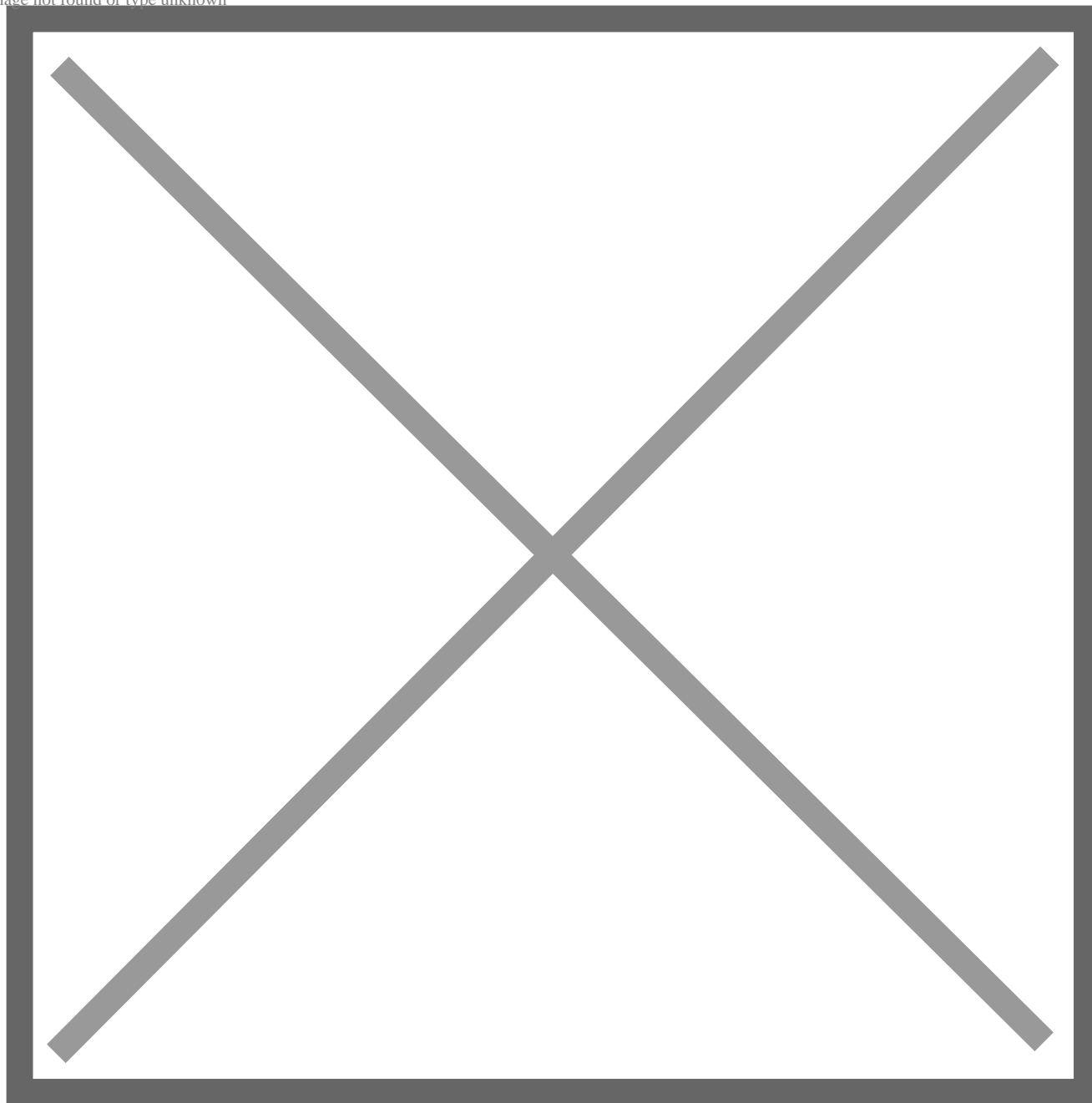


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## Meyer, Albert (1889–1963)

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### CHIGEMEZI NNADOZIE WOGU, AND ROLAND MEYER

Chigemezi Nnadozie Wogu, MTS, is a Ph.D. student at the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, the Netherlands and a research associate at the Institute of Adventist Studies in Friedensau Adventist University, Germany. At Friedensau, he manages the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventist* research project for some parts of Europe. Wogu is a junior member of the Netherlands School for Advanced Studies in Theology and Religion. He is co-editor to *Contours of European Adventism: Issues in the History of the Denomination in the Old Continent* (Möckern: Institute of Adventist Studies, Friedensau Adventist University, 2020).

Roland Meyer, Docteur en théologie protestante (Doctor of Protestant Theology) (Strasbourg University, France), was a teacher and a pastor in the Swiss French Conference. He taught systematic theology teacher at the Adventist University of France. His published articles and books include *La vie après la mort. Saint Paul défenseur de la résurrection*

(1989), *Le retour à la vie* (1997), *Paul et les femmes* (2013), "Pourquoi Jésus est-il mort sur la croix?" in *Servir: Revue adventiste de théologie* (2018). Meyer collaborated on the revisions of the *Nouvelle Bible Segond* (2002) and the *Bible en français courant* (2019).

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Albert Meyer served the Adventist Church for 42 years as pastor, missionary, and administrator in Switzerland, Algeria, Morocco, and France in the early and mid-1900s.

## Early Life

Meyer was born in Pully, near Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1889. His parents, Frederic Meyer (1854-1907) and Pauline Zbinden-Meyer (1854-1915) had eight children: three daughters, one of whom died at three months, and five boys, four of whom later served the Adventist Church. They lived in the suburbs of the city of Lausanne, in French-speaking Switzerland, and were among the first members of the Adventist Church of Lausanne, founded in 1886. The origin of the Meyer family goes back to the year 1322, in the small village of Reisiswil, in the canton of Bern, in German-speaking Switzerland.

## Education and Marriage

In 1905 Albert Meyer moved to Paris to work in a new health products factory, which later became the company *Pur Aliment [Pure Food]*. When he returned to Switzerland, he went to Zurich to train as a tailor. In 1915 Albert married Marguerite Michaud, born in Lausanne in 1888. The couple had three children: Raymond, Isabelle, and Sylvain.

## North Africa

In 1915 Albert Meyer joined the Lemman Conference in French-speaking Switzerland, where he worked as a pastor in Yverdon, Sainte-Croix, and Neuchâtel. In 1919 the region of Alsace-Lorraine, which was returned to France following World War I, needed a bilingual pastor, so Meyer moved to Metz. In 1921 Meyer was called to North Africa as a missionary. The family moved to Algeria with a mission to develop Adventist work throughout North Africa. Meyer worked as superintendent of the North African Mission and oversaw the mission work in Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco.<sup>1</sup> Around 1925 a female Adventist believer from Algeria moved to Casablanca, Morocco<sup>2</sup> where she began witnessing. Her witness set the pace of missionary work in Morocco. That same year, Jean Reynaud was sent to Casablanca. When four people were ready to be baptized, Meyer went there and conducted the first Adventist baptism in the country.<sup>3</sup>

Following the reorganization of the territory in 1928, and the creation of the North African Union, Meyer became superintendent of the Moroccan Mission.<sup>4</sup> Meyer moved with his family to Casablanca from where he oversaw the mission work in Morocco. The mission was officially organized in 1929. It was registered as an authorized association under the government as "The Moroccan Evangelical Mission of Seventh-day Adventists."<sup>5</sup> While Meyer and W. Lagger worked in Casablanca, other missionaries such as D. Asiano and E. Veuthey worked in Tangier and Fez respectively. Work among the Muslim Arabs and Berbers was not easy. Reflecting on the difficulty of the mission, Meyer wrote, "God only knows the fatigue which this work done in the heat of the open country represents."<sup>6</sup> It is not surprising that at first the team focused on the European population while plans for a medical mission work among the Muslims were laid.<sup>7</sup> Around 1932 a hall was rented in the city of Fez. The hall was partitioned into two sections: one for worship, the other as a dispensary.<sup>8</sup>

## Back to Europe

In 1936 Meyer returned to France and settled with his family in Angers where he pastored three Adventist churches: Angers, Tours, and Saumur. In 1938 Meyer accepted the invitation to be president of the Lemman Conference covering the French-speaking regions of Switzerland Conference, which had its headquarters in Lausanne. In 1944 he agreed to become the president of the Swiss Union Conference. During these years of administration Meyer engaged in significant evangelistic endeavors in the Geneva region, along with his pastoral colleagues. In 1946 he was appointed field secretary and ministerial secretary for the Southern European Division, while retaining the post of president of the Swiss Union Conference until 1952. He ended his active service in 1957.

## Later Life

After 42 years of active service in Switzerland, France, and North Africa, Albert Meyer and his wife, Marguerite, moved to La Tour-de-Peilz, by Lake Geneva, for their retirement. He died at La Lignière Clinic (Lake Geneva Sanatorium) in January 1963, at the age of 74, due to heart disease. He was buried in the cemetery of Gland, Switzerland.

## Contribution

Albert Meyer served the Seventh-day Adventist Church for more than four decades as a pastor, missionary, and administrator. As a missionary in North Africa, he was instrumental in establishing Adventism in Algeria and Morocco. As administrator at almost all church levels, he contributed to the consolidation, progress, and growth of the Church wherever he served. His legacy in the history of French Adventism was continued by Raymond Meyer and Sylvain Meyer, his two sons, who gave almost all their lives to the service of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as well.

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### NOTES

1. "North African Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1922), 93.?
2. The name of this woman remains unknown.?
3. See Charles Cornaz, "Church Dedication Casablanca, Morocco," *Quarterly Review*, March 1958, 2. ?
4. "Moroccan Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1929), 159.?
5. Albert Meyer, "The Moroccan Evangelical Mission of Seventh-day Adventists," *Missions Quarterly*, third quarter, 1930, 36.?
6. Ibid.?
7. By 1930 the membership had grown to about 29. See Albert Meyer, "Annual Meeting of the Moroccan Mission," *Quarterly Review*, December 1930, 6; General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Statistical Report of Seventh-day Adventists Conferences, Mission and Institutions: Year ending December 31, 1930, The Sixty-Eight Annual Report* (Takoma Park, MD: 1930), 18.?
8. Unfortunately, this dispensary was closed after a few weeks since its manager, Mrs. Veuthey (wife of E. Veuthey), returned to Switzerland because of illness. See Albert Meyer, "Progress in Morocco," *Missions Quarterly*, second quarter, 1932, 28.?

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