

Bork, Paulo Franz

(1924–2015)

THE BRAZILIAN WHITE CENTER – UNASP

The Brazilian White Center – UNASP is a team of teachers and students at the Brazilian Ellen G. White Research Center – UNASP at the Brazilian Adventist University, Campus Engenheiro, Coelho, SP. The team was supervised by Drs. Adolfo Semo Suárez, Renato Stencil, and Carlos Flávio Teixeira. Bruno Sales Gomes Ferreira provided technical support. The following names are of team members: Adriane Ferrari Silva, Alan Gracioso Alexandre, Allen Jair Urcia Santa Cruz, Camila Chede Amaral Lucena, Camilla Rodrigues Seixas, Daniel Fernandes Teodoro, Danilo Alfredo Rios Junior, Danilo Fauster de Souza, Débora Arana Mayer, Elvis Eli Martins Filho, Felipe Cardoso do Nascimento, Fernanda Nascimento Oliveira, Gabriel Pilon Galvani, Giovana de Castro Vaz, Guilherme Cardoso Ricardo Martins, Gustavo Costa Vieira Novaes, Ingrid Sthéfane Santos Andrade, Isabela Pimenta Gravina, Ivo Ribeiro de Carvalho, Jhoseyr Davison Voos dos Santos, João Lucas Moraes Pereira, Kalline Meira Rocha Santos, Larissa Menegazzo Nunes, Letícia Miola Figueiredo, Luan Alves Cota Mól, Lucas Almeida dos Santos, Lucas Arteaga Aquino, Lucas Dias de Melo, Matheus Brabo Peres, Mayla Magaieski Graepp, Milena Guimarães Silva, Natália Padilha Corrêa, Rafaela Lima Gouvêa, Rogel Maio Nogueira Tavares Filho, Ryan Matheus do Ouro Medeiros, Samara Souza Santos, Sergio Henrique Micael Santos, Suelen Alves de Almeida, Talita Paim Veloso de Castro, Thais Cristina Benedetti, Thais Caroline de Almeida Lima, Vanessa Stehling Belgd, Victor Alves Pereira, Vinícios Fernandes Alencar, Vinícios Pereira Nascimento, Vitória Regina Boita da Silva, William Edward Timm, Julio Cesar Ribeiro, Ellen Deó Bortolotte, Maria Júlia dos Santos Galvani, Giovana Souto Pereira, Victor Hugo Vaz Storch, and Dinely Luana Pereira.



Paulo Bork

Photo courtesy of Brazilian White Center - UNASP.

Paulo Franz Bork, pastor and archaeologist, was born January 8, 1924, in the city of Cristina, state of Minas Gerais, Brazil.¹ The youngest son of Max and Helena Bork,² his siblings were João³ (1911-1988),⁴ Lídia, and Ruth Bork (Marques) (1919-1998).⁵ Born into an Adventist home, Paulo had a spiritual influence since his childhood. His parents encouraged him to study the Bible when he was a child. His father learned the Adventist message at the beginning of the 20th century and was baptized in 1904, in Osłowo (now in Poland) when the Adventist Church in Germany was still in its early years. With the closing of the Adventist churches, due to members not participating in military training on Saturdays and not using guns, Max built a small chapel in the woods where they met to worship God. It was in this context that the Bork family immigrated to Brazil in 1922, settling in the state of Minas Gerais. In 1924 they moved to the vicinity of Brazil College,⁶ so they could provide a Christian

education to their children.⁷

Paulo finished elementary school at Brazil College (1939-1942). He canvassed in the cities of Assis, SP (1942), Presidente Prudente, SP (1943), and Joinville, SC (1944) to help his parents with school expenses. While in school he listened with special attention in history and geography classes taught by Ruth Oberg Guimarães and the civilization history classes taught by Renato Emir Oberg. In 1945 he graduated with a degree in accounting. In 1946 he went to the United States where he studied theology at Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University) and he stayed there until 1948. When he started the theology course, he was especially fond of the biblical archaeology classes and was certain that he should study in this area. In 1950 he graduated with a degree in theology from Pacific Union College.⁸

The next year he married Norma Koester, teacher⁹ and, later, president of the Speech and Hearing Association of Seventh-day Adventists (SHASDA).¹⁰ From this union, Paul Kevin (1955) and Terry Alan (1957) were born.¹¹ In 1951 he also finished a master's degree in History of the Church at the Adventist Theological Seminary in Takoma Park, Maryland. He later finished a Master of Divinity degree at Andrews University (1960). He achieved a doctoral degree at the California Graduate School of Theology (1971). In addition, he took courses in Archaeology at several universities, such as Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California (1962), the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1971-1972), and the University of London (1972).¹²

Paul began his ministry in the Adventist Church in 1953 as a pastor of the German church in the city of New York and director of the youth department of the Greater New York Conference that covered part of the state of New York, including its capital.¹³ In July 1955 he was transferred to the Portuguese-speaking churches of Taunton and New Bedford, Massachusetts¹⁴ where he stayed until 1961. He was ordained on June 30, 1956, in southern New England.¹⁵ In 1961 he accepted an invitation to teach Bible and German at Loma Linda Academy, which he did for the next six years.¹⁶

In 1967 he was asked to teach Old Testament and Archaeology at Pacific Union College (PUC) in Angwin, California. After nearly 20 years of teaching at PUC, in 1986 he was appointed director of the Religion Department of the college,¹⁷ combining the functions of director and teacher until 1989.¹⁸ Under his leadership the extension program of the Religion Department of PUC in Jerusalem was opened. He headed it for five years until he transferred its management to the General Conference.¹⁹

During this time, he served as a guide for students on several archaeological expeditions. Among them were the excavation, sponsored by Ford Foundation, of the Tel Gezer archaeological site, Israel (1971-1975); archaeological research with the intent of locating the walls and gates of old Jerusalem, sponsored by the Jerusalem Archaeological Museum (1975-1978); and excavation of the so-called City of David in Jerusalem, sponsored by the Israel Antiquities Authority (1978-1979). He also did research in Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Yemen, Greece, Italy, Mexico, and Guatemala, these last two being about the Mayan civilization.²⁰

He made the following literary contributions: *The World of Moses* in English and Dutch (1979);²¹ *Out of the City, Across the Sand*, translated into Portuguese in 1989 by the Brazilian Publishing House as *A Viagem da Promessa, reconstruindo os passos de Abraão, de Ur a Canaã*;²² *A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern California*; as well as articles published in the periodicals *Adventist Review*, *Ministry*, and *Revista Adventista*.²³ Dr. Paulo Bork retired in 1989 at PUC.

Paulo made important contributions to improving the biblical and archaeological areas of Brazil Adventist University. In 1993, when meeting with Pastor Walter Boger, Principal of the institution, he revealed his desire to donate part of his archaeological library and personal objects to the university. Around 200 books were sent to the Dr. Enoch de Oliveira collection of the university library, and around 110 items arrived on the campus in 1996 for display only when a museum was created in the Communication Center building. This was officially inaugurated on May 16, 2000, with the name "Museu de Arqueologia Bíblica Paulo Bork" (Paulo Bork Biblical Archaeological Museum).²⁴

While retired, Paulo continued his activities of traveling and giving lectures, as well as helping in research at the Ellen G. White Research Center at Loma Linda Academy.²⁵ He died January 24, 2015, at Loma Linda University Medical Center, after suffering from a fall at his house in Loma Linda.²⁶ Paulo affirmed in an interview that "Archaeology transformed his life. He never read the Bible in the same way as he did before becoming an archaeologist. His points of view changed and his faith in the Bible was confirmed. The archaeological researches prove that God really inspired the Scriptures."²⁷ Around 37 years of his service to the denomination contributed specifically to academic studies in the field of archaeology in SDA institutions of higher education.

SOURCES

Anderson, Carl P. "Farewell to the Borks." *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, vol 58, no. 34, August 31, 1959, 4-5. Accessed October 16, 2017. http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/ALUG/ALUG19590831-V58-34__B.pdf#view=fit

Borges, Michelson. *Por que creio: doze pesquisadores falam sobre ciência e religião* 1st edition, Tatuí, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 2003.

Bork, Paulo F. *A Viagem da Promessa: Reconstituindo os Passos de Abraão, de Ur a Canaã* 1st edition, Tatuí, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 1989.

"Casa Apresenta os Cursos de Leitura para 1989." *Revista Adventista*, February 1989, 27. Accessed October 16, 2017. <http://acervo.revistaadventista.com.br/capas.cpb>.

Curriculum Vitae of Paulo F. Bork. In National Center of Adventist History/Ellen G. White Research Center: UNASP-EC, Engenheiro Coelho, SP. Shelf 2. Rack 13. Folder/Box "Bork, Paulo F." Accessed October 16, 2016.

Hartbauer, R. E. "SHASDA Organized." *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, vol. 72, no. 17, September 11, 1973. Accessed October 16, 2017. http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/ALUG/ALUG19730911-V72-17__B.pdf#view=fit

"João Bork." *Revista Adventista*, June 1988. Accessed October 16, 2017, <http://acervo.revistaadventista.com.br/capas.cpb>.

Mills, Merle L. "Southern New England Ordination Service." ARH, vol. 133, no. 36, September 6, 1956. Accessed October 16, 2017. http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/RH/RH19560906-V133-36__B.pdf#view=fit

Ponder, James. "In Loving Memory of Paul Franz Bork, Ph.D." Loma Linda City News (online), February 2015. Accessed October 16, 2017, <http://lomalinda.citynewsgroup.com/articles/a6262d74ad10556aef029513c1d4043b>

Roth, Don. "Brazilian Museum Named for Loma Linda Professor." *Loma Linda City News*, January 20, 2011, 11.

"Ruth Bork Marques." *Revista Adventista*, January 1998. Accessed October 16, 2017. <http://acervo.revistaadventista.com.br/capas.cpb>.

Scheid, Geraldo Oscar. "Biografia de John Bork." Monograph, UNASP-EC, 1986.

Steed, Lincoln. "Books across my Desk." *Australasian Record and Advent Word Survey*, vol. 84, no. 30, July 23, 1979, 12. Accessed October 16, 2017. http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/AAR/AAR19790723-V84-30__C.pdf#view=fit.

Stencel, Renato and Alberto R. Timm. *Museu de Arqueologia Bíblica: Artigos em homenagem ao Dr. Paulo Bork Engenheiro Coelho*, SP: UNASPRESS, 2010.

NOTES

1. Michelson Borges, *Por que creio: Doze pesquisadores falam sobre ciência e religião* (Tatuí, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 2003), 61.
2. Renato Stencel and Alberto R. Timm, "Paulo Franz Bork (1924-) Resumo Bibliográfico," in *Museu de Arqueologia Bíblica: Artigos em homenagem ao Dr. Paulo Bork*, ed. Rodrigo Silva (Engenheiro Coelho, SP: UNASPRESS, 2010), 100.
3. Geraldo Oscar Scheid, "Biografia de John Bork" (Monograph, UNASP-EC, 1986), 4.
4. "João Bork," *Revista Adventista*, June 1988, 32.
5. "Ruth Bork Marques," *Revista Adventista*, January 1998, 29.
6. Geraldo Oscar Scheid, "Biografia de John Bork" (Monograph, UNASP-EC, 1986), 4.
7. Stencel and Timm, 100.
8. Borges, 61-62.

9. Roth, Don, "Brazilian Museum Named for Loma Linda Professor," *Loma Linda City News*, January 20, 2011, 11.
10. R. E. Hartbauer, "SHASDA Organized," *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, vol. 72, no. 17, September 11, 1973, 7.
11. Ponder, James, "In Loving Memory of Paul Franz Bork, Ph.D.," *Loma Linda City News*, February 2015. Accessed October 10, 2017, <http://lomalinda.citynewsgroup.com/articles/a6262d74ad10556aef029513c1d4043b>.
12. Curriculum Vitae of Paulo F. Bork (National Center of Adventist History/Ellen G. White Research Center, UNASP-EC, Engenheiro Coelho, SP). 1.
13. Ibid.
14. Carl P. Anderson, "Farewell to the Borks," *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, vol. 58, no. 34, August 31, 1959, 4.
15. Merle L. Mills, "Southern New England Ordination Service," *ARH*, vol. 133, no. 36, September 6, 1956, 24.
16. Curriculum Vitae of Paulo F. Bork. (Collection of the National Center of Adventist History/Ellen G. White Research Center: UNASP-EC, Engenheiro Coelho, SP), 1.
17. Ibid.
18. "Casa Apresenta os Cursos de Leitura para 1989," *Revista Adventista*, February 1989, 27.
19. Curriculum Vitae of Paulo F. Bork (Collection of the National Center of Adventist History/Ellen G. White Research Center: UNASP-EC, Engenheiro Coelho, SP), 1; Stencil and Timm, 100.
20. Curriculum Vitae of Paulo F. Bork, 1; Stencil and Timm, 100.
21. Lincoln E. Steed, "Books Across my Desk," *Australasian Record and Advent Word Survey*, vol. 84, no. 30, July 23, 1979, 12.
22. Paulo F. Bork, *A Viagem da Promessa: reconstituindo os passos de Abraão, de Ur a Canaã* (Tatuí, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 1989), 146.
23. Stencil and Timm, 100.
24. Ibid., 44-46.
25. Borges, 62.
26. James Ponder, "In Loving Memory of Paul Franz Bork, Ph.D.," *Loma Linda City News*, February 2015, accessed October 30, 2017, <http://lomalinda.citynewsgroup.com/articles/a6262d74ad10556aef029513c1d4043b>.
27. Borges, 63.

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000