was symbolically called “the Charles Wesley of South American Methodism.”³⁶²

Almost three decades after its first edition, one missionary wrote:

Unquestionably the hymns of Charles Wesley have had a part second only to the sermons of his more famous brother John in the formation of the doctrinal system of the people called Methodists. In the quickening and nurture [sic] of the spiritual life of the Church the hymns have probably been far more potent than the sermons. . . . As yet Spanish-speaking Methodism had produced no great hymn writer of native birth. . . . But the man who has made the greatest impression on Spanish Methodism by reason of the number and character of his hymns is Dr. Henry G. Jackson, an honored member of the Joint Commission which prepared the new Methodist Hymnal. The “Himnario” used by the entire Spanish Methodism of South America is one prepared and originally published by Dr. Jackson during his years of missionary service in Buenos Aires.³⁶³

Then he commented on some features of those hymns, remarking that “salvation” was their pervasive theme:

They are characterized by intense spirituality, and express the varied experiences of the sinner saved by grace. Simplicity and directness are also marked features of these hymns, leaving no room for doubt as to the sentiment expressed. While their author would doubtless not claim for them the highest degree of poetic excellence, since few persons can take first rank as poets in a language not their own, these hymns are, nevertheless, sufficiently chaste and correct as literary productions to be favorites with Latins of highly cultivated taste in literature.³⁶⁴

³⁶¹ *Fifty-eight Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Year 1876* (New York, NY: Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1877), 40.

³⁶² Samuel P. Craver, “The Charles Wesley of South American Methodism,” *Northwestern Christian Advocate* 53, no. 40 (October 4, 1905):7.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

The article concluded with a paragraph on the extended acceptance of that hymnbook in all South America:

Several efforts have been made to introduce other hymn books . . . but every such effort has been unsuccessful because those books contain so few of Dr. Jackson's hymns, and his hymns have entered into the very life of the Church in South America. It is safe to say that for many a decade it will be impossible to popularize any hymnal in the Spanish Methodism of the great countries south of the equator unless a very large percentage of Dr. Jackson's hymns of the heart life shall be incorporated in the book. Until he shall be eclipsed by some spiritually minded native Spanish hymn-writer, Henry G. Jackson will continue to be the Charles Wesley of Spanish-speaking Methodism.³⁶⁵

The third edition of this hymnbook (1881) was accompanied with tunes after two years of work of a local musician, Juan R. Naghton. John Fletcher Hurst claimed that “it was the first printing with music types ever done in South America.”³⁶⁶ There were numerous editions of this hymnal, but the original 101 hymns remained as the unchanged body of the book, with later additions in the form of supplements.³⁶⁷

Despite the contribution made by this hymnbook, some years later other voices arose claiming that hymnody in the Spanish language needed improvement in both content and language. They found it theologically “poor,” lacking in hymns that expressed “the great truths of the Gospel and the noble yearnings awakened by these truths.”³⁶⁸ But their most acute critique

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ John Fletcher Hurst, *The History of Methodism*, vol.7 (New York, NY: Eaton & Mains, 1904), 260. In Fletcher's text there is a misspelling and the last name appears as Naghten.

³⁶⁷ Craver, “The Charles Wesley of South American Methodism,” 7. Regarding the issue of additions, the 1901 edition, for example, had a supplement of 18 hymns making a total of 119 hymns. See *Himnos Evangélicos con Música*, 2^a edición aumentada, ed. William F. Rice (Buenos Aires: Imprenta Metodista, 1901).

³⁶⁸ “pobre. . . (especialmente himnos que expresen) las grandes verdades del Evangelio, y las nobles aspiraciones que esas verdades despiertan.” *EESA*, December 3, 1896, 371.

was the misuse of the Spanish language and the misunderstanding of Spanish poetry by many of its composers and translators, almost all of them foreigners.³⁶⁹

In the following years some distinguished composers emerged from local Methodism, like Daniel Hall —author of the renowned wedding hymn *Dios bendiga a las almas unidas*— and Juana Rodríguez de Balloch, the composer of more than a dozen hymns who later chaired the committee that prepared a new hymnal —*Himnario Evangélico*— published in 1943 by the Methodists in cooperation with the Waldensians and the Disciples.³⁷⁰ The latter introduced several changes, one of the most salient being the inclusion of hymns for “each circumstance of Christian experience” and for different church events.³⁷¹ The shifts display how hymnody accompanied the evolution undergone by Methodism in Argentina in the first half of the twentieth century, moving toward a broader understanding of the Christian life beyond the traditional focus on conversion and the expansion of denominational institutionalization.

3.8 Conclusion

It is not a surprise that the worship practices of the Methodist Church in Argentina demonstrate pervasive continuities with nineteenth century American Methodism. After all, this denomination remained under the control of American missionaries during the entire period researched here. Yet, they differed from American Methodism basically in two features: the use of the Spanish language and the extreme anti-Catholicism.

³⁶⁹ See, for example, *EESA*, March 13, 1901, 4.

³⁷⁰ See McConnell, *La historia del himno en castellano*, 49-50.

³⁷¹ “cada una de las circunstancias de la experiencia cristiana.” Pablo Sosa, “Apuntes para la cronología de la himnología evangélica rioplatense. A 50 años de ‘El cielo canta alegría,’ 1958-2008,” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 5 (2007): 60.

When in 1867 the Methodist church started regular worship services in the vernacular, it gave a step of great historical importance in the *argentinization* of Methodism in particular, and Protestantism in general. At that time there were no other Christian worship services in the language of the people in the entire country; the Roman Catholic masses were celebrated in Latin—a practice that lasted until the liturgical reform introduced by Vatican Council II—while the few Protestant churches recently established in Argentina among European immigrant communities worshipped in their own foreign languages.

This decision of using the vernacular in worship coincided with a time of unprecedented demographic and cultural change produced by the massive European immigration. In this context, the reconfiguration of a local society able to integrate the new immigrants made essential the use of the Spanish language as the *lingua franca*.³⁷² Hence, we must not underestimate the symbolic power behind this move, which for the Liberal elites, put Methodism at the forefront of a new form of Christianity much more suitable for the modernizing project.

In addition, the use the vernacular focused on the intelligibility of the gospel message, which was another feature compatible with modern religious sensibilities that highly valued both rationality and individual freedom of conscious. In this sense, Methodist worship was essential in the formation of a new Christian community comprised of individuals who voluntary converted and adhered to it. This formation was intrinsically related to Christian perfection, so personal morality was other pervasive theme in congregational services.

The centrality of the Scriptures in Methodist piety in the local context reflected the same overtones discussed above. Methodists actively involved in Spanish-language Bible distribution

³⁷² For a comprehensive study on the transformation of the Argentine identity during the last decades of the nineteenth century see Lilia Ana Bertoni, *Patriotas, cosmopolitas y nacionalistas: la construcción de la nacionalidad argentina a fines del siglo XIX* (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001).

and simultaneously committed to different literacy efforts, which matched their proselytizing interest and their civilizing agenda, while contributed to the *argentinization* of thousands of immigrants through the acquisition of the host country language. However, the promotion of Scripture reading in the vernacular was a sign of defiance to the Roman Catholic Church—who banned that practice—and consequently a deeply countercultural formative practice.

Continuities with American Methodist worship can be observed in the adoption of a similar revivalist liturgy, even in congregational singing in the vernacular. The great importance of hymns in the Wesleyan tradition turned the Methodists in forerunners of Spanish-language hymnody in Argentina. The contextualization of congregational hymnody only reached the lyrics, which were mostly translated from the English; but music remained in the European and North American styles.

What stands out of this practice is that during the period here studied, nor the Methodists nor any other Protestant group used Argentine folk rhythms in worship (e.g. *zamba*, *chacarera*, *milonga*, *tango*, *cueca*, *chamamé*, *carnavalito*, *malambo*) or local popular musical instruments (e.g. *guitarra criolla*, *charango*, *bombo legüero*, *quena*, *bandoneón*). The reason behind this may be found in the civilizing paradigm of the Enlightenment that so deeply influenced the modern missionary movement. As Simei Monteros notes:

The Methodist missionary did not offer a message completely distinct from that presented by missionaries of other denominations. . . . His optimistic vision was that the Gospel would be able to release the Latin American peoples from the darkness of ignorance and religious fanaticism in which they had been immersed, thanks principally to the Roman Catholic “paganism.” . . . From the outset, it is clear that missionaries saw the Latin Americans as “receivers” with not much to “offer.” Nobody claimed to learn anything from the Latins, only to teach them.³⁷³

³⁷³ Simei Ferreira de Barros Monteiro, “Singing a New Song: Developing Methodist Worship in Latin America,” in *The Sunday Service of the Methodists: Twentieth-Century Worship in Worldwide Methodist (Studies in Honor of James F. White)*, ed. Karen B. Westerfield Tucker (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books-Abingdon Press, 1996), 266.

Accordingly, popular culture was virtually disregarded. Paradoxically, the late adoption of indigenous tunes and instruments in congregational singing among Argentine Methodists and many other Protestant groups, would be largely influenced by the Roman Catholic Liturgical Renewal in 1960s and its turn towards inculturation. The Argentine Methodist Church officially started publishing indigenous music in 1974, in a series of songbooks called *Cancionero Abierto* (Open Songbook) edited by Pablo Sosa. Six volumes were published, with 150 songs, which were mostly composed by Argentine authors but also by other Latin American composers, plus a few global songs. According to Michael Hawn, “This collection has influenced virtually every Spanish language songbook and hymnal published in the United States since the last quarter of the twentieth century.”³⁷⁴

Finally, much of what has been described in this chapter might be of great surprise to Argentine Methodists today, especially regarding to the vivid anti-Catholicism that permeated Methodist worship practices in Argentina in these initial times. Yet, it is worth noting that faced with an overwhelming Roman Catholic hostile majority, anti-Catholic worship was deeply formational of a community that understood its own identity through otherness. In addition, as mentioned above, anti-Catholicism became a convergence factor with the anticlerical Liberal elites and the Freemasons, who shared a modernizing agenda close to Methodist social views. In this sense, Methodist worship services in Argentina were formative spaces not only of a new form of spirituality but also of a new political subject prone to support the secularization of the

³⁷⁴ C. Michael Hawn, “Through Every Land, By Every Tongue: The Rise of Ecumenical Global Song,” in *New Songs of Celebration Render: Congregational Song in the Twenty-First Century*, comp. and ed. C. Michael Hawn (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications Inc., 2013), 269.

state, common public education, democratic values, and workers and women's rights. This topic will be more closely examined in chapter 6.

CHAPTER 4

BAPTIST WORSHIP

4.1 People

The most distinctive feature of the Baptist denomination in its emergence in Argentina was its heterogeneity. The denomination was the product of the work initiated by European forerunners (1881), enhanced by the arrival of American missionaries from the Foreign Mission Board of the SBC at the beginning of the twentieth century (1903), and solidified by the early inclusion of native workers in leadership.³⁷⁵ This peculiar dynamic imprinted unique traits on Argentine Baptists that proved to somewhat limit the potential control by the SBC missionaries, thus preventing its complete Americanization.

The European stream traces its roots to Paul Besson, who soon after his arrival in Argentina became actively involved in national public life, advocating for religious freedom, legal rights for religious minorities, and separation between church and state. His own spiritual journey from a Swiss Reformed background, his outstanding scholarly education, and his eccentric personality added to his role as precursor of the Baptists in Argentina, turned him into a major influence in the shaping of this denomination. Probably the most typical mark he left, primarily in those congregations he helped to start—the “Bessonian” churches—was the rejection of any form of hierarchical ecclesial institutionalization in defense of congregationalism. This trait, added to Besson’s uniqueness, explains the emergence of mutual

³⁷⁵ As argued in chapter 2, “native workers” was the expression commonly used by American missionaries to refer to leaders that had been converted in Argentina, but without ethnic or nationality connotations; most of them were European immigrants or their descendants born in Argentina.

suspicion when the American missionaries arrived in the country. Americans were hesitant about Besson's orthodoxy; the Bessonian churches feared that the American initiative of creating a National Convention could threaten their independence. Over time, they came closer and by 1912 all Baptists congregations from both streams had joined the CEBA. However, there was never a complete fusion of ideas, and unity in diversity became a hallmark of the Argentine Baptists.

A common trait among all Baptists was their evangelistic zeal; their early missionary efforts produced a first generation of converts that was primarily comprised of new European immigrants and to a lesser extent, some locals. The congregation founded by Besson, Del Centro Baptist Church, offers an interesting example of the cosmopolitanism of its membership, which reflected the demographic changes that were taking place in Argentina, and, even more drastically, in the city of Buenos Aires. From 1883 to 1916, this church identified the nationality of most of the new members in its records. In that period, the church added 172 members, of which the country of origin was recorded in 124 cases. Half of the latter were Spanish, 14 were Argentine, 10 were Italian, nine were French, seven were British; and five were Swiss. The rest were from Sweden, Germany, Chile, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Brazil, and Peru.³⁷⁶ The prevalence of the Spanish may be due to the widespread climate of hostility against Protestants in Spain during this period, which forced many of them to emigrate. Those of them who sought refuge in this congregation brought with them years of experience in the Christian faith, substantially increasing leadership capabilities. Conversely, the Spanish constituency was also

³⁷⁶ See Arnoldo Canclini, *100 Años con Cristo en el Centro* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos Argen-Press, 1983), 30.

comprised of poorly educated immigrants, some of whom became literate for the primary purpose of reading the Scriptures.³⁷⁷

Likewise, the outreach of the American missionaries also targeted new European immigrants. Their efforts proved to be more successful with those living in poverty:

House-to-house visitation was only possible among the poorer people . . . It was impossible to reach the seclusive upper classes or even the middle class. . . . That meant that the first foot-hold was among dwellers of the poorer tenements. . . . Here we found people struggling with poverty, people who felt longing for heavenly riches. Here, too, we found men and women who had broken away from the influences and traditions of their homes in Italy and Spain, coming to begin life anew in a new land, where as yet many of them had not formed social relations; nor had yet gotten under the influence of the Church of Rome in their surroundings. From these Italian and Spanish immigrants, we reaped a large part of our early harvest.³⁷⁸

It was amid these poor immigrant tenements where “many diamonds in the rough were discovered, jewels that in coming years would reveal all their beautiful lustre.”³⁷⁹ Those of them who later pursued Christian ministry were named “native workers.” Albeit in a much lower proportion, the native workers included a few highly educated leaders. Despite obvious differences, they had in common: “their character, dedication, and spirituality.”³⁸⁰ The native workers inaugurated a time of long-lasting pastorates that helped this denomination in evolve a local identity.

4.2 Piety

If unity in diversity was feasible among Baptists in Argentina, it was greatly due to the concurrence of thoughts and practices regarding to piety. According to Church Historian E.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

³⁷⁸ Quarles, *Christ in the Silver Lands*, 53-54.

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 54.

³⁸⁰ Canclini, “Panoramic View,” 128.

Glenn Hinson, Baptist piety drew upon different traditions and experiences. It inherited from the Protestant Reformation a Scriptural spirituality. It was rooted in Puritan piety, which was concerned “for heart religion manifested in transformed lives and, from thence, the transformation of society.”³⁸¹ It was influenced by continental Anabaptists’ insights on the form of baptism and on the congregational model of believers’ church. In America, it was deeply transformed by “the voluntary principle in religion,” “the conversionist approach” of the Great Awakenings and the Frontier, and the pragmatism that had increasingly affected the Southern Baptists since the second half of the nineteenth century.³⁸²

The same features distinguished the spirituality of the Baptists in Argentina. In spite of their name, they held not a sacramental but a conversionist piety. Conversion, understood as a personal experience of a spiritual new birth, was the essence of Baptist spirituality, which as a mark of authenticity had to be evidenced by moral transformation. In church life, conversionist piety resulted in the prevalence of the evangelistic and renewal motif in worship services, and “witness to others became the ultimate test and preachers or missionaries the model Christians.”³⁸³ Conversionism enhanced by pragmatism led to a great concern for numbers, which turned into a prime instrument to assess the efficacy of evangelistic methods and worship practices.

Baptist piety was also characterized by its Bible-centrism. Scripture reading was fundamentally encouraged for private devotion, and biblical preaching was the core of

³⁸¹ E. Glenn Hinson, “Baptists and Spirituality: A Community at Worship,” *Review & Expositor* 84 no. 4 (Fall 1987): 649.

³⁸² E. Glenn Hinson, “Baptist Approaches to Spirituality,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 37 no 2 (Spring 2002): 6-7.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 15.

congregational worship services. As Hinson notes, “It would not be inaccurate to say that the Bible has been the chief Baptist ‘sacrament,’ that is, the chief means through which Baptists experience God’s grace.”³⁸⁴

Baptist support of the voluntary principle in religion and of freedom of conscience shaped a piety actively involved in public advocacy for religious rights for minorities and for separation between church and state, while the democratic ideal largely influenced the Baptist ecclesiological practice of a more horizontal form of congregationalism.³⁸⁵

Beyond particularities, Baptist piety showed many affinities with the spirituality of the broader evangelical community in Argentina, which facilitated the development of a common evangelical identity that greatly contrasted with Roman Catholic popular piety.

4.3 Time

4.3.1 Weekly calendar

Like other evangelical groups in Argentina, the Baptists emphasized worship services on the Lord’s Day and favored the weekly calendar over the observance of the annual holidays. The pattern of Sunday service was very simple, consisting basically of congregational singing, prayer, Bible reading, offering, and preaching.³⁸⁶ The sermon assumed the most important place in congregational services, usually ending with an invitation to salvation or consecration accompanied by the singing of a hymn. In the twentieth century it became increasingly common

³⁸⁴ Hinson, “Baptists and Spirituality,” 652.

³⁸⁵ See, for example, Pablo Besson, *Escritos de Pablo Besson T.I*, comp. Santiago Canclini (Buenos Aires: Junta de Publicaciones de la Convención Evangélica Bautista, 1948). See also Mondragón, *Like Leaven in the Dough*, 70-83.

³⁸⁶ According to A. Canclini, evangelical churches kept a similar order of worship as the one described here, which helped to keep good relations among them, beyond denominational differences. See, Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 280-81.

to add a musical postlude to finish the service.³⁸⁷ The Sunday schedule usually included the Sunday school, a program the Baptists considered essential to congregational formation.³⁸⁸

The influence of a conversionist and pragmatic spirituality is demonstrated in the reasons invoked to encourage regular attendance of Sunday services: promoting fellowship among church members, increasing congregational effectiveness in the evangelistic mission, and keeping members informed of “the progress of the church.”³⁸⁹ Similarly, an article in *El Expositor Bautista* said: “Meetings are nurturing if all brethren come to the worship service motivated by a good spirit, seeking their own edification and their fellows’. Everyone plays their part, according to their gifts, and the worship services will be attractive . . . new souls will be converted and there will be joy in heaven and among us.”³⁹⁰

Furthermore, weekly worship services were intended to form Christian virtues, such as politeness and hospitality, as signs of a renewed community: “In evangelical meetings . . . courtesy . . . is the expression that we are truly brethren. When we enter into a worship service and a brother makes room for us in the pew or we are reached a hymnal with fraternal greeting, this is of great encouragement to feel the beneficial effects of worship.”³⁹¹

³⁸⁷ According to Arnoldo Canclini, it was his father, Santiago, who introduced this practice among Baptists. Arnoldo Canclini, e-mail to author, March 5, 2013.

³⁸⁸ A good example of the high regard the Baptists held for the role played by Sunday schools in Christian formation can be noted in these lines by missionary James Quarles: “Our first missionary efforts, after the beginning of public preaching, were directed toward the building up of Sunday schools in each station. . . . In the older churches today, our Sunday schools do compare favourably with those of other parts of the world, especially in the matter of sane, throughout Bible teaching. . . . From these Sunday schools in recent years have to come the church members who are giving to our work today a very encouraging outlook.” Quarles, *Christ in the Silver Lands*, 92-93.

³⁸⁹ “*la marcha de la iglesia.*” L. Mongay, “La asistencia a los cultos,” *EB*, May 1916, 6-7.

³⁹⁰ “*las reuniones son edificantes, si todos los hermanos vienen al culto animados de buen espíritu, buscando su propia edificación y la de su hermandad. Cada uno haga su parte, según sus dones, y los cultos resultarán atractivos. . . se convertirán nuevas almas y habrá gozo en el cielo, y entre nosotros.*” “El Culto,” *EB*, May 1915, 4-5.

³⁹¹ “*En las reuniones evangélicas. . . la cortesía [es] la expresión de que en verdad somos hermanos. Al entrar a los cultos, al ver que su hermano nos hace lugar en el banco o nos alcanza un himnario, con una*

American missionaries early identified the need to deepen Christian formation while raising native leadership and, to this end, added other gatherings to the weekly calendar in which laity could find opportunities for more active participation:

The pastors have devoted themselves more to the training and development of the members, not only employing the Sunday morning service for the edification of the church, but also by means of special weekly classes, prayer services, preaching in which members take active part, studies with individuals led by natives, etc. Woman's work is coming to be a lively asset. Nearly all our churches have an organization or special meetings for the women. Young people's unions have assured their permanent existence.³⁹²

The weekly calendar was complemented by the monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper. It was observed as one of the two church "ordinances," with a pervasive commemorative character. To be able to participate in the Lord's Supper, Baptist churches required partakers to meet three conditions: "faith in Christ," meaning to be a born again Christian; "Christian baptism," understood as baptism by immersion after a personal experience of conversion; and "membership in Christ's church," or participation in the fellowship of a local congregation.³⁹³ Years later, these requirements were re-phrased as "regeneration," "baptism," and "good behavior."³⁹⁴ The latter substitution reflected a theological turn towards individualism and human merit.

salutación hermanable, es un gran estímulo para poder sentir los benéficos efectos del culto." "La cortesía en las reuniones," *EB*, August 1912, 10.

³⁹² L. Cleveland Quarles, "Argentine Mission Annual Report," *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1915* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1915): 154.

³⁹³ "*fe en Cristo. . . bautismo cristiano. . . ser miembro de la iglesia de Cristo.*" "La Cena conmemorativa," *EB*, April 1910, 3.

³⁹⁴ "*la regeneración. . . el bautismo. . . la buena conducta.*" "Nuestra posición con respecto a la Cena del Señor," *EB*, June 1, 1924, 1.

4.3.2 Annual calendar

Baptists rejected the use of the traditional liturgical calendar, mostly based on a particular interpretation of Gal.4:10-11 and on the historical idea that the Christian calendar contributed to “the degeneration of faith and practice of the early churches.”³⁹⁵ However, they kept a simple annual calendar in which Easter and Christmas were the main feasts observed, even when certain objections were raised on the dates of both holidays and on the pagan influences on the latter.³⁹⁶

Nevertheless, the Christmas holiday was celebrated because of the soteriological meaning of Christ’s incarnation.³⁹⁷ Similarly, Easter was observed because it announced the Lord’s death, but making clear that Christians can celebrate Passover always.³⁹⁸ The same reasoning was applied to other Christian festivities, like Pentecost and Epiphany. Based on 1 Corinthians 5:8, Besson wrote: “we are permitted to celebrate always a feast . . . there is not a certain date . . . the date does not originate the feast but a good conscience. . . . A feast is nothing but the Church itself and nothing produces spiritual joy but the consciousness of good works.”³⁹⁹ In practice, Christmas and Easter were observed—both imbued with an evangelistic spirit—and the rest of the traditional Christian calendar was omitted.

Over time, other special days were introduced to the Baptist annual calendar, in most cases intended for evangelization or consecration. The most typical was the celebration of New

³⁹⁵ “*la degeneración de la fe y la práctica de las primitivas iglesias.*” “Guardáis los días y los meses, los tiempos y los años,” *EB*, June 15, 1922, 1.

³⁹⁶ See, for example, Pablo Besson, “El calendario católico romano,” *EB*, June 15, 1926, 4.

³⁹⁷ See, for example, Pablo Besson, “La Navidad,” *EB*, December 15, 1920, 7.

³⁹⁸ See Pablo Besson, “Las fiestas católicas,” *EESA*, June 10, 1987, 5.

³⁹⁹ “*nos es lícito hacer siempre la fiesta. . . no hay tiempo determinado. . . no es el tiempo que hace la fiesta, sino una buena conciencia. . . Una fiesta no es otra cosa que la Iglesia y la alegría espiritual nada la da sino la conciencia de buenas acciones.*” *Ibid.*

Year as a day of thanksgiving, renewal, and proclamation.⁴⁰⁰ Notwithstanding, there was resistance to introducing any change to this succinct calendar that could overshadow the centrality of the Lord's Day. For example, Baptists objected to the observance of a Bible Sunday:

First, we do not like this eagerness to multiply special days or special Sundays. . . . The churches of Christ have a serious and important job, and it is not fair their attention be distracted to celebrate [special] days. Moreover, the multiplication of special days is not biblical. . . . With the multiplication of days of "Saints" the Lord's Day lost its Christian character in Romanism. . . . There is little difference between celebrating the day of Saint Anthony or Saint Pancras, and Saint Bible Sunday, or Saint Mother's Day, or the Saint Red Cross Day. It is easy that among so many new saints, our Most Holy Lord Jesus Christ might be forgotten.⁴⁰¹

Likewise, they adamantly refused to join an Anglican initiative to celebrate Whit-week as a special week for Christian witness: "We need not only to testify or preach Christ continuously, during the fifty-two weeks of the year, but also the meaning of Pentecost for Christianity."⁴⁰²

4.3.3 Lifetime and occasional services

4.3.3.1 *Baptism*

Baptists practiced adult baptism by immersion administered to believers who confessed a previous individual experience of conversion. Consequently, baptism functioned as a liturgical reenactment of spiritual rebirth and as a symbolic representation of identification with Christ in

⁴⁰⁰ "New Year" was the only section in *HSE* related to an annual holiday. It included only four hymns (nos. 370, 370 bis, 371 and 372): one of thanksgiving, one of consecration, and two on salvation.

⁴⁰¹ "Primeramente, no nos gusta este afán de multiplicar días especiales, o domingos especiales. . . . Las iglesias de Cristo tienen un trabajo serio, importante, y no es justo que se les distraiga la atención para festejar días. Además, la multiplicación de días especiales en sí misma no es bíblica. . . . Con la multiplicación de días de "los santos", el día Señor perdió su carácter cristiano en el romanismo. . . . Poca diferencia hay entre festejar el día de San Antonio, San Pancracio, y el día del Santo Domingo de la Biblia, o el día de la Santa Madre, o de Santa Cruz Roja. Es fácil que entre tantos santos nuevos, se olvide de nuestro santísimo Señor Jesucristo." "El domingo de la Biblia," *EB*, May 15, 1920, 1.

⁴⁰² "No sólo necesitamos dar testimonio o predicar a Cristo continuamente, en todas las cincuenta y dos semanas del año, sino lo que significa para el cristianismo la Pentecostés." "Guardáis los días," 1.

his death and resurrection. The prevalence of this theological understanding was demonstrated in the common use of the expression “buried with Christ in baptism.”⁴⁰³ The common practice was to baptize in living waters in rivers, or when possible, to have a baptistery built in their own churches.⁴⁰⁴ As well as being a symbolic reenactment, the ordinance of baptism functioned as the initiation rite to membership in a local congregation.

In his study on the British Baptists, Christopher Ellis argues that “Baptists have tended to focus on who is eligible to receive baptism and how it is to be administered rather than to engage in much theological reflection on what is happening in baptism.”⁴⁰⁵ This same feature is applicable to the Baptists in Argentina. The *who* and the *how* dominated the teaching on the matter, and this led to the practice of rebaptizing not only new converts coming from Roman Catholicism but also believers from paedobaptist denominations.

The latter was the case for the first two baptisms administered by the Baptists in Argentina. The first of them was performed on the Christmas Day of 1883, in the river—Río de la Plata— by Besson, and the person baptized was a faithful British Methodist; the second baptism occurred the following year, on December 25, 1884, and in this opportunity Besson

⁴⁰³ “*sepultado con Cristo en el bautismo.*” See, for example, J.L. Hart, “Report of the Argentine Mission,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1907* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1907): 85.

⁴⁰⁴ For example, the Baptist Church of La Plata, used to perform baptisms in a part of the River Plate known as El Dique; and the Church of Distrito Sud in Buenos Aires continued with this practice for at least two decades after its foundation. See Santiago Canclini, *Pablo Besson: un heraldo de la libertad cristiana* (Buenos Aires: Junta de Publicaciones de la Convención Evangélica Bautista, 1933), 85; M.S. Blair, “Argentine Mission Annual Report,” in *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1922* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1922): 207.

⁴⁰⁵ Ellis, “Duty and Delight,” 336.

baptized a French man who had been nominally raised as Protestant.⁴⁰⁶ It is likely that Besson's own experience coming from the Reformed tradition reinforced this practice⁴⁰⁷:

Having believed I was baptized, when in fact I was not, I now realize my error. What I know is that before the blindfold fell from my eyes, I was blind but now I see. . . . I was in error in good faith . . . For having kept souls and congregations in error, for having administered the sprinkling to children, and for having confirmed catechumens' baptism, I must confess, before God and before his Church, that I have sinned by ignorance, and so I ask God to forgive me this involuntary infidelity, and all [infidelities] during my pastorate.⁴⁰⁸

In spite of these cases, the large majority of rebaptized persons were of Roman Catholic background. Immersion baptism was such a rarity in Argentina at the end of the nineteenth century that it even attracted the attention of the secular press. On February 27, 1893, *La Prensa*, the most important national newspaper of the time, published the following chronicle:

Last night, in the Evangelical Baptist Church located at 1330 Independencia Street, it was performed the baptismal ceremony of two members of the congregation . . . The original ceremony began with a sermon by deacon Caballero, and religious songs were sung by members accompanied by harmonium. Then the pastor of the congregation, Mr. Paul Besson, totally immersed the two new Baptists in a large pool; they were wearing a light suit tailored to the occasion. . . . The ceremony ended with other songs sung by the cosmopolitan crowd that filled the temple.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁶ See Canclini, *100 Años con Cristo en el Centro*, 26, 28.

⁴⁰⁷ For more on Besson's discussion on modes of baptism, see Pablo Besson, *Aspersión e inmersión* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta Evangélica, n.d.)

⁴⁰⁸ "Habiéndome creído bautizado, a pesar de que no lo estaba, ahora reconozco mi error. Lo que sé es que antes que la venda cayera de mis ojos, era ciego y ahora veo. . . . estuve de buena fe en el error. . . . Es por haber mantenido a las almas y a las congregaciones en el error, ya por haber administrado la aspersión a los niños, ya haciendo ratificar a los catecúmenos el voto del bautismo, que debo confesar delante de Dios y de su Iglesia, haber pecado por ignorancia, y por ello pido a Dios que me perdone esta infidelidad involuntaria, y todas las de mi pastorado." Quoted in Canclini, *Pablo Besson*, 60.

⁴⁰⁹ "En la Iglesia Evangélica Baptista de la calle Independencia 1330 verificose anoche la anunciada ceremonia del bautismo de dos afiliados a la congregación. . . . Comenzó la original ceremonia con un sermón pronunciado por el diácono señor Caballero y coros religiosos cantados por los afiliados con acompañamiento de armonium. En seguida el pastor de la congregación, señor Pablo Besson, sumergió totalmente en un extenso baño a los dos nuevos baptistas, que vestían un traje ligero adaptado a las circunstancias. . . . Otros coros cantados por la cosmopolita concurrencia que llenaba el templo dieron fin a la ceremonia." Quoted in Canclini, *Pablo Besson*, 88.

Baptisms used to be administered in special congregational services concurrently focused on the evangelization of visitors, generally those related to the baptismal candidates. “A simple immersion baptism,” said Alejandro Dechert “is the clearest and purest way to preach the glorious gospel of Christ, and to demolish all doctrines of error, including the big ‘business’ of purgatory, penance, idolatry, pilgrimages, confessions, and even the Mass itself, because He died once.”⁴¹⁰

In sum, believers’ immersion baptism reflected the typical features of Baptist piety: conversionism, pragmatism, biblicism, individualism, and freedom of conscience.

4.3.3.2 *Marriage*

When Paul Besson arrived in Argentina, education, birth, marriage, and burials were controlled by the Roman Catholic Church, which restricted the religious rights of the non-Catholic minorities. As a provisory partial solution, national authorities created a registry of “dissident priests” who were allowed to solemnize matrimones only when both intending spouses were Protestants. Besson not only refused this option, prevented by his commitment to the Baptist principle of separation between church and state, but he initiated a personal campaign for the secularization of the state, which at that time was a main topic in the public agenda driven by the Liberal elites.

Meanwhile, in 1887 two members of the brand-new Baptist church decided to be married. In a clever move, Besson advised them to sign a civil “conjugal contract” he wrote for the occasion, and which became a precedent to the civil registry bill passed in 1888.⁴¹¹

⁴¹⁰ “Un sencillo bautismo por inmersión, es la más clara y pura manera de predicar el glorioso evangelio de Cristo, y derribar todas las doctrinas de error y entre ellas los grandes “negocios” del purgatorio, penitencias, idolatrías, peregrinaciones, confesiones, y aún la propia misa, porque Cristo murió una sola vez.” Alejandro Dechert, “El bautismo y los bautisterios,” *EB*, February 15, 1923, 9.

⁴¹¹ For details on this story see S. Canclini, *Pablo Besson*, 113-122; A. Canclini, *Sí, Quiero*, 321-26.

This precedent would greatly influence Baptist wedding liturgies. While for Roman Catholic canon law marriage was a sacrament, the Baptists adhered to its contractual interpretation.⁴¹² Consequently, Baptist wedding ceremonies were not to solemnize matrimony but an event where the local church came together as a community of faith to ask for God's blessing upon the spouses just married by a civil court. This emphasis became so pervasive that even today many Baptist churches in Argentina name this service a wedding *blessing* ceremony.

Concerning the order of worship, they kept the basic components of the Sunday service—prayers, Bible reading, hymn signing and sermon—but focused them to matrimony, yet without losing the regular evangelistic aim. In regard to Baptist teaching on Christian matrimony, like the other evangelicals, Baptists objected to marriage with unbelievers.⁴¹³

4.3.3.3 *Funerals*

Baptist funerals were often an abbreviated replica of Sunday worship, usually comprised of the same basic components: prayer, Bible reading, a brief sermon, and hymn singing. The common practice was to first have a memorial service in a funeral home or in the church building and later to hold a shorter second service during the burial. The sermon used to include words of remembrance and gratitude for the life of the dead person and other words addressed to the attendees. These words were of an evangelistic nature, if the majority of the attendees were unsaved, or a consecration sermon if they were believers; in either case preaching pointed to the need of being “prepared for our turn to leave this world.”⁴¹⁴ Bible readings, prayers, and hymn singing were all allusive to the Christian hope in resurrection and the life to come.

⁴¹² For more on Besson's views on marriage see Besson, *Escritos de Pablo Besson T.I.*, 361-75.

⁴¹³ See for example, Manuel García Reiriz, “El matrimonio,” *EB*, August 15, 1923, 10.

⁴¹⁴ See for example, *EB*, March 15, 1921, 5, and April 1, 1926, 3-4.

Like the other evangelicals, Baptists also objected to the Roman Catholic tradition of using candles at funerals and putting a crucifix in the hands of the deceased. Their main concern was that some evangelical families continued these embarrassing practices.⁴¹⁵ The pastoral advice to remedy these “anti-Christian” customs was, first, that each local church should admonish all its members to refrain from these practices; second, that Christians must leave instructions to their family members on their desire “to be buried as an evangelical,” refusing the use of candles and crucifix and requesting a memorial service that included singing, praying, and gospel preaching; and third, that the Christian families of the deceased remained strong against pressures by relatives or neighbors against an evangelical funeral.⁴¹⁶ The instruction to believers on funerals was summarized in a few words: “Live and die as true evangelicals.”⁴¹⁷

4.3.3.4 *Pastoral ordination*

The first ordination of a Baptist pastor in Argentina happened as early as January 12, 1890; only nine years after Paul Besson arrived in the country. The newly ordained minister was Alberto Ostermann, a French immigrant and the second person baptized by Besson. Typical of Baptist ecclesiology, the ordination was done by a local congregation (Del Centro Baptist Church). But it had a peculiarity: Ostermann was ordained as a missionary-pastor sent to shepherd the French-speaking Baptist group that originally called Besson to come to Argentina, and to plant a church in the Spanish language in the city of Santa Fe. Likely because of Besson’s anticlericalism, the event eschewed the term “ordination” and was named the service of “laying on of hands.” According to the church records, the service included a sermon by Besson based

⁴¹⁵ See, for example, J.M. Rodríguez, “El uso de velas y crucifijos en los velorios,” *EB*, October 15, 1922, 1.

⁴¹⁶ “*anticristianas*,” “*ser enterrado como evangélico*.” *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴¹⁷ “*Vivamos y muramos como verdaderos evangélicos*.” *Ibid.*

on Acts 13. The focus was a contrast between the apostolate according to the Holy Spirit and the apostolate in Roman Catholicism; the first was “not based on diplomas, academic degrees, official and diplomatic documents, but on its strength, power, effects, and results: the conversion of souls.”⁴¹⁸ After the sermon, the pastoral candidate “testified to his vocation, his gratitude to the church that supported him . . . [and] entrusted himself to his brethren’s prayer.”⁴¹⁹ The service ended with the observance of the Lord’s Supper.

Subsequent services of laying on of hands maintained the title, intentionally refusing any sign of clericalism, and a pattern developed that included a sermon addressed to the candidate, a second sermon addressed to the congregation, a testimony of conversion and call by the candidate, the laying on of hands on the candidate, and prayer.⁴²⁰

The most remarkable formative features of these services were, on one hand, the importance of pastoral vocation; it was not the ordination that turned the candidate into a pastor but the divine call to Christian ministry.⁴²¹ On the other hand, they taught about the central role of the local congregation; it was the local assembly who recognized God’s call upon someone’s

⁴¹⁸ “no por sus diplomas, por sus títulos académicos, sus documentos oficiales y diplomáticos, sino por su fuerza, por su poder, por sus efectos, por sus resultados: la conversión de almas.” Quoted in Canclini, *Pablo Besson*, 83.

⁴¹⁹ “dio testimonio de su vocación, de su gratitud a la iglesia que le soportó,. . . [y] se encomendó por fin a la oración de los hermanos.” Ibid.

⁴²⁰ See for example, *EB*, May 15, 1922, 13-14; *EB*, July 1, 1927.

⁴²¹ Ordination services among Argentine Baptists were very similar to those performed by the SBC. This was probably due to the fact that ordinations became more common after the creation of the CEBA in 1909, at a time when SBC missionaries were very influential in the life of the denomination. For a description of ordination services among Southern Baptists in the United States see Bill J. Leonard, “The Ordination Service in Baptist Churches,” *Review & Expositor* (Fall 1981): 549-61. On the background and historical development of this practice in the Baptist tradition, see William H. Brackney, “Ordination in the Larger Baptist Tradition,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* (Fall 2002): 225-39.

life, voted the approval of the ordination, and spiritually joined the candidate during the ordination service and along his ministry.⁴²²

4.4 Place

James White claims that “the context of place is also a most important part of the experience of worship. . . . The whole space in which things occur shapes meaning.”⁴²³ In this sense, Baptists’ worship spaces reflected and modeled a conversionist piety centered in the preaching of the gospel and opposed to Roman Catholic liturgical practices. Church buildings were designed as preaching halls, usually with a rectangular shape, and the basic furniture consisted of pews or chairs, a pulpit, and a harmonium or piano, which demonstrates that the sermon and congregational singing were both considered essential components of the Baptists’ basic pattern of worship. Architecture and décor were very simple too, in part to differentiate from Romanism but also because of financial constraints.

The first Baptist church building for the use of a Spanish-speaking congregation in Argentina had a peculiar history. For near two decades Del Centro Baptist church had not had its own worship space, and its small size and economic conditions made acquiring a facility a remote possibility. But the situation changed when its pastor, Paul Besson, received an inheritance from his father and decided to use these funds to build a chapel. To complete the sum, he requested donations from some European churches. The amount of the latter is unknown and it seems of low economic value, but Besson always remembered this offering proud that no British or American funds were used to build this temple.⁴²⁴ The lack of legal provisions about

⁴²² See, for example, *EB*, May 15, 1922, 13-14.

⁴²³ White, *Protestant Worship*, 19.

⁴²⁴ See Canclini, *100 Años con Cristo en el Centro*, 43.

property rights for non-Catholic churches turned Besson into the legal owner of the building until 1912, when the property was transferred by a nominal price to the Baptist Mission, which had recently acquired legal standing.⁴²⁵ When Besson died, most of his estate was designated a church building fund.⁴²⁶

Financial issues and pragmatism influenced both the location and the design. The neighborhood was “a bit marginal by that time” and the building design was “very peculiar.”⁴²⁷ It consisted of a main hall destined to worship services and several rooms on the first and second floors for both pastoral housing and income rental to sustain the pastor. The worship space was a long and narrow rectangle, with a tall platform and a baptistery under the pulpit; it also had a small gallery where it was located a harmonium bought by Besson in a Catholic convent. The décor included evangelistic Bible verses stamped on the walls, which, according to A. Canclini, represented a summary of the theology preached by Besson: “The wages of sin is death,” “Repent, and believe the Gospel,” and “The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus.”⁴²⁸ Windows were ogival and colorful, allowing some natural light and “giving the building the feel of a temple.”⁴²⁹ A chronicle published by the secular newspaper *La Prensa* included this description: “The whole building is tasteful. Inside the chapel, without an altar or images, there is

⁴²⁵ J.L. Hart, “Report of the Argentine Mission,” in *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1912* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1912): 107. Arnoldo Canclini dated this in 1927, when Besson retired from his pastorate there. See, Canclini, *100 Años con Cristo en el Centro*, 44.

⁴²⁶ See Canclini, *Pablo Besson*, 96.

⁴²⁷ Canclini, *100 Años con Cristo en el Centro*, 44.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 47.

a baptismal font, an exact copy of the fonts from the old Catholic churches, to administer adult baptism by immersion.”⁴³⁰

The “Baptist chapel” was inaugurated on September 8, 1899. According to an extensive chronicle published by the Methodist magazine, it was a Friday evening and the place was completely full, with people standing at the back of the hall. Ministers from other Protestant congregations attended the service, considering it an honor to be present “in the dedication of a new house of true worship to the living God.”⁴³¹ The service opened with a hymn whose lyrics were especially composed for the occasion by Rafael Pose y Blanco:

God of Heaven, merciful and benevolent
Supreme Being, Divine Creator;
You who so extremely loved the world
As to send your Son Jesus, the Redeemer.
We come to your glorious throne,
Hoping that you want to hear us;
To ask your blessing upon the works
Here done in your name.⁴³²

After a prayer of thanksgiving, Besson shared a moving speech, remembering his arrival into Argentina and the struggles for the sake of the “saving truth,” and thanking God’s favor in obtaining religious freedom from national authorities.⁴³³ Then it was the turn of the keynote speaker, Methodist Superintendent Drees, who spoke about the progress of the evangelical movement around the globe. Among his words, he said:

⁴³⁰ “*El conjunto del edificio es de buen gusto. Dentro de la capilla, sin altar ni imágenes se ve la pila bautismal, copia exacta de las fuentes de las antiguas iglesias católicas, y donde debe administrarse, por inmersión, el bautismo de los adultos*”. Quoted in Canclini, *Pablo Besson*, 97-98.

⁴³¹ “*en la dedicación de una nueva casa al culto verdadero del Dios vivo.*” “El Evangelio progresa. Inauguración de una capilla baptista,” *EESA*, September 14, 1899, 5.

⁴³² “Dios del cielo, clemente benigno; Ser supremo, divino Hacedor: Tu que al mundo le amaste al extremo de dar a tu Hijo Jesús, Redentor. A tu trono glorioso acudimos, esperando nos quieras oír; a pedirte bendigas las obras que en tu nombre se hicieron aquí.” *Ibid.*

⁴³³ “*verdad salvadora.*” *Ibid.*

In South America, where less than twenty-five years ago it was dangerous to confess having ideas opposed to Romanism, today can be found hundreds of halls, from various branches of evangelicalism, destined to God's worship, and more than 80,000 converts recorded in different church books; 80,000 who have left the Church of Rome to accept the doctrines of Christ, the gospel in its purity.⁴³⁴

This was followed by two shorter discourses: one by a Free Brethren leader who "intended to sow the blessed seed" of the gospel, and the second by a deacon of the Baptist congregation remarking that the inauguration was "a new triumph of the Gospel, of the light against the darkness."⁴³⁵ The service finished in prayer that the chapel might be a place of "salvation for thousands of souls, won for Christ."⁴³⁶ What this account proves is the unity among Protestants during this period and the common understanding that church buildings were mainly places for "the propaganda of the Christian truths."⁴³⁷

For their part, Southern Baptist missionaries shared that same view on worship spaces; they were primarily places destined for preaching the gospel in the revival style, of which hymn singing was a main component. Consequently, they concentrated their efforts in having halls in strategic locations and in furnishing them with pulpit, pews, and piano. Missionary Hart's account of their first rented place is revealing in this sense:

As the time drew near to open our first work, we considered several places. . . . Finally, we rented a place in the front of Plaza Constitución, near the Southern Railway station. We now had a house. We had no appropriation for seats. What could we do? We talked with carpenters about benches. There is no timber in Argentina within five hundred miles of Buenos Aires. Most of the timber used there comes from the United States. That

⁴³⁴ "En Sud-América, donde no hacen cinco lustros, era peligroso confesar tener ideas contrarias a las del romanismo, se cuentan hoy por centenares los locales destinados al culto divino, de las distintas ramas del evangelismo (sic), y son más de 80.000 convertidos e inscriptos en los registros de las distintas iglesias, 80.000 que han abandonado la iglesia de Roma para aceptar las doctrinas de Cristo, el Evangelio en su pureza." Quoted in "El Evangelio progresa," 5.

⁴³⁵ "trató de arrojar la bendita semilla," "un nuevo triunfo del Evangelio, de la luz sobre las tinieblas." "El Evangelio progresa," 5.

⁴³⁶ "salvación de millares de almas, ganadas para Cristo." Ibid.

⁴³⁷ "la propaganda de las verdades cristianas." Ibid.

makes lumber extremely high in price. We soon found that benches would be out of the question. We now went to the furniture stores to look at chairs and found that with our savings we could purchase four dozen. These were placed in our rented hall along with a rented piano. The time to begin arrived. . . . Mrs. Hart played the piano. Mr. Sowell preached, and I kept the door and acted as usher.⁴³⁸

The narrative shows the tendency among missionaries to reproduce their American customs both in the order of worship and in the arrangement of worship spaces, and that change was only introduced when for practical reason that replication was not possible.

If during the initial times functionality was the main criteria for the worship space design, as soon as churches started building their own facilities, issues related to aesthetics arose. New standards continued to prioritize practicality:

Not all churches require the same style of building. . . . The first principle that should guide us is usefulness. Our temples are for the practical uses of worship services, for preaching. First, it is necessary that the projected building may fit the people to hear the preaching. But a preaching hall, even a large one, does not meet all the purposes of an evangelical building. When you build, do not forget the Sunday school, the youth and ladies societies, the library, and many other things that demand attention. See that the building proves useful for all church activities.⁴³⁹

But the principle of beauty was introduced to the discussion:

We believe that Protestants have often gone too far in reaction to the other extreme of the pompous buildings of Romanism. It is not necessary that our temples consist of bare walls. We do not need altars or images; but we well might make use of some beauty, so that our temples may be worthy; thus, buildings might help to spiritual edification and the nakedness of our walls would not offend educated sensibilities.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁸ Joseph L. Hart, *Gospel Triumphs in Argentina and Chile* (Richmond: Educational Department, Foreign Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1925), 111-12.

⁴³⁹ “No todas las iglesias requieren el mismo estilo de edificio. . . . El primer principio que debe guiarnos es la utilidad. Nuestros templos son para usos prácticos del culto, de la predicación. Es necesario primeramente que en el edificio que se proyecta pueda caber la gente para escuchar la predicación. Pero, un salón para la predicación por grande que sea, no responde a todos los fines de un edificio evangélico. Al edificar no debe olvidarse la escuela dominical, ni la sociedad de jóvenes, y la de señoras, la biblioteca, y muchas otras cosas que reclaman atención. Trátese de que el edificio propio sea útil para todas las actividades de la iglesia.” “Edificación,” *EB*, June 1919, 5-6.

⁴⁴⁰ “Creemos que los protestantes en muchas ocasiones han ido al extremo, al reaccionar contra el otro extremo de los edificios aparatosos del romanismo. No es necesario que nuestros templos consistan de paredes

This change seems to reflect the impact of increasing pragmatism on Baptist worship, where decisions were mainly driven by what proved successful in making more converts. The desire for sophistication spoke to their interest in reaching people from higher social classes; as J. Quarles argued, “unattractive quarters naturally had a repellent influence upon the more esthetic and culture natures of the more refined people.”⁴⁴¹

Paradoxically, the same principle seemed to have been applied to open-air preaching and tent meetings, although in this case, targeting popular classes and pushing the evangelistic work outside the church walls.⁴⁴² Their extended use and effectiveness was claimed by missionary L. Quarles: “Pastors are leading the more talented members to the public plazas to preach the Gospel. . . . Many of the churches are buying tents and pitching them in various localities and preaching to numbers not otherwise reached.”⁴⁴³ According to the American missionaries the most successful tent-preacher was Juan C. Varetto: “Pastor Varetto keeps up an almost continuous campaign of tent services. He has found the tent to be a splendid method of reaching the people who probably would never be enticed to enter one of our usual preaching halls. We trust it may prove to be, at least, one solution to the ever-present problem—how to reach the

peladas. No necesitamos altares no imágenes; pero muy bien podríamos usar un poco de lo bello, para que nuestros templos sean dignos; para que los edificios ayuden en lo posible a la edificación espiritual; para que la desnudez de sus paredes no hiera las sensibilidades cultas.” Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ Quarles, *Christ in the Silver Lands*, 78.

⁴⁴² On the success of open-air preaching and tent meetings, see, for example, J.L. Hart, “Report of the Argentine Mission,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1912* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1912):108.

⁴⁴³ L. Cleveland Quarles, “Argentine Mission Annual Report,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1928* (Southern Baptist Convention, 1928), 157.

people.”⁴⁴⁴ Likewise, tent and open-air meetings demanded increase volunteer work, which resulted in the added benefit of raising local leadership.

In sum, for Baptists in Argentina there were no sacred spaces but appropriated places for gospel preaching and, over time, for granting the effective implementation of church programs. Practicality pushed congregations to secure their own buildings, and functionality led their architecture design. By 1930 there were 55 organized Baptist churches with a total of 3,332 members, 35 of whom already owned their facilities.⁴⁴⁵

4.5 Prayer

The regular practice of prayer among Baptists, both public and private, was spontaneous conversation with God from the heart. Christopher Ellis argues that for Baptists, “In extempore prayer, there is exemplified a spirituality which is concerned for sincerity and freedom of expression, with prayer flowing from the heart.”⁴⁴⁶ Unscripted prayer was considered conducive to authenticity in personal spirituality, in contrast to the perceived ritualism of the Roman Catholic practice of fixed and repetitive prayer. Note the poignant language used by Joseph Hart to depict the conversion of a woman through heartfelt prayer:

Finally, I said, “Shall we pray?” We knelt together and I lifted my heart to God and asked him to save that woman. I then asked if she wanted to pray. Her hands instinctively felt for the strings of beads around her neck. I said, ‘No, not that. Is there not something in your heart you wish to say to God?’ There was silence for a few moments and then in a broken voice she prayed her first prayer, asking God to save her soul and make Himself known to her. As we arose I noticed her face stained with tears but there was a new

⁴⁴⁴ Robert M. Logan, “Argentine Mission Annual Report,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1918* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1918): 212. Tents were also used to plant new churches. See, for example, the use of tents for this purpose by Once Baptist Church in Sowell, *Por sendas de gloria*, 66-67.

⁴⁴⁵ Robert F. Elder, “Argentine Mission Annual Report,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1930* (Southern Baptist Convention, 1930):164-165.

⁴⁴⁶ Ellis, “Duty and Delight,” 339.

radiance in it and new light in her eyes. She extended me her hand and looked straight in the eyes and said: 'Now I know that Jesus saves.'⁴⁴⁷

The identification of sincerity with spontaneity resulted in the absence of written prayers, and anticlericalism facilitated laity participation in prayer during congregational gatherings. In Sunday worship services it was common that extemporaneous prayers were asked from one or more congregants during the service.⁴⁴⁸ But the privileged place for the practice of public prayer was the mid-week prayer meeting. It was the only congregational service not designed around the sermon, and the one that offered attendees greater opportunities for active participation. However, over time, attendance at prayer meetings seemed to have declined. Alleged reasons were multiple: "ignorance of some [believers] on the supreme importance of common prayer," laziness, and spiritual illness.⁴⁴⁹ Other explanations pointed to deficiencies in the performance of prayer by some church members who took excessive time, while conversely others completely abstained from any oral public participation.⁴⁵⁰ But in any case, individuals were found responsible for this flaw without discussing the incidence of promoting such an informal order of worship. Consequently, corrective actions revolved around congregational encouragement and teaching on the benefits of the regular practice of prayer for the spiritual life of individuals: "The one who truly prays enters into intimate communion with God. He recognizes his dependence on God. His pride leaves. . . . This communion with God tends to calm and fortify the soul facing

⁴⁴⁷ Hart, *Gospel Triumphs in Argentina and Chile*, 13-15.

⁴⁴⁸ Under Besson's pastorate, only men were allowed to publicly pray in worship service; later, both male and female members were given the same privilege. See Canclini, *100 Años con Cristo en el Centro*, 67-68.

⁴⁴⁹ "la ignorancia de algunos respecto a la suprema importancia de la oración en común." "J.M. Rodríguez, "El culto de oración," *EB*, January 15, 1922, 2-3.

⁴⁵⁰ See Juan C. Varetto, "La reunión de oración," *EB*, January 1, 1925, 2-3.

difficulties and afflictions. . . . It also tends to purify the life.”⁴⁵¹ And prominently, corrective instruction drew upon the evangelistic motif core to the Baptist identity; successful “Gospel propaganda” required for cultivating the practice of prayer, and primarily, of public prayer.⁴⁵²

4.6 Preaching

Preaching had a dominant place in Baptist worship. The sermon was its most prominent component, proved by the large amount of time allotted to this activity in each service. Worship services were generally called *cultos* or preaching services, and preaching was understood as the main task of pastoral ministry.

The centrality of preaching stemmed from the concept that the sermon must be based in the Scriptures and that through the work of the Holy Spirit it became the word of God to its listeners. Exegetical and doctrinal sermons were cherished for their power in congregational formation, but the conviction of the need of spreading the gospel among unbelieving multitudes in Argentina made evangelistic preaching the prevalent type.

The first sermon in the Spanish language in a Baptist gathering in Argentina was preached by Paul Besson on August 16, 1884.⁴⁵³ His preaching was distinguished by three features: doctrinal soundness, polemical tone, and Christocentricism. His outstanding biblical scholarship may have proved a bit too intellectual for his audience, and his “very European style”—which drew on many biblical quotations—was overly profound and required great

⁴⁵¹ “*El que ora de veras, entra en íntima comunión con Dios. Reconoce su dependencia de Dios. Se le va el orgullo. Esta comunión con Dios tiende a tranquilizar y fortificar el alma frente a las dificultades y aflicciones. . . . Tiende también a purificar la vida.*” Roberto Elder, “La oración tiene influencia sobre el que ora,” *EB*, February 15, 1926, 2.

⁴⁵² “*la propaganda del Evangelio.*” Rodríguez, “El culto de oración,” 3.

⁴⁵³ See Monti, *Presencia del Protestantismo*, 233.

concentration.⁴⁵⁴ However, according to Santiago Canclini, the pastor that succeeded Besson at Del Centro Baptist Church and his biographer, Besson was able to deliver sermons imbued with deep doctrinal substance in an enjoyable and instructive form: “He knew how to make the most difficult issue accessible to everyone, tempering it with timely anecdotes and occurrences drawn from his own experience.”⁴⁵⁵

Like Methodist forerunner John F. Thomson, Besson also drew upon controversy in his sermons to counter Roman Catholicism:

He used controversy a lot, especially to attack the errors of the Catholic Church, and in that sense his word was tough and his speech was fierce against its doctrines and intolerances. He was convinced that it was impossible to build the gospel truths without demolishing the castles of false and superstitious teachings raised by it.⁴⁵⁶

Curiously, he had created a liturgical calendar that he employed to plan his sermons, which revolved around the main Christian festivities, national holidays, and Catholic feasts; a calendar he used to denounce Catholic doctrinal errors. Polemical preaching was pervasive but not restrained to anticlericalism; his sermons also countered other popular thoughts of his time, such as spiritualism, anarchism, and scientism; and, though in a different tone, he even addressed the differences with other evangelical denominations.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁴ See Canclini, *100 Años con Cristo en el Centro*, 47-48.

⁴⁵⁵ “El asunto más difícil sabía ponerlo al alcance de todos y matizarlo de oportunas anécdotas y ocurrencias tomadas de su propia experiencia.” Canclini, *Pablo Besson*, 81.

⁴⁵⁶ “Usó mucho de la controversia, especialmente para atacar los errores de la Iglesia Católica, y en ese sentido su palabra fue fuerte y su apóstrofe terrible en contra de sus doctrinas y sus intolerancias. Estaba persuadido de que era imposible edificar las verdades del Evangelio sin antes demoler los castillos de enseñanzas falsas y supersticiosas por ella levantados.” *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁷ See, for example, Canclini, *100 Años con Cristo en el Centro*, 48-49.

Notwithstanding, the central theme of his sermons was Christ and the message of the gospel:

Above all, his preaching consisted of the clear message of redemption through the crucified Christ. The spiritual misery of man, and the unsearchable riches of God's mercy; salvation by grace through faith by the consummated work on Calvary; the pre-existence of the eternal Word and his utter humiliation of being made in human likeness in the historical person of Jesus Christ; the clear and complete difference between law and grace, were his favorite subjects.⁴⁵⁸

The dominance of the doctrine of salvation in Besson's sermons is confirmed by his contemporary, missionary Robert Elder: "His preaching was at its best when he dealt with the grace of God, the atonement of Christ, justification by faith, and the new birth."⁴⁵⁹

Arnoldo Canclini summarized the contribution to preaching of the European stream in these terms: "The influence of Godet and C. H. Spurgeon continued in the importance given to exegetical and biblically-based preaching."⁴⁶⁰

For its part, the preaching of the Southern Baptist missionaries stood out for its evangelistic nature. According to Robert Elder, "The dominant note of all our preachers is evangelism. All may not have the gift of an evangelist, but all are evangelists at heart. The winning of souls is their chief concern."⁴⁶¹ They opted for a preaching strategy that was less confrontational toward Roman Catholicism because, as James Quarles said, they became convinced that "the task of the missionary in Romish countries is not *proselytizing* but *positive*

⁴⁵⁸ "por encima de todo, su predicación consistió en una predicación clara del mensaje de la redención por medio del Cristo crucificado. La miseria espiritual del hombre, y las inescrutables riquezas de la misericordia de Dios; la salvación por gracia, por medio de la fe en la obra consumada en el Calvario; la preexistencia del Verbo eterno y su completa humillación al humanarse en la persona histórica de Jesucristo; la diferencia clara y total entre la ley y la gracia, fueron sus temas predilectos." Canclini, *Pablo Besson*, 82.

⁴⁵⁹ Elder, "Pablo Besson of Argentina," 32.

⁴⁶⁰ A. Canclini, "Panoramic View," 124.

⁴⁶¹ Robert F. Elder, "Argentine Mission Annual Report," *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1930* (Southern Baptist Convention, 1930):68.

evangelization. It is a task of winning souls from the power of sin and Satan for God and salvation.”⁴⁶² He deepened the concept, adding: “What the South American needs, more than enlightenment as to the errors of the Church of Rome and the evils of priestcraft . . . is to know Christ and have a real experience of God’s grace through faith in Christ. This has been the central theme of our missionary message in the River Plate countries.”⁴⁶³

The dominance of the evangelistic theme in both European and North American Baptists in this mission field deeply shaped the emerging generation of native preachers. The most emblematic case of a local evangelist in whose preaching style both influences converged was Juan C. Varetto, “the first Argentinean Baptists of international repute, making several preaching tours in Latin America and Spain.”⁴⁶⁴ His grandson, Arnolde Canclini, said of him:

His style, modeled in part on the British style of his first teachers, with its direct, expository, biblically-based preaching, stressing the need for conversion, was well suited to Argentina. He himself added a good measure of humor and popular elements. He was decidedly Baptist, but very appreciative of other Evangelicals, since he had been converted in the Methodist Church and had begun his work with the Christian Missionary Alliance. This, and his great interest in social issues, are features of Baptist life which have not always attracted attention.”⁴⁶⁵

Varetto’s outstanding ability to combine elements from diverse evangelical influences and re-express the product in a language closer to popular culture proved to be an early successful attempt of *argentization* of the message of the gospel that marked an entire

⁴⁶² Quarles, *Christ in the Silver Lands*, 48.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴⁶⁴ Canclini, “Panoramic View,” 128.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 129.

generation of native Baptist evangelists. Curiously, among the latter there was a female preacher, who turn out to be one of Varetto's daughters, Agustina.⁴⁶⁶

4.7 Music

Since the beginning of the Baptist work in Argentina music played a central role, and the relevance of congregational singing as a component of worship services was only second to preaching. Praising God was essential in a worship service, but congregational singing was also encouraged because of its benefits in strengthening one another, in inspiring the preacher, and in attracting the unsaved.⁴⁶⁷ This understanding proved that Baptists in Argentina reproduced the turn from theocentric to anthropocentric hymnody typical of American Frontier Baptists.⁴⁶⁸ In practice, the prevalence of evangelistic emphasis in worship services reoriented the other components to this end, and congregational singing proved to be of great help. "How immense is the power of song; often nor the most faithful words of a pastor nor the most noble traits able to expose the way of life of a human being would exert such a regenerating influence in an unconverted heart as singing may do," wrote Joel Maradel; then, he asked: "Cannot perhaps the singing of a hymn become the only efficient means able to touch the innermost fiber of an unregenerate heart?"⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁶ For more information on Agustina Varetto de Canclini, see Arnoldo Canclini, *Santiago y Agustina: historia de mis padres* (Buenos Aires: Distribuidora Alianza, 2005).

⁴⁶⁷ See J. A. Newhouse, "Cantad Alegres al Señor," *EB*, February 15, 1925, 5-6.

⁴⁶⁸ See Thomas R. McKibbens Jr., "Our Baptist Heritage in Worship," *Review and Expositor* (Winter 1983): 64-65.

⁴⁶⁹ "cuán inmenso en el poder del canto; muchas veces ni las palabras más tiernas y fieles de un pastor, ni los rasgos más nobles que pudieran ser capaces de exponer la manera de vivir de un ser humano, ejercerían en un corazón inconverso, la influencia regeneradora, que sería capaz de hacerlo el canto. ¿No puede, acaso, ser el canto de algún himno el único medio eficiente que toque la fibra más íntima de un corazón regenerado?" Joel J. Maradel, "El canto en las reuniones," *EB*, May 15, 1926, 3.

Maradel pointed to an experience common to some new converts, who had come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ through listening to a certain hymn. If music did not have always this same effect, it was at least a factor of attraction or curiosity. Congregational hymn singing was so uncommon for the local culture that it attracted the attention of the visitors. And even some secular press noticed the peculiar effect of this practice. In 1904, *The Buenos Aires Herald* published a chronicle on a worship service at Del Centro Baptist church that included a paragraph on music:

There is no regular organist, but no shortage of volunteers who willingly fill this important part of public worship. But they do not totally depend on these volunteers because the pastor of the church accompanies the singing with his violin, and the sounds of hymns so executed emerge very clearly, even if the harmonium is performed by inexperienced hands. Singing with this accompaniment is very good and the effect of all the musical part of the service, though simple in the extreme, is touching and delicious.⁴⁷⁰

The supporting role of music and singing explains the priority of furnishing a harmonium or a piano to most preaching halls as well as smaller portable organs for tent or open-air revival meetings. A positive collateral consequence of this approach was the opportunities it created for female participation in worship leadership roles. Musical knowledge was unusual among most of the first converts, but it was common among American missionaries' wives and daughters. Consequently, they became the majority of church instrumentalists and role models for other Christian women. Beyond practicality, this custom reflected in part the influence on the SBC

⁴⁷⁰ “No hay organista regular, pero no faltan los voluntarios, que con gusto llenan importante parte del culto público. Sin embargo no dependen totalmente de estos voluntarios, porque el pastor de la iglesia acompaña el canto con su violín y los sonidos de los himnos así ejecutados surgen con gran claridad, aun cuando el armonio es ejecutado por manos inexpertas. El canto acompañado así es muy bueno y el efecto de toda la parte musical del servicio, aunque simple en extremo, es tocante y deliciosa.” Quoted in Canclini, *100 Años con Cristo en el Centro*, 51-52. (“The Buenos Aires Herald” is a secular daily newspaper published in English from 1876 until today).

missionaries of the changes in female participation in religion experienced in nineteenth century evangelicalism in America.⁴⁷¹

This practice is illustrated in the testimony of Margaret Fowler, writing in the third person, included in the biography of her father, missionary Frank Fowler:

Margaret's primary interest was in learning the piano so she could play hymns for her father in church. She learned two or three hymns, and as she progressed in her piano skills, she learned more hymns which father noted in the back of his hymnbook. Margaret used to tell him not to ask for hymns not noted down in his book! Slowly, she learned all the hymns in the book and any number he asked for, she could play. . . . One day, [he] took Margaret with him to San Rafael . . . then they pitched their mission tent in the center of town and began their revival meeting, with Margaret playing a little portable organ.⁴⁷²

This brief account singles out the three basic elements of music in Baptist churches: an instrument, an instrumentalist, and a hymnal.

Before 1923, Baptists had to resort to available non-denominational hymnbooks in Spanish. The most commonly used was *El Himnario Evangélico para el uso de las Iglesias Evangélicas de Habla Española en Todo el Mundo*, edited by the American Tract Society. According to J. Quarles it was "the hymnbook of almost all Spanish-speaking denominations."⁴⁷³ Originally published in 1895, it was entirely revised in 1914.

⁴⁷¹ For more on the influence of FMB's missionaries in promoting women's rights and participation in the Baptist work in Argentina, see Sowell, *Por sendas de gloria*, 124-126. For more on this topic in American evangelicalism see for example, Susan Hill Lindley, *You Have to Step Out of Your Place: A History of Women and Religion in America* (Louisville, KY: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1996); Tiffany K. Wayne, *Women's Roles in Nineteenth-century America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007); Catherine Clinton and Christine Lunardini, *The Columbia Guide to American Women in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2000).

⁴⁷² Margaret Fowler Drake, "Golden Footprints: The Story of Frank Fowler," *The Journal of Florida Baptist Heritage Vol.4* (Fall 2002), 29, 32. Fowler served as missionary in Argentina since 1904 to 1933; Margaret was born there in 1907.

⁴⁷³ "el libro de canto de casi todas las denominaciones de habla castellana." Jaime C. Quarles, "El nuevo himnario evangélico," *EB*, May 1915, 6-7.

J. Quarles wrote a positive review on the latter in *El Expositor Bautista* addressing some resistance to change. After commending the quality of the printing and its proper grammar, he confessed he had feared that the new hymnal would “be filled with tunes in the sacred ‘rag time’ style —similar to ‘The Merry Widow,’ with verses very unsuitable for Christian nurture.”⁴⁷⁴ But the committee had done a good job with the tunes: “I’m glad to see some as ‘HORTON’ (197, 174), ‘WELLESLEY’ (177), ‘ZERAH’ (64), and other majestic tunes that I have loved since childhood.”⁴⁷⁵ But he expressed his sadness for the omission of tunes like STEPHENS, MERIBAH, PARK STREET, HAMBURG, HAYDEN'S HYMN and BAVARIA, and he raised a critique: “And how can us, the Calvinist Baptists, supply the absence of ‘Believers can be always calm’ (184) and the tune of this same hymn ‘Portuguese Hymn’?”⁴⁷⁶

At this point Quarles introduced the issue of music and culture that reveals that evangelical hymnody remained foreign to local sensibilities:

But after all, it may be that many of these hymns have a special meaning only for those of us that have been raised in other environments and for Latinos this music does not represent the corresponding Christian sentiment. Perhaps we need a composer like Dykes but Latin American, with extensive knowledge of the musical spirit of the people. It seems to me that we have an example in the hymn no. 251, ‘Oaxaca,’ by Pastor Epigemio Velasco; a hymn of exotic beauty, as if the author would have found inspiration among a tribe of Mexican Indians.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁴ “se llenara de todas del estilo «rag time» sagrado, —algo parecido a «La Viuda Alegre», con versos muy poco convenientes para la edificación cristiana.” Ibid., 6.

⁴⁷⁵ “Me alegro de ver algunas como «HORTON» (Nº 197, 174), «WELLESLEY» (Nº 177), «ZERAH» (Nº 64), y otras tonadas majestuosas que he amado desde mi infancia.” Ibid.

⁴⁷⁶ “Y ¿cómo podremos los bautistas calvinistas suplir la falta de «Tranquilos hallaros podéis los creyentes» (Nº 184) como también la tonada del mismo himno «Portuguese Hymn?»” Ibid.

⁴⁷⁷ “Pero, al fin y al cabo, puede ser que muchos de estos himnos tengan su significado especial sólo para los que nos hemos criado en otros ambientes y que para los latinos esta música no represente el correspondiente sentimiento cristiano. Tal vez hace falta un compositor como Dykes, pero que sea latino americano con amplios conocimientos del espíritu musical del pueblo. Tenemos un ejemplo, según parece, en el himno Nº 251, «Oaxaca» por el pastor Epigemio Velasco, himno de una belleza exótica como si el autor hubiera encontrado su inspiración entre alguna tribu de indios mejicanos.” Ibid., 6-7.

Likewise, Quarles commented on the aesthetic quality of the revised lyrics, what unveiled the difficulties of translating poetry into a different language in the absence of hymns by native composers: “The real merit of the hymnbook is the successful revision of the lyrics of many hymns. Even foreigners have always felt that the verses were too ‘prosaic,’ artificial, lacking profound sentiment and poetic rhythm. Now we have . . . a collection with true poetic merit.”⁴⁷⁸

But the fact that this hymnal was destined for a broader evangelical public proved to be not totally suitable for the liturgical needs and views of the Baptists:

I notice that there is not a baptismal hymn in the new hymnal. In the previous one there were not many and only one was suitable for the Baptists: no. 257, “We receive you through Jesus;” and it expressed a partial meaning of the ordinance. If we have some Baptist poet, we wish he writes some good hymns on the symbolism of baptism from the Baptist point of view.

But, why those pages at the end of the book with responses, liturgies, order of worship, etc.? Spanish-speaking evangelicals have little affection for ritualism and those who do, have already their rituals and will not make use of what the Tract Society has sent us. It would have been more useful printing some more hymns on these thirty-one pages instead of promoting stereotyped worship.⁴⁷⁹

Over time, Baptists in Argentina felt the increasing need of having their own denominational hymnal that could not only enhance evangelism but also congregational formation. As Quarles claimed, “I believe that superficial hymns . . . are to blame for many

⁴⁷⁸ “El verdadero mérito del himnario en la bien acertada revisión de las palabras de muchos himnos. Aun los extranjeros hemos sentido siempre que los versos eran demasiado «prosaicos», artificiales, faltos de profundo sentimiento y ritmo poético. Ahora tenemos. . . una colección de verdadero mérito poético.” Ibid., 7.

⁴⁷⁹ “Noto que no hay en el nuevo himnario ningún himno bautismal. En el antiguo no había muchos, y uno sólo era servible para los bautistas: el N° 257, «Te recibimos Jesús» y este expresaba sólo una parte del sentido de la ordenanza. Si tenemos algún poeta bautista, es de desear que escriba algunos buenos himnos sobre el simbolismo del bautismo desde el punto de vista bautista. Pero, ¿por qué esas páginas al fin del libro con responsos, liturgias, orden de culto, etc.? Los evangélicos del mundo español son poco amantes del ritualismo, y los que lo son, ya tienen sus rituales y no harán uso de éste que la Sociedad de Tratados nos has mandado. Habría sido más útil imprimir en estas treinta y una páginas unos himnos más, en vez de dar este impulso hacia un culto estereotipado.” Ibid.

people's superficial religiosity."⁴⁸⁰ The recognition of the formative power of hymnody is remarkable in a context where preaching was the central component of worship services.

The project was entrusted to James Quarles and Robert Elder. The absence of a consolidated body of a Baptist hymnody required of the careful work of the editors, who were responsible for selecting hymns by either Baptists or other evangelical composers but suitable to their theological views and practical needs. The result was that a larger portion of the hymnal was more broadly evangelical in nature than typically Baptist. As the Baptist hymnal's preface acknowledged, "[Hymns] are not properly ours; they were selected from different sources, from the pool of the Spanish-speaking evangelicals. We recognize our debt and we thank everyone who with his musical compositions and lyrics blessed the evangelical world."⁴⁸¹ Nearly all these hymns were translations from American and European sources and their tunes represented those musical traditions foreign to the popular local culture.

In 1923, the first Argentine Baptist hymnal was published under the title *Himnos Selectos Evangélicos*. The significance of this achievement was remarked by R. Elder in his report to the SBC:

The outstanding event of the year's work was the publication of our own hymn book. For years the need has been felt of a book of hymns better adapted to the services in our churches and that was also more attractive and convenient in form than those already existing. Although we were compelled to collect the hymns and rush the work through the press too hurriedly, the churches have almost universally praised the selection of hymns and form of the book. Possibly when a music edition can be produced it may

⁴⁸⁰ "Creo que los himnos superficiales. . . tienen la culpa por la gran superficialidad de la religión de muchos." James C. Quarles, "Los buenos himnos y buenas tonadas," *EB*, October 1, 1922, 1.

⁴⁸¹ "No son propiamente nuestros: fueron seleccionados de diferentes fuentes, del fondo común de los evangélicos de habla española. Reconocemos nuestra deuda, y agradecemos a todos los que con sus composiciones musicales y sus versos dieron estas bendiciones al mundo evangélico." Preface to *Himnos Selectos Evangélicos* (Buenos Aires: Junta de Publicaciones de la Convención Evangélica Bautista, 1928), v.

become more generally used amongst other evangelical churches. An edition of 10,000 copies was printed of which nearly half have been sold.”⁴⁸²

This hymnbook was “the consummation of a long-cherished dream of many of our River Plate Baptists,” said J. Quarles.⁴⁸³ The first edition with tunes was published in 1928 (2,000 copies), with the particularity that it was only funded by Argentine congregations.⁴⁸⁴ Over the years, the hymnbook resulted in “an unqualified success. All of the Baptist churches have adopted it and churches of other denominations are also using it.”⁴⁸⁵

Since its first edition in 1923 until it was replaced by *Himnario Bautista* in 1978, *Himnos Selectos Evangélicos* sold more than 150,000 copies. According to Bruce Muskrat, it “was accepted as the standard worship book for nearly sixty years, two or three times the normal life-span for a modern hymnal.”⁴⁸⁶ Its extended use and pervasive focus “on hymns that treat the believer’s relationship with Jesus Christ and others related to the eternal life,” shaped the spirituality of several generations of Argentine Baptists.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸² Robert F. Elder, “Argentine Mission Annual Report,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1924* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1924): 191.

⁴⁸³ L. Cleveland Quarles, “Argentine Mission Annual Report,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1928* (Southern Baptist Convention, 1928), 159.

⁴⁸⁴ See E. Swenson, “Argentine Mission Annual Report,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1929* (Southern Baptist Convention, 1929): 165.

⁴⁸⁵ Robert F. Elder, “Argentine Mission Annual Report,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1930* (Southern Baptist Convention, 1930):167.

⁴⁸⁶ Muskrat, “The Development of Music Ministry,” iii.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 251.

4.8 Conclusion

What stands out when we consider Baptist emergence in Argentina is that their worship practices were able to amalgamate the heterogeneous influences of their different streams to create unity but without erasing diversity.

There is no doubt that a major factor of unity was the evangelical nature of Baptist spirituality, common to all streams. Some diversity in worship was acceptable if it passed the test of Scriptural validation and proved effective for evangelism purposes. Conversionist piety took prevalence in worship and was exacerbated in the local context by Baptist common understanding that Roman Catholics did not have a real faith in Jesus and consequently had to be evangelized. It is noteworthy that in a denomination that took its name from the rite of baptism, public profession of repentance and faith, in practice, overshadowed baptism as the main event by which conversion was publicly expressed. In a worship pattern where the call to conversion is its climax, as Hinson observes, “the invitation has replaced baptism as the dominant sacrament (“means of grace”).”⁴⁸⁸

Likewise, the different Baptist streams also converged in the understanding that worship services should be stripped of any element that may be perceived as a form of ritualism, and made of the sermon their most prominent component. The most obvious example of this was the regular use of the same simple pattern of worship centered on the sermon accompanied by some spontaneous prayer and hymn singing in all occasions, including the rites of passage. In contrast, it is fair to say that preaching was probably the main worship component which evidenced Baptist diversity. Preachers in the European tradition were strongly influenced by Godet and Spurgeon and were prone to exegetical and doctrinal sound sermons. For its part, the American

⁴⁸⁸ Hinson, “Baptist Approaches to Spirituality,” 14.

missionaries imported the revival worship typical of the nineteenth century American Frontier and their preaching tended to be simpler and prevalently evangelist. In the case of the “native” preachers it is worth noting that, while to some extent they represented one or the other style just mentioned, as they mostly learn by imitation, their main contribution was giving first steps towards contextualization. Likely due to its pragmatism, American missionaries soon realized of this benefit, as noted Lemuel Quarles: “The missionary must needs (sic) continue to be pastor of certain churches, but even our best churches will prosper more when once under the care of strong cultured native pastors.”⁴⁸⁹ In this sense, the early active involvement of native leaders in the most prominent component of worship meant a significant step forward in Baptist *argentinization*.

In contrast, the second main element of Baptist worship, congregational singing, was only contextualized in the use of the vernacular but not in music. This had a profound effect in the formation of a people for whom the appropriated church music was the hymn tunes imported from Europe and North America. It would take decades to start considering indigenous music for worship. Similarly to the Methodists, the adoption of Argentine folk and popular tunes by the Baptists would not officially start until 1970s, when the Argentine Baptist Convention initiated the publication of a series of songbooks called *Corazón y Voz*.⁴⁹⁰

Finally, we must note that diversity in Baptist worship also revealed different views on social issues. This topic will be explored in more detail in chapter 6, but we can anticipate here that the bidding element was the common defense of religious freedom against the threat

⁴⁸⁹ L.C. Quarles, “Argentine Mission Annual Report,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1920*. (Nashville, TN: Marshall & Bruce Co, 1920): 213.

⁴⁹⁰ For more on the topic, see Muskrat, “The Development of Music Ministry,” 292-294.

represented by Roman Catholic hegemony. This feature was a factor of unity not only inward the Baptist denomination but also with other Protestant groups.

CHAPTER 5

FREE BRETHREN WORSHIP

5.1 People

The arrival of the Free Brethren in Argentina was the result of the timely concurrence of various factors.

First, this group emerged in Great Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a time when that nation was the center of the Protestant modern missionary movement that grew in parallel with British colonial expansion.

Second, the Brethren's distinctive theological tenets, enhanced by that particular milieu, turned the group into one of the most important missionary senders of its time.⁴⁹¹

Third, the close commercial ties between Argentina and Britain, which added to the Argentine openness towards European immigration, favored the arrival of British immigrants primarily to work for British companies.

And fourth, the missiological principle of faith missions developed among the Brethren. As Kent Eaton argues, the use of the book of Acts not as a descriptive but as a normative text led the Brethren to consider that "all valid missionary methods had to be explicitly taught or observable in the historical development of the Apostolic Church."⁴⁹² Consequently, they objected to missionary societies, given that they lacked a Scriptural basis. The Brethren fiercely sustained that God had exclusively entrusted to the local church the responsibility of sending out

⁴⁹¹ See Grass, *Gathering to His Name*, 108.

⁴⁹² Kent Eaton, *Protestant Missionaries in Spain, 1869-1930: Shall the Papists Prevail?* (Laham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015), 26.

missionaries. This, in addition to their rejection of salaried clergy, resulted in the acceptance of two models of missionary support: tent-making and voluntary individual donations.

The practical consequence of the concurrence of these factors was that a considerable number of Brethren with a missionary call took advantage of the increasing job opportunities in British companies in Argentina and came as self-sustained missionaries. This model provided an abundance of leaders to the Brethren movement compared to other denominations, which turned into a fundamental factor for its initial growth.⁴⁹³

Notwithstanding, the downside of this model was that it originated a largely British dominance during the initial years, deferring the emergence of native leadership and therefore, the *argentization* of the movement. This unbalance also created tensions inside the group; some native “brothers” complained that “the British want to rule and in effect they govern the assemblies.”⁴⁹⁴ Conspicuously, the British missionaries’ response appealed to their racial superiority: “It may cause a little jealousy and envy that all missionaries in the country are Englishmen. . . . If He has disposed that nowadays the world may receive [the gospel] through the Anglo-Saxon race, what would we say to God? There are other countries that do something too, but little compared to the efforts made by the Anglo-Saxon race.”⁴⁹⁵

But it may be said that, ultimately, British missionary dominance was the consequence of the ecclesiological option for self-supporting ministry. Without the same work opportunities as

⁴⁹³ Canclini claims that by 1911 the Brethren had 38 Christian workers, a high number compared to other denominations. See Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 256.

⁴⁹⁴ “*los ingleses quieren gobernar, y efectivamente gobiernan en las asambleas.*” Jaime Kirk, “Aclaración sobre la posición que ocupan los misioneros en las asambleas,” *SC*, October, 1919, 176, 182.

⁴⁹⁵ “*Tal vez cause un poco de recelo y envidia que todos los misioneros en el país son ingleses. . . . si hoy día él ha dispuesto que el mundo lo reciba [al evangelio] por medio de la raza anglo-sajona ¿qué le diremos a Dios? Hay otros países que también hacen algo, pero poco comparado con el esfuerzo que hace la raza anglosajona.*” *Ibid.*

the British, some native leaders with a godly call left to join other denominations and mission societies.⁴⁹⁶ On the other hand, gradually some natives entered into Christian ministry, but the great majority came from the middle class. This feature had direct consequences in Brethren doctrinal and social views and in ecclesial practices.⁴⁹⁷

The social composition of the group might have influenced to a certain extent the Brethren success in reaching out to other immigrant communities, and it may explain why immigrants accessed leadership roles more easily than the creoles.⁴⁹⁸ Cosmopolitanism was welcomed and celebrated inside the assemblies; a foretaste of the wedding feast of the Lamb:

On Saturday . . . we had a very precious meeting, where the work of God's grace was manifested and how it unites those who, otherwise—like worldly people—would be divided. An Argentine, a Turk, a Swiss and a Belgian were baptized. The brother who performed the baptism was German, and who taught on this matter was English. An Italian, a Dutch, and two Spanish prayed, all in a natural way without any special arrangement.

In the Lord's Supper, besides these nationalities, subjects of France and Armenia were present; and when partaking the bread and wine in view of the coming of the Lord, the Lord's power was felt among us and we could not do other thing but long for His soon coming.⁴⁹⁹

A distinctive feature of the Brethren was their position on the role of women in church.

The literal interpretation of certain Bible verses, such as 1 Corinthians 14, resulted in banning

⁴⁹⁶ See, for example, Jaime Kirk, "El sostén de obreros en la viña del Señor," *SC*, December, 1919, 213-17.

⁴⁹⁷ For more on this issue see Alberto F. Roldán, "Comprensión de la realidad social en el discurso teológico de los Hermanos Libres en la Argentina (1882-1955)." *Cuadernos de Teología* 15, no. 1-2 (1996): 30-32.

⁴⁹⁸ See Mariana Esther Espinosa, "Una iglesia primitiva e internacional: el perfil misionero de los Hermanos Libres en su llegada a la Argentina," *Ciências Sociais e Religião* 16, no. 20 (Jan-June, 2014): 65-66.

⁴⁹⁹ "El sábado. . . tuvimos una reunión muy preciosa, en la que se manifestó la obra de la gracia de Dios, y como unifica a aquellos que, de otra manera, como los del mundo, serían dividido. Se bautizaron un argentino, un turco, un suizo, y un belga. El hermano que los bautizó era alemán, el que dio algunas enseñanzas alusivas al acto era inglés. Oraron un italiano, un holandés, y dos españoles, y todo de una manera natural sin arreglo especial. En la cena del Señor, además de estas nacionalidades, había presentes súbditos de Francia y Armenia; y al participar del pan y vino, en vista de la venida del Señor, el poder del Señor se hacía sentir entre nosotros y no podíamos sino anhelar que él venga pronto, para llevar del campo de batalla, del hojar (sic) desolado y triste, y de todas partes a los que son de él." *SC*, September, 1914, 186-87.

women from any form of public speaking during worship services. Also, based on 1 Corinthians 11:3-10, women were required to wear a veil as a sign of submission to their husbands and as a symbol of the assembly's submission to the Lord.⁵⁰⁰ This veil was supposed to be “a real mantle, and not . . . a hat or a lightweight tulle”.⁵⁰¹ Some disagreements emerged on when women should wear the veil, if in all church meetings or if only during the service of the Breaking of the Bread. It seemed that most renowned leaders favored the position that women had to cover their heads in all congregational services, although a general consensus was never reached.⁵⁰²

5.2 Piety

Brethren piety was deeply evangelical and therefore might be characterized by the common traits David Bebbington identified as typical of nineteenth century evangelicalism: conversionism, activism, Biblicism, and crucicentricism.⁵⁰³ However, Brethren held other unique features that distinguished their spirituality from the broader evangelical realm.

First, Brethren piety was primitivist; they believed that the apostolic church was the norm for Christianity. Therefore, they “were primarily concerned with practising an ecclesial piety which obediently followed the New Testament’s portrait of the church.”⁵⁰⁴

Second, the Brethren’s radical emphasis on the Scriptures as the sole authority in matters of faith and practice resulted in a strict Bible-oriented spirituality.

⁵⁰⁰ See, for example, W.E. Lowe, “El Señor y nuestras casas,” *SC*, June-July 1915, 125-126.

⁵⁰¹ “*un verdadero tapado y no . . . con un sombrero o tul liviano.*” *SC*, January, 1917, 14.

⁵⁰² See, for example, *SC*, February, 1917, 35; *SC*, April, 1917, 77.

⁵⁰³ See David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from 1730s to 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1993), 2-3.

⁵⁰⁴ James Patrick Callahan, *Primitivist Piety: The Ecclesiology of the Early Plymouth Brethren* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996), 207.

Third, the combination of the former two features, or “biblicist primitivism,” largely influenced Brethren ecclesiology: absolute rejection of ordained clergy, total independence of each church under the care of a plurality of overseers, and the development of the doctrine of “living by faith.”⁵⁰⁵ The climax of this horizontal ecclesiology in a congregational worship setting was embodied in the weekly celebration of an unstructured service of the Lord’s Supper, thus resulting in a Eucharistic piety.

And finally, Brethren premillennial eschatology, with its corresponding pessimistic view of society and apostasy of the established Church and a dispensational understanding of history oriented toward the future, shaped a disembodied spirituality of radical withdrawal from the world, strong anti-Catholicism, and adamant legalistic morality.⁵⁰⁶ The Brethren’s self-perception as a faithful remnant may have originated what Eaton calls “a tendency to equate spirituality with suffering and enduring hardships;” a motif that was not absent in missionary piety.⁵⁰⁷

Worldliness was considered the great enemy of anyone seeking true spirituality—an internal condition of a heart consecrated to carnality where Christ could not coexist.⁵⁰⁸ Christians should be in the world without being morally “of” the world.⁵⁰⁹ They should pursue “the path of separation.”⁵¹⁰ In practice, that meant renouncing social ties with unbelievers and giving up

⁵⁰⁵ Timothy Larsen, “‘Living by Faith’: A Short History of Brethren Practice,” *Brethren Archivists and Historians Network Review* 1 (1978): 71.

⁵⁰⁶ For more on the topic see, Ian S. Rennie, “Aspects of Christian Brethren Spirituality,” in *Alive to God: Studies in Christian Spirituality Presented to James Houston*, eds. J.I. Packer and Loren Wilkinson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 190-208.

⁵⁰⁷ Eaton, *Protestant Missionaries in Spain*, 125.

⁵⁰⁸ See, for example, “Carácter del mundanismo,” *SC*, January 1925, 20.

⁵⁰⁹ See, for example, “El cristianismo y el mundo,” *SC*, November 1927, 251.

⁵¹⁰ “*la senda de la separación*.” Gualterio Drake, “Asuntos prácticos,” *SC*, November 1916, 229.

sinful social customs: “vices” such as alcohol, tobacco, and gambling, but also carnivals, theater, dancing, and cinema.⁵¹¹ “The emphasis on the preparation of the believer for the second coming of Christ led them to live apart from the world, avoiding amusements and anything that might corrupt.”⁵¹²

5.3 Time

5.3.1 Weekly calendar

5.3.1.1 *The service of the Breaking of Bread*

The most distinctive feature of Brethren worship was the weekly celebration of a service completely dedicated to the Lord’s Supper: the Breaking of Bread or “the meeting for adoration.”⁵¹³ It was the epitome of Brethren communal piety, a service “to lift up our hearts to God in praise and worship,” gathered around the table in remembrance of his death.⁵¹⁴

The practice of communion as the most sublime act of congregational worship was a hallmark of this movement since its origins in Britain. As Kent Eaton claims, “From the beginning, the Brethren would argue that worship was the key element in their services. The purpose of their original meetings was not to evangelize or even study the Scriptures, but rather

⁵¹¹ See, for example, *SC*, April, 1921, 23; *SC*, December 1922, 290; Gilberto M. J. Lear, “La grande,” *SC*, December, 1916, 259; Gualterio Drake, “El carnaval, el teatro, el baile. Razones que el creyente no debe asistir a ellos,” *SC*, July 15, 1912, 135; “La asistencia a los cines,” trad Jaime Clifford, *SC*, February 1928, 31-33.

⁵¹² “*El énfasis en la preparación del creyente para la segunda venida de Cristo les llevaba a vivir separados del mundo evitando las diversiones y todo aquello que pudiera contaminar*.” Carlos A. Bisio, *En torno a nuestros primeros pasos* (Pilar: Fundación Cristiana de Evangelización, 1992), 31.

⁵¹³ “*La reunión para la adoración*.” Tomas E. Stacey, “Las reuniones y sus propósitos distintos,” *SC*, December, 1919, 209.

⁵¹⁴ “*eleva nuestros corazones a Dios en alabanza y adoración, por habernos hecho conocer lo que él es, y los que ha hecho por nosotros en la persona del Señor Jesús*.” Ibid. (For more on the use of the expression “in remembrance of his death” —lit. “en memoria de su muerte”—see, for example, *SC*, June, 1918, 119; *SC*, August, 1922, 198.)

to worship God through the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Worship was then a priority for the Brethren and a characteristic mark of the movement."⁵¹⁵

However, Brethren Eucharistic piety was not build upon a sacramental theology; the Lord's Supper was not considered a means of grace but an ordinance. It was an act of adoration in "commemoration of the great event that introduced this dispensation of grace."⁵¹⁶ The true meaning of the celebration was found in its memorial character and in the proclamation of the gospel, "not a dead doctrine of the past, but a living hope until He returns."⁵¹⁷

The strict weekly observance was an expression of Brethren biblicist primitivism. It was based on a literal reading of Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:2, from where they deduced "that the practice among Christians was meeting on the first day of the week, and its purpose was the breaking of the bread."⁵¹⁸ Therefore, to emulate the early church, whenever possible weekly communion was held on Sundays.⁵¹⁹

Also, biblicist primitivism shaped the pattern of this celebration. Brethren rejected both elaborate rituals and simpler formats from other Christian traditions. Instead, they instituted an unstructured and spontaneous service which embodied their horizontal ecclesiology: around the Table "a believer meets another believer on the same platform; no clergy climbs up to a higher platform."⁵²⁰ There was no presider but Christ himself, and no order of worship; regular

⁵¹⁵ Eaton, *Protestant Missionaries in Spain*, 11.

⁵¹⁶ "es la conmemoración del gran acontecimiento que introdujo a esta dispensación de la gracia." J. S. Anderson, "Hasta que venga," *SC*, January, 1918, 15-16.

⁵¹⁷ "no es una doctrina muerta de lo pasado, sino una esperanza viva hasta que venga." *Ibid.*

⁵¹⁸ "fue práctica entre los cristianos reunirse el primer día de la semana, y que el propósito era partir el pan." Jorge H. French, "La Cena del Señor," *SC*, September, 1915, 200.

⁵¹⁹ See, for example, Stacey, "Las reuniones y sus propósitos distintos," 209.

⁵²⁰ "un creyente se encuentra con otro sobre una misma plataforma. Ningún clérigo asciende a una plataforma superior." "El valor de la reunión de la cena del Señor," *SC*, December, 1928, 271.

components were praying, singing, meditation, and moments of silence, but without previous human planning, giving “the Spirit the chance to work freely.”⁵²¹ All male believers were able to speak with no condition but the guidance of the Spirit, “without prior knowledge or agreement about who could take part or what may happen.”⁵²² The teaching was summarized in these words: “this could be foolishness for the world, but it is scriptural and *it works*.”⁵²³ However, this absolute spontaneity created undesired situations that could not be prevented, but even so, Brethren considered it worthwhile to take the risk in obedience to the Scriptures and trusting in the direction of the Holy Spirit.⁵²⁴

Weekly Breaking of Bread might have been perceived as continuity for new converts from a Roman Catholic background, but its extreme unstructured pattern was a striking sign of discontinuity and a deeply formative event in associating spiritual sincerity with impulse and any prearrangement with empty ritualism.

Participation in the Breaking of Bread was considered both a privilege and a responsibility. Unless a reasonable cause justified the contrary, regular attendance was expected from all church members as an act of obedience and submission to the Lordship of Christ. Brethren admonished that the celebration’s frequent occurrence should never play down its importance: “We risk being punished if we attend this meeting with a negligent and careless

⁵²¹ “*al Espíritu una oportunidad de obrar libremente.*” Ibid., 273-274.

⁵²² “*sin previo conocimiento o acuerdo acerca de quién pueda tomar parte o lo que pueda suceder.*” Ibid., 274.

⁵²³ “esto será locura para el mundo, pero es escriturario y *da resultado.*” Ibid.

⁵²⁴ See, for example, “El valor de la reunión de la cena del Señor,” SC, December, 1928, 274.

spirit.”⁵²⁵ Likewise, a disciplined Christian life in obedience was required of all communicants. To avoid “any disgrace or punishment from the Lord,” they were encouraged to engage in self-examination in prayer, in the light of the Bible, each time they came to the table.⁵²⁶ Even when their theology taught that they were living in the dispensation of grace, this pervasive emphasis on discipline and right conduct during the Brethren’s principal worship service may have reinforced their manifest tendency to moral legalism.

5.3.1.2 *Other weekly meetings*

Every Sunday, Free Brethren assemblies met for the Breaking of Bread. But the Lord’s Day frequently included other gatherings designed to accomplish different purposes. One of them was the service for the “ministry of the Word,” intended for encouragement, exhortation, discipline, or consecration of believers, but without including the Table.⁵²⁷ For the Brethren the distinction between the Breaking of Bread (adoration) and ministry meeting (edification) was fundamental. As Tim Grass claims, “Worship was directed to God and seen as the fruit of the Spirit’s leading (preparation of particular contributions was seen as inappropriate). Ministry was seen as directed to man, and (though debate continued about this) the fruit of prior preparation.”⁵²⁸

For educational purposes, Sundays also included Sunday school and Bible classes, and when possible they added a gospel meeting, generally in a revival style, though the latter was not

⁵²⁵ “*Corremos el riesgo de recibir castigo si vamos a esta reunión en un espíritu negligente y descuidado.*” Gilberto M. J. Lear, “La adoración,” *SC*, June, 1918, 112.

⁵²⁶ “*una desgracia, o recibamos el castigo del Señor.*” R.R. Rowdon, “Su mandato, nuestro privilegio,” *SC*, November 15, 1910, 204.

⁵²⁷ “*ministerio de la Palabra.*” Stacey, “Las reuniones y sus propósitos distintos,” 210-11; Hugo M. Petter, “Conferencias de creyentes,” *SC*, June, 1917, 101.

⁵²⁸ Grass, *Gathering to His Name*, 176.

restricted to a Sunday occurrence; any day of the week was a good opportunity for lost souls to come to Christ. The custom of dividing Sunday meetings for believers from the gospel meeting for unconverts was typical of the British Brethren and replicated in Argentina. In his study on Scottish assemblies, Neil Dickson argues that this pattern “emphasized separatism.”⁵²⁹

Besides multiple gatherings on the Lord’s Day, assemblies usually held other midweek services, such as prayer meetings—where “all brothers may pray in public”—and Bible study—to seek “food for our souls” and where “there should be always room for questions or to explain any difficulties on the subject matter.”⁵³⁰

Faithful attendance of congregational meetings was considered “an obligation;” a practice that prevented believers from lukewarmness while simultaneously promoting “affinity in ideas and fellowship” among all those exposed to “the same teachings and exhortations by whom God raised and gave to the church for that ministry.”⁵³¹ Likewise, punctuality was seen as a sign of “true Christian character.”⁵³²

Notwithstanding, the ideal of Brethren spirituality was the continuity between Sunday worship and the daily individual and family practice of devotion. Believers were taught to prioritize daily adoration—to “cultivate” within their hearts “an attitude of worship.”⁵³³ It should

⁵²⁹ Neil Dickson, “‘Shut in with Thee’: The Morning Meeting among Scottish Open Brethren, 1840-1960,” *Studies in Church History* 35 (1999): 284.

⁵³⁰ “*siempre debe haber lugar para preguntas o para explicar cualquier dificultad que hubiere en el asunto tratado*”. Stacey, “Las reuniones y sus propósitos distintos,” 210-212.

⁵³¹ “*una obligación,*” “*afinidad de idea y comunión,*” “*las mismas enseñanzas y exhortaciones de aquellos que Dios ha levantado y dotado en la iglesia para ese ministerio.*” Jorge H. French, “La asistencia a las reuniones,” *SC*, July 15, 1912, 139-140.

⁵³² “*el verdadero carácter cristiano.*” Jorge H. French, “La puntualidad,” *SC*, September 15, 1912, 181; Jaime Clifford, “Puntualidad,” *SC*, March 15, 1911, 50.

⁵³³ “*cultivar (en nuestros corazones) una actitud de adoración.*” Lear, “La adoración,” 111.

be the first thing every day, preferably “in *the morning* . . . when we have more strength and hope . . . [when] he who is worthy, wants to have the first thoughts of the day. Blessed is the day whose morning is sanctified. Full of success will be the day whose first hours have been devoted to prayer.”⁵³⁴

Likewise, the family altar was encouraged as a means of countering worldly dangers and ensuring pious parenting: “Our love for God and for our children should make us strive. We should have an intense desire to surround them with a holy atmosphere and influence before they go out to the world to be exposed to their evil influences.”⁵³⁵ Brethren seemed to have been particularly concerned with some tendency to spiritual lukewarmness among the second generation and saw “as a remedy against this evil that threatens us . . . the ancient and honorable habit of daily family reading of the Word of God and praying together at least once a day.”⁵³⁶ In addition, family devotion brought the secondary benefit of promoting family happiness and unity, helping members to sympathize with each other and to mutually support each other in times of sickness or trials.⁵³⁷

The main responsibility for family worship fell to the father, the head of the family; its main components were Bible reading and joint prayer, while the inclusion of singing was highly

⁵³⁴ “*En la mañana. . . cuando tenemos más fuerzas y esperanzas. . . [cuando] aquel quien es digno de tenerlos, desea ocupar los primeros pensamientos del día! Bendito el día cuya mañana ha sido santificada. Lleno de éxito será ese día cuyas primeras horas han sido dedicadas a la oración.*” “Adoración matutina,” *SC*, September, 1918, 158.

⁵³⁵ “*Amor a Dios y a nuestros hijos debe esforzarnos. Debemos tener un deseo intenso de rodear a estos con una atmósfera e influencia santas antes que salgan al mundo a exponerse a sus influencias malévolas.*” A. Lowes, “El altar en la familia,” *SC*, August, 1915, 170.

⁵³⁶ “*Como remedio contra el mal que nos amenaza. . . la antigua y honorable costumbre de leer diariamente la Palabra de Dios en la familia, y de tener una oración conjunta a lo menos una vez por día.*” S.E. French, “El altar de familia,” *SC*, May, 1915, 87.

⁵³⁷ See, for example, Lowes, “El altar en la familia,” 170.

encouraged.⁵³⁸ The practical recommendation was: “Read a whole chapter or part of it with reverence, briefly comment on what has been read, or don’t, as you were led, and then put yourselves and your household ardently in the hands of God, seek His glory and blessing in regard to your homes and you will never regret giving the Lord his place in your home.”⁵³⁹

Family devotion came to be a very important spiritual routine which, next to regular attendance to worship services, gospel witness to the unsaved, and separation from the world, were the pillars of Brethren Christian life.

5.3.2 Annual calendar

The Brethren perception of time and history was deeply shaped by its theology and piety.⁵⁴⁰ The traditional Christian year was eschewed, given that it was not commanded by the Scriptures nor was it the practice of the New Testament church. Only Easter and Christmas were observed, but with a little suspicion.

Easter was alleged to be of pagan origins, however, the fact that Christ died during the Jewish Passover made it acceptable to keep the date and to observe the feast in remembrance of his transcendental death in the cross.⁵⁴¹ In the words of one missionary: “We do not observe days, forced to do so by any religious formalism, but we do cherish the memory of what Jesus did for us as our most valuable possession.”⁵⁴² Nevertheless, Easter Sunday was observed as any

⁵³⁸ Ibid., 171.

⁵³⁹ “*Leed un capítulo o parte de uno con reverencia, comentad brevemente sobre lo leído o no, según fuereis guiados, y después poneos “tú y tu casa ardientemente en las manos de Dios, buscad su gloria y bendición en lo que atañe a vuestros hogares y nunca os arrepentiréis de haber dado al Señor su lugar en vuestro hogar.”* French, “El altar de familia,” 87-88.

⁵⁴⁰ It is noteworthy to mention their custom of printing an annual calendar with assigned Bible readings for each day. See, for example, *SC*, September 15, 1930, 195.

⁵⁴¹ See, for example, Gilberto M. J. Lear, “La semana santa,” *SC*, April, 1917, 71.

⁵⁴² “*No guardamos días, obligados a hacer así por un formalismo religioso, pero sí atesoramos la memoria de lo que realizó Jesús por nosotros como nuestra posesión más valiosa. La cruz del Calvario señala el centro de*

other Sunday, with the service of the Breaking of Bread (whose dominant theological motif was, in fact, remembrance), and ministry and gospel meetings according to their regular schedule.

Christmas seemed to have been considered of lesser importance, which may be explained in the light of a Christology that in theory was orthodox but in practice overstressed Christ's divinity and transcendence. According to Roldán, the latter emphasis was evidenced in the Brethren's hymnal (*H&CE*), where "of the eighty-eight Christological hymns, the human Jesus is almost absent, somehow being absorbed by the divinity."⁵⁴³

Roman Catholic virgin and saints' feasts were frowned on by the Brethren, but at the same time the large crowds gathered at these festivities served as an optimal opportunity for evangelism. A typical strategy was tract distribution and the selling of Bibles in central spots, which, in general, led to open confrontation with Catholic priests.⁵⁴⁴

Likely the most important popular religious festivity of the time was Carnival. Perceived as an occasion for licentiousness, the majority of evangelicals opposed it, and the Brethren were no exception. Christians' participation in Carnival was condemned as "repugnant to the new nature."⁵⁴⁵ "Any who professing being a Christian attends to a Carnival parade because he *loves it*, raises serious doubts about his conversion."⁵⁴⁶ Strategically, the Brethren made use of this long weekend for their Annual Conference.

los propósitos divinos, y allí podemos ver la tiple victoria ganada, es decir, la victoria sobre el mundo, la carne y Satanás; y todo esto en provecho de los creyentes en Cristo." Lear, "La semana santa," 71.

⁵⁴³ Roldán, "Comprensión de la realidad social," 41.

⁵⁴⁴ See for example *SC*, April, 1914, 78; *SC* May, 1914, 100.

⁵⁴⁵ "repugnantes a la nueva naturaleza." Jorge H. French, "Sección preguntas," *SC*, November, 1916, 244.

⁵⁴⁶ Lit.: "el que profesando ser cristiano, asista al corso de carnaval por amor a ello, da lugar a serias dudas acerca de su conversión." *Ibid.*

The chief event in the Brethren's yearly calendar was the Annual Conference. Held each year since 1910, it gave members from all assemblies the opportunity to come together for "exhortation, edification and fellowship."⁵⁴⁷ The program was structured in three parts named "spiritual exercises," consisting of "adoration, ministry of the Word, and reports on the work."⁵⁴⁸ It always started with the service of adoration or the Breaking of Bread as an "act of manifestation of the unity of the body of Christ."⁵⁴⁹

Through the years the Annual Conference turned into a privileged space for instruction in Brethren doctrine. Although their ecclesiology sustained strict congregational autonomy, in practice the Annual Conference became a strategic way of unifying assemblies' beliefs through the teaching of the missionaries, equally reproduced in the monthly magazine, *El Sendero del Creyente*.⁵⁵⁰

Another date on the annual calendar that seemed to have had a special meaning for the Brethren was New Year. Many assemblies used to hold a prayer vigil on New Year's Eve. In some cases, a whole worship service was celebrated, eventually including baptisms.⁵⁵¹ Spontaneous testimonies by new converts were often part of the program, primarily seeking to awaken unbelievers.⁵⁵² After all, they were convinced of the imminent return of Christ and hence, any day could be a last opportunity for salvation:

⁵⁴⁷ "exhortación, edificación y comunión." "La Conferencia General," *SC*, January, 1926, 1.

⁵⁴⁸ "ejercicios espirituales," "adoración, ministerio de la Palabra e informes de la obra." "La Conferencia de 1926," *SC*, March, 1926, 62.

⁵⁴⁹ "acto de la manifestación de la unidad del cuerpo de Cristo." "La Conferencia General," *SC*, January, 1927, 72; Gilberto M.J. Lear, "Notas editoriales. Conferencia general de 1928," *SC*, March, 1928, 62.

⁵⁵⁰ See Roldán, "Comprensión de la realidad social," 26-30.

⁵⁵¹ See, for example, *SC*, January, 1915, 19; *SC*, January, 1918, 19.

⁵⁵² See *SC*, January, 1919, 20.

Year passes quickly!
May be your last chance!
Be safe while it lasts.
The day of salvation.⁵⁵³

New Year also provided an ideal opportunity for believers' spiritual accountability and rededication. Teachings did not leave aside biblical imagery: "We are in an analogous position to that of the Israelites on the edge of the Promised Land . . . as we begin another phase in our earthly pilgrimage, hoping that the New Year will bring us new life, we do well if we examine our hearts to see how many spiritual truths we have put in practice."⁵⁵⁴ And, above all, each New Year renewed the Brethren's expectation of the Second Coming: "We are a people awaiting the Lord, and while we expect, we try to walk as pilgrims and strangers in a hostile world, which has rejected Him."⁵⁵⁵

5.3.3 Lifetime

5.3.3.1 *Baptism*

For the Brethren, the central event of the life cycle of a Christian was conversion. It was "the most relevant day in human life;" the beginning of a pilgrimage from the old life in Egypt to the Promised Land in Heaven.⁵⁵⁶ In this journey, they taught that believers experienced three changes: "a change of condition," from slavery to Satan to freedom in Christ; "a change of

⁵⁵³ "*¡Veloz el año pasa! ¡Quizás tu última ocasión! Sé salvo mientras dura. El día de salvación.*" Refrain from the hymn no. 299, H&CE.

⁵⁵⁴ "*Estamos en posición análoga a la de los Israelitas en el borde de la tierra prometida. . . al principiar otra etapa de nuestra peregrinación terrenal, esperando que el año nuevo nos traerá vida nueva, haremos bien si examinamos nuestros corazones para ver cuánto hemos experimentado prácticamente estas verdades espirituales.*" Gilberto M.J. Lear, "Año Nuevo, vida nueva," SC, January, 1918, 11-12.

⁵⁵⁵ "*Somos un pueblo que espera a su Señor, y mientras estamos esperándole, tratamos de andar como peregrinos y extranjeros en medio de un mundo hostil, el cual Le ha rechazado.*" W. A. Tremlett, "Las palabras finales de la Biblia. Pensamientos para el fin del año," SC, December, 1930, 271.

⁵⁵⁶ "*el día más destacado de la vida humana.*" Juan Maridew, "Año Nuevo," SC, January, 1930, 4.

character,” being transformed in Christ’s image; and “a change of body and circumstances,” when called to the presence of the Lord.⁵⁵⁷ Two of those changes were ritualized: baptism, the external sign or visible testimony of a previous spiritual experience of new birth by the Holy Spirit; and the funeral, the symbol of the final passage to eternal life.

Conversion was the prerequisite for baptism; therefore, assemblies were very careful to obtain evidence of a true experience of faith before its administration, but without requiring any particular baptismal class. Only “sincerity of heart, demonstrated by the fruits of repentance” was the condition for those who wanted to “worthily receive the baptism of the present dispensation.”⁵⁵⁸

When should a person saved by faith in the gospel be baptized? After careful examination of the New Testament accounts about those who were baptized, we concluded that there was not a period of time between conversion and baptism. They were baptized as soon as it was convenient after believing in the Lord Jesus. If we certainly knew that those who now profess faith in the gospel were truly born again by the Holy Spirit, it would be not necessary to delay their baptism. We should, however, expect to see the fruit of repentance in the daily lives of those who ask for baptism, without erring of excessive caution.⁵⁵⁹

Baptism was always practiced “according to the Scriptures; . . . in the way He has established it in his Word, that is, by immersion.”⁵⁶⁰ This form of baptismal administration

⁵⁵⁷ “*un cambio de estado,*” “*un cambio de carácter,*” “*un cambio de cuerpo y circunstancias.*” S. A. Williams, “Tres cambios,” *SC*, December, 15, 1912, 231-34.

⁵⁵⁸ “*la sinceridad de corazón, demostrada por los frutos del arrepentimiento,*” “*recibir dignamente el bautismo de la dispensación presente.*” Roberto Hogg, “El bautismo del creyente,” *SC*, February 15, 1914, 24.

⁵⁵⁹ “*¿Cuándo debería de bautizarse el que es salvo por la fe en el Evangelio? Al examinar minuciosamente el relato que se encuentra en el Nuevo Testamento de los que se bautizaron, quedamos convencidos que no hubo plazo alguno entre su conversión y su bautismo. Se bautizaron tan pronto como fuese conveniente después de creer en el Señor Jesús. Si supiéramos de cierto que los que ahora profesan fe en el Evangelio, fueran de veras renacidos del Espíritu Santo, no sería necesario demorar su bautismo. Nos conviene, sin embargo, esperar a fin de ver el fruto del arrepentimiento en la vida diaria de los que piden el bautismo, pero no pecar de una prudencia exagerada.*” Roberto Hogg, “El bautismo del creyente II,” *SC*, March 15, 1914, 44.

⁵⁶⁰ “*conforme a las Escrituras. . . en la manera que él mismo ha establecido en su Palabra, es decir, por inmersión.*” *SC*, May 15, 1913, 100.

reenacted the dominant motif assigned to the rite: baptism as burial. Commenting on Romans 6:3-4, one missionary wrote:

Baptism is an image of death, burial and resurrection. . . . River, baptistery, or wherever a believer is baptized, is at that moment a grave. It represents the burial of Christ, and the believer, as a dead person, is interred with Him. We would never bury a man if we know he is alive; but those whom God counts as “dead in Christ” are buried in the tomb with Christ, and they rise [from the waters] as a sign that they are alive or are made alive and risen with Christ. This is the teaching of baptism.⁵⁶¹

The emphasis on this interpretation was so pervasive that it gave rise to anecdotes like this: “A brother went down in the baptistery, taking his pipe and tobacco. When asked why he was carting those things into such a solemn an act (as he was about to be baptized), he answered: ‘I’ll leave these things that belong to the old man in the grave.’”⁵⁶² Missionary Hogg concluded: “This brother understood well *what* he was going to be baptized *for*.”⁵⁶³

5.3.3.2 Funerals

Dying as true believers was an experience highlighted in numerous chronicles, with no distinction of age, gender, or causes of death, and most of these accounts involved common church members. Some of these accounts were written in a style that, in essence, seemed to resemble the death of the martyrs, especially in the cases of those who rejected Catholic practices at the end of their lives. For example, there were stories of a girl who refused to confess her sins to a priest, and a woman, who “when dying, the priest went to give her the ‘extreme unction,’ but

⁵⁶¹ “*El bautismo es una figura de muerte, entierro y resurrección. . . . El río, el bautisterio o doquiera que el creyente fuere bautizado, es por el momento una sepultura. Representa la sepultura de Cristo, y el creyente, como persona muerta, es sepultado con él. No enterraríamos a un hombre vivo, sabiéndolo; pero los hombres que Dios cuenta como “muertos con Cristo” son sepultados en la sepultura con Cristo, y se levantan en señal de que son vivificados o hechos vivos, y resucitados con Cristo. Esa es la enseñanza del bautismo.*” J.R. Caldwell, “Unión con Cristo,” *SC*, October 15, 1911, 183.

⁵⁶² “*Un hermano descendió en el bautisterio llevando consigo su pipa y tabaco. Al preguntársele por qué los llevaba así en un acto tan solemne (pues estaba por bautizarse), contesto: ‘Voy a dejar estas cosas que pertenecen al viejo hombre en el sepulcro’*” Hogg, “El bautismo del creyente II,” 44.

⁵⁶³ “*Este hermano entendía bien para qué iba a ser bautizado.*” *Ibid.*

she refused to kiss the crucifix.”⁵⁶⁴ Or a newly converted man who, “two days before passing away, gathered his whole family around his bed, and told them about Christ and salvation, begging they trust in the Savior. After entrusting them to God, he left instructions for when the Lord takes him away; that candles be not lighted, because he wouldn’t need them, as he would be already with the Lord.”⁵⁶⁵ In sum, funeral and burial services were considered to be believers’ last opportunity to witness to their faith, and to save souls.⁵⁶⁶ Words and practices during these ceremonies functioned both to affirm their identity as believers and to counter popular Catholic rituals.

Like other evangelicals, the focal controversial point in Brethren funerals was the Catholic custom of lighting candles for the souls of the dead on their way to purgatory—a custom that gave funerals the popular name of *velatorio* or *velorio*, terms derived from the word *vela*, candle. In a long article exploring the topic, one missionary said:

“*Velorio*” has always been a superstitious act. Although most of those who practice it cannot explain it, they attribute to candles a mysterious virtue. . . . The candles are of no value either to the dead persons or to those who are alive. The blood of Jesus Christ is the only thing God values. . . . Our conclusion is that a Christian should not keep this practice, and that is worthy to do everything possible to discontinue a custom so abominable to God.

It seems that the most difficult are those cases when only one in a family belongs to the Lord, and he is taken away by the Lord, because his relatives do not listen to the advice of those who are not relatives and continue with this custom. To avoid this, it is clear that everyone should advise his people in advance that, if the Lord would take him away, he

⁵⁶⁴ “*el cura le fue a dar la «extrema unción», cuando estaba moribunda, pero se negó a besar el crucifijo.*” SC, January, 1916, 18; SC, September, 1917, 184.

⁵⁶⁵ “*dos días antes de partir, hizo reunir a toda la familia alrededor de su cama, y les habló de Cristo y la salvación, rogando a todos que confiasen en el Salvador. Después de recomendarlos a Dios, dio instrucciones de que cuando el Señor lo llevara, que no lo velaran (prendieran velas) diciendo que él no necesitaba de aquello, desde que estaría ya presente con el Señor.*” SC, April, 1916, 80.

⁵⁶⁶ Evangelistic funerals seem to have been a common practice among Brethren missions in Catholic fields. For an outstanding study of Brethren funeral practices in Spain during almost the same period of time here addressed, see Kent Eaton, “‘Go Tell It in the . . . Cemetery?’ Protestant Funerals in Victorian Spain,” *Missiology* 31, no. 4 (October 2003): 431-48.

does not want his coffin be surrounded by candles, while trying to explain his relatives why he doesn't need these things on his favor. . . . We must seek the Lord may be glorified in death as in life.⁵⁶⁷

In addition to rejecting *velatorios*, the Brethren fervently opposed the Catholic celebration of the Day of the Dead. A curious story on the topic was told in this chronicle on the burial of an ex-fervent Catholic, which coincided with that holiday:

When she was in Romanism, it was her constant practice to be in the cemetery, praying, etc., on the Day of the Dead, and, strangely, her own funeral happened on that date. Of course, the opportunity to preach the Gospel was unbeatable and the contrast shown in this scene was truly great.

Some people cried desperately; others wept disconsolately, and some other people began to pray. Among this really moving scene we began to sing: "Peace, sweet peace." Meanwhile, people gathered to watch this novelty and when ended the hymn, we spoke about defeated death, our consolation in Christ and the glorious hope of his soon coming; finished this, we sang the hymn: 'Meditate that there is a home after life' and entrusted our sister remains to their last resting.⁵⁶⁸

Conversely, Free Brethren developed for their own funerals and burials spontaneous liturgies that in both cases generally included prayer, Bible reading, hymn singing and a sermon, and, sometimes, testimonies about the faithfulness of the dead person.⁵⁶⁹ Sermons usually

⁵⁶⁷ "La dificultad más grande consiste, al parecer, en aquellos casos cuando solamente uno de la familia pertenece al Señor, y que éste es llevado por el Señor, pues sus parientes no escuchan los consejos de los que no son de la familia, y siguen con la costumbre que nos ocupa. Para evitar esto es claro que todos deben avisar a los suyos de antemano, que si el Señor los llevara, no desean que su ataúd sea rodeado de velas, y al mismo tiempo tratar de mostrarles a sus parientes la razón por la que no necesitan estas cosas a su favor. . . . Debemos buscar que el Señor sea glorificado en la muerte tanto como en la vida." S.A. Williams, "Velar a los muertos," SC, September, 1916, 201-2.

⁵⁶⁸ "Era su costumbre invariable cuando estaba en el romanismo, estar en el cementerio rezando etc., en el día de las ánimas, y, cosa extraña, su entierro cayó en esa fecha. Por supuesto, la oportunidad de predicar el Evangelio era inmejorable y el contraste presentado en aquella escena era verdaderamente grande. Unos gritaban desesperadamente, otros lloraban desconsolados y algunos se pusieron a rezar. Entre esta escena realmente conmovedora empezamos a cantar: "Paz, dulce paz." Mientras tanto, la gente se congregaba a ver esta novedad y al terminar el himno hablamos de la muerte vencida, de nuestra consolación en Cristo y de la gloriosa esperanza de su pronta venida; terminado esto, cantamos el himno: "Meditad en que hay un hogar, más allá" y encomendamos los restos de nuestra hermana a su último descanso." SC, January 15, 1912, 9.

⁵⁶⁹ See, for example, SC, August, 1929, 222; SC, November, 1918, 200.

contained “words of consolation for the bereaved, and words of admonition for the unsaved to accept the Lord as his own Savior, before it's too late.”⁵⁷⁰

In the same spirit, other creative ideas emerged, as this curious one: “At the head of the coffin was placed the text, ‘I am the resurrection and the life’, and another one at its foot, ‘Rejoice in the Lord always.’”⁵⁷¹ The chronicler concluded: “a great witness of believer’s faith in his death, and the right attitude expected of the bereaved facing the most severe trial.”⁵⁷²

5.3.3.3 *Marriage*

Wedding rites seemed to have been improvised locally with the purpose of “calling God’s blessing upon the new home that was formed” —a proper wording in a country where only civil judges had the legal authority to marry.⁵⁷³

This religious service was greatly formative, as it functioned as the ideal occasion to strengthen the teaching on endogamic marriage: “The intending spouses were Christians . . . the event prompted to teach on the subject matter, remembering what God teaches in his Word about marriage: that a believer should not join an unbeliever, etc.”⁵⁷⁴ Marriage between believers was not only an act of obedience to the Lord, but essential for granting family worship at home: “Under no circumstances marrying an unconverted should be allowed. To love such a person

⁵⁷⁰ “*palabras de consolación para los entristecidos, y amonestación para los inconversos para que aceptasen al Señor como su propio Salvador, antes que sea demasiado tarde.*” *SC*, August, 1929, 222.

⁵⁷¹ “se había colocado el texto “Yo soy la resurrección y la vida”, a la cabecera, y otro, “Gozaos en el Señor siempre”, al pie del ataúd.” J. Jorge Hotton, “Con el Señor,” *SC*, December, 1923, 270.

⁵⁷² “un buen testimonio de la fe del creyente en su muerte, y de la actitud de los deudos frente a la más severa de las pruebas.” *Ibid.*

⁵⁷³ “*invocar la bendición de Dios sobre un nuevo hogar que se formaba.*” *SC*, October, 1923, 235.

⁵⁷⁴ “Los contrayentes eran cristianos. . . el acontecimiento dio lugar a que tuviéramos enseñanzas alusivas al acto, recordando lo que Dios enseña en su palabra acerca del matrimonio —que el creyente no debe unirse con el que no lo es, etc.” *Ibid.*

proves that the own heart is away from God. . . . How impossible it is for the saved and the lost to walk together in that agreement that Christian marriage should show! . . . They cannot read the Word of God or pray together, or talk about the precious things of the Lord.”⁵⁷⁵

The anti-Catholic spirit was not absent in the treatment of this matter, priestly celibacy being the focal controversial point. In his advices to single Christians, J. Clifford wrote: “[The fact] that the Lord made his first miracle at a wedding and that there he manifested his glory is in itself a very effective defense against the doctrine of celibacy promulgated by false and so different systems, as materialist Romanism and diverse spiritual sects; a doctrine that has been, and still is, one of the biggest insults to society.”⁵⁷⁶

Brethren radical separatism deeply influenced what was considered appropriate in believers’ wedding feasts:

The wedding day should be of joy and rejoicing, according to the Christian profession. But we must be careful not to descend to the level of the wicked world, adopting its extravagance in dress and feasts, foolish toasts and speeches. Nor should we allow unconverted relatives and friends to take over the arrangements. . . . Heavenly pilgrims should not appear this way before a world without Christ, as if they didn’t have a better example to give. Christian joy, simplicity and lack of worldliness are the real things suitable for God’s fellowship. Avoid mere appearances, and do your best for Christ to excel at weddings, so ensuring His approval and the prayers and good wishes of the faithful people of God.⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷⁵ “*Bajo ningún concepto se debe permitir un enlace con una persona no convertida. Amar a una tal persona comprueba que su propio corazón se aleja de Dios. . . . Cuán imposible es para es para el salvado y el perdido andar juntos con el acuerdo que la vida matrimonial de los cristianos debe expresar! . . . No pueden tener lectura de la Palabra de Dios ni oración juntos, ni conversación de las cosas preciosas del Señor.*” Franklin Ferguson, “El matrimonio,” *SC*, September, 1927, 198-99.

⁵⁷⁶ “*Que el Señor hiciera su primer milagro en unas bodas y allí manifestase su gloria es en sí una contestación muy eficaz contra la doctrina del celibato promulgada por sistemas falsos y tan diferentes entre sí como el romanismo materialista y las diferentes sectas espiritistas, doctrina que ha sido, y todavía es, una de las injurias más grandes de la sociedad.*” Jaime Clifford, “Consejos para cristianos solteros,” *SC*, January 15, 1913, 11.

⁵⁷⁷ “*Llegado el día del casamiento, éste debe ser uno de gozo y regocijo, de acuerdo con la profesión cristiana. Pero tenemos que tener cuidado de no descender al nivel del impío mundo, adoptando sus extravagancias en vestidos y festines, sus brindis y sus discursos necios. Tampoco debemos permitir que parientes y amigos no convertidos dominen los arreglos. . . . Peregrinos celestiales no deberían figurar así ante un mundo sin Cristo, como si no tuvieran mejor ejemplo que dar. Gozo cristiano, sencillez, falta de mundanalidad, son las cosas verdaderas que acompañan la comunión con Dios. Hay que evitar meras apariencias y hacer lo posible para que*

Brethren teaching on wedding feast was strongly countercultural, while they saw most of the common practices in Argentine society of the time as worldly and sinful. Indubitably, this objection obeyed Brethren distinctive piety and theology, although it might also have reflected a certain resistance to the local culture in favor of keeping and promoting British customs. A curious example of the latter was the replacing of the wedding feast with a traditional English tea party.⁵⁷⁸

5.4 Place

In *El Sendero del Creyente* George French wrote, quoting John Lightfoot, that “Christianity . . . has not sacred days or seasons, no special sanctuaries, because every time and every place alike are holy.”⁵⁷⁹ This phrase implicitly supported the Brethren preference for simplicity in worship and simultaneously objected the liturgical traditions of established churches.

Worship spaces were not considered sacred by any inherent propriety; it was the consciousness of the presence of God among his people that hallowed a place and made it a space where reverence must reign:

When someone treads on the threshold of an evangelical hall, even as small or humble as it may be, he should always keep in mind that he is about to enter in the presence of the Divine Majesty; he has come to meet the King of kings and Lord of lords. In some hymnals there is a hymn that begins this way:

‘The worship time is coming,
Prayer has started.
The soul surrenders to God,

Cristo sobresalga en el casamiento, asegurándose así su aprobación, y las oraciones y buenos deseos del pueblo fiel de Dios.” Ferguson, “El matrimonio,” 198-199.

⁵⁷⁸ See, for example, *SC*, July 15, 1911, 140.

⁵⁷⁹ “*El cristianismo. . . no tiene días ni épocas sagradas, ni santuarios especiales, porque todo tiempo y todo lugar es igualmente santo.*” Jorge H. French, “Heme aquí,” *SC*, January 1911, 1.

Silence and attention!
If to the Holy God
We want to lift up our minds,
Reverent silence,
We will keep.⁵⁸⁰

Without inherent sacred significance, any place might be adequate for worship if it allowed attendees to listen to the Word of God: family houses, rented halls, or even portable temples made of wood and zinc.⁵⁸¹ Church building architecture kept a simple and unpretentious style, usually shaped as rectangular halls with two extra rooms for other congregational uses, including housing for missionaries or itinerant evangelists.⁵⁸² Some buildings incorporated retractable partition walls, allowing a more functional use of the space.⁵⁸³

Inside “the hall”—it was never called a church building or a temple—plastered walls lacked any artwork, and the main furniture consisted of a platform and wooden pews, in many cases handmade by church leaders and members.⁵⁸⁴ The centrality of the Breaking of Bread added the need to furnish halls with a table, which next to all movables should communicate the simplicity of the gospel. This pattern of extreme modesty is exemplified in this journal entry by

⁵⁸⁰ “Cuando una persona pisa en umbral de una sala evangélica, por pequeña y humilde que esta sea, debe siempre tener presente que está a punto de entrar en la presencia de la Majestad Divina; ha venido para tratar con el Rey de los reyes, el Señor de los señores. En algunos himnarios hay un himno que comienza así: «Del culto el tiempo llega, Comienza la oración. El alma a Dios se entrega ¡Silencio y atención! Si al Santo Dios la mente, Queremos elevar, Silencio reverente, Habremos de guardar». ” “El modo de asistir al culto evangélico,” SC, November, 1917, 218.

⁵⁸¹ See, for example, SC, January 15, 1910, 18; SC, September, 1918, 167.

⁵⁸² See, for example, SC, September, 1918, 166; SC, February, 1923, 47.

⁵⁸³ See, for example, SC, October, 1917, 203-4.

⁵⁸⁴ See, for example, SC, September, 1918, 166; SC, February, 1923, 47.

missionary Clifford: “In Tucumán we rented a pretty good site and from wooden boxes we bought, we made benches, a table and a platform.”⁵⁸⁵

As the group practiced baptism by immersion only, some assemblies built a baptismal pool in their meeting hall.⁵⁸⁶ Instead, others simply baptized in a nearby river, or in an irrigation pool, or even in improvised baptisteries made by digging a hole in the ground, later lined with canvas and filled with water.⁵⁸⁷ An example of this practice was reported and theologically interpreted by Clifford: “It was a frozen night, with wind shear. The baptistery was a hole dug in the yard of a cottage. It really looked like a burial. The water was damed. Only those who know the countryside know the consistency of such water. It helps a lot to the image of being buried with Christ.”⁵⁸⁸

The geographical expansion of the movement in the most populated regions of the country followed the railroad. This was not an exclusive strategy of the Brethren; the other evangelicals made use of the same option. But in the case of the Brethren it is very likely that this move was due to the fact that an important number of lay missionaries and preachers self-sustained their ministries working for British railroad companies. This is attested by the chronology of new church developments accompanying the railway expansion: Buenos Aires (1882), Santa Fe (1889), Rosario (1896), Córdoba (1897), Tucumán (1899), Salta (1906), Jujuy

⁵⁸⁵ “En Tucumán alquilamos un sitio bastante bueno y comprando cajones hicimos bancos, una mesa y una plataforma.” Clifford, *Un hombre bueno*, 14.

⁵⁸⁶ See, for example, *SC*, August, 1919, 145.

⁵⁸⁷ See, for example, *SC*, February, 1928, 46; *SC*, May, 1918, 98.

⁵⁸⁸ “Era noche de hielo, con un viento cortante. El bautisterio fue un hoyo cavado en el patio de una casita de campo. Parecía una sepultura, de veras. El agua era de represa. Solamente los que conocen el campo en las provincias saben lo que es la consistencia de tal agua. Ayuda mucho a la figura de sepultura con Cristo.” *SC*, October, 1929, 275.

(1907), Santiago del Estero (1907) y Catamarca (1909).⁵⁸⁹ In the interior of the country, when finances allowed, they tried to be centrally located near a main public square; “so, it cannot be said of us that we are hiding our light under a bushel.”⁵⁹⁰

Brethren are credited for introducing the use of tents for preaching in Argentina, which “proved to be one of the best means of gathering people to hear the Gospel.”⁵⁹¹ Meetings consisted of a word of exhortation followed by testimonies by new converts. These tents worked as portable preaching halls humbly furnished with at least some pews or chairs and a platform; the basic movables for gospel meetings. Despite austerity, the single presence of a tent in a small town or village in the countryside, and even in larger cities, attracted many curious people, as illustrated by these two anecdotes:

Watching the tent used as an evangelical hall at that time, he [Mr. Suárez] believed he was entering a circus, and was surprised not seeing horses, etc.; but since the first prayer he did not think on any circus anymore; oppressed and enslaved by sin, he found himself in the presence of God, and in contact with a power and realities he ignored until then. . . . Now he is a new man in Christ Jesus.⁵⁹²

While [the missionaries] were at the entrance [to the tent], a farmer from Salta came and asked what evangelical meetings looked like. Don Jaime [Clifford] ushered him inside. Then he prayed, sang a hymn, and read and commented briefly a few Bible verses, explaining the plan of salvation. Everything was done in a few minutes, and once he concluded, he told the peasant: “Well, friend; now you know how evangelical meetings look like.”⁵⁹³

⁵⁸⁹ See Espinosa, “Una iglesia primitiva e internacional,” 64.

⁵⁹⁰ “*Por lo tanto, no se puede decir de nosotros que estamos escondiendo nuestra lámpara debajo de un almud.*” SC, February, 1923, 47.

⁵⁹¹ Payne and Wilson, *Missionary Pioneering*, 7-8.

⁵⁹² “*Al ver la carpa que servía de templo evangélico, en aquel tiempo [Pedro Suárez] creía entrar en un circo, y se extrañó no ver los caballos, etc.; pero desde la primera oración no se acordó más de ningún circo; agobiado y esclavizado en el pecado, se halló en la presencia de Dios, y en contacto con un poder y realidades que hasta entonces le eran desconocidos. . . . ahora era un hombre nuevo en Cristo Jesús.*” SC, April, 1919, 67.

⁵⁹³ “*Mientras estaban en la puerta [de la carpa], se presentó un campesino salteño que les preguntó cómo eran las reuniones evangélicas. Don Jaime lo hizo pasar adentro. Luego oró, cantó un himno, leyó unos versículos y los comentó brevemente, explicando el plan de la salvación. Todo lo hizo en muy pocos minutos, y una vez*

Open-air meetings were another major outreach strategy; an innovation in Argentina allegedly introduced by Brethren missionary Charles K. Torre.⁵⁹⁴ In this regard, assemblies were encouraged to preach in public squares, choosing “crowded places, and if possible, shaded ones. The fisherman doesn’t fish in little wells (unless he is inexperienced and shy); he goes to the great sea where there are many and big fishes.”⁵⁹⁵

A list of other practical advice on varied topics for outdoor meetings ranged from counsel on personal appearance—entailing the civilizing motif—to the important role played by singing and music:

The open-air meeting . . . must be held decently and in order, not giving the enemy any chance to ridicule it. To this end it has to be led by one or more brothers. . . . If there is an organ or platform to be brought to the meeting, it is naturally the duty and privilege of the youth to carry out them. . . . It is of great help if brothers and sisters sing the beautiful songs that contain gospel teaching. These songs are like rain falling on hard ground, softening it and preparing it for the good seed of the Word of the cross. Since immemorial times people have been attracted and softened by singing. Do not despise or neglect this Levitical service. . . . Some people do not consider . . . personal hygiene. The gospel is pure, and to advocate it, you need to be clean in your own person (and at home). Do not come without having washed your face and hands before. Clothing should be decently fastened; not giving the impression of being careless but obedient people converted both in body and soul. If there are a good number of brothers, they can form a circle, leaving room for the platform, etc. Thus, people in a circle may make it easier to hear the preacher. Not everyone has a voice of trumpet.⁵⁹⁶

concluido le dijo al paisano: “Bueno, amigo; ya sabe cómo son las reuniones evangélicas.” Clifford, Un hombre bueno, 33.

⁵⁹⁴ See, for example, *SC*, November, 1923, 243.

⁵⁹⁵ “*parajes frecuentados y, si fuera posible, donde hay sombra. El pescador no va a los pocitos de agua para pescar (al menos que sea algún inexperto y tímido); va a la gran mar donde hay muchos y grandes peces.*” W.S. Miller, “Reuniones al aire libre,” *SC*, May, 1916, 93-94.

⁵⁹⁶ “*La reunión al aire libre. . . debe ser celebrada decentemente y en orden, sin dar al enemigo oportunidad de hacer de ella un papel ridículo. A este propósito deberá haber uno o más hermanos encargados de ella para dirigirla. . . . Si hay órgano o plataforma para ser llevados a la reunión es naturalmente el deber y el privilegio de los jóvenes de llevarlos. . . . Es de mucha ayuda si van hermanos y hermanas para cantar los cánticos preciosos que encierran la enseñanza del evangelio. Estos cánticos son como una lluvia que cae sobre la tierra dura, ablandándola y preparándola para la buena semilla de la Palabra de la cruz. Desde tiempo inmemorial las gentes han sido atraídas y ablandadas por el canto. No despreciemos ni descuidemos este servicio levítico. . . .*”

In connection to this initiative—preaching anywhere where they could reach a crowd—the Free Brethren introduced in Argentina an even greater novelty: the Bible-carriage. It turned into a very effective way to take the Bible and the message of the Gospel to remote villages in the countryside. Donated by an assembly from Dublin in 1910, this first carriage was horse-drawn; a decade later it was replaced by an auto-Bible-carriage, and the same year, as an addition to this mission enterprise, a Bible-boat called *El Alba*—Dawn—was built to extend the work to Paraguay.⁵⁹⁷

5.5 Prayer

The Brethren considered that prayer was a crucial spiritual discipline both in the life of the congregation and in family and individual devotion. Public prayer meetings might occur any day of the week, both as scheduled gatherings or as a response to a particular situation or church activity. In fact, any opportunity was a good occasion for the assembly to pray together.

As with most of the other evangelicals, written and fixed prayers were eschewed in favor of spontaneous prayer from the heart; a significant distinction from the usual practice in Roman Catholicism. The Brethren's strict biblicism may have facilitated objection to most common Catholic prayers and recitations, but certainly the avoidance to adopt the Lord's Prayer required deeper explanation:

Algunos no piensan. . . en el aseo de su persona. El evangelio es de pureza, y para recomendarlo, es necesario estar limpio en nuestra persona (y también en la casa). No debe venirse sin antes haberse lavado la cara y las manos. La ropa debe estar abrochada decentemente; no demos la impresión de ser unos descuidados, sino obedientes, convertidos en persona tanto como en alma. Reunidos un buen número de hermanos se puede formar un círculo, dejando lugar para la plataforma, etc. De esta manera la gente se forma en rueda, siendo más fácil al predicador hacerse oír. No todos tienen voz de trompeta.” Ibid.

⁵⁹⁷ See, for example, SC, August 15, 1910, 158; SC, April, 1920, 92.

Clearly, the “Lord’s Prayer” or “Our Father,” given by the Lord Jesus Christ at the request of his disciples, was not pronounced with the intention of establishing an exact or excluding form of prayer, since not even two of the Evangelists cited the same words. The New Testament Church had not been established yet, and therefore this prayer better adapts to the previous dispensation; and it is remarkable that it doesn’t include any clause asking for blessing in the name of Jesus Christ, which later the Lord taught as a prerequisite of acceptable prayer.

After the resurrection and ascension of Christ, when the Church was established, there is no mention of this formula in the New Testament, and only recently, centuries after the apostolic age, we find this prayer definitively introduced into Church public worship. . . . He did not intend to teach his disciples what words had to be used in prayer, but what were the things that should be asked.⁵⁹⁸

The rejection of fixed formulas was based in the notion that they led to empty ritualism, and only the practice of extemporaneous prayer granted the desired spiritual sincerity. Consequently, recommendations to prayer leaders in public services underscored the importance of “leading the audience to the conscious presence of the divine majesty, to reassure the attendees and to solemnize the meeting. Thus the stranger will see that it is an act of sincere communion with God.”⁵⁹⁹ Other practical guidelines included advice on prayer length, objectivity, language, and relevance:

Be prayer on the platform not too long; we would suggest a limit of five minutes. . . . Be our prayers clever, demonstrating sympathy for the people and understanding of the global issues. Avoid the habit of giving explanations to the Omniscient, and be reverent, sincere and concise, and our fervent supplications will bless the rest of the meeting.

⁵⁹⁸ “Es evidente que la «Oración del Señor» o «Padre Nuestro» dada por el Señor Jesucristo a solicitud de sus discípulos no fue pronunciada con la intención de establecer una fórmula exacta y mucho menos exclusiva de oración, pues ni aún dos de los Evangelistas la citan en las mismas palabras. La iglesia del Nuevo Testamento no se había establecido todavía, y por lo tanto esta oración se adapta más bien a la anterior dispensación, y es de notar que no incluye ninguna cláusula pidiendo bendición en el nombre del Señor Jesucristo, lo que más tarde el Señor enseñó como condición indispensable de la oración aceptable. Después de la resurrección y ascensión de Cristo cuando fue establecida la Iglesia no hay más mención de esta fórmula en todo el Nuevo Testamento, y recién, siglos después de la época apostólica, encontramos esta oración definitivamente introducida en el culto público de la Iglesia. . . . No fue su intención enseñar a sus discípulos cuáles eran las palabras a emplearse en la oración, sino cuáles eran las cosas que debieran pedirse.” “El ‘Padre Nuestro’,” SC, August, 1918, 144.

⁵⁹⁹ “conducir al auditorio a la presencia consiente de la majestad divina, para tranquilizar la reunión y solemnizar a los asistentes. Que los extraños vean que es un acto de comunión sincera con Dios.” G. M. J. Lear, “Para los predicadores II: La oración,” SC, February, 1919, 25.

At the end of the sermon, do not preach again to God, simply conclude with a few requests, entrusting to God the proclaimed word and invoking his blessing upon all. And that is enough.⁶⁰⁰

Since sincerity was so highly value in true prayer, Brethren teaching in this regard shows the pervasiveness of asceticism. Four conditions were considered the key to effective prayer: “First, that we have a sincere heart; second, that we approach [God] in full assurance of faith; third, that we have hearts cleansed of bad conscience; and fourth, that we have our bodies washed with pure water.”⁶⁰¹ The relationship between prayer and personal holiness was emphasized in all contexts and assessed as the main condition for the much-desired spiritual revival:

Every spiritual revival is the work of the Holy Spirit and is achieved by prayer and obedience to the Word of God. A few months ago the Lord awakened the spirit of prayer in the hearts of a few brothers of this church, resulting that definitely they started to pray (1) that the church was cleaned from everything that was not according to the holy will of God; and (2) that unsaved people who heard the gospel, believed in it and were saved. . . . So far we noticed the following results: . . . (3) The Holy Spirit has worked in the hearts of several friends producing in them repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus. . . . (4) The dividing line between the “sons of God” and the “sons of disobedience” has become clearer, and those who want to faithfully follow the Lord Jesus, have to carry the “cross” and suffer the “reproach” with their Divine Master.⁶⁰²

⁶⁰⁰ “no sea larga la oración en la plataforma; quisiéramos sugerir un límite de cinco minutos. . . . Que sean nuestras oraciones inteligentes, mostrando simpatía con el pueblo y entendimiento de los movimientos mundiales. Evitemos el hábito de dar explicaciones al Omnisciente, y seamos reverentes, sinceros y concisos, y nuestras suplicas fervorosas tendrán su repercusión en todo el resto de la reunión para bendición. Al final de la predicación, no hay que dar el sermón otra vez a Dios, concluyamos sencillamente con unas cuantas peticiones, encomendando a Dios la palabra anunciada e invocando su bendición sobre todos. Y con esto basta.” Ibid.

⁶⁰¹ “Primero, que tengamos un corazón verdadero; segundo, que nos acerquemos en completa certidumbre de fe; tercero, que tengamos corazones limpiados de mala conciencia; y cuarto, que tengamos nuestros cuerpos lavados con agua pura.” E. G. Gray, “La oración,” SC, March 15, 1910, 48.

⁶⁰² “Todo avivamiento espiritual es la obra del Espíritu Santo y se consigue por la oración y la obediencia a la Palabra de Dios. Hace algunos meses que el Señor despertó en los corazones de unos pocos hermanos de esta iglesia el espíritu de oración, con el resultado que empezaron a orar definitivamente (1) que la iglesia fuese limpiada de todo lo que no fuera conforme a la santa voluntad de Dios; y (2) que las personas inconversas que escuchaban el evangelio lo creyesen a fin de ser salvadas. . . . Hasta ahora notamos los resultados siguientes: . . . (3) El Espíritu Santo ha obrado en los corazones de varios amigos produciendo en ellos arrepentimiento hacia Dios y la fe en el Señor Jesús. . . . (4) La línea divisoria entre los “hijos de Dios” y “los hijos de desobediencia” ha venido a ser más marcada, y los que quieren seguir fielmente al Señor Jesús, tienen que llevar la “cruz” y sufrir “el vituperio” con su Maestro Divino.” Roberto Hogg, SC, September 15, 1910, 167-168.

For the Free Brethren, revival prayer meetings were not about miraculous healing or supernatural wonders but about the work of the Holy Spirit convincing unbelievers of sin, sanctifying the lives of converts through moral transformation, and restoring the fallen.⁶⁰³ These motifs were a constant priority and as a manifestation of the evangelistic zeal it became a common practice to intercede for unbelievers by name in public services.⁶⁰⁴

Extemporaneous prayer was a central activity in pastoral home visits, oriented to family needs and complimented with Bible readings:

When we all sat in a circle, [James Clifford] drew a small New Testament, read a passage, explained it in simple terms, applying it to the particular needs of the family, and ended with a long prayer. It was long, but it seemed very brief, because not beating around the bush, he talked to his God like a child talks with other children; he spoke to the father. He chatted with his Heavenly Father in an impressive way.⁶⁰⁵

This kind of account underscores the Brethren ideal of a very simple practice of prayer, characterized by honesty, identified with improvisation; conscious of being in a relationship with a God who hears and answers his children's pleas; and presuming of God's action and intervention in individuals' lives, especially as a response to a prayer of faith.

5.6 Preaching

The Brethren understanding and practice of preaching was shaped by their peculiar tripartite pattern of worship services: the Breaking of Bread, the ministry meeting, and the gospel

⁶⁰³ See, for example, *SC*, August, 1922, 199.

⁶⁰⁴ See, for example, *SC*, June, 1919, 126.

⁶⁰⁵ “cuando todos estaban sentados en rueda, [Jaime Clifford] sacaba un pequeño Nuevo Testamento, leía un pasaje, lo explicaba con palabras sencillas, aplicándolo a las necesidades particulares de la familia, y terminaba con una larga oración. Era larga, pero parecía muy breve, porque sin andar por las ramas, hablaba con su Dios como un hijo que junto a otros hijos, hablaba al padre. Conversaba con su Padre Celestial de una manera que impresionaba.” Clifford, *Un hombre bueno*, 18.

meeting. In this scheme the Brethren differentiated the former two, internal gatherings for exhortation and mutual edification of believers, from the latter, public gospel preaching.⁶⁰⁶ In “meetings *of the church*” any brother could take part as guided by the Holy Spirit, but in “public preaching” only those brothers with the spiritual gift of evangelism were allowed to preach.⁶⁰⁷ Therefore, in a strict sense, preaching was only exercised as proclamation, and this was the only sermon that might be prepared in advance although communicated extemporaneously. Conversely, instruction during the Breaking of Bread was expected to be impulsive, and in ministry meetings spontaneous and prearranged speeches could coexist.

Consistent with Brethren church polity, gospel preachers were not required to have any formal theological studies but needed only the evidence of the gift of the Spirit and the testimony of a pious life.⁶⁰⁸ In the words of missionary Hogg, “A ‘competent minister’ has to study at the ‘school of God.’”⁶⁰⁹

And even when they tepidly accepted prearranged sermons, Brethren stressed the agency of the Holy Spirit in leading the preaching: “Tremble at God before climbing to the platform or the pulpit, and ask Him, ‘What shall I say to them?’ And after having received a message from Him, go and boldly say ‘thus saith the Lord.’”⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰⁶ See Roberto Hogg, “Observaciones breves sobre los dones y su ejercicio en la iglesia,” *SC*, September 1919, 152.

⁶⁰⁷ “*las reuniones de la iglesia*,” “*predicación pública*.” *Ibid.*, 152-53.

⁶⁰⁸ See, for example, Lear, “Para los predicadores,” 3.

⁶⁰⁹ “‘*ministro competente*’ tiene que estudiar en la ‘*escuela de Dios*’.” Roberto Hogg, “El ministerio del Evangelio,” *SC*, October 15, 1912, 204.

⁶¹⁰ “*Temblemos delante de Dios antes de ocupar la plataforma o el púlpito, y preguntémosle “¿qué les diré?” y habiendo obtenido un mensaje de él, vayamos y audazmente digamos “así ha dicho Jehová.”*” Jorge H. French, “La predicación,” *SC*, September 15, 1911, 171-72.

Essential to this form of practice was a regular life of prayer and dedication to Bible reading and study. Likewise, preachers were encouraged to know their audience, to “study the people . . . with a heart overflowing with love of God for them. . . . We have to visit them to know their living conditions, their hopes and fears, and their way of thinking.”⁶¹¹

The Brethren took gospel meetings very seriously and set high standards of excellence for evangelists. Sermons should be memorized and preached *extemporaneously without any help of written notes or outlines*. They must keep a neat personal appearance, maintain a good posture, and speak clearly and in the right volume. They had to eschew imitating any other preacher but be natural and sincere, careful of not offending or discriminating against anyone in the audience. And in the planning of the service, they had to think about “the hymns and all other details, so that the whole [service] may produce the desired impression.”⁶¹² But above all, they must take care of not losing their first love due to routine preaching.⁶¹³

These standards were reinforced in open-air preaching, for it reached out “to people that would never go into a hall.”⁶¹⁴ Therefore, this responsibility was entrusted to the most qualified evangelists, and even when personal witness was the foundation of Brethren evangelization, spontaneous testimonies by new converts were restrained to just a few brief interventions, because “in the outdoors many people listen for first and last time.”⁶¹⁵

⁶¹¹ “*el estudio de los hombres. . . con un corazón rebozando del amor de Dios para con ellos. . . . Debemos visitarlas para conocer las condiciones de sus vidas, sus esperanzas y temores, y su manera de pensar.*” Gilberto M. J. Lear, “Para los predicadores IV. El predicador y su preparación,” *SC*, April, 1919, 60-61.

⁶¹² “*los himnos y todos los detalles, para que todo el conjunto influya para producir la impresión deseada.*” Gilberto M. J. Lear, “Para los predicadores VIII. El discurso pronunciado,” *SC*, August, 1919, 132.

⁶¹³ See, Gilberto M. J. Lear, “Para los predicadores VI. El tema (continuación),” *SC*, June, 1919, 101; Lear, “Para los predicadores VIII,” 132-33.

⁶¹⁴ “*personas que nunca entrarían en un local.*” *SC*, April, 1918, 90.

⁶¹⁵ “*en el aire libre muchos escuchan por primera y última vez.*” *Ibid.*

Brethren's gospel meetings kept typical features of later nineteenth century revivalism: intense emotional gatherings primarily aimed at evangelism, but also expected to reinvigorate the church. This recollection by David Morris is an eloquent example of that dynamic:

The hall was packed for the last meeting. Don Jaime and I preached. . . . Both had the conviction that the Spirit of God was working in many hearts and that many souls were ready to accept Christ. The meeting ended abruptly. Announcements were given, and the two of us were suffering on the platform watching that the opportunity was being wasted. Suddenly, Don Jaime said, "Cast the net, David!" These words confirmed what I had felt in my heart. We threw the fishing net. . . . What a catch! The congregation was in tears watching how many souls responded to the call. Certainly there was much joy in heaven that night, as well as in our hearts. The words of Don Jaime were recorded in my heart, and I can still hear his voice from heaven saying, "Cast the net, David."⁶¹⁶

Regarding the church services, impromptu speeches were the norm, however missionaries sought to give basic guidelines to channel spontaneous participation. For the Breaking of Bread they underscored that speeches should be on adoration and not for instruction:

It is of great importance, the nature of the ministry of the Word during this time of fellowship. If it draws our attention more specifically to our Christian duties or to our services to the Lord, or even to our many blessings, it does not accomplish what should be its purpose. The subject . . . should help everyone to focus on the person of Christ and His finished work. It is not enough for us to see His shroud and the linens; we want to see Him, to hear His voice and to understand more about the meaning of His passion on the cross.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁶ "El local estaba repleto para la última reunión. Don Jaime y yo hablamos. . . . Los dos tuvimos la convicción de que el Espíritu de Dios estaba trabajando en muchos corazones y que había almas que estaban listas para aceptar a Cristo. La reunión terminó en forma abrupta. Se dieron los anuncios, y los dos estábamos en la plataforma sufriendo al ver la oportunidad que se perdía. De repente, don Jaime exclamó: « ¡Echa la red, David! » Estas palabras confirmaron lo que yo ya había sentido en mi corazón. Arrojamos la red. . . ¡qué pesca obtuvimos! La congregación estaba en lágrimas al ver cómo tantas almas respondían al llamado. Por cierto que hubo mucho gozo en el cielo esa noche, como también en nuestros corazones. Las palabras de don Jaime se grabaron en mi corazón, y todavía me parece escuchar la voz, desde el cielo, diciéndome «Echa la red, David.» Clifford, *Un hombre bueno*, 25.

⁶¹⁷ "Es de especial importancia el carácter del ministerio de la Palabra durante esta hora de comunión. Si dirige nuestra atención más específicamente a nuestros deberes cristianos, o a nuestros servicios para el Señor, o aun a nuestras muchas bendiciones, no cumple con lo que debe ser su propósito. El tema, de cualquier lado que venga, deberá ayudar a todos a fijar la vista en la persona de Cristo y su obra consumada. No nos basta ver el sudario y los lienzos puestos queremos verle a él mismo, oír su voz y entender más del significado de su pasión en la cruz." Lear, "La adoración," 112.

For its part, the advice for the ministry meetings seems to implicitly support certain prearrangement, encouraging that each speaker (two or three, but no more than three) delivered a brief extemporaneous discourse that, combined, conveyed a whole lesson on the same topic.⁶¹⁸

Certainly this whole pattern contributed to the dominance of thematic messages over expository preaching. The preference was to address a topic, referring to passages from both the Old and the New Testament.⁶¹⁹ And in this regard Brethren made use of a distinctive dispensational hermeneutic based on the pervasive use of allegory and typology that, as Tim Grass claims, made of Christ “the key who unlocked the meaning of all Scripture.”⁶²⁰

5.7 Music

Like for the Methodists and Baptists in Argentina, hymn singing was a basic component in Free Brethren meetings and a distinctive practice in a dominant Roman Catholic milieu. In his memoirs about his years of service in South America, William Payne recalled an encounter with a Catholic priest in northern Argentina:

After showing me how he conducted his service, the priest asked me to explain him how a Protestant service was conducted. When I told him that we sang hymns, he wished to hear one as a sample, and I sang to him “I shall see Him face to face,” in Spanish. He was so delighted that he asked for another and yet for another. He then wished to copy them, but I arranged to send him a Spanish hymn-book with music, containing about 500 hymns.⁶²¹

⁶¹⁸ See Hugo M. Petter, “Conferencias de creyentes,” *SC*, June, 1917, 102.

⁶¹⁹ See N.J. L. Darling, “Nota para predicadores,” *SC*, August, 1929, 216.

⁶²⁰ Grass, *Gathering to His Name*, 172.

⁶²¹ Payne and Wilson, *Missionary Pioneering*, 40.

This account unveils the novelty that hymn singing in the vernacular was for Roman Catholics only used to the Latin Gregorian chant. It also illustrates the central role played by worship and hymnody when it came to the Brethren's identity. Not surprisingly, some of their most prominent missionaries were also recognized as prolific hymn writers and translators, such as James Clifford, author and translator of over a hundred hymns; Gilberto Lear, a renowned preacher, writer, musician, and poet; and Charles K. Torre and the aforementioned William Payne, who in 1903 edited the first Free Brethren's Hymn Book, *Himnos del Evangelio*.⁶²²

Before then, the Brethren used the Methodist hymnbook *Himnos Evangélicos*. The evangelistic nature of that book might have proved suitable for their gospel meetings but it did not meet their particular formative needs, and they decided to produce their own hymnal. The 1903 edition was appropriated but largely improved by the 1916 revision, *Himnos y Cantos del Evangelio (H&CE)*, which, with additions, is still the Argentine Brethren's hymnbook.

Likely, this revision found inspiration in the British precedent, where the Plymouth Brethren had produced their own hymnbooks and, curiously, in order to solve certain tensions between keeping their distinctive identity and having communion with the wider evangelical revivalist movement, ended up printing two different hymnals: one exclusively for the Breaking of Bread, which contained their most typical theological features, and a second one for gospel meetings.⁶²³ In Argentina, instead, the Brethren published a single hymnbook but arranged the hymns in sections according to their different needs.

⁶²² See Alejandro Clifford, "Estos noventa años, 1882-1927. Quinta nota. Guillermo Payne," *SC*, August, 1972, 242; Clifford, *Un hombre bueno*, 22.

⁶²³ Grass, *Gathering to his Name*, 155. For a more detailed study on British Brethren hymnology, see John S. Andrews, "Brethren Hymnology," *The Evangelical Quarterly* 28 (1956): 208-29.

With 374 entries, this hymnbook comprised five sections; the first three corresponded to their tripartite pattern of worship meetings: testimony of the gospel (1-134); edification of believers (135-235); and praise and worship (236-296), for the Breaking of Bread. The other two parts were special occasions and children (297-333), and songs for less formal gatherings (334-374).

This hymnal was welcomed with positive reviews, praising the work of the editors that “have not spared any effort to offer us the best hymnody, without losing sight of what is essential in a book like this: the true gospel message and sound doctrine.”⁶²⁴ In 1920 a hymnbook with musical notation was released; and in 1927 *H&CE* was expanded to 489 total entries, but without altering the original arrangement of the 1916 edition.⁶²⁵

The hymnal structure was formative for the Brethren, reinforcing their rigid system of separation between the church and the world. And it was also of great help to solve the tension between their ideal of impromptu participation and their views on congregational formation in assembly meetings. While evangelists used to do some planning in advance for gospel meetings, the election of the hymns in church meetings, and especially in the Breaking of Bread, was the fruit of the spontaneous suggestions by any member. On the other hand, based on Colossians 3:16, the Brethren recognized the formative power of spiritual singing.⁶²⁶ Therefore, missionaries instructed church members to be very careful in selecting hymns suitable for each occasion, and undoubtedly the hymnal’s internal organization was intended to orient them in this task:

⁶²⁴ “no han perdonado esfuerzo alguno con tal de ofrecernos lo mejor posible en himnología, sin perder de vista, sin embargo, lo esencial en un libro como el que nos ocupa: la verdadera nota evangélica y la sana doctrina.” *SC*, August, 1916, 188.

⁶²⁵ See *SC*, October, 1927, 215.

⁶²⁶ See, for example, Gilberto M. J. Lear, “Cantad a Jehová,” *SC*, July, 1916, 136.

[*H&CE*] is comprised now by sections, each one clustering the most adequate songs for certain spiritual exercises, albeit, leaving room for personal discretion in the selection of appropriated songs to each occasion. Much care must be taken to give a hymn in the *Lord's Supper*! In how many opportunities any hymn number is chosen just to fill up the time in a meeting! Then, singing becomes a pastime instead of a solemn act of adoration to the Father. Each time we gather to break the bread there is a special message, and hymns must be chosen accordingly.

Some other songs express high hopes for a more abundant life, or holiness, etc., or express great joy in God: they are of particular help at *meetings of prayer and Bible study*.

In the *evangelical conferences* we obviously sing invitations and God's admonitions to the sinner; and it has frequently turned out that a well-chosen song has led a soul to repentance or faith in Christ.⁶²⁷

Next to its primary use in congregational settings, the hymnal was simultaneously intended to be used as a formative resource in personal daily devotion and to shape Christians' life during the main life cycle events: "Actually, for the believer there is a song for every occasion in life: welcome, farewell, baptism, marriage, and even around the grave the bereaved can sing the beautiful and certain hope of life beyond death, which is the inheritance of those who 'die in the Lord.' And all these kinds of songs will be found in the new book."⁶²⁸

Beyond these benefits, the role played by the hymnbook in the consolidation of Argentine Brethren identity should not be downplayed. Their radical position against any form of ecclesial

⁶²⁷ "Se divide ahora en secciones, cada una de las cuales reúne las canciones más apropiadas para determinados ejercicios espirituales; y, sin embargo, hay bastante lugar para el criterio personal en la selección de los cánticos más a propósito para cada ocasión. ¡Cuánto cuidado se necesita al dar un himno en la Cena del Señor! ¡Cuántas veces se anuncia cualquier número en el himnario para llenar el tiempo en la reunión! Y el canto de esta manera viene a ser un «pasatiempo», en vez de un acto solemne de adoración al Padre. Cada vez que nos reunimos para romper el pan hay una nota especial, y los himnos deben ser elegidos de acuerdo con ella. Algunos de los cantos expresan grandes anhelos por más abundancia de vida, santidad, etc., o manifiestan gran gozo en Dios: estos ayudarán especialmente en las reuniones de oración y estudio de la Palabra. En las conferencias evangélicas cantamos naturalmente las invitaciones y amonestaciones que Dios dirige al pecador; y no pocas veces ha resultado que un cántico bien elegido ha conducido un alma al arrepentimiento o a la fe en Cristo." Ibid.

⁶²⁸ "De veras, para el creyente hay un canto a propósito para toda ocasión en la vida: para bienvenida, despedida, bautismo, casamiento, y aún alrededor del sepulcro los deudos pueden cantar la esperanza bella y segura de una vida más allá de la muerte, que es la porción de los que «mueren en el Señor». Y se encontrarán todas estas clases de cánticos en el nuevo libro." Ibid.

institution might have resulted in a diffuse movement; however, the Brethren grew as a Christian group with a solid personality, and this was due to the strong missionary leadership and the doctrinal unity forged through publications, the annual conference, and the common hymnal.

5.8 Conclusion

After examining the worship practices of the Free Brethren in Argentina, what stands out even when we expect dissent in different contexts, is the robust continuity with their British background. With the exception of the adoption of the Spanish language, the Brethren British missionaries replicated the worship practices developed by the Open Brethren assemblies in Britain. This included their unique tripartite worship pattern central to their Christian identity: adoration, ministry, and gospel. What this pattern demonstrates is their strong convictions in the need to clearly differentiate worship addressed to God from worship service destined to humans, and in the precedence the first took over the second. This feature sharply contrasted with the anthropocentric twist typical of Revivalism which impregnated both Methodist and Baptist worship in this time.

Furthermore, the form taken by the service of adoration as the weekly impromptu service around the Breaking of Bread, where everything was about the celebration of communion as led by the Holy Spirit without human planning, historically emerged as a contradictory sign of Christian unity and repudiation to the institutional Church. The continuation of this practice in the local context might be easily perceived by the other denominations as a critique to their own worship or as a veiled sectarianism.

We must note that the aforementioned worship practice also embodied the prevalent Brethren's emphasis on separation from the world. It is not a surprise that this feature next to a dispensational eschatology disconnected from history had acted against worship indigenization,

in addition to the patronizing control of the British missionaries in detriment of the emergence of native workers. An example of their difficulties for a more inculturated worship is evidenced in the fact that, in contrast to Methodists and Baptists, the Free Brethren nowadays still use the same hymnal published in 1916, *Himnos y Cantos del Evangelio*, to which they had added appendixes which include local compositions yet maintaining the prevalence of the European and North American hymnody.

In spite of these particularities, it seems pertinent to remember that Free Brethren worship had also remarkable similarities with Methodist and Baptist worship. Anti-Catholicism was pervasive in the three groups. Also central to the three of them was sincerity in worship, especially its identification with spontaneous prayer. Congregational singing in the vernacular but with imported tunes remained the common practice. And finally, assent to the authority of the Scriptures and an individualistic understanding of conversion overloaded with moral demands continued to be at the core of Evangelical worship during the period studied here.

CHAPTER 6

THEOLOGY AND ETHICS IN FORMATIVE WORSHIP PRACTICES: INTERPRETATIVE ANALYSIS

6.1 Preliminary considerations

6.1.1 Theology and worship: historical background

In previous chapters the most common worship practices among Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren have been described in the broader context of Protestant emergence in Argentina. This chapter will deal with the theological and ethical meanings embodied and communicated in those worship practices in this unique setting.

The foreign origins of these denominations and the fact that in early times missionaries reproduced the liturgical patterns typical of their sending denominations or churches of origin anticipates that the analysis here undertaken will reveal continuities and discontinuities with the theology and ethics embedded in those worship practices. For that reason, this chapter begins with a concise review of the theology and liturgy of each group in their own historical context.

Baptists, Methodists, and Plymouth Brethren have in common their British origins. They emerged in different centuries: the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, respectively. They represented different traditions: separatist Puritanism, a certain form of British pietism, and dispensational-premillennialist primitivism, in that order.⁶²⁹ And they held doctrinal differences: Open Brethren were moderate Calvinists, the Methodists were Arminians, and the Baptists were divided over

⁶²⁹ Tim Grass, drawing upon James P. Callahan, distinguishes Christian primitivism from restorationism, even when these terms are usually interchanged. He argues that, while both believe that normative Christianity was the apostolic church, primitivists hold more radical views on the contemporary church as “irreparably ruined,” and consequently believers should not attempt to restore it to the apostolic order. See Grass, *Gathering to His Name*, 84-85.

this issue. However, the three of them were largely influenced by evangelical popular Protestantism that emerged in Britain after the 1730s. David Bebbington identifies four features that have been typical marks of the evangelical religion: “*conversionism*, the conviction that lives need to be changed; *activism*, the expression of the gospel in effort; *biblicism*, a particular regard for the Bible; and what may be called *crucicentrism*, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.”⁶³⁰

Evangelicalism crossed the Atlantic to the English colonies in America, and awakenings and revivals on both sides of the ocean mutually fueled and consolidated this movement. Of great importance for this study is the impact of evangelicalism among Methodists and Baptists in both countries and in this framework, the relationship between the two denominations in America. Bebbington notes that the big success of the Methodist expansion in the 19th century influenced other denominations and particularly the Baptists, whose theology became more Arminian and who through a major process of synthesis incorporated elements from the Methodist revival style.⁶³¹ Specifically regarding worship practices, James White says that beyond a few distinctive features, a common trait of both denominations—and some others in the Free Church tradition—was their pragmatism in the light of their primary goal of producing new converts. In practice, this resulted in “a very similar order of Sunday worship that varied little in structure whether in Methodist, Baptist, or independent congregations,” which White describes in these terms:

⁶³⁰ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 2-3.

⁶³¹ David W. Bebbington, “Revivals, Revivalism and the Baptists,” *Baptistic Theologies* 1, no.1 (January 2009): 6-7. The Baptists’ turn toward some Arminian tenets in America might reflect increasing individualism in that society. An illuminating analysis of the changes that occurred in Baptist worship in nineteenth-century America as the result of the shift from theocentricism to anthropocentrism may be found in Thompson, Phillip E. “Re-envisioning Baptist Identity: Historical, Theological, and Liturgical Analysis,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 27, no. 3 (September 2000): 287-302.

The usual order is a three-part structure: opening acts, a fervent sermon, and a harvest of those touched by the morning's sermon. The opening acts (significantly, often called “preliminaries”) usually include hymns, choral music, a pastoral prayer, a Scripture lesson, and an offering. The style of these varies according to the cultural milieu of the congregation, but the structure changes little. The sermon is often a call to decision for Christ. The harvest usually includes an invitation to join the church or to be baptized. This often is followed by the singing of a hymn during which the candidates gather, then comes their reception, and, finally, the dismissal of everyone. There is nothing the least bit scriptural about the order; its only credential has been effectiveness in making converts.⁶³²

In the case of the Plymouth Brethren, they emerged in Britain in the 1830s—only some decades before arriving in Argentina—and the majority of their founders were already evangelicals inside the Church of England, which they left because they were discontent with its formalism and with increasing nominalism. Being part of a wave of nonconformists that separated from the established church, they inherited many doctrinal and ecclesiastical ideas from dissenter Calvinists.⁶³³ Early Brethren were distinguished by four distinctive tenets: radical separation from the world; primitivist ecclesiology; a completely unstructured and spontaneous worship pattern centered on the weekly service of the Breaking of Bread; and dispensational eschatology.⁶³⁴ But beyond these particularities, they held the common features of British evangelicalism.

If the existence of these commonalities contributed to a rapprochement among evangelical denominations in Great Britain and in North America, in emerging Protestantism in Argentina—where they represented a small minority facing hegemonic Roman Catholicism—it

⁶³² James F. White, “The Missing Jewel of the Evangelical Church,” *Reformed Journal* (June 1986): 12.

⁶³³ For further details on the background of the emergence of Plymouth Brethren in England and Ireland, see Peter L. Embley, “The Origins and Early Development of the Plymouth Brethren” (Ph.D. diss., St. Paul College, 1966): 13-37, accessed August 15, 2015, <http://www.bruederbewegung.de/pdf/embley.pdf>

⁶³⁴ For more on this point see Grass, *Gathering to His Name*, 84-108.

resulted in the blurring of rigid denominational barriers and favored the appearance of a broader evangelical identity.⁶³⁵

6.1.2 Theology in hymns

A second preliminary consideration of the interpretation intended in this chapter is on the importance of hymnbooks in emerging Protestantism in Argentina and the leading role of hymnody in liturgical theological analysis.

It is striking that each of the three Evangelical groups here surveyed published its own hymnbook. The Methodist hymnal was the first Protestant hymnbook ever published in Argentina (1876, revised and expanded in 1901), and even though it was the fruit of the personal venture of Henry G. Jackson, it immediately functioned as the official hymnal of the denomination in Río de la Plata. Some years later, as the result of a more collective process, Free Brethren (1903, revised and expanded in 1916) and Baptists (1923) produced their own hymnbooks. In this enterprise they had to deal with funding and technical constraints, which they were finally able to overcome.⁶³⁶ All this effort proved the great importance they attached to congregational singing, a typical feature in early evangelicalism in Britain and America that missionaries transferred to this new mission field.

Mark Noll argues that in the early evangelical movement, “hymn singing became almost sacramental.”⁶³⁷ And he adds, “It was the only physical activity that all evangelicals shared, and

⁶³⁵ See, for example, Bruno, “Modelo para rearmar,” 126-127

⁶³⁶ For example, the preface of the Baptist hymnal edition with music recounts the nonexistence of technical resources in Argentina to print music of high quality and how they solved this issue by importing custom-made matrixes from Germany. Preface to *Himnos Selectos Evangélicos*, v.

⁶³⁷ Mark A. Noll, “The Defining Role of Hymns in Early Evangelicalism,” in *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology*, eds. Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Knoll (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 4.

it was the one experience that bound them most closely together with each other.”⁶³⁸ Using twentieth-century liturgical language, hymn singing was able to offer to largely under-educated or illiterate audiences an accessible form of full, active, and conscious participation. Christopher Ellis noted in this regard that in Free Church worship, hymns played a similar role to liturgical responses in other traditions, and their language often offered to members of the congregation “a shared vocabulary for testimony, personal faith and commitment.”⁶³⁹ Poetic lyrics interwoven with music were able to create abiding images that deeply touched emotions and feelings; while at the same time they could easily convey doctrinal concepts.⁶⁴⁰ Thus, hymns functioned as sung “popular” theology that, through repetition and memorization, deeply shaped a generation of believers.⁶⁴¹

What the aforementioned implies for this work is that in its endeavor of disclosing the theological and ethical meaning of worship practices in emerging Protestantism in Argentina, special attention will be given to hymnody. As S. T. Kimbrough Jr. said, “The hymns of the church *are* theology.”⁶⁴² Also since church singing is the main form of communal popular participation in worship, the study of song, as John Witvliet says, may give us “one of the best points of access to understanding worship from the point of view of worshipers rather than

⁶³⁸ Ibid.

⁶³⁹ Ellis, *Duty and Delight*, 339.

⁶⁴⁰ In his classic text James Whites discusses the forms and function of church music. See White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 112, 130.

⁶⁴¹ The use of the term “popular” here relies on the work of John Tyson, who claims that Charles and John Wesley were “populists” in their intentions of making theology available to the general audience as it was lived and experienced. See John R. Tyson, “The Theology of Charles Wesley’s Hymns,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 44 no. 2 (Fall 2009): 60.

⁶⁴² S.T. Kimbrough Jr., “Lyrical Theology,” *Theology Today* 63 no. 1 (April 2006): 22. For a broader study of this concept, see S.T. Kimbrough Jr., *The Lyrical Theology of Charles Wesley: A Reader* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2013), 3-41.

clergy.”⁶⁴³ This assertion is of greater significance in the study of the history of worship in non-liturgical churches, where hymns become the chief source of liturgical texts we can access today.

As Hugh McElrath noted from a Baptist perspective:

What people really believe down deep is often embedded in the words of the hymns they have known and loved because of repeated meaningful experiences in singing them.

Fundamentally, therefore, hymns are theological utterances. We Baptists have traditionally been wary of creeds and generally do not recite them in corporate worship. Laying aside the fear of many that recent developments within Southern Baptist ranks portend a “creeping creedalism,” it can be asserted with confidence that in a very real sense our hymns are our creeds. We do not read publicly our confessions of faith as a general practice. But, for better or worse, we sing them!⁶⁴⁴

Yet any analysis of doctrinal utterances in hymnody requires carefully considering that hymns are not constructed as systematic theology; hymns constitute a particular “genre of theological literature” that Kimbrough calls “lyrical theology.”⁶⁴⁵ “‘Hymnody’ is a genre of ‘doxological speech’ that connects ‘cultic speech’ with the ‘language of devotion,’” claims Teresa Berger, and in consequence it is less static than other forms of liturgical language, so demonstrating “more clearly the imprint and interaction of a particular period and its theology.”⁶⁴⁶

In sum, hymnody provides a chief key to understanding theology embodied in worship practices at any particular moment in church history, and therefore it will be a major source for

⁶⁴³ John D. Witvliet, foreword to *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology*, eds. Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Knoll (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), viii.

⁶⁴⁴ Hugh L. McElrath, “The Hymnbook as a Compendium of Theology,” *Review and Expositor* 87, no.1 (1990):11.

⁶⁴⁵ Kimbrough Jr., “Lyrical Theology,” 23.

⁶⁴⁶ Teresa Berger, *Theology in Hymns? A Study of the Relationship of Doxology and Theology According to a Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists (1780)*, trans. Timothy Edward Kimbrough (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1995), 20-21.

this work. The study of theology in hymns in emerging Protestantism in Argentina will basically rely on the three hymnbooks produced by each targeted denomination.

One noticeable thing to observe is that none of the three books had a denominational title; they were “evangelical” hymnals.⁶⁴⁷ This may be due to different reasons. First, *evangélico* in Latin America became the most common word any non-Catholic church with Protestant roots employed to self-designate.⁶⁴⁸ By transition, their members identified themselves as *evangélicos*; this common identity became stronger than any denominational affiliation and favored the unity of these churches and the creation of a common evangelical common subculture. Second, due to the strength of this self-understanding as *evangélicos*, it is very likely that hymnbook editors sincerely intended to serve the whole evangelical community beyond their own denominational constituency in a context where worship resources were scant. And lastly, as it seems to suggest in the preface of the Baptist hymnal, (1928), it may have been a way of recognizing that the content was not exclusively produced by members of a particular denomination; on the contrary, it represented the wider evangelical tradition.⁶⁴⁹

Nevertheless, a comparative analysis of the three hymnbooks could shed light on how these groups dealt with the tension between formation of a common evangelical identity and particular denominational identities.

⁶⁴⁷ The Methodist hymnbook’s title was *Himnos Evangélicos* (Lit. *Evangelical Hymns*), the Baptists’ was *Himnos Selectos Evangélicos* (Lit. *Evangelical Selected Hymns*) and the Brethren’s was *Himnos y Cantos del Evangelio* (literally, “Hymns and Songs of the Gospel;” in Spanish, “gospel” is *evangelio*, so this title also implies the evangelical identity).

⁶⁴⁸ See Míguez Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism*, 27-28; and Juan Francisco Martínez, *Los Protestantes: An Introduction to Latino Protestantism in the United States* (Santa Bárbara, CA: Praeger, 2011), 97-98.

⁶⁴⁹ See Preface to *Himnos Selectos Evangélicos*, v.

Table 1. Comparison of hymns in common in each denominational hymnal

	Methodist Hymnal	Baptist Hymnal	F. Brethren Hymnal	Common to the 3	Total
Methodist Hymnal (HE, ed. 1901)	57 (48%)	24	11	27	119
Baptist Hymnal (HSE, ed. 1928)	24	197 (51%)	135	27	383
F. Brethren Hymnal (H&CE, ed. 1916)	11	135	267 (61%)	27	440

On one hand, the intertwining among these groups as part of a larger evangelical community could be seen in the number of shared hymns (Table 1).⁶⁵⁰ There are 27 hymns in common in the three hymnals; they include some hymns broadly appreciated among Protestants in Argentina and in Latin American evangelicalism in general⁶⁵¹, such as “Holy, Holy, Holy” (lyrics by Reginald Herber and music by John B. Dykes, translated by Juan B. Cabrera) and

⁶⁵⁰ The three hymnals have some hymns translated or composed by their local leaders. The most representative case, as said in chapter 3, in the Methodist hymnbook, where Henry Jackson authored or translated 57 of the 101 hymns of its first edition (1876). This would be due to the lack of hymns in Spanish at that time. However, as other collections of hymns in Spanish were already printed, mostly in Spain and in Mexico, Free Brethren and Baptist hymnbooks published in the twentieth century as well as the revised version of the Methodist hymnal tended to include already available hymns. For example, Thomas Westrup, an English pastor in Mexico, published *Incienso Cristiano* (1875) and *Colección de Himnos* (1889). The last one had 99 hymns, of which 62 were his own composition or translation. The three editions of denominational hymnals here surveyed had hymns by Westrup. For a detailed history of hymnbooks in Spanish see McConnell, *La historia del himno en castellano*, 112-49.

⁶⁵¹ An interesting example of how pervasive the use of these hymns was in Latin America can be found in a survey done by Dinorah Méndez on hymnody among contemporary evangelicals in Mexico. According to her findings, these two hymns still are on the list of the seven most-used hymns in these congregations. Curiously, she claims that the reason for this success is the great affinity of their content with Mexican culture. In contrast, in the Argentine context, I argue that these hymns, and Protestant hymnody in general, as well as most of their worship practices, were deeply countercultural and consequently they were fundamental to forming an alternative Christian identity. See Méndez, *Evangelicals in Mexico*, 218-31.

“Onward, Christian Soldiers” (lyrics by Sabine Baring-Gould and music by Arthur S. Sullivan, translated by Juan B. Cabrera).⁶⁵² On the opposite extreme, each denominational hymnal had exclusive materials, the Free Brethren the group having the largest percentage (61%).

The unique organization of the Free Brethren hymnal provides some hints on how they balanced the formation of both wider evangelical identity and their own denominational identity. It was structured in three large sections, each one destined to be used in services with different purposes, plus a cluster of miscellaneous hymns and songs.⁶⁵³

Table 2. Comparison of hymns included in each main section of the Free Brethren’s hymnbook with hymns included in Baptist and Methodist hymnals

Free Brethren Hymns	Methodist Hymnal	Baptist Hymnal	F. Brethren Hymnal	Common to all three	Total
For “Witness to the Gospel” (1-134)	7	58	59 (44%)	11	135
For Believers’ Edification (135-235)	2	30	62 (61%)	7	101
Hymns for “Adoration and Praise” (236-296)	2	9	44 (72%)	6	61

As shown in Table 2, a survey of the three main divisions concludes that the evangelistic section contains the largest number of hymns in common with both or any of the two other denominations (56%) and consequently the lowest percentage of exclusive materials (44%), which noticeably increases in the section dedicated to believers’ edification (62%) and to the service of the Breaking of Bread (72%). Yet a considerable number of their exclusive material consisted of hymns created by non-Brethren Revival composers—like Ira D. Sankey and

⁶⁵² Argentine Baptist Historian Arnoldo Canclini observed that in the twentieth century the hymn “Onward, Christian Soldiers” (*Firmes y adelante*) became a sign of unity among Argentine evangelicals. See Canclini “Unidad y diferencias,” 17. Even nowadays this hymn functions as an evangelical national anthem.

⁶⁵³ For more details on the structure of the Free Brethren hymnal, see the “Music” section in chapter 5.

William B. Bradbury, among others—whose doctrinal content, except on concrete issues such as baptism, in most cases could be appropriated to any other evangelical denomination.⁶⁵⁴ They showed a slight tendency to reinforce themes such as the otherworldly afterlife, the second coming of Christ, and the Christian struggle against sin, although affirming assurance of salvation. But none of these topics were remarkably unique, beyond their pervasiveness. So how to explain the existence of a large cluster of exclusive hymns in each hymnal?

Perhaps a comparison with the Baptist hymnbook might shed light on this question.⁶⁵⁵ The Baptist hymnbook was topically arranged according to a mix of order of worship, classic systematic doctrine, and special occasions. Like the Brethren hymnbook, the Baptist hymnal's exclusive material matches in general with the broader evangelical views and its organization seems to reflect a greater concern with its didactic use in a more systematic doctrinal formation. For the Free Brethren it seems to have been most important to shape their members' spirituality around their distinctive service of the Breaking of Bread, which was the hallmark of their piety. In any case, beyond these discrepancies, the comparative analysis demonstrates a confluent

⁶⁵⁴ In his study on the Open Brethren in Britain and England, Tim Grass remarks on the influence of Moody and Sankey, "whose visits to Britain helped to shape much Open Brethren evangelistic practice" and who "had themselves been influenced by the holiness thinking, which in turn has been seen as indebted to early Brethren for its conviction that a higher level of practical holiness was possible for each believer as an outworking of their standing as already completely sanctified through Christ." Grass, *Gathering to His name*, 235. The inclusion of a significant number of Sankey hymns in the Argentine Free Brethren hymnbook points to the same theological emphasis.

⁶⁵⁵ The comparison of hymnal organization has been done only between Baptist and Free Brethren hymnbooks because they were made explicit in the indexes. This is not the case of the Methodist one, whose arrangement seems to be random, except for a cluster of hymns at the beginning proper for the opening worship exercise, and Thomas Ken's Doxology at the end of the original Jackson's version, which seems to have been the service's concluding hymn. On this last assertion, see for example the sermon manuscripts of Rev. John F. Thomson, who usually indicated the number of the hymns to be sung during each service on his outlines first page; in most cases the last hymn was the Doxology (HE no. 101). These manuscripts may be found in the historical archives of the IEMA.

emphasis on evangelism, which allows us to infer that the core of the evangelical identity relied on a major theological agreement on soteriology and a soteriological Christology.

Likewise, the Methodist hymnbook embraced the evangelical character more than the denominational identity. Daniel Bruno explains this trend, claiming that an already theologically mixed Methodism resulting from the Second Great Awakening deepened its homogenization with “the so called evangelical world” when it arrived in Latin America.⁶⁵⁶ He adds that “the urgent need of otherness against the Catholic world of the early twentieth century led to a defensive bloc” whose priority was “to show no contradictions” and thus to achieve its main objective: “to fight the ground to Catholicism.”⁶⁵⁷ As a result, “Methodism mimicked” the evangelical bloc and its only remaining hallmark was “the narrative of the “ardent heart.””⁶⁵⁸

In sum, theology in the hymns of Argentine Protestants in this historical period reveals the strong imprint of evangelicalism and the existence of a common evangelical identity that in the practice of congregational singing tended to prevail over denominational features. Most of the latter emerged in some other worship practices, but rarely in hymnody.

6.2 Theology in worship

As theologian Kevin Vanhoozer claims, “Worship involves a conception of the one to which our praise and prayers are directed. The nature and quality of our worship is an index of theological understanding, a measure of our apprehension of God’s ‘worth-ship.’”⁶⁵⁹ In this

⁶⁵⁶ Daniel Bruno, “Modelo para rearmar. El metodismo latinoamericano y sus opciones teológicas,” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 6 (2010): 126.

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 126-27.

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 127.

⁶⁵⁹ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “The Triune God of the Gospel,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Evangelical Theology*, eds. Timothy Larsen and Daniel J. Treier (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 18.

perspective, it would be insightful to reflect on the conception of God embedded in worship practices in emerging Protestantism in Argentina.

Evangelical worship was Trinitarian. Methodists, Baptists, and Brethren all baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Explicitly or implicitly, in the celebration of the Lord's Supper the Triune God was alluded to. And similarly, the notion of a Trinitarian God was nurtured in the practice of prayer, generally through the use of the formula "to the Father, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit."⁶⁶⁰ Yet a powerful exercise of embodiment of this doctrine was the singing of Trinitarian hymns, most typically those in which each divine person was allotted a stanza and the concluding stanza addressed the Trinity, or through the traditional "Doxology" by Thomas Ken.⁶⁶¹

But certainly, the center of each worship service was the person of Christ; the *culto* was essentially the gathering of those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.⁶⁶² Each congregant had a personal experience of repentance and faith in Christ the Savior; those who had not had it were fervently invited through sermons, songs, and altar calls to surrender their lives to the Lord as their personal Savior. Christology was basically framed by the doctrine of salvation and stressed

⁶⁶⁰ However, praying to each person of the Trinity was also an accepted practice. For example, a hymn on prayer (a free translation of "Oh! Sweet Hour of Prayer" by George Williamson and William Bradbury) included in both the Baptist and Methodist hymnal, specifically addresses prayer to each person and to the Trinity (HE no.51; HSE no.256).

⁶⁶¹ Trinitarian hymns were included in the three denominational hymnals, for example: "Holy, Holy, Holy" (HE no.116; H&CE no.279; HSE no. 2), or "To Our Father God" (HE no.16; H&CE no.238; HSE no.3; lyrics from Star of Bethlehem, and music by Henry Carey) or the Ken Doxology translated by Henry G. Jackson, HE no.101; H&CE no. 386; HSE no. 33 bis). The majority of the Trinitarian hymns in the Baptist hymnal (HSE) are in the section of call to worship, and singing the Doxology at the end of the service seems to have been a usual practice among some Methodist and Baptist congregations.

⁶⁶² Arnoldo Canclini argues that the first generation of Protestant missionaries and preachers created a linguistic subculture; as the Spanish language was shaped by Catholic patterns, they appealed to Anglicism or neologism to name evangelical practices. Thus, for example, when Roman Catholics attend a worship service, *ellos van a misa* (lit. "They go to Mass"); Protestants, instead, *van al culto* (lit. "they go to the cult"). Despite the misuse of the term *culto*, it was one of the typical terms to name a worship service in emerging Protestantism. See Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 328.

reconciliation with God through the atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross—vicarious and substitutionary. In Bebbington’s terminology, “crucicentrism” was also a typical doctrinal feature of Argentine evangelicals, thus replicating British and American evangelicalism.

Congregants of the three groups used to sing this kind of personal faith utterance:

I trust in Jesus,
And I am saved;
By his death in a sad cross
I go to glory.
(Chorus): Everything was already paid,
I owe nothing;
Perfect salvation gives
That one who died for me.⁶⁶³

As noted by Míguez Bonino, in this perspective “theology is practically swallowed up in Christology, and this in soteriology, and, even more, in a salvation which is characterized as an individual and subjective experience.”⁶⁶⁴ Benefits of salvation were described in terms that pointed to the forgiveness of sins and to sentiments individuals experienced as its result: peace, joy, relief from the burden of conscience, release of guilt, and so on. Yet the most important result of salvation was the removal of eternal punishment alongside the promise of eternal life with Christ in Heaven after death. The imagination of those believers was fueled during worship services mainly by poignant hymn language promising a better tomorrow, as in these stanzas:

I go to Heaven, I go to Heaven;
I trust in Jesus;
I’m saved, I’m saved,
For me he died on the cross.
I will see you, Lord;
I will see you, my Savior.
In sweet light and splendor,

⁶⁶³ “*Yo confío en Jesús y salvado soy; Por su muerte en la cruz A la gloria voy. (Coro) Todo fue pagado ya. Nada debo yo. Salvación perfecta da Quien por mí murió.*” HE no.57. See also H&CE no.133; HSE no.84.

⁶⁶⁴ Míguez Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism*, 112.

I will live with my Savior.⁶⁶⁵

Nor sins, nor cry, nor mourning,
Nor any sorrows there will be
In the house of God in Heaven;
Thus, how [happy] to be there it will be!⁶⁶⁶

I've read about a beautiful city,
In the kingdom of God hereafter:
I've known about its jasper walls,
Of pure gold is that city.
In the middle runs a river of life;
Its waters shine as crystal.
But not even half of its glories
Could be ever told to men.⁶⁶⁷

The dual nature of Jesus Christ, both fully God and fully human, was a core tenet of these evangelicals; however, in practice the extreme emphasis on Christ as Savior resulted in a tendency to underplay the humanity of Christ. This trend seems to have been even more pervasive among the Free Brethren; their peculiarly negative view of this world combined with their premillennial eschatological expectations led to a focus on the crucified Christ and on the

⁶⁶⁵ “*Al cielo voy, al cielo voy; Yo confío en Jesús. Salvado soy, salvado soy Por su muerte en la cruz. Yo te veré a ti, Señor. Yo te veré, oh, Salvador; En dulce luz y esplendor, Viviré con mi Jesús.*” First stanza hymn *Al cielo voy* (Lit. “I go to Heaven;” lyrics from Star of Bethlehem, music by Asa Hull); HE no. 88. See also H&CE no. 5; and HSE no. 322.

⁶⁶⁶ “*Ni pecados, ni llanto, ni duelo, Ni pesares ningunos habrá. En la casa de Dios en el cielo; Pues, hallarnos allí, ¡qué será!*” Fourth stanza of the hymn *Siempre hablamos del mundo dichoso* (Lit. “We always talk of the happy world;” anonymous version with music by George Stebbins) HE no. 85. See also H&CE no. 114.

⁶⁶⁷ “*De una hermosa ciudad he leído. Es el Reino de Dios más allá; De su muro de jaspe he sabido, De oro puro es aquella ciudad: Por el medio va el río de vida, Cual cristal resplandecen sus aguas; Más ni aun la mitad de sus glorias, Al hombre se puede contar.*” First stanza of the hymn “De una hermosa ciudad he leído” (Lit. “I’ve read about a beautiful city;” anonymous translation and adaptation of the hymn “Not Half Has Ever Been Told” by Jonathan Bush Atchinson and Otis F. Presbrey), H&CE no. 35. The same hymn with a slight variation in translation but keeping the same meaning may be found in HSE no. 321.

risen King who comes soon to judge the living and the dead, and a lack of focus on his incarnated ministry on earth.⁶⁶⁸

Being that Catholicism was profoundly entangled in the surrounding culture, the distinctive evangelical soteriology was strikingly countercultural. In contrast to popular Catholic views of a detached Jesus, the Protestant message presented a personal Christ.⁶⁶⁹ Jesus was the loving shepherd seeking the sinner: “Christ is at your door; open it, open it.”⁶⁷⁰ He was one that, to the believer, was “a friend who is more than a brother . . . who carried our pain in human body.”⁶⁷¹ And in contrast to the popular image of a powerless baby or a suffering crucified man, Protestants proclaimed a still active and alive Christ: the almighty and victorious Son of God.⁶⁷² An empty cross behind the altar or table and facing the congregants was a strong visual statement of the resurrected Christ, in contrast to common images of the crucified body of Jesus in Catholic churches.

⁶⁶⁸ For a comprehensive analysis of Argentine Free Brethren’s Christology and other theological tenets, see Roldán, “Comprensión de la realidad social,” (Ph.D. diss.), 94-147.

⁶⁶⁹ For more on Christology in South America, see this classic text, John Alexander Mackay, *The Other Spanish Christ: A Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America* (New York, NY: Macmillan Co., 1933). See also Robert Elder, “Evangelizing the Queen Province of Argentina,” *Missionary Review of the World* 27, no. 37 (1914): 834-35.

⁶⁷⁰ “*A tu puerta Cristo está, ábrela, ábrela.*” First line of the hymn “*A tu puerta Cristo está*” (Lit. “Christ is at your door;” translation and adaption by Enrique Turrall of the hymn “There Is a Stranger at the Door” by Jonathan Bush Atchinson and Edwin Othello Excell), H&CE no.4. See also HSE no. 154.

⁶⁷¹ “*Un Amigo hay más que hermano. . . Quien llevó en cuerpo humano, Nuestro dolor.*” First stanza of the hymn *Un amigo hay más que un hermano* (Lit. “There is a friend, more than a brother;” anonymous lyrics, tune by Hubert Platt Main) H&CE no. 124. See also HSE no. 46.

⁶⁷² In his autobiography, Baptist missionary Joseph Hart described Roman Catholic Christology during his time in Argentina: “Roman Catholicism has two conceptions of Jesus Christ. First, that of a baby in his mother’s arms. . . . Thank God, Jesus did come to Bethlehem as a babe, but thank God he is not there now. Our Christ is not a baby. . . . No wonder there is no dynamic in Romanism, when its God is a baby. The other conception Roman Catholicism has of Christ is that of a dead Christ. There is no salvation in a dead Christ.” Hart, *Gospel Triumphs in Argentina and Chile*, 9-10.

Soteriological Christology was remarkably embodied in the practice of adult immersion baptism by Baptists and Free Brethren. Candidates were guided to the “tomb” (a river, or a formal or improvised baptistery) for a reenactment of their previous experience of conversion; of having died to an old life and thus being symbolically “buried” with Christ in the waters of baptism. Then, emerging from the water, they enacted Christ’s resurrection and their own spiritual rebirth.⁶⁷³ Meanwhile, the congregation accompanied the act by singing hymns or praying silently.

In spite of these similarities, Baptist and Free Brethren’s baptism had slightly different ecclesiological implications. For the Baptists, baptism was an initiatory rite through which a person became a member of a local church. In this perspective, they used to celebrate the Lord’s Supper after baptisms, inviting the “new members” to partake for the first time as a symbol of their joining to the local church body. This way, even though baptism was the external testimony of individual conversion, the multisensory formative experience of celebrating immersion baptism followed by the Lord’s Supper made visible the communal dimension of baptism for the Baptists. For the Free Brethren, instead, baptism worked more as the initiation rite to a Christian life separated from the world, which, as Eaton notes, involved “both to withdraw from active involvement in society and to enclose oneself in this kind of Protestant semi-monastic community.”⁶⁷⁴ In this sense, baptism functioned as an outward sign of separation from the

⁶⁷³ Baptist and Free Brethren hymnals had two baptismal hymns in common expressing this meaning: *En las aguas de la muerte* (Lit. “In the waters of death;” by Enrique Turrall, H&CE no. 307 and HSE no.361) and *Yo quiero obedecete* (Lit. “I want to obey you;” anonymous lyrics, tune by Robert Lowry, H&CE no.308 and HSE no. 362). Both were filled with words of consecration to a new life separated from the world and dedicated to God’s service.

⁶⁷⁴ Eaton, *Protestant Missionaries in Spain*, 9.

world while participation in the Breaking of the Bread symbolized the fellowship of the true believers awaiting for the second coming of their Lord.⁶⁷⁵

Worship practices also expressed and shaped believers in the theological understanding of Christ as the only mediator. The topic was repeatedly preached in evangelistic sermons and embodied by the congregation in singing, in simple church decor without any human images, and overall, in prayer.⁶⁷⁶ In contrast to the mediation of Mary and the saints, praying in the name of Jesus Christ *our only mediator* was a counter-formative testimony, as well as the practice of individual confession of sins only to God, without any human intermediary.

Theological anthropology was also shaped by the strong individualism and soteriological stress. Despite their differences —Baptists and Free Brethren held moderate Calvinist views while Methodists were Arminian— the three shared an individualistic notion of sin and the need of the human will’s cooperation in the act of conversion, in convergence with the work of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁷⁷ Yet in that peculiar context of permanent confrontation with Roman Catholicism, they were very careful in remarking that salvation could be received by faith only and not through personal merits.⁶⁷⁸ Evangelistic preaching energetically called sinners to repentance and

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid., 10.

⁶⁷⁶ An example of a sermon contrasting Protestant Christology with Catholic devotion to the Virgin Mary can be found in chapter 5, “Jesús o María,” in the book of sermons by Baptist Pastor Varetto. See Juan C. Varetto, *Discursos Evangélicos*, 3a. ed. (Buenos Aires: Junta Bautista de Publicaciones, 1919): 47-55.

⁶⁷⁷ This theological view demonstrates the extended influence of Revival anthropology and Charles Finney’s theological thinking upon Argentine evangelicals. For further research on this topic, see Derek R. Nelson, “Charles Finney and John Nevin on Selfhood and Sin: Reformed Anthropologies in Nineteenth-century American Religion,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 45 no. 2 (November 2010): 280-303. John Witvliet explores a broader group of Finney’s theological principles in relation to Frontier worship tradition in nineteenth-century America, which are strikingly reflected in Argentine evangelicalism. This confirms what has been stated on the Revival influence. See Witvliet, *Worship Seeking Understanding*, 179-200.

⁶⁷⁸ This tenet was also reinforced when Seventh Day Adventism emerged in Argentina; apparently there was some membership lost to them, which produced a strong reaction by evangelicals. See, for example, Jorge H. French, “El Adventismo,” *SC*, October 15, 1911, 191-94.

to accepting Christ as one's personal Savior. Intercessory public prayer for unconverted family members, friends, or neighbors was a constant practice, as was singing hymns through which the congregation unanimously voiced the calling of nonbelievers to salvation.⁶⁷⁹ Conversion was expected to be sudden and was frequently embodied in physical responses, such as raising a hand, standing up, or coming to the altar. It was also taught to be an experience of interior certainty of one's salvation through the witness of the Holy Spirit:

How can the sinner know
About his forgiveness here?
How can the Savior
Make him understand this?
He who feels the truth
In his own heart,
Says with certainty:
'God has forgiven me.'⁶⁸⁰

Unrepentant sinners would face eternal condemnation, so a sense of urgency shaped the use of the time; any Sunday, any wedding, even any funeral, was a good occasion to preach the message of the gospel and perhaps the only opportunity when unsaved could listen to the Good News of salvation in Christ:

Seek God, seek God;
While you have time, seek God.
If you dare to wait,
God will shut the door,
And will say: 'It's already late;'
Seek God.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁹ See, for example, the hymn "*Venid, pecadores*" (Lit. "Come, sinners!") HE no. 25; H&CE no. 31; HSE no. 125.

⁶⁸⁰ "*¿Cómo puede el pecador, Su perdón aquí saber? ¿Cómo puede el Salvador, Esto hacerle comprender? El que siente la verdad, En su propio corazón, Dice con seguridad: «Dios me ha dado el perdón.»*" First stanza of the hymn "*¿Cómo puede el pecador?*" (Lit. "How may the sinner?") anonymous lyrics, tune by John B. Dykes) HE no. 73. See also H&CE no. 18.

⁶⁸¹ "*Busca a Dios, busca a Dios; Entre tanto tengas tiempo, Busca a Dios. Si te atreves a esperar, Dios la puerta cerrará, Y dirá: «Es tarde ya». Busca a Dios.*" Chorus of the hymn "*Nuestra vida acabará*" (Lit "Our life will end;" translation and adaptation by Enrique Turrall of the hymn "Life at best is very brief" by Charles Harrison Mason and William James Kirkpatrick) H&CE no. 82. See also HSE no.142.

Evangelical pneumatology stressed the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of individuals to bring about salvation and sanctification. Methodist, Baptist and Free Brethren's teachings coincided on the understanding that the Spirit must empower the Christian for holiness and effective ministry. Also, the three groups concurred in emphasizing the role of the Holy Spirit in Bible inspiration and in believers' illumination to understand the Scriptures. Next to this, they stressed the Spirit's assistance to Christians during prayer and they formed believers in the regular practice of praying for the much desired-revival, which was expected as the result of the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.

In the twentieth century, when Pentecostalism emerged in Argentina, *los evangélicos* forcefully rejected its pneumatology, particularly opposing the exercise of glossolalia.⁶⁸²

6.3 Worship practices and formation for Christian life

Corporate worship, intentionally or not, forms individuals and the church in certain beliefs, values, and commitments toward God, themselves and humanity. Through words, symbols, and rites, public worship functions "as the primary vehicle through which the Christian community shapes individual human identity."⁶⁸³ Likewise, liturgy has formative power to build the church's identity, shaping how it sees itself and the world and how it envisions its mission and involvement in society.

⁶⁸² See for example, "El pentecostalismo o el movimiento de lenguas," *SC*, May 1925, 93-97.

⁶⁸³ Paul H. Jones, "Worship as Identity Formation," *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (April 1991): 50.

6.3.1 Worship and individual morality

The core of ethical formation is the building of a people with a distinctive moral identity as Christians in the world. Hence, we could ask for the main ethical identity-shaping meanings involved in worship practices in emerging Protestantism in Argentina.

First, believers were taught to have a new identity in Christ. *Converted* Christians were *new-born* beings. They had been made “children of God” (John 1:12; Gal. 3:26) and consequently, members of God’s family. Language during services reinforced this concept, addressing church members as brothers and sisters.⁶⁸⁴ This language pattern was especially prominent during the celebration of the Lord’s Supper:

Gathered as brothers
At the Lord’s Supper,
We already enjoy communion
Around the Savior.⁶⁸⁵

A new identity as a member of the family of the faith was of high significance to those who, due to a change of religious affiliation, were rejected by their blood family, friends or acquaintances. It was also significant to immigrants who did not have family ties in Argentina and were in great need of belonging to a community. From a socio-historical perspective, Paula Seiguer suggests that some new immigrants who converted to Protestantism were attracted by the hospitality of an open group with horizontal and democratic practices, which offered support in daily needs “and the possibility of denying the past through a ‘new birth’ and looking into the

⁶⁸⁴ Arnoldo Canclini observes that the use of the expression *hermano* (brother) in social settings among evangelicals in general and among pastors from different denominations became a sign of evangelical unity beyond the boundaries of local congregations. See Canclini “Unidad y diferencias,” 16.

⁶⁸⁵ “*Reunidos, cual hermanos, En la cena del Señor, Comunción ya disfrutamos, Rodeando al Salvador.*” First stanza of the hymn “*Reunidos como hermanos*” (Lit. “Gathered as brethren,” or “Gathered as brothers and sisters;” anonymous composer, tune by H.L. Hasler), H&CE no. 277. Hymn no. 366 from HSE is very similar and conveys the same idea. It is also by an anonymous composer, with tune attributed to Isaac B. Woodbury.

future.”⁶⁸⁶ This certainly may have been appealing for those struggling with adapting to a new life in Argentina, and might have reinforced in others sentiments of autonomy and independence through breaking with religious traditions from their past.

Second, formation in a new Christian identity meant that after conversion they were *saints*. Mateo Donati summarized evangelical preaching in these terms: “What evangelical ministers want [through their preaching] is the conversion of souls, the abandonment of the vices, and the growing perfection of the faithful.”⁶⁸⁷ Sanctification was the work of the Holy Spirit, but it also required from believers the adoption of a new a set of values and a change of habits, mostly in a moral sense. The highest expectation of a holy life was the quitting of vices and mundane customs. Public testimonies of conversion structured in a format such as “before Christ I was . . . and now I am . . .” became, in practice, a brief speech genre that facilitated lay active participation in any worship service, preferably in those of an evangelistic nature.⁶⁸⁸

Daniel Bruno claims that such a strong emphasis on counteracting vices created an opposite pole in the moral Protestant imagination of an idealized Christian home.⁶⁸⁹ This ideal home was promoted through preaching; wedding sermons; the celebration of Mother’s Day;

⁶⁸⁶ Paula Seiguer, “‘Ser de Cristo’: prácticas, ideas y recepción del protestantismo entre los sectores populares inmigrantes en Buenos Aires, c. 1870-1910,” *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos* 21, no. 62 (April 2007): 15-16.

⁶⁸⁷ “*Lo que quieren los ministros evangélicos es la conversión de las almas, la substracción de los vicios, y el aumento de la perfección en los fieles.*” Mateo Donati, “El culto. Sistema romano y sistema evangélico,” *EESA*, January 21, 1894, 5.

⁶⁸⁸ Varetto quotes these words of John F. Thomson: “One doesn’t need to be a scholar to be Christian, and a good, honest and useful one. Repentance and faith are enough to achieve the glorious personal experience that is called regeneration, a new moral and spiritual life in the joy the Spirit of God gives, in order that the recipient, who even not having education has a tongue, can testify of the immense change that has taken place in all his being for the glory of God.” Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 119-120. See also Varetto, *Discursos Evangélicos*, 81-82.

⁶⁸⁹ See Daniel Bruno, “Pulcritud de alma y de cuerpo. El hogar cristiano y la lucha contra el vicio en el ideario evangélico (1900-1950),” *Cuadernos de Teología* 22 (2003).

songs; and the expected regular practice of prayer, singing, and Bible reading in family devotions. Bruno adds that in this “home-paradise” the “evangelical Mother” played the central role, with the consequent extreme demand of perfection; mothers carried the main responsibility for the moral formation of the family and, by extension, of any possible social transformation.⁶⁹⁰

Preaching stressed the fact that, because of their sinful nature, human beings weren’t able to fight by themselves against the flesh, the devil, and the world; they needed the greater power of the gospel.⁶⁹¹ Spanish versions of hymns like “Power in the Blood” by Lewis E. Jones echoed this notion in congregational songs.⁶⁹² However, the overemphasis of discipline and right Christian behavior led to the development of an evangelical subculture with rigid and legalistic traits, which became more pervasive among the Free Brethren.⁶⁹³

Living such a holy life entailed using spiritual resources to defeat the enemy in any attack attempt: the Bible, and above all, prayer. As not every Christian knew how to read, prayer became “the most powerful weapon for a Christian to confront the world, the flesh and the devil, which alongside innumerable hosts incessantly fight against the children of God.”⁶⁹⁴ Effective prayer should be an expression of sincere devotion and ardent faith. “Sincere prayer is never lost,” John F. Thomson used to say.⁶⁹⁵ An emphasis on authenticity meant eschewing fixed

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid., 362-63.

⁶⁹¹ See, for example Varetto’s sermon on Romans 1:16 in Varetto, *Discursos Evangélicos*, 77-85.

⁶⁹² The Spanish version of this hymn, “¿Quieres ser libre del vicio?” was included in both Baptist and Free Brethren hymnals; see HSE no. 143 and H&CE no. 106.

⁶⁹³ See Roldán, “Comprensión de la realidad social,” (Ph.D. diss.), 195-197.

⁶⁹⁴ “siendo la oración el arma poderosísima con que el cristiano puede hacer frente al mundo, al demonio y la carne, que con sus innumerables huestes luchan incesantemente en contra de los hijos de Dios.” EESA, June 11, 1896, 180.

⁶⁹⁵ “No hay oración sincera. . . que se pierda.” Quoted in Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 120.

prayers in favor of a spontaneous practice. Catholics *rezan*; Protestants *oran*.⁶⁹⁶ Catholics recited their fixed and memorized prayers, but Protestants talked to God from their hearts:

Oh sweet, pleasant prayer!
To whom kindly listens
I address my petition.
To whom truly loves
I look forward to his blessing.
And I already enjoy his friendship.⁶⁹⁷

Third, evangelicals underscored that a new Christian identity offered a new meaning to life through joining the divine cause of spreading the gospel and saving other people's souls. Sermons, prayers, and hymns appealed to military imagery to shape believers' self-perception as agents of the kingdom of God in the fight for souls and for the truth, which involved disputing religious space with the Catholic Church.⁶⁹⁸ "Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before," are the first words of a hymn that well represents the spirit of the time.⁶⁹⁹ As Pablo Deiros observes, this military language expressed the

⁶⁹⁶ Even though most Spanish dictionaries consider these terms as synonyms, etymologically they are different. *Rezar* comes from the Latin *re-citare*, which etymologically implies the recitation of phrases by rote. *Orar* also comes from the Latin *orare* that literally means "to talk." *Rezar* was, and still is, the most common term used in Roman Catholicism in Spanish-speaking countries to name the practice of prayer, popularly conceived as recitation of the Our Father, or *Ave Maria*, or the entire rosary. In contrast, Protestants introduced the use of the term *orar* to name the practice of prayer according to their distinct understanding; it means talking to God from the heart and simultaneously stressing the contrast with Roman Catholic common prayer practice, which Protestants saw as lacking sincerity and being "vain repetition." For an example of this emphasis, see Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 122.

⁶⁹⁷ "¡Oh, dulce, grata oración! A quien escucha con bondad, Dirijo yo mi petición, A Dios, que ama con verdad. Espero yo su bendición. Y gozo ya su amistad." First stanza hymn, "¡Oh, dulce, grata oración!" This is an anonymous translation and adaptation of the hymn "Sweet hour of prayer" by William W. Walford and William B. Bradbury, included in both the Methodist and the Baptist hymnals. See HE no.51 and HSE no.256.

⁶⁹⁸ See, for example, these hymns *Soldados de Cristo, que estáis en la lid* (Soldiers of Christ, that are in combat), HSE no.359; *Soldados de Cristo, tened precaución* (Lit. "Soldiers of Christ, be cautious," by E. Martínez Garza), HSE no. 279; and *Soy yo soldado de Jesús* (Lit. "Am I a soldier of Jesus;" translation and adaption by Enrique Turrall of the hymn "Am I a Soldier of the Cross?" by Isaac Watts and Thomas A. Arne), H&CE no. 221 and HSE no.284.

⁶⁹⁹ The Spanish translation of this hymn was included in the hymnals of the three studied groups and functioned, and still does, as a kind of national anthem for Protestants in Argentina. With its third stanza declaring the unity of the church, this hymn was typically sung in most denominational and interdenominational meetings. See HE no.115; H&CE no. 173 and HSE no.274.

eschatological hopes of a “marginalized and sometimes persecuted” group that was growing in their consciousness of being an “oppressed and militant minority.”⁷⁰⁰

All believers were expected to take an active role in this mission; participating in home visits, tract distribution, works of charity, or open air or tent preaching events were some of the available opportunities. “Christians must confess Christ in every place where we find ourselves. We must talk about Him in factory workshops, offices, and wherever we find immortal souls; we must bear witness of our faith among our relatives, among our friends, and even among our enemies,” preached Baptist pastor Juan C. Varetto.⁷⁰¹

The result of this emphasis involved more openness to active female participation. Even though during this historical period Protestant women in the River Plate region were barred from pastorate, “in return they played a leading role in the missionary project of developing ‘civilizing works,’ especially in the creation of educational networks.”⁷⁰² Moreover, in 1918 the Baptists granted women full rights for acting as church delegates in the Assemblies of the Baptist Convention (CEBA).⁷⁰³ Thus, Protestantism held an ambivalent position toward women: on one hand keeping a conservative perspective in tune with the traditional surrounding culture; and on the other, impelling a countercultural progressive perspective influenced by the democratic ideas

⁷⁰⁰ Pablo Deiros, *El Protestantismo en América Latina. Ayer, hoy, y mañana* (Nashville, TN: Editorial Caribe, 1997), 60.

⁷⁰¹ “*Los cristianos debemos confesar a Cristo en todo lugar donde nos hallemos; debemos hablar de Él en los talleres, en las oficinas, y en cualquier sitio donde encontremos almas inmortales; debemos dar testimonio de nuestra fe entre nuestros parientes, entre nuestros amigos, y aún entre nuestros enemigos.*” Varetto, *Discursos Evangélicos*, 80.

⁷⁰² Norman Rubén Amestoy, “Las mujeres en el protestantismo rioplatense 1870-1930,” *Franciscanum* 54 no. 157 (January-June 2012): 55.

⁷⁰³ Sowell, *Por sendas de gloria y humildad*, 123. It was also in 1918 when women were allowed to serve as “messengers” (delegates) in the SBC. This marked a great advance compared to women’s suffrage in Argentina; female citizens were granted the right to vote only in 1949.

promoted by the American Second Awakening.⁷⁰⁴ In worship services among Baptist and Methodists, women were allowed to participate in public prayer and testimony, and specifically they became privileged instrumentalists; but they were banned from ordained ministry.⁷⁰⁵ Conversely, the Free Brethren did not permit any audible female participation in liturgy except for congregational or solo singing, based on a literal reading of 1 Corinthians 14:34: “Let your women keep silence in the churches.” Also, they were the strictest evangelicals on reinforcing modesty in female dress, which included the use of the veil in assembly meetings.⁷⁰⁶ These dress codes embodied their biblical literalism and the active resistance to worldliness.

In Christian service, the Bible was “the sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17). To use Bebbington’s terminology, evangelical *activism* was intimately connected to *biblicism*. The Scripture contained those “wonderful words of life;” it was the divinely inspired “Word of God” and the final authority in matters of faith and practice.⁷⁰⁷ Its message was thought to have such a regenerative power that just reading it could result in the new birth of the reader. In this sense, the work of the colporteurs was essentially seen as an evangelistic enterprise.

For those already converted, Scripture reading was a duty, so taught John F. Thomson: “It is a law without exception that one of the consequences of conversion is the development and strengthening of intelligence. This comes out from the fulfillment of an essential duty of every

⁷⁰⁴ For an extended analysis of this topic see Amestoy, “Las mujeres en el protestantismo rioplatense,” 51-81.

⁷⁰⁵ As early as 1896, the Methodist magazine published an article discussing the topic with a progressive view on the role of women in society and in the propagation of the gospel, but concluding that they should not be ordained as ministers because this is against the Scriptures. See “La mujer-ministro,” *EESA*, January 2, 1896, 3.

⁷⁰⁶ The Free Brethren magazine has several articles reinforcing this topic and even condemning dressing fashionably. See, for example, Jorge H. French, “¿Qué me pondré?,” *SC*, April 1917, 61-62.

⁷⁰⁷ This concept was reinforced by hymn singing. For example, the Spanish version of the hymn “Wonderful Words of Life” by Philip P. Bliss, translated and adapted by Julia A. Butler, may be found in H&CE no. 86 and HSE no. 289 under the title “*Oh, cantádmelas otra vez.*”

Christian: to search and to meditate on the content of the divine revelation we have in the Bible. It is imperative to ‘grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.’”⁷⁰⁸

In public worship the Bible had, literally, a central place; it became an increasingly common custom to place a large open Bible on the pulpit as the central focal point of the worship space. Through this symbol, attendees were visually reminded of the centrality of the Word of God. In some cases, this same message was reinforced with verses from the Scriptures printed on the walls.

In most churches, copies of the Bible were not typically found in the pews; believers were expected to bring their own Bible and hymnbook.⁷⁰⁹ That was another formative practice that communicated meaning: Bibles were not just to be read in Sunday worship services; the Word of God should be read daily, in private devotion, thus strengthening Christians to face everyday challenges and worldly temptations. In metaphoric language these believers heard that the Bible was the sword of the Spirit, and no soldier would leave his sword aside. Neatly dressed each Sunday to attend worship meetings and visibly carrying their own Bibles and hymnals, their bodies became primary witnesses of their evangelical piety. Walking from home to church and

⁷⁰⁸ “*Es una ley sin excepción que uno de los efectos de la conversión es el desarrollo y robustecimiento de la inteligencia. Esto resulta del cumplimiento de un deber imprescindible de todo cristiano, el escudriñar y meditar en el contenido de la revelación divina que tenemos en la Santa Biblia. Es imperativo el ‘crecer en la gracia y conocimiento de Jesucristo’.*” Quoted in Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 120-22.

⁷⁰⁹ Believers were expected to have their own copy of the Bible and the hymnal to take with them to the worship services and to use in their personal devotional time. For example, in the occasion of the first visit of a couple to missionary Hart’s congregation, he wrote: “I knew by the way they handled their Bible and hymn book [emphasis added] that they were Christians. A Bible and a hymn book are the inseparable companions of all who are converted from Roman Catholicism in Latin lands.” Hart, *Gospel Triumphs*, 131. The practice of each member carrying his own hymnbook was so extended that, for example, in an article reporting on the progress of the committee’s work on the soon to be published Baptist hymnal, missionary Quarles noted the importance of printing it in “the convenient format” which could be carried in one’s jacket pocket or handbag. James Quarles, “Movimiento de Libros,” *EB* 16, April 1, 1923, 5. A few years later, *El Expositor Bautista* published a series of article on worship in which it was reaffirmed that each believer should have their hymnal and carry it when attending worship services. Samuel Libert, “El Canto en Nuestras Reuniones,” *EB*, May 1942, 130-32, and Jose Díaz, “Los Hermanos sin Himnarios,” *EB*, November 1942, 338. See also Muskrat, “The Development of Music Ministry,” 69, 129-130.

back home with the black book beneath the arm became a symbol of these evangelicals who identified themselves as *the people of the book*.

The reverence for the Scriptures was also expressed in congregational singing, which in the Baptist case even included a hymn “to” the Bible: Pedro Castro’s Spanish translation of John’s Barton’s hymn “Holy Bible, Book Divine.”⁷¹⁰ It could be argued that for many new converts coming from a Catholic piety strongly shaped around visual images and religious objects to a drastic iconoclastic evangelical spirituality, the Bible—and maybe also the hymnbook—became the only allowed material entity that could unconsciously fill the need for an emotional bond to objects of religious devotion.⁷¹¹

The promotion of personal and direct contact of each believer with the Bible was clearly aligned with modern liberal ideals of individual autonomy and of a more horizontal and democratizing ecclesial model of access to knowledge and to God. But this practice required at least a basic literacy that a large number of people lacked; the urgency to satisfy this need fueled an early Protestant commitment to increasing and improving educational opportunities for the general public.

6.3.2 Worship and social ethics

The last paragraph above leads us to consider the views of these evangelicals on society and the world which shaped their worship practices and were simultaneously embodied in their liturgies. In general, Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren concurred on three ideas: first,

⁷¹⁰ The Baptist hymnal included a literal translation of this hymn “to” the Bible by Pedro Castro (HSE no.287), while the Free Brethren’s adaptation changed it to speak of the Bible in the third person singular, “The Bible Is to Me a Holy Treasure Here” (H&CE no.407), thus avoiding what could be considered a bibliolatric practice.

⁷¹¹ For a deep analysis on the importance of symbols and objects in religious emotions, see Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead, *A Sociology of Religious Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Argentine society in general lacked moral values, which was an obstacle for progress and wellbeing; second, Catholicism—the religion of the majority—was insufficient to counteract sinfulness (and even worse, tolerant of it), and its retrograde practices kept people oppressed by ignorance and poverty; and third, moral transformation of converted individuals could bring change to the nation. In sum, culture and religion were not dissociated, so the main battle for the souls and for ethical transformation under the modernizing paradigm was fought against Romanism, and conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism implicitly meant transitioning from a traditional society into modernity.⁷¹²

Ascetic social values pervaded worship services as well the pages of denominational periodicals, reports, and other writings; for example:

Our enemies are the papacy, sensualism, love of pleasure more than love of God. I refer to the race course, ball-room, opera or theater, and some other forms of diversion, which, as mighty currents, carry upon their bosoms a large part of the population.⁷¹³

The attitude of the great numbers of people toward work of any kind is the secret of the popularity of gambling in its many forms. The ideal of thousands is to get something for nothing.⁷¹⁴

Behind these types of comments lay typical principles of the Protestant work ethic, for which the responsible use of time and resources and an austere and industrious lifestyle were

⁷¹² Some primary sources are pretty reveling on how missionaries understood the relationship between conversion and civilization. For example, Emilio Olsson, a Swedish independent evangelical missionary and colporteur, wrote on his ministry in the Argentine pampas: “At one meeting I asked all who wished to be saved to raise their hands, and all raised their hands; and then I asked all who wished to be saved to kneel, and all knelt. They all professed to accept Christ; but to find out the reality of their conversion, we went to see their homes, for superstition and dirt go hand in hand in South America, and I tried to teach them to be clean as well as to be Christians. When their homes were swept, and the pigs outside, and the children washed, we believed the work of God was going on.” Emilio Olsson, *The Dark Continent . . . At Our Doors: Slavery, Heathenism and Cruelty in South America* (New York: M. E. Munson Publisher, 1899), 45.

⁷¹³ Thomas Spight, “Annual Report of the Argentine Mission,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1909* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1909): 83.

⁷¹⁴ Sidney M. Sowell, “Argentine Mission Annual Report,” *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1916* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO, 1916): 153.

desirable signs of piety.⁷¹⁵ Interestingly, most worship practices described in previous chapters with regards to time could be framed from this perspective as implicit formation on a disciplined life, a central value in modern forms of work and social organization. These stanzas from the Baptist hymnal are a good example of counter-cultural formation in the Protestant work ethic:

Rise up, Christian,
Rise up and work;
Do not let your life
Be spent in inaction.
He who lives at leisure,
The Maker outrages;
He does not comply with his duties
He does not fulfill his mission.

Work for the world,
Work for heaven,
Sowing the good deeds,
Sowing profusely.
Work is virtue,
Relief and true comfort.
And in it we always find
God's blessing.⁷¹⁶

This Protestant ideal coincided with a liberal political agenda, which favored European immigration as a mean to counteract “*criolla* laziness” and develop a work culture; both agreed on the key role of public education to forge a new type of “civilized” and virtuous Argentine citizen.⁷¹⁷ Protestants saw education as “needful for the moral training in such countries;” in the

⁷¹⁵ For an outstanding work on Protestant piety and its attitudes towards festivals and entertainment in Argentina and Uruguay, see Norman Rubén Amestoy, “Festivals, Entertainment, and Pleasure in the Protestantism of the Río de la Plata Region, 1875-1900,” *Journal of Latin American Theology: Christian Reflections from the Latino South*, 6 no. 2 (2011): 187-210.

⁷¹⁶ “(1) *Levántate, cristiano, Levántate y trabaja; No dejes que tu vida, Se pase en la inacción. El que en el ocio vive, Al Hacedor ultraja; No llena sus deberes, Ni cumple su misión.* (3) *Trabaja para el mundo, Trabaja para el cielo, Sembrando buenas obras, Sembrando en profusión. Virtud es el trabajo, Alivio y fiel consuelo, Y siempre en él se encuentra, De Dios la bendición.*” First and third stanzas of the hymn *Levántate, cristiano* (Lit. “Rise up, Christian!;” lyrics by D.H.M., tune by Howard Kingsbury), HSE no. 286.

⁷¹⁷ See Lucía Lioentti, “*La función republicana de la escuela pública: la formación del ciudadano en Argentina a fines del siglo XIX,*” *Revista Mexicana de Investigación Educativa* 10 no. 27 (September 2005): 1236, 1245.

words of British Baptist missionary and educator F. Lister Newton.⁷¹⁸ He added, “Those who have been in the Continent will have some idea of the awful state of morality in Roman Catholic countries, and Argentina is no better than these.”⁷¹⁹ This model of a moralizing and civilizing education shaped Protestant mission efforts in both Christian and public education.⁷²⁰ On the first, almost all congregations offered at least a Sunday school program for children as the number of Bible study programs for adults grew. On the second, beyond the pioneer work of Baptist James Thomson in introducing the Bible in the school system, Methodists were exemplary in their educational commitment particularly toward the most relegated sectors of society, which included large numbers of poor new immigrants.⁷²¹ In both cases, evangelicals believed in the formative power of the practice of prayer and hymn singing for an evangelistic education. Proof of this was the publication of books of songs and prayers specifically to be used in educational settings; for example, *Canciones y Oraciones para las Escuelas Evangelicas Argentinas* (Songs and Prayers for Argentine Evangelical Schools) and *El Himnario de la*

⁷¹⁸ F. Lister Newton, “Our Work in Tandil,” *All Nations* (February 1904): 53.

⁷¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷²⁰ Besides Protestant involvement in Argentine education as part of its missionary efforts, other unplanned Protestant contributions to Argentine education unfolded when Domingo F. Sarmiento, the father of Argentine public common education and a Roman Catholic and Freemason, based his educational reform on the school system of Massachusetts. To implement this reform, he hired American teachers, the majority of which were Protestant evangelical women. Therefore, the Argentine public education reform at the end of nineteenth century heavily relied on these women, who left footprints of Protestant values and moral views. For more on this topic, see Julio Crespo, *Las maestras de Sarmiento* (Béccar: Grupo Abierto Comunicaciones, 2007); Alice Houston Luiggi, *Sesenta y cinco valientes: Sarmiento y las maestras norteamericanas* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Ágora, 1959); A.F. Faust, “The Influence of the United States upon the Developing Argentine Normal School,” *History of Education Journal* 2 no. 2 (Winter 1951): 62-64; and Dorothy Dee Bailey, “Early History of the Argentine Normal Schools,” *Peabody Journal of Education* 36 no. 1 (July 1958): 16-26

⁷²¹ For a more detailed study see Norman Rubén Amestoy, “Las escuelas evangélicas argentinas de William C. Morris, 1898-1910,” *Cuadernos de Teología* 23 (2004): 111-140. As will be discussed later, the Free Brethren emphasis on separation from the world may have influenced his weak involvement in public education compared to other denominations. In contrast, they committed to great efforts in Bible distribution, trusting in the power of the Scriptures to change readers’ morals.

Escuela Dominical (The Sunday School Hymnal), an interdenominational hymnbook whose publication was sponsored by The World Sunday School Association.⁷²²

But above all, at the core of the Protestant education model was the Bible. Protestant ethics derived from the Scriptures were considered fundamental for the progress of the nations in contrast to Catholic Bible illiteracy, which caused weak social morality and underdevelopment.

For example, Andres Murray Milne, known as “the prince of colporteurs,” wrote:⁷²³

When we are asked for the cause of the existing differences between Anglo-Saxon America and Latin America, our explanation is that it is not a matter of race, but of principles. . . . With the Bible in hand, and because of the Bible, English Puritans came to America to found their country, and in that powerful state we have the proof of what Latin America would have been if in its foundations the same class of materials had been put.⁷²⁴

Similarly, Methodist Lino Abeledo said:

The goodness of Protestantism is not the Protestants themselves, but the Bible, which Protestantism has made its own and who carries a flag saying “open Bible”. . . . The Bible is on the side of progress. . . . Its popularization and knowledge is a guarantee for social order. It is a sanitizing and vivifying sun. . . . Romanism knows this, and hence it is committed to move the people away from it.⁷²⁵

⁷²² See *Canciones y Oraciones para las Escuelas Evangélicas Argentinas* (Buenos Aires, 1904) *Canciones patrióticas, escolares, cristianas y del hogar para el uso de las escuelas* (Buenos Aires: Escuelas e Institutos Filantrópicos Argentinos, 1926) and *El Himnario de la Escuela Dominical* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta Metodista, 1926). For more details on the latter, see Sosa, “Apuntes para la cronología,” 59.

⁷²³ Lit.: “el príncipe de los colportores.” Milne was dubbed this way by Free Brethren missionary James Clifford. For more details on the life of Andrés Milne, see David R. Powell, “Andrés Milne,” accessed August 6, 2015, http://www.kairos.org.ar/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=907&catid=90%3Aarticulos-de-la-revista-iglesia-y-mision&Itemid=156

⁷²⁴ “Cuando se nos pregunta la causa de las diferencias existentes entre la América Anglosajona y la América Latina, nuestra explicación es que no es cuestión de razas, sino de principios. . . . Con la Biblia en la mano, y por causa de la Biblia, los puritanos ingleses vinieron a América para fundar su patria, y en ese mismo poderoso estado tenemos la prueba de lo que hubiera sido de América Latina si sus cimientos hubieran sido puestos con la misma clase de materiales.” Inés Milne, *Desde el cabo de Hornos hasta Quito con la Biblia* (Buenos Aires, La Aurora, 1944), 148-149. Quoted in Norman Rubén Amestoy, “El reformismo social metodista en el Río de la Plata y sus raíces ideológicas,” *Cuadernos de Teología* 20 (2001): 360.

⁷²⁵ “La bondad del protestantismo no está en los protestantes, sino en la Biblia, que el protestantismo ha hecho suya y lleva en su bandera escrito «Biblia abierta». . . . la Biblia está del lado del progreso. . . . Su popularización y conocimiento es una garantía de orden social. Es un sol higienizador a la vez que vivificador. . . . El romanismo sabe esto, y de aquí su empeño en alejar de ella al pueblo.” Lino Abeledo, *Campaña Anticlerical*,

Formation in Christian values based on the Scriptures marked a distance from the secularizing liberal agenda and its faith in human progress through education only. *Los evangélicos* actively engaged in educational endeavors, yet mission as evangelism was the primary goal. Conversion should produce moral transformation, but secular moral education was unable to result in regeneration. This position became even more evident by the end of the studied historical period, in the emergence of the social gospel. An article in the Baptist magazine said:

We oppose the propaganda that denies the supernatural work and advocates a natural development, making education and civilization to take the place of regeneration and justification by faith in Christ; it says that if you change the environment of man, he will change without “being born again”. . . . We believe that the way to achieve social improvements . . . is to preach the pure gospel of Jesus Christ to make as many converts as possible and so achieving the sanitation of “body, family and home” and the municipality and government too.⁷²⁶

Evangelical worship formed believers as citizens of a heavenly kingdom. They were taught to see the world as an evil place that they should keep their distance from in order to live a holy life:

I leave the world and I follow Christ
Because the world will pass;
But his love, his blessed love,
Will last forever.⁷²⁷

librada en los siguientes puntos: Jujuy, Córdoba, Paraná, Rosario de S. Fe, Concordia, La Plata, Buenos Aires (La Plata: La Nueva, 1909), 361-63.

⁷²⁶ “*Nos oponemos a la propaganda que niega la obra sobrenatural y aboga por un desarrollo natural; que hace la educación y la civilización tomar el lugar de la regeneración y la justificación por la fe en Cristo; que dice que si cambia el medio ambiente del hombre se cambiará el hombre sin «nacer de nuevo». . . . creemos que la manera de conseguir mejoras sociales... es predicar el evangelio puro Jesucristo para conseguir el mayor número de convertidos posible y así conseguir el saneamiento del «cuerpo, familia y hogar» y del municipio y gobierno también.*” Robert F. Elder, “El Evangelio Social,” *EB*, January 6, 1923, 3.

⁷²⁷ “*Dejo el mundo y sigo a Cristo, Porque el mundo pasará; Mas su amor, amor bendito, Por los siglos durará.*” First stanza, hymn “Dejo el mundo y sigo a Cristo,” (Lit. “I leave the world and I follow Christ”). See HSE no.225 and H&CE no.201. Translation and adaptation by Vicente Mendoza of the hymn “Take the World but Give Me Jesus,” by Fanny J. Crosby and John R. Sweney.

The strict practice of this tenet was a mark of the Free Brethren. As a result, their involvement in society, beyond active evangelism, was almost exclusively through acts of charity, especially inspired by the example of George Müller. But otherwise they abstained from any form of political participation.⁷²⁸ Curiously, it could seem a priori paradoxical that they taught withdrawal from the world and simultaneously subjection to the governmental powers.⁷²⁹ However, the logic was sustained in their Bible literalism, which also drove their regular commitment to pray for the established authorities.⁷³⁰ They radically opposed socialism and anarchism: they alleged the latter obstructed Bible distribution and evangelism.⁷³¹ “Socialism threatens the gospel,” said Jorge French, “Socialist principles are completely incompatible with the doctrines of Christ; they are 'seductive doctrines of demons' (1 Tim. 4:1).”⁷³² Brethren also condemned believers' participation in labor movements and strikes.⁷³³ Their position toward society was summarized by Walter Drake, “The disciples of Christ must follow their Master's

⁷²⁸ The Free Brethren in Argentina reproduced the teaching of the British Brethren on this matter. See Elizabeth Wilson, “Your Citizenship in Heaven: Brethren Attitudes to Authority and Government,” *Brethren Archivists and Historians Network Review* 2 (2003): 75-90.

⁷²⁹ For an extended study on social perspectives of Free Brethren in Argentina, see Roldán, “Comprensión de la realidad social,” (Ph.D. diss.), 189-238.

⁷³⁰ On subjection to public authorities, see for example, Gilberto Lear, “El Cristianismo y el mundo,” *SC*, June 1916, 111-12.

⁷³¹ See, for example, the report on Argentina, which quotes the words of colporteur and Free Brethren leader Charles Kirby Torre, *The Hundred and Fourth Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 1908*, 360.

⁷³² “*El socialismo amenaza el evangelio. . . . Los principios socialistas son completamente incompatibles con las doctrinas de Cristo; son, sí, 'seductoras doctrinas de demonios' (1 Tim.4:1).*” Jorge H. French, “Alrededor del socialismo,” *SC*, June 1919, 104. See also Water Drake, “¿Fue el Señor socialista?,” *SC*, January 1920, 7-11.

⁷³³ For instance, they were drastically opposed to a major railroad workers' strike in 1917. In this case it should be also considered that most railway companies were of British capital, and counted with sympathies among several British Brethren missionaries. See Gilberto Lear, “La huelga ferroviaria,” *SC*, September 1917, 175-76. On Christians and labor unions see, for example, Jaime Clifford, “El individuo y los gremios obreros,” *SC*, August 1920, 185-88.

footsteps; they should not try to reform a fallen, perverted and lost world, but to turn away from it and to preach the gospel of God's grace."⁷³⁴ Separated from the world, their hopes were placed in the second coming of the Lord and in eternal life in heaven.

Methodist social ethical praxis sharply contrasted with the Free Brethren's radical withdrawal from the world; Methodists believed that their mission was both to save souls and to reform society.⁷³⁵ Converted individuals were continuously taught by all means to refrain from vices and "worldly entertainments and pleasures" because they were not only sinful but "barbaric," and, as such, they hindered "civilization."⁷³⁶ Simultaneously Methodists carried out active campaigns oriented to raise awareness in the general public on these social evils. The most iconic example of this type of social ethical praxis was the Temperance Movement. A Methodist hallmark, the Temperance Movement permeated liturgy and influenced not only the preaching on the subject but also congregational singing. Examples of the latter were the translation into Spanish of hymns such as "Who Hath Sorrow" or "Sign the Pledge" by J. R. Sweeney.⁷³⁷ Methodists were also actively involved in advocacy for the separation between church and state, Sunday rest, animal protection, and warfare. In these endeavors they wove a network of strategic alliances with anticlerical Argentines: Liberals, Free Masons, and later, the Socialists.⁷³⁸

⁷³⁴ Water Drake directed the Free Brethren printing house in Argentina from 1904 to 1946. Quoted in Roldán, "Historia y posicionamientos sociopolíticos," 69.

⁷³⁵ Amestoy claims that this proves the influence on Argentine Methodism of American Social Reform movements emerged after 1840s inspired by the Second Great Awakening. See Amestoy, "El reformismo social metodista," 343-60.

⁷³⁶ See Amestoy, "Festivals, Entertainment, and Pleasure," 197-98.

⁷³⁷ Translated into Spanish and published in *El Himmario de la Escuela Dominical* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta Metodista, 1926), 195-197; Hymns no.161 (*¿Para quién el ay?*) and no.162 (*El voto*). See also hymns no.163 (*No queremos bebidas que matan*) and no.164 (*¡Afuera la copa!*).

⁷³⁸ See Bruno, "Mission Outside the Walls," 197-206.

For their part, Baptists fought alongside Methodists in favor of the “secularizing civil laws” and complete separation between church and state. Besides active advocacy—where Besson played a key role through his articles published in the national press—these topics permeated Baptist preaching and public speech. Through their church administrative assemblies, Baptists also formed their members in democratic values and practices that for most of the period here studied were denied to general citizenship.⁷³⁹

But beyond the aforementioned distinctive emphasis, Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren concurred in the belief that conversion of individuals could solve social problems. New converts became harder workers, able to save money that was not spent on vices and sinful entertainments, thus improving the family’s financial situation and even allowing people to share with the needy. Methodist Rev. Thomson argued this perspective: “We are seeing the results of our message through the radical change taking place in the customs of the converted: hatred of vice, love of work, love of neighbor, honesty and sincerity in all relationships with society, obedience to authority and respect to elders, peace and harmony at home, in the name of the Most Holy Lord Jesus Christ.”⁷⁴⁰

⁷³⁹ This feature also impacted Methodism. Amestoy argues that the pyramidal and clerical traditional Methodist ecclesiology substantially softened in Rio de la Plata due to a more democratic consciousness of the clergy and because their pervasive anticlerical speech against Roman Catholicism could have been interpreted as hypocritical if they did not exercise power in a more democratic way. See Amestoy, “El pensamiento teológico,” 21-22.

⁷⁴⁰ “*Estamos palpando los frutos de nuestra propaganda por el cambio radical que se opera en las costumbres de los convertidos: odio al vicio, amor al trabajo, amor al prójimo, honradez y sinceridad en todas las relaciones con la sociedad, obediencia a la autoridad y respeto a los mayores, paz y concordia en casa, en el nombre del santísimo Señor Jesucristo.*” Quoted in Varetto, *El apóstol del Plata*, 118.

6.3.3 Worship and culture

An analysis of Protestant worship and culture needs to take into consideration the fact that Protestantism arrived in Argentina in a time when the local society was experiencing its deepest transformation, fueled by the effects of massive waves of European immigration. The latter was a main strategy of the Liberal elites who ruled Argentina during most of the historical period here studied, precisely to introduce social changes compatible with the transformation they envisioned for the nation. The culture of the traditional society the Liberals countered had been strongly shaped by the Spaniards and was, in essence, Roman Catholic. In fact, traditional local culture was so deeply intertwined with Catholicism that each one's beliefs, traditions, and values became almost indistinguishable.

In this cultural tension, the Liberals saw in Protestantism a modern religion that could become an ally in propelling the wished-for cultural change, countering the traditional Catholic mentality. And certainly, Protestants saw themselves in a similar way. Their negative assessment of both Argentine Roman Catholicism and local traditional culture, added to their attachment to the theology and practices from their contexts of origin, shaped Protestantism as a countercultural movement. Liturgically this counterculturality was expressed in the usage of imported forms and contents without much effort towards inculturation, except for the adoption of the vernacular language. Local art and music, two basic elements of any culture, were disregarded in ecclesial architecture and hymnody, and any expression of popular religiosity was rigidly countered as syncretic and superstitious.⁷⁴¹ Lecture hall architectural style, foreign hymnody accompanied by European organs, and the centrality of the Bible-based sermon were

⁷⁴¹ For more on popular Catholic practices in Argentina at the end of the nineteenth century, see Nicolás Grranada, "Los días santos," *Caras y Caretas*, March 25, 1899, 13-14.

all countercultural liturgical elements appropriated more for modern sensibilities than for the local traditional religiosity. These features proved what Westerfield Tucker observed in her study on liturgical migrations: the tendency of the second-generation church to preserve the liturgies of the originating denomination.⁷⁴² A more comprehensive Protestant liturgical *argentinization* would be the challenge of the subsequent generations of believers.⁷⁴³

6.4 Conclusion

It is probably not a surprise that the study of the worship practices of Methodists, Baptists, and Free (Christian) Brethren in emerging Protestantism in Argentina reveals overarching continuities with their corresponding foreign traditions. In the end, Protestantism came to these lands by the hands of North American and European missionaries and immigrants who tended to replicate what they believed was “true” worship: a service featured by the tenets of nineteenth-century Evangelicalism and the Second Great Awakening.

But even much less perceptible, discontinuities can be also found. After all, it is reasonable to expect that the transplanting or grafting of a communal practice from one society into another resulted in some change. Perhaps the most obvious examples of this change may be noted in how the vivid anti-Catholicism Protestants upheld in the Argentine context reshaped most of their worship practices. They went to the extreme of creating a new Protestant liturgical language to differentiate their practices from the Roman Catholic’s: *orar* (to pray) instead of *rezar*; *culto* instead of mass; the Lord’s Supper or the Holy Supper instead of the Eucharist; and so forth. The extended use of a common worship language next to the development of a similar

⁷⁴² See Westerfield Tucker, “Methodism’s ‘World Parish,’” 131-154.

⁷⁴³ The work of Pablo Sosa is an example of positive liturgical enculturation in Argentine Methodism. See C. Michael Hawn, *Gathering into One: Praying and Singing Globally* (Grand Rapids, MI-Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 32-71.

pattern of worship –el *culto evangélico* (evangelical worship) –brought about a new *evangélica* subculture in which denominationalism played a secondary role.

This assertion does not pretend to invalidate each group's uniqueness. For example, a major difference among the three groups noticeable throughout this investigation concerns the rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper. For the Methodists, they were sacraments; for Baptists and Brethren, ordinances. Methodists practiced infant and adult baptism; Baptists and Brethren, adult baptism and by immersion only. Methodists recognized Roman Catholic baptism; Baptist and Brethren did not. For Methodists, baptism was a means of grace, a sign of regeneration which not necessarily presupposed conversion; in the case of baptized infants, they were expected to grow in their faith after baptism towards Christian perfection. For Baptists and Free Brethren, baptism should be administered to believers after a personal experience of conversion. For Baptists, this was also an initiation rite into church membership; for the Brethren, baptism acquired the significance of an outward sign of separation from the world. Likewise, the three groups showed significant differences in the frequency, meaning, and right recipients and proper celebrants of the Lord's Supper. The fact that these distinctions concerned the two main Christian rites enables us to say that they must have functioned as the primary conveyers and shapers of denominational particular identities in public worship.

Furthermore, worship practices in emerging Protestantism in Argentina were of significant importance in the formation of believers' personal values and ethical views on how they and the church should engage with society. In this respect Protestant *political worship* evidenced robust continuities with nineteenth-century North American and British Evangelicalism. In its own way Methodists, Baptists and Free Brethren coincided in the belief that social problems would be solved through individuals' transformation resulting from

conversion, regeneration, and sanctification. Accordingly, Protestant worship formed Christian citizens as civilizing agents responsible for living with impeccable virtue and committed to active proselytism.

In spite of the similarities, we should not overlook their differences, in which the North American influence on Methodists and Baptists played a crucial role eliciting contrasting social views between these two groups and the Free Brethren. Thus, Methodists and Baptists in Argentina stressed democratic values and social reform, and held an optimistic belief in human social progress through an education based in Christian values, convictions which converged with the modernizing project of the Liberal-Freemason alliance. In contrast, Free Brethren's dispensationalism and anti-worldliness made them reluctant to political participation and social activism beyond works of Christian charity and education. Not surprisingly, their position regarding to women evidenced the same trends. Whereas North American influence on Methodists and Baptists made them foster female active participation in worship services, except for any role reserved to ordained clergy, the Brethren went to the other extreme of banning women of speaking or praying aloud in the assemblies and required of them the usage of veil as a sign of submission.

Differences in matters of women in worship services seem to evidence a broader contrast between North American and European traditions. Arnaldo Canclini remarks that whereas the European custom was that men and women sat in different sides of the temple (women, left side; men, right side), in the North American churches families sat together.⁷⁴⁴ These imported customs were maintained by the churches in Argentina according to their origins.

⁷⁴⁴ See Canclini, *Cuatrocientos años*, 214, 329.

We must also note that throughout the years studied here *political worship* was reshaped by the social change occurred inside the Protestant community. In the unique Argentine context of deep economic and social transformation, Protestant personal and work ethics seemed to have facilitated the upward social mobility aspired to by most believers who came from the immigrant sector. This shift resulted in the emergence of an evangelical subculture with a middle-class mentality which was perpetuated in a worship service fitted to that constituency.

The aforementioned leads us to considering the complex relationship between worship and culture during this period. Any expectation on intentional worship inculturation as understood nowadays would be an anachronism. Protestant emergence in Argentina was the fruit of the mission model of the Enlightenment, which was undeniably forged by the colonial mentality of Western cultural superiority. Notwithstanding, cross-cultural mission in this paradigm revolved around the intelligibility of the message, which translated in the fomenting of vernacular worship. Vernacular worship also demonstrated that Protestants did believe in the formative nature of worship, but they confined formation to the intellect ignoring the pedagogical power of symbols, gestures, music, and the arts in general. A good example of this trait was the common decision by the three groups of translating hymn lyrics but keeping the foreign tunes.

According to the Christian worship approach we have followed in this dissertation all worship is formative, both the explicit and the non-verbal and more subtle messages. When we consider altogether that Protestant worship, even though held in the vernacular language, did not incorporate positively other elements from the indigenous culture, and that the pervasive explicit message was that of criticism and categorical resistance to a great number of popular customs

and local expressions of religiosity, it is not great stretch to say that the overarching formation through worship was of a counter-cultural nature.

Finally, we will resume the central assumption of this dissertation; that is, that worship is a formative Christian practice par excellence. After examining the worship practices of Methodist, Baptists, and Free Brethren in their emergence Argentina we can conclude that a constant pedagogy developed through worship shaped the identity of *los evangélicos*, a people who understood itself as the “true” Christian community responsible for bringing the light of the Gospel to a country in darkness, fighting the good fight of faith until the Lord comes.

Onward Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before!⁷⁴⁵

⁷⁴⁵ Refrain of the hymn “Onward Christian Soldiers;” lyrics by Sabine Baring-Gould and tune by Arthur Sullivan.

General Conclusions and Future Work

7.1 Introduction

This dissertation set out to explore the history of the worship practices of Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren in emerging Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930). The study has also sought to unveil the theology and ethics embodied in and shaped by those worship practices, with attention to their formative power in that particular social, cultural, historical, and religious context.

Framed by formative worship theory, the study sought to answer these questions: 1) What were worship practices like in emerging Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930)? 2) What were the theology and ethics embodied and shaped by those worship practices, with attention to their formative power in that particular social, cultural, historical, and religious context?

In order to answer these questions, this research focused on three evangelical groups that pioneered Spanish-language services in emerging Protestantism in Argentina: Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren.

7.2 Research Findings

The main findings of this dissertation are chapter-specific and were summarized within the respective chapters: chapter 3 described common worship practices in the Methodist Church, while chapters 4 and 5 recounted most typical worship practices among Baptist and Free Brethren congregations, respectively. The interpretative analysis is found in chapter 6.

This section will synthesize the main findings to answer the two research questions of this dissertation:

1) What were worship practices like in emerging Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930)?

Beyond typical features of the traditions addressed in each corresponding chapter, the worship practices of Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren reveal broad similarities. With the exception of Free Brethren's weekly service of Breaking of Bread, the liturgical pattern was identical, structured in three movements: opening, sermon, and call, all done in a simple style that resisted fixed patterns and promoted extemporaneous practices. For all three, liturgical time revolved around the weekly calendar centered on the Lord's Day, and evangelism permeated most worship occasions and liturgical rites. Ecclesiastical buildings, generally designed as lecture halls, reflected the centrality of the Word in public service. Anti-Catholic sensibilities were reflected in the iconoclasm of evangelical churches' architecture, and austere décor was considered the most conducive aesthetic to pointing attendees toward gospel truth in contrast to Roman Catholic syncretism. Likewise, fixed prayers were considered ritualistic and vain repetition, and were eschewed in favor of sincerity, identified by spontaneous speaking to God from the heart.

Preaching was the worship services' heart. The use of the vernacular was a remarkable innovation in times when the Catholic mass was only performed in Latin. The clear communication of a Christocentric and biblical message was highly regarded; evangelism and believers' edification were its main objectives. Controversial speech, especially polemic against Catholic errors, was a hallmark of early evangelicalism.

Next to the sermon, hymn singing represented an unprecedented novelty in Argentina, and was a primary form of congregational participation. Hymnbooks were largely comprised of translated hymns composed in the United States or Europe; almost no local composers emerged

in these times, and similarly church music did not incorporate local instruments or tunes. Being the only liturgical printed text besides the Bible, hymnals were fundamental resources in Protestant theological and ethical formation in that unique context.

2) What were the theology and ethics embodied and shaped by those worship practices, with attention to their formative power in that particular social, cultural, historical, and religious context?

Theologically, worship practices shaped those communities in the typical features of nineteenth-century Evangelicalism. Doctrinal formation in worship was fundamentally Christocentric, with a strong soteriological Christology and a pervasive stress on individuals' conversion. Christ the only Mediator, the beloved friend, the Redeemer, and the Savior, were the most prominent Christological images used in public worship. The soteriological stress tended to underplay the humanity of Christ; a trait that was more persistent for the Free Brethren. The iconic liturgical embodiment of the *conversionist* emphasis was the Revival style, imported by missionaries from nineteenth-century American Frontier worship—other sign of continuity with foreign theology and worship practices.

Theology in emerging Protestantism in Argentina was also vividly anti-Catholic; this feature imbued and shaped most liturgical practices and contributed to the formation of a similar evangelical identity transversal to denominationalism and developed in opposition to Roman Catholicism. This otherness in conjunction with evangelical activism and eschatological hopes created a sense of spiritual militancy reinforced by the usage of evocative military imagery in worship. All the efforts, struggles, and sufferings involved in this life profession were well worth compared to the heavenly recompense of eternal life—a major theme in its evangelical hymnody.

Ethical formation in liturgy was in accordance with the aforementioned theological emphasis which in all cases reflected a particular regard for the Bible and the extended belief in the power of Scripture reading to bring about salvation and sanctification. Personal morality was expected to testify to true conversion, primarily through a disciplined life and the abandonment of sinful habits and customs, which, more or less veiled, was a critical response to cultural or nominal Roman Catholics. Social ethics were seen as a continuity of the conversionist perspective; evangelism was at the core of their involvement in society, and social transformation was expected to be the logical consequence of born-again individuals' regeneration. Particularly through hymnody, worship practices conveyed a strict asceticism; still, of the three groups, the Free Brethren were especially noteworthy for a radical emphasis in anti-worldliness, which in conjunction with a persistent focus on the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, resulted in an individual legalistic morality and in a communal withdrawal from the world. In contrast to the latter, the Methodists were the most vigorously involved in social reform—an evidence of the influence of American Methodism. Likewise, the American influence over Methodists and Baptists in Argentina led these denominations to promote democratic practices and to empower female active participation in church worship, which represented a countercultural position for the majority of society, yet aligned with the Liberal elites' modernizing project.

In sum, beyond the contrasts underscored in this dissertation, the worship practices of the Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren in emerging Protestantism in Argentina reveal that their similarities contributed to the development of a broader common evangelical identity opposed to Roman Catholicism. This period was not one of significant variation; continuity and

stability characterized the worship of these three groups during their first decades in Argentina. Change and innovation will come later.

7.3 Contributions of this dissertation

The worship practices of non-liturgical Protestant churches in Argentina is an understudied topic. To date no publications addressing this study's specific subject are available. Therefore, this dissertation primarily makes an original contribution to the scant literature on liturgical studies in Argentina (liturgical history, theology, ethics, and catechesis) and their findings may be of great interest to this specific scholarly field as well as to other academic fields that may benefit from this investigation, such as history of Protestantism in Argentina, missiology, Christian education, and Argentine history in general.

Further, this dissertation has employed a less common research methodology in the field of liturgical studies. The most prominent theoretical approaches in the field of liturgical studies emerged from scholars mostly identified with Roman Catholic or Protestant "High Church" liturgical traditions which generally work with fixed liturgies and common written liturgical texts. Main characteristics of long-established methods in this field can be summarized as follows: 1) are text-oriented; 2) tend to prioritize the *ordo* or structure in worship as a key hermeneutical tool for doing liturgical theology; and 3) tend to normativity. This dissertation, instead, opted for a phenomenological approach which primarily surveys outward and visible worship practices and to this end relies on non-traditional primary sources that reflect different people's worship experiences and beliefs. Therefore, this work has the potential to also contribute as a methodological model for future investigations. Likewise, the analytical work done in this dissertation, framed in formative worship theory, may encourage further studies and

deeper reflection on the implications of liturgies as formative practices in other liturgical contexts.

7.4 Recommendations for future research

As a result of this study, further research might well be conducted in order to widen this study to other Protestant churches contemporary to denominations here studied, which might add new primary sources and provide valuable findings for further comparative analysis with the potential of verifying or challenging some of this work's conclusions.

Other promising directions for future investigation might be the temporal extension of this study to examine the developments since 1930. This broader diachronic approach has the potential to examine the evolution of worship practices in Protestantism and to provide critical analysis of great relevance to understand recent changes in evangelical worship in Argentina.

Future studies might also be directed to a geographical expansion. Similar investigations on Protestant worship practices in other Latin American countries might provide valuable knowledge of their particularities and useful information for comparative analysis.

An ethnographic study on worship practices in actual Protestant congregations would also contribute significantly to the advancement of the *understanding of the formative power of* worship practice and the interplay between theology and worship, and ethics and worship.

Lastly, due to the unquestionable importance of Latin American Pentecostalism and the extended assumption that this movement represents the first form of popular Protestantism in the region, future investigations may benefit by applying the methodology proposed in this dissertation to the study of Pentecostal worship practices, with special focus on worship and culture.

7.5 Limitations of the study

This study has offered a descriptive and interpretative analysis of worship practices in emerging Protestantism in Argentina, conducted through the usage of a phenomenological methodology framed by a formative worship approach. As a direct consequence of this investigation, a number of limitations have been encountered, which need to be taken into consideration.

A major limitation of this study is the scant amount of primary sources on the matter. Extended resistance among non-liturgical churches to employing fixed patterns and texts in favor of impromptu practices meant that most of the liturgical language used in public services is inaccessible. With a few exceptions, orders of worship haven't been preserved. And the central element in Protestant worship services, the sermons, were preached extemporaneously; to date only a few outline manuscripts have been found, in addition to a few published sermons, which makes it extremely difficult to access major preaching content. Moreover, these written texts of a sermon may offer access to the content but not to the entire preaching event.⁷⁴⁶ In addition, although the exam of all primary sources as a whole does not show significant variation, the scarce availability of primary sources hasn't allow us to work diachronically inside the historical period studied here.

The aforementioned limitations made hymnals a prominent source to understand theology and ethics in worship. However, it must be recognized that the study of hymnbooks does not provide further information on the frequency and context of usage, the knowledge of which would deepen any theological interpretation.

⁷⁴⁶ For more on this matter see Ellis, *Gathering*, 126-127.

Above all, a major limitation for any study on Protestant history in Argentina is the difficult access to primary sources in general. Due to reasons whose explanation goes beyond this research, in most cases the preservation of historical documents has been neglected. In addition, the vast majority of the historical documents that have been conserved reside in local congregations, which usually lack professional curators. Efforts to keep organized and centralized historical archives are still incipient in Argentine Protestantism, even though greatly laudable. It is the sincere wish of this author to encourage the persistence of these endeavors, which in the future might expand the availability of valuable primary sources.

7.6 Final conclusion

According to the Christian practice approach that frames this dissertation, worship is the quintessential formative practice. Active participation in worship provides a learning experience “through doing” powerful enough to not only convey beliefs and values but to shape the character and identity of individuals and communities. From this perspective the study of the worship practices of Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren in emerging Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930) reveals that over and above their particularities, an anti-Catholic conversionist liturgy common to the three groups enabled the forging of a common identity as we, the “*evangélicos*.”

A robust pedagogy developed through worship formed a community whose character was based on the shared understanding that to be a true Christian required a personal experience of conversion evidenced by the abandonment of vices and sinful customs to pursue the highest Christian call of “gaining souls for Christ.” Through sermons and prayers, testimonies and songs, rites and symbols, worship created an evangelical subculture which shows significant continuities with nineteenth-century Evangelicalism and the Second Great Awakening.

Overarching continuities with foreign elements enhanced by a profound rejection of the Catholic practices deep-rooted in the Argentine society formed Protestant believers in a spirituality featured by strong counter-cultural traits.

The *political worship* of Methodists and Baptists, deeply modeled by Protestant ethic and the social reform tenets which grew out of nineteenth-century North-American Revival, conveyed values highly valued by the Liberal elites and formed citizens better fitted to a country moving towards Modernity. For its part Brethren anti-worldliness teaching functioned in a similar way in regard to fostering a Protestant ethic, yet removed from active political involvement. In either case, through worship practices more attuned with Modern sensibilities and bearer of a message that proclaimed the possibility of a “new birth” and offered a new community to which to belong, emerging Protestantism found fertile ground amongst European immigrants who arrived in Argentina pursuing a better life.

Even though the Protestant groups remained very small during this period, they planted the seeds that would bear fruit in future years. The common evangelical identity they developed, in great part because of the similarities in their worship practices, would turn into the soil where Latin-American Popular Protestantism would grow at the end of the twentieth century.

SUMMARY

This dissertation examines the worship practices of three evangelical groups that pioneered Spanish-language services in emerging Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930)—Methodists, Baptists, and Free (Plymouth) Brethren—and the theology and ethics embodied in and shaped by those worship practices, with attention to their formative power.

Most scholarly works on Protestantism in Argentina have tended to focus on the history of its institutions and main characters but, noticeably, little attention has been given to unveiling the history of the primary communal practice Christians do together: worship. Two major reasons may explain this omission. First, most Protestants in Argentina belong to non-liturgical churches; and second, Protestant liturgical studies is still a developing academic field.

Framed by a Christian practice approach and formative worship theory, this dissertation seeks to describe the worship practices of Methodist, Baptists, and Free Brethren in a particular social and historical context that favored the emergence of Protestantism in Argentina (1867-1930), and to analyze the theology and ethics embodied and shaped by those worship practices, with attention to their formative power in that specific context. To this end this dissertation is organized into six chapters, as follows.

Chapter 1 introduces the theoretical framework that guides this dissertation. The Christian practice approach and formative worship theory sustain that worship is intrinsically formative, both theologically and ethically. Social practices are deep enough to shape the identity and character of individuals and communities, and among all of them, the communal practice of worship is the Christian practice par excellence and therefore the most powerful formative experience. Worship practices are informed and shaped by doctrine, and reciprocally they embody and express particular theological beliefs. Likewise, they form a community and its

members in a unique self-understanding, in certain values, affections, and particular views of the world and the Christian life that inform and model their ethical praxis. This ethical dimension of worship forms individuals and communities as citizens and hence, public worship is political worship.

Chapter 2 recounts the history of Protestant emergence in Argentina, which was intrinsically linked to the demographic strategy ideated by the Liberal ruling elite to advance their modernizing project: the active promotion of European immigration. The latter brought millions of Europeans to Argentina, and with them arrived the first Protestant churches as well as the missionaries and mission organizations. Firstly, the Methodists, followed by the Baptists and the Free Brethren alongside other “conversionist” groups emerged in this context and very soon their proselytizing zeal and Protestant ethics elicited confrontation with Roman Catholic traditional order. This chapter also outlines a brief history of the beginnings of the Methodist, Baptist, and Free Brethren work in Argentina and their main characters and features.

Through a phenomenological approach and the usage of non-traditional primary sources that reflect different people’s worship experiences and beliefs, chapters 3, 4, and 5 offer respectively a comprehensive description of the worship practices of Methodists, Baptists, and Free Brethren (1867-1930).

In chapter 3, the study of the Methodist worship in Argentina demonstrates pervasive continuities with nineteenth century American Methodism. Yet, in contrast with other Protestant churches that remained as refuges of ethnic identities, in 1867 the Methodist church became the first Christian church in Argentina regularly worshipping in the vernacular. This proved the importance they gave to the intelligibility of the gospel message; a feature compatible with modern religious sensibilities that highly valued both rationality and individual freedom of

conscious. This trait is easily observable in their pattern of worship centered in the sermon, accompanied by Scripture reading, prayer, and hymn singing. Concerning the latter, faithful to their Wesleyan tradition, Methodists forerun Spanish-language hymnody in Argentina, though not by fostering local composers or using native tunes but translating hymns from Europe and North America.

The core feature that shaped Methodist worship practices was conversionism, which in this tradition was considered an individual experience intrinsically related to Christian perfection. Unlike American Methodism, its local expression was marked by a vivid anti-Catholicism primarily evidenced in the controversial language used in preaching.

Chapter 4 explores the worship practices of the Baptists in their emergence in Argentina. In spite of their heterogeneous origins, Baptist worship embodied the typical Baptists features: the centrality of individuals' experience of conversion, the normative character of the Bible as the rule of faith and practice, the rejection of Roman Catholicism, adult baptism by immersion, defense of religious freedom, and democratic congregationalism. In regard to the worship pattern it was similar to the Methodist's and influenced by Revivalism: preliminaries (prayer and song), Bible-based preaching, and harvest. Being the sermon the most prominent component in public worship, the prompt promoting of a generation of native leaders primarily resulted in a more culturally relevant preaching.

Chapter 5 describes the worship practices of Free (Plymouth) Brethren in Argentina, the most unique of the three groups studied in this dissertation. These practices expressed an outstanding continuity with their British background, with the exception of the use of the Spanish language. Like the Plymouth Brethren in Britain, the Free Brethren held three different and separated worship services, each one with a different purpose: adoration (centered in the

Lord's Supper), ministry (for believers' edification), and gospel (for evangelism). The most important of the three services was the Breaking of Bread, a weekly Sunday meeting for the celebration of the Lord's Supper in a totally impromptu service. Services for edification may have prearranged or spontaneous preaching, while gospel meetings held the Revival pattern of worship: preliminaries, sermon, and harvest. In any case, and with strong anti-Catholic sentiments, Brethren worship conveyed their unique theological tenets: primitivist biblicism, premillennial dispensationalism, and radical separation from the world.

Finally, chapter 6 offers an interpretative analysis of the theology and ethics embodied in the worship practices described in previous chapters. Throughout the entire analysis emerges the pervasiveness of a formative liturgy robustly shaped by conversionism and by a profound rejection of Catholic practices and sensibilities. The theology embodied and shaped by these worship practices demonstrates the strong imprint of evangelicalism, featured by a rigid biblicism, a dominant soterological Christology, and a strong emphasis in eternal life and afterlife recompense. Ethical formation through worship was primarily oriented to individual morality; strict ascetics and anti-worldliness impregnated evangelical liturgies in general, but were uniquely pervasive among the Free Brethren. Conversionist worship also shaped the three groups' social ethics: individuals' regeneration and sanctification was seen as the main tool for social transformation. Consequently, evangelical *activism* was primarily oriented towards evangelization, which deeply shaped Protestant liturgical practices. The compelling usage of military images in worship became a main formative strategy for such a minority group striving to find its own place in a broader Catholic society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources

- Abeledo, Lino. *Campaña Anticlerical, librada en los siguientes puntos: Jujuy, Córdoba, Paraná, Rosario de S. Fe, Concordia, La Plata, Buenos Aires*. La Plata: La Nueva, 1909.
- Actas de la séptima asamblea anual de la Misión de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal en Sud América. Montevideo, República Oriental del Uruguay, Octubre 4 a 11 de 1888*. Buenos Aires: Mackern y McLean, 1888.
- Actas oficiales de la décima reunión de la Conferencia Anual de Sud-América de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal habida en Buenos Aires, Argentina, Marzo 12 a 18, 1902*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta Metodista, 1902.
- Actas de la Primera Convención Evangélica Bautista Argentina*. December 31, 1908. Convención Evangélica Bautista Argentina.
- Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention*. Nashville: Marshall & Bruce CO (from 1904 to 1931).
- Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1910*. New York, NY: Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1911.
- Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1922*. New York, NY: Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1922.
- Besson, Pablo. *Escritos de Pablo Besson*, compiled by Santiago Canclini. Buenos Aires: Junta de Publicaciones de la Convención Evangélica Bautista, 1948.
- _____. *Aspersión e inmersión*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta Evangélica, n.d.
- Canciones y Oraciones para las Escuelas Evangélicas Argentinas*. Buenos Aires, n.p.:1904.
- Christian Work in Latin America. Survey and Occupation. Message and Method. Education*. New York: Committee on Cooperation in Latin América-The Missionary Education Movement, 1917.
- Craver, Samuel P. "The Charles Wesley of South American Methodism." *Northwestern Christian Advocate* 53, no. 40 (October 4, 1905):7.
- Drake, Francis. *The World*. London: Hakluyt Society, 1854.

Elder, Robert. "Evangelizing the Queen Province of Argentina." *Missionary Review of the World* 27, no. 37 (1914): 834-835.

_____. "Pablo Besson of Argentina." *The Baptist Quarterly* 7, no.1 (January 1934): 27-28.

El Estandarte Evangélico (de Sud-América) (For the year 1883, and from 1892 to 1931).

El Evangelista. Órgano de la Verdad Evangélica para las Repúblicas del Plata (From 1881 to 1883, and from 1887 to 1888).

El Expositor Bautista. Convención Evangélica Bautista Argentina (From 1908 to 1931).

El Himmario de la Escuela Dominical. Buenos Aires: Imprenta Metodista, 1926.

El himnario evangélico para el uso de todas las iglesias. New York: Sociedad Americana de Tratados, 1895.

El Sendero del Creyente. Revista evangélica mensual de asuntos de interés para cristianos. (From 1910 to 1931).

Fifty-first Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Year 1869. New York, NY: Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1870.

Fifty-eight Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Year 1876. New York, NY: Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1877.

Fowler Drake, Margaret. *Golden Footprints. The Story of Frank Fowler*. Hendersonville: n.d., 1984. Reprinted in *The Journal of Florida Baptist Heritage* IV (Fall 2002): 24-36.

Granada, Nicolás. "Los días santos." *Caras y Caretas*, March 25, 1899.

Hart, Joseph L. *Gospel Triumphs in Argentina and Chile*. Richmond: Educational Department, Foreign Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1925.

Himnos Selectos Evangélicos. Buenos Aires: Junta de Publicaciones de la Convención Evangélica Bautista, 1928.

Himnos y cánticos del Evangelio. Edición con música. Quilmes: Imprenta Evangélica, 1927.
Jackson, Henry J., ed. *Himnos evangélicos para el uso de las congregaciones cristianas. Nueva edición con apéndice revisada y corregida por Daniel Hall*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta Metodista, 1923.

IV Censo General de la Nación, Tomo I. Buenos Aires: Dirección Nacional del Servicio Estadístico, n/d.

- Las Doctrinas y la Disciplina de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal 1896 con Apéndice. Edición Española.* Santiago de Chile-Buenos Aires: Imprenta Moderna-Imprenta Evangélica, 1899.
- Libro de bautismos de la Iglesia Evangélica Metodista de Rosario, 1889-1895.*
Minutes of Quarterly Conference of the Methodist Church (From 1868 to 1922).
 Newton, F. Lister. "Our Work in Tandil." *All Nations*, February 1904.
- Olsson, Emilio. *The Dark Continent . . . at our Doors: Slavery, Heathenism and Cruelty in South America.* New York: M.E. Munson Publisher, 1899.
- Payne, Will and Chas T.W Wilson. *Missionary Pioneering in Bolivia, with some Account of Work in Argentina.* London: H.A Raymond-Echoes of Service, 1904.
- Quarles, James C. *Christ in the Silver Lands.* Richmond, VA: Foreign Mission Board- Southern Baptist Convention, 1937.
- Registro de bautismos de la Primera Iglesia Metodista Episcopal* (For the years 1867 and 1868).
- Registro de actas bautismos de la Segunda Iglesia Metodista Episcopal de Buenos Aires, 1883.*
- Registro de actas de matrimonios de la Segunda Iglesia Metodista Episcopal de Buenos Aires, 1884.*
- Reid, John Morrison. *Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.* Vol.1. New York-Cincinnati: Phillips and Hunt-Hitchcock and Walden, 1879.
- Rice, William, ed. *Himnos evangélicos con música. Segunda edición de la Conferencia Anual de Sud-América.* Buenos Aires: Imprenta Metodista 1901.
- Segundo Censo de la República Argentina: Mayo 10 de 1895, Tomo 2.* Buenos Aires: Taller Tipográfico de la República Argentina, 1898.
- Segundo Censo de la República Argentina: Mayo 10 de 1895, Tomo 3.* Buenos Aires: Taller Tipográfico de la República Argentina, 1898.
- Seventy-fourth Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1892.* New York: Cable Andres Missions, 1893.
- The Christian Advocate*, January, 1828.
- The Doctrines and Disciplines of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 14th. ed. New York: NY: John Wilson and Daniel Hitt, 1808.

The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1864 with an Appendix.
Cincinnati: Poe & Hitchcock, 1864.

The Hundred and Fourth Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society for the Year Ending March MDCCCXVIII. London: The Bible House, 1908.

Thomson, James. *Letters on the Moral and Religious State of South America.* London: James Nisbet, 1827.

_____. *Union Liturgy.* London: James Nisbet, 1837.

_____. *Family and Individual Prayers.* Montreal: Campbell and Becket, 1840.

_____. *Incense for the Christian Altar.* London: Partridge and Oakey, 1850.

_____. *Incense for the Private Altar.* London: Partridge and Oakey, 1850.

Thomson, John F. Manuscript sermons. Archivo Histórico de Iglesia Evangélica Metodista Argentina.

Varetto, Juan C. *Diego Thomson, apóstol de la instrucción pública e iniciador de la obra evangélica en la América Latina.* Buenos Aires: Imprenta Evangélica, 1918.

_____. *Discursos evangélicos.* Buenos Aires: Junta Bautista de Publicaciones, 1919.

_____. *El apóstol del Plata: Juan F. Thomson.* Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1943.

Wesley, John. *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America with Other Occasional Services.* London: n.p., 1788.

_____. *The Works of John Wesley.* Vol. 5. 1832. 3rd ed. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1986.

Secondary sources

Alberdi, Juan Bautista. *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización política de la República Argentina (1852).* Buenos Aires: Red Ediciones S.L., 2012.

Amestoy, Norman Rubén. "El reformismo social metodista en el Río de la Plata y sus raíces ideológicas." *Cuadernos de Teología* 20 (2001): 343-360.

_____. "Los orígenes del metodismo en el Río de la Plata. Las sociedades metodistas en el marco del liberalismo, 1867-1901." *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 2 (2004): 83-107.

- _____. "Las escuelas evangélicas argentinas de William C. Morris, 1898-1910." Cuadernos de *Teología* 23 (2004): 111-140.
- _____. "Ideas para repensar la historia del Cristianismo en América Latina" *Teología y cultura* 7, no.12 (December 2010): 5-24.
- _____. "Festivals, Entertainment, and Pleasure in the Protestantism of the Río de la Plata Region, 1875-1900." *Journal of Latin American Theology: Christian Reflections from the Latino South* 6, no. 2 (2011): 187-210.
- _____. "Los cambios en el Protestantismo latinoamericano. Del Congreso de Panamá a la Habana (1916-1929)." *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 7 (2012): 187- 205.
- _____. "Las mujeres en el protestantismo rioplatense 1870-1930." *Franciscanum* 54, no.157 (January-June 2012): 51-81.
- _____. "El pensamiento teológico wesleyano en el Rio de la Plata (1870-1900)." *Invenio* 16, no.30 (2013): 13-28.
- Anderson, Justice C. *An Evangelical Saga: Baptists and Their Precursors in Latin America*. Longwood, FL: Xulon Press, 2005.
- Andiñac, Pablo R. "Las Iglesias Protestantes en Buenos Aires." *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 1 (2003): 167-179.
- Arias, Mortimer. "Historia Metodista ¿Por qué y para qué?" *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 2 (2004): 9-26.
- Atkins Vásquez, Jane. *La Biblia en Español: cómo nos llegó*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2008.
- Barclay, Wade Crawford. *The Methodist Episcopal Church 1845-1939*. Vol.3. Widening Horizons: 1845-95. New York, NY: The Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, 1957.
- Bastian, Jean-Pierre. *Breve historia del protestantismo en América Latina*. México: Casa Unida de Publicaciones S.A., 1986
- _____. *Protestantes, liberales y francmasones: sociedades de ideas y modernidad en América Latina, siglo XIX*. México: Comisión de Estudios de Historia de la Iglesia en América Latina- Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1990.
- _____. "The Metamorphosis of Latin American Protestant Groups: A Socio-historical Perspective." Translated by Margaret Caffey-Moquin. *Latin American Research Review* 28, no. 2 (1993): 33-61.

- _____. *Protestantismos y modernidad latinoamericana: historia de unas minorías religiosas activas en América Latina*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994.
- _____. “De los protestantismos históricos a los pentecostalismos latinoamericanos: análisis de una mutación religiosa.” *Revista de Ciencias Sociales* 16 (2006): 38-54.
- _____. “En diálogo con la obra de Lalive d’Epinay. Búsquedas de una sociología histórica del cambio religioso en América Latina.” *Revista Cultura y Religión* (October 2008): 1-25.
- Bertoni, Lilia Ana *Patriotas, cosmopolitas y nacionalistas: la construcción de la nacionalidad argentina a fines del siglo XIX*. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001.
- Bianchi, Susana. *Historia de las religiones en Argentina. Las minorías religiosas*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2004.
- Bisio, Carlos. *Nuestros primeros pasos*. Buenos Aires: Fundación Cristiana de Evangelización, 1982.
- _____. *Contribución bibliográfica para el estudio de las Iglesias Cristianas Evangélicas de la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Instituto Bibliográfico Antonio Zinny, 1982.
- _____. *En torno a nuestros primeros pasos*. Pilar: Fundación Cristiana de Evangelización, 1992.
- Bruno, Daniel. “‘Por una iglesia con alma nacional’: nacimiento y ocaso de un sueño. El frustrado intento de nacionalización de la Iglesia Metodista en la Argentina, 1917-1919.” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 1 (2003): 109-153.
- _____. “Pulcritud de alma y de cuerpo. El hogar cristiano y la lucha contra el vicio en el ideario evangélico (1900-1950).” *Cuadernos de Teología* 22 (2003): 353-374.
- _____. “Las vanguardias silenciadas en el metodismo rioplatense (1896-1924): Francis D. Tubbs y Gabino Rodríguez. La represión del brote ‘modernista’.” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 3-4 (2005-2006): 101-132.
- _____. “Un camino de intrigas y misterios. Historia del proceso hacia la primera predicación evangélica en español en el río de la Plata. A 140 años del metodismo nativo.” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 5 (2007): 105-115.
- _____. “La Iglesia Metodista como espacio asociativo entre inmigrantes. Estudio de la ‘Misión Evangélica de la Boca’ 1900-1950.” *Cuadernos de Teología* 27 (2008): 203-222.
- _____. “Modelo para rearmar. El metodismo latinoamericano y sus opciones teológicas.” *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 6 (2010): 123-138.

- _____. "Abordaje y periodización para una historia del metodismo en Argentina." *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 7 (2012): 11-44.
- _____. "Mission Outside the Walls: The Alliances of Methodism to Defeat the Old Colonial Order Related to Church and State in Argentina, 1880-1890." *Methodist History* 52, no.4 (July 2014): 197-206.
- Canclini, Agustina Varetto de. *Juan C Varetto: embajador de Cristo*. Junta de Publicaciones de la Convención Evangélica Bautista del Rio de la Plata, 1955.
- Canclini, Arnoldo. *100 Años con Cristo en el Centro*. Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos Argon-Press, 1983.
- _____. *Diego Thomson: Apóstol de la enseñanza y distribución de la Biblia en América y España*. Buenos Aires: Asociación Sociedad Bíblica Argentina, 1987.
- _____. "Panoramic View of the History of Baptists in Argentina," translated by Tony Coates. *Baptist Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (July 1995): 120-131.
- _____. "Unidad y diferencias entre evangélicos argentinos (1825-1945)." *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 1 (2003): 11-29.
- _____. *Cuatrocientos años de protestantismo argentino*. Buenos Aires: FIET, 2004.
- _____. *Sí, quiero. Historias y anécdotas del matrimonio en la Argentina (siglos XVI a XIX)*. Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 2005.
- _____. *Santiago y Agustina: historia de mis padres*. Buenos Aires: Distribuidora Alianza, 2005.
- Canclini, Santiago. *Pablo Besson: un heraldo de la libertad cristiana*. Buenos Aires: Junta de Publicaciones de la Convención Evangélica Bautista, 1933.
- Carro, Daniel. "Sidney McFarland Sowell: Pastor Evangelizador (1918-1942)." In *Forjadores de Obreros*, 19-32. Buenos Aires: Seminario Internacional Teológico Bautista, 1992.
- Chami Rouvroy, Tomás "El metodismo en Argentina: de iglesia extranjera a iglesia nacional. Implantación, difusión y compromiso social, desde el siglo XIX hasta la última dictadura militar." XII Jornadas Interescuelas/Departamentos de Historia. Departamento de Historia, Facultad de Humanidades y Centro Regional Universitario Bariloche. Universidad Nacional del Comahue, San Carlos de Bariloche, 2009.
- Coitinho, Mirtha E. *Testigos de un silencio: metodismo y masonería en el Uruguay del siglo XIX*. Montevideo: Editorial Planeta, 2009.

- Cooper, William Lowery. "Sidney McFarland Sowell: Mighty Man of Faith." *Baptist History and Heritage* 3, no. 99 (July 1968): 99-103,123-124.
- Costas, Orlando. *El protestantismo en América Latina hoy: ensayos del camino*. San José de Costa Rica: Instituto de Evangelización a Fondo, 1975.
- Damboriena, Prudencio. *El Protestantismo en America Latina*. Freiburg: International Bureau of Social Research Feres, 1962.
- Deiros, Pablo A. *El Protestantismo en América Latina. Ayer, hoy, y mañana*. Nashville, TN: Editorial Caribe, 1997.
- Di Stefano, Roberto. "Disidencia religiosa y secularización en el siglo XIX iberoamericano: cuestiones conceptuales y metodológicas." *Projeto História* no. 37 (December 2008): 157-178.
- Di Stéfano, Roberto y Loris Zanatta. *Historia de la Iglesia Argentina. Desde la Conquista hasta fines del siglo XX*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2009.
- Espinosa, Mariana Esther. "Una iglesia primitiva e internacional: el perfil misionero de los Hermanos Libres en su llegada a la Argentina." *Ciências Sociais e Religião* 16, no.20 (January-June 2014): 58-81.
- Freston, Paul. "Latin America." In *Encyclopedia of Protestantism* Vol. 3, edited by Hans J. Hillerbrand, 1068-1074. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Gattinoni, Carlos T. *Viejo roble que los vientos no derriban*. Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1981.
- Hurst, John Fletcher. *The History of Methodism*, vol.7. New York, NY: Eaton & Mains, 1904.
- Lalive d'Epinau, Christian. *El Refugio de las masas. Estudio sociológico del protestantismo chileno*. Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacífico, 1968.
- _____. "Toward a Typology of Latin American Protestantism." *Review of Religious Research* 10, no.1 (Autumn 1968): 4-11.
- Mackay, John A. *The Other Spanish Christ: a Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America*. New York, NY: Macmillan Co., 1933.
- _____. *The Latin American Churches and the Ecumenical Movement*. New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, Division of Foreign Missions, 1963.

- Mcmeley, Mark. "The Task of Gender Role Differentiation in Foreign Missions: The Case of American Methodists in Rosario, Argentina, 1870-1880." In *Cross-Cultural History and the Domestication of Otherness*, edited by Michal Jan Rozbicki and George O. Ndege, 103-115. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- McConnell, Cecilio. *La historia del himno en castellano*. Buenos Aires: Casa Bautista de Publicaciones, 1963.
- Méndez, Dinorah B. *Evangelicals in Mexico. Their Hymnody and its Theology*. Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang S.A., 2008.
- Míguez Bonino, José. *Faces of Latin American Protestantism: 1993 Carnahan Lectures*. Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1997.
- Milne, Inés. *Desde el cabo de Hornos hasta Quito con la Biblia*. Buenos Aires, La Aurora, 1944.
- Mitchell, Donald R. "The Evangelical contribution of James Thomson to South American Life, 1818-1825." Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1972.
- Mondragón, Carlos. *Like Leaven in the Dough: Protestant Social Thought in Latin America, 1920-1950*, translated by Daniel Miller and Ben Post. Maryland: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011.
- Monteiro, Simeia Ferreira de Barros. "Singing a New Song: Developing Methodist Worship in Latin America," in *The Sunday Service of the Methodists: Twentieth-Century Worship in Worldwide Methodist (Studies in Honor of James F. White)*, edited by Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, 265-282. Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books-Abingdon Press, 1996.
- Monti, Daniel P. *Presencia del Protestantismo en el Río de la Plata durante el siglo XIX*. Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1969.
- Muskat, James Bruce. "The Development of Music Ministry among the Baptists of Argentina (1881-1981)." D.M.A. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary-School of Church Music, 2001.
- Palomino Miguel A. and Samuel Escobar, "Worship and Culture in Latin America." In *Christian Worship Worldwide: Expanding Horizons, Deepening Practices*, edited by Charles E. Farhadian, 107-130. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007.
- Palomino, Miguel A. *¿Qué le pasó al culto en América Latina? La adoración en las iglesias evangélicas*. Lima: Ediciones Puma, 2011.
- Pascuccio, Jorge Darío. "Iglesia Metodista, los orígenes del Protestantismo en Chivilcoy." *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 3-4 (2005-2006): 133-156.

- Roldán, Alberto Fernando. "Comprensión de la realidad social en el discurso teológico de los Hermanos Libres en la Argentina (1882-1955)." Ph.D. diss., ISEDET, 1996.
- _____. "Comprensión de la realidad social en el discurso teológico de los Hermanos Libres en la Argentina (1882-1955)." *Cuadernos de Teología* 15, no.1-2 (1996): 23-53.
- _____. "Historia y posicionamientos socio-políticos de los Hermanos Libres en la Argentina (1910-1937, 1945-1955)." *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 1 (2003): 1-23.
- Romero, José Luis. *Breve historia de la Argentina*. Nueva edición aumentada y actualizada. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2002.
- Rooy, Sidney. "Religious Tolerance and the Arrival of Protestantism in Latin America." *Journal of Latin American Theology: Christian Reflections from the Latino South* 6, no.2 (2011): 41-69.
- Ruffle, Douglas W. "Juan F. Thomson: Christian Identity and the Beginnings of Spanish-Language Protestant Preaching in The River Plate." *Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education* 10 (1994-1995): 49-58.
- Sanchez-Alonso, Blanca. "Making sense of immigration policy: Argentina, 1870-1930." *Economic History Review* 66, no.2 (2013): 601-627.
- Seiguer, Paula. "Ser de Cristo": prácticas, ideas y recepción del protestantismo entre los sectores populares inmigrantes en Buenos Aires, c. 1870-1910." *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos* 21, no.62 (April 2007): 1-21.
- _____. "Liberales y protestantes. Breve discusión para seguir reflexionando." Paper presented at Encuentro del Seminario de Historia Política del Centro de Estudios de Historia Política; Centro de Estudios de Historia Política, Escuela de Política y Gobierno, Universidad Nacional de San Martín, 2008.
- _____. "Los inicios de un debate: el lugar del protestantismo histórico en la Argentina." *Iberoamericana* 9, no.34 (June 2009): 163-168.
- _____. "El protestantismo histórico en la Argentina: 1870-1930: perspectivas historiográficas." *Diversidad* 1, no.1 (December 2010): 100-112.
- _____. "Estado laico y pluralización religiosa: la participación protestante en el debate público en torno a las leyes laicas en la década de 1880." Paper presented at VI Jornadas de Historia Política: Argentina, siglos XIX y XX, Universidad General de San Martín, July 7-8, 2011.

- _____. "El espacio del protestantismo proselitista en Buenos Aires. El caso de William Morris, 1895-1932." In *Los avatares de la nación católica. Cambios y permanencias en el campo religioso en la Argentina contemporánea*, coordinated by C. Touris y M. Ceva, 51-66. Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2012.
- Sosa, Adam F. "La predicación de Juan F. Thomson." *Cuadernos de Teología* 1, no. 1 (1970): 31-40.
- Sosa, Pablo. "Apuntes para la cronología de la himnología evangélica rioplatense. A 50 años de «El cielo canta alegría», 1958-2008." *Revista Evangélica de Historia* 5 (2007): 51-72.
- Sowell, Benjamim L. *Por sendas de gloria y humildad: vida de Sidney McFarland Sowell*. Buenos Aires: Junta Bautista de Publicaciones, 1969.
- Tallon, A. Guillermo. *Historia del metodismo en el Río de la Plata, 1836-1936*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta Metodista, 1936.
- Vanzini, Marcos G., comp. *Historias curiosas de templos de Buenos Aires*, 2nd ed. Buenos Aires: Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, 2011.
- Villalpando, Waldo Luis, ed. *Las Iglesias del trasplante. Protestantismo de Inmigración en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Centro de Estudios Cristianos, 1970.
- Zanatta, Loris. *Del Estado liberal a la Nación católica. Iglesia y Ejército en los orígenes del peronismo, 1930-1943*. Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, Buenos Aires, 1996.
- _____. *Perón y el mito de la nación católica: Iglesia y Ejército en los orígenes del peronismo 1943-1946*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1999.

Tertiary sources

- Altamirano, Carlos. "José Luis Romero y la idea de la Argentina aluvial." *Prismas- Revista de historia intelectual* (2001): 313-326.
- Anderson, E. Byron. "The Power of Godliness to Know: Charles Wesley and the Means Of Grace." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 43, no 2 (Fall 2008): 7-27.
- Anderson E. Byron and Bruce T. Morrill. "Introduction." In *Liturgy and the moral self: humanity at full stretch before God: essays in honor of Don E. Saliers*, edited by E. Byron Anderson and Bruce T. Morrill, 3-13. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1998.
- Andrews, John S. "Brethren Hymnology." *The Evangelical Quarterly* 28 (1956): 208-229.
- Aune, Michael B. "Liturgy and Theology: Rethinking the Relationship. Part I, Setting the Stage." *Worship* 81, no.1 (January 2007): 46-68.

- _____. Liturgy and Theology: Rethinking the Relationship. Part II, A Different Starting Point." *Worship* 81, no. 2 (March 2007): 141-169.
- Bailey, Dorothy Dee. "Early History of the Argentine Normal Schools." *Peabody Journal of Education* 36, no. 1 (July 1958): 16-26
- Baily, Samuel L. "The Italians and organized labor in the United States and Argentina, 1880-1910." *International Migration Review* 1, no. 3. Special Issue: The Italian Experience in Emigration (Summer 1967): 56-66.
- Bass, Dorothy C. "Introduction." In *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*, edited by Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass, 1-12. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.
- _____. "Ways of abundant life." In *For Life Abundant: Practical Theology, Theological Education and Christian Ministry*, edited by Dorothy C. Bass and Craig Dykstra, 21-40. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008.
- Bebbington, David W. *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from 1730s to 1980s*. London: Routledge, 1993.
- _____. "Revivals, Revivalism and the Baptists." *Baptistic Theologies* 1, no.1 (January 2009): 1-13.
- Berger, Teresa. *Theology in Hymns?: A Study of the Relationship of Doxology and Theology According to a Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists (1780)*, translated by Timothy Edward Kimbrough. Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1995.
- Bonano, Floreal C. *Historia del Colegio Ward. Edición conmemorativa del 50º aniversario*. Buenos Aires: Methopress Editorial y Gráfica, 1963.
- Brackney, William H. "Ordination in the Larger Baptist Tradition." *Perspectives in Religious Studies* (Fall 2002): 225-239.
- _____. "Difficulties in Doing Theological Liturgy." *Pacifica* 11 (June 1998): 181-194.
- Cahalan, Kathleen A. "Three Approaches to Practical Theology, Theological Education, and the Church's Ministry." *International Journal of Practical Theology* 9, no.1 (July 2005): 63-94.
- Callahan, James Patrick. *Primitivist Piety: The Ecclesiology of the Early Plymouth Brethren*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996.

- Chupungco, Anscar J. "Reenvisioning 'Liturgy and the Components of Culture.'" In *Worship and Culture. Foreign Country or Homeland?* Edited by Gláucia Vasconcelos Wilkey, 68-83. Grand Rapids, MI: Wiliam B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014.
- Clinton, Catherine and Christine Lunardini. *The Columbia Guide to American Women in the Nineteenth Century*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2000.
- Cracknell, Kenneth and Susan J. White. *An Introduction to World Methodism*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Crespo, Julio. *Las maestras de Sarmiento*. Béccar, Bs. As.: Grupo Abierto Comunicaciones, 2007.
- Dickson, Neil. "'Shut in with Thee': The Morning Meeting among Scottish Open Brethren, 1840-1960." *Studies in Church History* 35 (1999): 275-288.
- Duncan, Julian S. "British Railways in Argentina." *Political Science Quarterly* 52, no.4 (December 1937): 559-582.
- Dykstra, Craig "Reconceiving Practice." In *Shifting Boundaries: Contextual Approaches to the Structure of Theological Education*, edited by Barbara G. Wheeler and Edward Farley, 35-66. Louisville, KY: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1991.
- Dykstra, Craig and Dorothy C. Bass. "A Theological Understanding of Christian Practices." In *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*, edited by Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass, 13-32. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.
- Eaton, Kent. "'Go Tell It in the . . . Cemetery?' Protestant Funerals in Victorian Spain." *Missiology* 31, no.4 (October 2003):431-448.
- _____. *Protestant Missionaries in Spain, 1869-1930: Shall the Papists Prevail?* Laham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015.
- Ellis, Christopher J. "Duty and Delight: Baptist Worship and Identity." *Review & Expositor* 100 (Summer 2003): 329-349.
- _____. *Gathering: A Theology and Spirituality of Worship in Free Church Tradition*. London: SCM Press, 2004.
- Embley, Peter L. "The Origins and Early Development of the Plymouth Brethren." PhD diss., St. Paul College, 1966.
- Fagerberg, David. *Theologia Prima. What is Liturgical Theology?* Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2004.

- Farhadian, Chales E., ed. *Christian Worship Worldwide. Expanding Horizons, Deepening Practices*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007.
- Faust, A.F. "The Influence of the United States upon the Developing Argentine Normal School." *History of Education Journal* 2, no. 2 (Winter 1951): 62-64.
- Ferguson, David. "The Theology of Worship. A Reformed Perspective." In *Worship and Liturgy in Context: Studies and Case Studies in Theology and Practice*, edited by Duncan B. Forrester and Doug Gay, 67-80. London: SCM, 2009.
- Fern, Henry S. "Beginnings of British investments in Argentina." *The Economic History Review*, New Series 4, no.3 (1952): 341-352.
- Furet, François. *Interpreting the French Revolution*, translated by Elborg Foster. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- González Bernaldo, Pilar. "Masonería y revolución de Independencia en el Río de la Plata: 130 años de historiografía." In *Masonería, Revolución y Reacción, IV Symposium Internacional de Historia de la Masonería Española*, coordinated by José Antonio Ferrer Benimeli, 1035-54. Alicante, Instituto Alicantino Juan Gil-Albert, 1990.
- Grass, Tim. *Gathering to his Name. The Story of the Open Brethren in Britain and Ireland*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006.
- Guroian, Vigen. "Seeing Worship as Ethics: An Orthodox Perspective." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 13, no.2 (Fall, 1985): 332-359.
- _____. "Moral Formation and Christian Worship." *The Ecumenical Review* 49, no.3 (July 1997): 372-378.
- Hahn, Karl Joseph. *Historia do culto protestante no Brasil*, translated by Antonio Gouvêa Mendoça. São Paulo: ASTE, 1989.
- Hauerwas Stanley and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1989.
- Hauerwas, Stanley. *Christian Existence Today: Essays on Church, World and Living in Between*. Durham, NC: The Labyrinth Press, 1988.
- _____. *In Good Company: The Church as Polis*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995.
- Hawn, C. Michael *Gathering into One: Praying and Singing Globally*. Grand Rapids, MI-Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.

- _____. "Through Every Land, By Every Tongue: The Rise of Ecumenical Global Song," in *New Songs of Celebration Render: Congregational Song in the Twenty-First Century*. Compiled and edited by C. Michael Hawn. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications Inc., 2013.
- Hickman Hoyt L., Don E. Saliers, Lawrence Hull Stookey and James F. White. *The New Handbook of the Christian Year: Based of the Common Lectionary*. 2nd ed. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1992.
- Hinson, E. Glenn "Baptists and Spirituality: A Community at Worship." *Review & Expositor* 84, no. 4 (Fall 1987): 649-58
- _____. "Baptist Approaches to Spirituality." *Baptist History and Heritage* 37, no 2 (Spring 2002): 6-31.
- Hohenstein, Charles R. "'Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi': Cautionary Notes." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (September 1, 1997): 140-157.
- Hoon, Paul Waitman. *The Integrity of Worship*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1971.
- Houston Luiggi, Alice. *Sesenta y cinco valientes: Sarmiento y las maestras norteamericanas*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Ágora, 1959.
- Hughs, Ben. *The British Invasion of the River Plate, 1806-1807. How the Red Coats Were Humbled and a Nation Was Born*. South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2013.
- Irwin, Kevin. *Liturgical Prayer and Spirituality*. New York-Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1984.
- _____. "Liturgical Theology." In *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship*, edited by Peter E. Fink, 721-33. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1990.
- _____. *Context and Text: Method in Liturgical Theology*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1994.
- _____. "Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi- Origins and Meaning: State of the Question." *Liturgical Ministry* 11 (Spring 2002): 57-69.
- Johnson, Maxwell E. *Praying and Believing in Early Christianity: The Interplay Between Christian Worship and Doctrine*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013.
- Jones, Paul. H. "Worship as Identity Formation." *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 26, n^o2 (April, 1991): 50-52.
- Jungmann, Josef. A. *Public Worship: A Suvey*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1957.
- Kacowicz, Arie M. *Globalization and the distribution of wealth: the Latin American experience, 1982-2008*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

- Kavanagh, Aidan. *On Liturgical Theology*. New York: Pueblo, 1984.
- Kimbrough Jr., S.T. "Lyrical Theology." *Theology Today* 63, no.1 (April 2006): 22 -37.
- _____. *The Lyrical Theology of Charles Wesley: A Reader*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013.
- Knight III, Henry H. *The Presence of God in the Christian Life: John Wesley and the Means of Grace*. Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1992.
- Lakeland, Paul. *Postmodernity: Christian Identity in a Fragmented Age*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997.
- Langford, Thomas A. "Charles Wesley as Theologian." In *Charles Wesley: Poet and Theologian*, edited by S.T. Kimbrough Jr., 97-136. Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 1992.
- Lappa, Alcibíades. *La masonería argentina a través de sus hombres*, 2nd ed. Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos de Impresora Belgrano, 1966.
- Larsen, Timothy "'Living by Faith': A Short History of Brethren Practice." *Brethren Archivists and Historians Network Review* 1 (1978): 67-102.
- Lathrop, Gordon W. *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.
- _____. *Central Things: Worship in Word and Sacrament*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2005.
- Leonard, Bill J. "The Ordination Service in Baptist Churches." *Review & Expositor* 78, no. 4 (Fall 1981): 549-561.
- Lindley, Susan Hill. *You Have to Step Out of Your Place: A History of Women and Religion in America*. Louisville, KY: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1996.
- Lioenti, Lucía. "La función republicana de la escuela pública: la formación del ciudadano en Argentina a fines del siglo XIX." *Revista Mexicana de Investigación Educativa* 10, no. 27 (September 2005): 1225-69.
- Lorenzo, Celso Román. *Manual de Historia Constitucional Argentina*. Vol. 2. Rosario: Editorial Juris, 1997.
- Macquarrie, John. *Paths in Spirituality*. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.
- Marshall, Paul V. "Reconsidering 'Liturgical Theology': Is There a Lex Orandi for All Christians?" *Studia Liturgica* 25 (1995): 129-50

- _____. "Liturgy." *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*. Vol.3, edited by Erwin Fahlbusch, Jan Milič Lochman, John Mbiti, Jaroslav Pelikan and Lukas Vischer, 324-326. Grand Rapids, MI-Leiden: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company-Brill, 2003.
- Martínez, Juan Francisco. *Los Protestantes: An Introduction to Latino Protestantism in the United States*. Santa Bárbara, CA: Praeger, 2011.
- Míguez, Daniel. "El Protestantismo popular en la Argentina. Lógicas de expansión del Pentecostalismo durante el siglo XX." *Anuario del Instituto de Estudios Sociales* 14 (1999): 163-201.
- McElrath, Hugh L. "The Hymnbook as a Compendium of Theology." *Review and Expositor* 87, no.1 (Winter 1990):11-31.
- McKibbens, Thomas R. "Our Baptist Heritage in Worship." *Review and Expositor* 80, no.1 (Winter 1983): 53-69.
- Murphy, Debra Dean. "Worship as Catechesis: Knowledge, Desire, and Christian formation." *Theology Today* 58, no.3 (October 2001): 321-332.
- Negretto, Gabriel L. and José Antonio Aguilar-Rivera. "Rethinking the Legacy of the Liberal State in Latin America: The Cases of Argentina (1853-1916) and Mexico (1857-1910)." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 32, no.2 (May 2000): 361-397.
- Nelson, Derek R. "Charles Finney and John Nevin on Selfhood and Sin: Reformed Anthropologies in Nineteenth-century American Religion." *Calvin Theological Journal* 45, no. 2 (November 2010): 280-303.
- Norden, Deborah Lee. *Military Rebellion in Argentina: Between Coups and Consolidation*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996.
- Noll, Mark A. "The Defining Role of Hymns in Early Evangelicalism." In *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology*, edited by Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Knoll, 3-16. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004.
- Osmer, Richard Robert *The Teaching Ministry of Congregations*. Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2005.
- Piepkorn, Arthur Carl "Plymouth Brethren (Christian Brethren) *Concordia Theological Monthly* 41 (1970): 165-171.
- Pulley, Raymond H. "The Railroad and Argentine National Development, 1852-1914." *The Americas* 23, no.1 (July 1966): 63-75.

- Ray, Walter D. *Tasting Heaven on Earth: Worship in Sixth-Century Constantinople, The Church at Worship*. Grand Rapids, MI-Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012.
- Rennie, Ian S. "Aspects of Christian Brethren Spirituality." In *Alive to God: Studies in Christian spirituality Presented to James Houston*, edited by J.I. Packer and Loren Wilkinson, 190-208. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992.
- Riis Ole and Linda Woodhead. *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Ruth, Lester. *A Little Heaven Below: Worship at Early Methodist Quarterly Meetings*. Nashville, TN: Kingswood Book, 2000.
- _____. *Longing for Jesus: Worship at Black Holiness Church in Mississippi 1895-1913, The Church at Worship*. Grand Rapids, MI-Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013.
- Ruth, Lester, Carrie Steenwyk and John D. Witvliet. *Walking Where Jesus Walked: Worship in Fourth-Century Jerusalem, The Church at Worship*. Grand Rapids, MI-Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010.
- Saliers, Don. "Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 72 (1979): 173-189.
- _____. *The Soul in Paraphrase: Prayer and Religious Affections*, 2nd ed. Cleveland, OH: OSL Publications, 1991.
- _____. *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994.
- _____. "Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings." In *Liturgy and the moral self: humanity at full stretch before God: essays in honor of Don E. Saliers*, edited by E. Byron Anderson and Bruce T. Morrill, 15-35. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1998.
- Scharen, *Christian Public Worship and Public Work: Character and Commitment in Local Congregational Life*. Virgil Michel Series. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004.
- Schmemmann, Alexander. "Theology and Liturgical Tradition." In *Worship in Scripture and Tradition*, edited by Massey H. Shepherd Jr., 165-178. New York- Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963.
- _____. *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*. Translated by Asheleigh E. Moorhouse. Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996.
- Smith, James K.A. *Desiring the Kingdom. Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics, 2009.

- Stringer, Martin D. *A Sociological History of Christian Worship*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Thompson, Phillip E. "Re-envisioning Baptist Identity: Historical, Theological, and Liturgical Analysis." *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 27, no.3 (September 2000): 287-302.
- Tyson, John R. "The Theology of Charles Wesley's Hymns." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 44, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 58-75.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J. "The triune God of the gospel." In *The Cambridge Companion to Evangelical Theology*, edited by Timothy Larsen and Daniel J. Treier, 17-34. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Vasconcelos Wilkey, Gláucia ed. *Worship and Culture. Foreign Country or Homeland?* Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2014)
- Vogel, Dwight. "Liturgical Theology: A Conceptual Geography." In *Primary Sources of Liturgical Theology: A Reader*, edited by Dwight Vogel, 3-14. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2000.
- Wachholz, Wilhelm. "Mainline Protestants in Latin America." In *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, edited by Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen Westerfield Tucker, 651-660. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Wainwright, Geoffrey. *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life: A Systematic Theology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- Wannenwetsch, Bernd. *Political Worship: Ethics for Christian Citizens*, translated by Margaret Kohl. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Wayne, Tiffany K. *Women's Roles in Nineteenth-century America*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007.
- Westerfield Tucker, Karen B. "Form and Freedom: John Wesley's Legacy for Methodist Worship." In *The Sunday Service of the Methodists: Twentieth-Century Worship in Worldwide Methodist*, Studies in Honor of James F. White, edited by Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, 17-30. Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books-Abingdon Press, 1996.
- _____. *American Methodist Worship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- _____. "Methodist Worship," in *T&T Clark Companion to Methodism*, edited by Charles Yrigoyen Jr., 240-56. London-New York: T&T Clark International, 2010.
- _____. "Methodism's 'World Parish': Liturgical and Hymnological Migrations in Three Ecclesiastical Generations." In *Liturgy in Migration: From the Upper Room to Cyberspace*, edited by Teresa Berger, 131-54. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012.

- White, James F. "Traditions of Protestant Worship." *Worship* 49, no.5 (May 1975): 272-282.
- _____. "The Missing Jewell of the Evangelical Church." *Reformed Journal* (June 1986): 11-16.
- _____. *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition*. Louisville, KY: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1989.
- _____. *A Brief History of Christian Worship*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993.
- _____. *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 3rd ed. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2000.
- _____. *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture: Theological and Historical Considerations*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Pub., 2003.
- White, Susan J. *A History of Women in Christian Worship*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2003.
- Willems, Emilio. *Followers of the New Faith, Culture Change and the Rise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chile*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967.
- Witvliet, John D. *Worship Seeking Understanding: Windows into Christian Practice*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003.
- _____. Foreword to *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology*, edited by Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Knoll, vii-ix. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004.
- _____. "The Cumulative Power of Transformation in Public Worship. Cultivating Gratitude and Expectancy for the Holy Spirit's Work." In *Worship that Changes Lives: Multidisciplinary and Congregational Perspectives on Spiritual Transformation*, edited by Alexis D. Abernethy, 41-58. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Wynarczyk, Hilario. "Entre el Legado y los Desafíos: las Iglesias Evangélicas en la Argentina. Dinámica Histórica. Función del Pentecostalismo. Ley de Cultos." In *Voces del pentecostalismo latinoamericano. Identidad, teología e historia*, 29-58. Concepción, Chile: RELEP, CETELA y ASETT América Latina, 2003.
- Zimmerman, Joyce Ann. *Worship with Gladness: Understanding Worship from the Heart*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 2014.
- _____. *Liturgy as Language of Faith: A Liturgical Methodology in the Mode of Paul Ricoeur's Textual Hermeneutics*. Lanham: University Press of America, 1988.

Electronic sources

- Alba Miguel A. "Difusión del Protestantismo en la ciudad de Buenos Aires (1870 - 1910). El caso Metodista." *Teología y cultura*. Accessed June 23, 2013. http://teologos.com.ar/historia/difusion_del_protestantismo_daniel_ochoa.pdf
- Clifford, Alejandro. *Un hombre bueno. Biografía de James (Jaime) Clifford*. Córdoba: El Amanecer, 1957. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://tesorodigital.com/contenido/biografia-e-historia/>.
- Goodfellow, William. *Missionary Advocate*. August 20, 1867. Accessed January 7, 2015. <http://findit.library.yale.edu/bookreader/BookReaderDemo/index.html?oid=11535010#page/6/mode/1up>.
- Luteral, Juan Francisco and Nicolás Hilding Ohlsson, "Historia de la Iglesia Anglicana en Argentina." Accessed April 20, 2015. <http://www.anglicana.org.ar/images/descargas/Resumen%20Historia%20de%20la%20Iglesia%20Anglicana%20en%20Argentina.pdf>.
- Maurizio, Roxana. "Migraciones internacionales en Argentina: un análisis de sus determinantes y de su relación con el mercado de trabajo." *Migraciones internacionales, Booms, Crisis Económicas y Desarrollo. El caso latinoamericano*. Santiago de Chile: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2008. Accessed April 22, 2015. http://www.mininterior.gov.ar/provincias/archivos_prv25/Migraciones_Argentina_Maurizio.pdf.
- Missionary Advocate*, March 17, 1868. Accessed January 7, 2015. <http://findit.library.yale.edu/bookreader/BookReaderDemo/index.html?oid=11535073#page/1/mode/1up>.
- Mitchell, Bill. "Diego Thomson: A study in Scotland and South America (1818-1825)." Accessed April 13, 2015. <http://www.jamesdiegothomson.com/diego-thomson-a-study-in-scotland-and-south-america-1818-1825/>
- Powell, David R. "Andrés Milne." Accessed August 6, 2015. http://www.kairos.org.ar/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=907&catid=90%3Aarticulos-de-la-revista-iglesia-y-mision&Itemid=156
- Thomson, James. "Circulation of the Scriptures in Buenos Ayres." *New Evangelical Magazine* (1820) Accessed April, 13, 2015. <http://www.jamesdiegothomson.com/blog/2013/12/26/buenos-aires-1st-september-1820>