

Oberg, Renato

Emir (1914–2013)

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 Stencel, and Carlos Flávio Teixeira. Bruno Sales Gomes Ferreira provided technical support. The following names are of team members: Adriane Ferrari Silva, Alan Gracioto 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, Thaís 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.



Renato Emir Oberg

Photo courtesy of Brazilian White Center - UNASP.

Renato Emir Oberg, pastor, teacher, translator, and historian, was born March 25, 1914, in the city of Curitiba, state of Paraná, Brazil.¹ His parents were Leonardo Oberg and Bertha Oberg, and he had four siblings: Ruth Oberg Guimarães, Arthur Oberg, Odete Oberg, and Leoni Oberg de Souza Ávila.² Renato's mother learned of the Adventist faith through her brothers, who had studied at the International School of Curitiba, which followed the Adventist teaching philosophy. However, she was baptized only later, when she attended an evangelistic meeting held by Pastor José Amador dos Reis, in Porto Alegre, state of Rio Grande do Sul. Under the influence of their mother, Renato and his brothers were also baptized into the Adventist faith.³ His baptism was officiated by Pastor Germano Streithorst in 1930, when he was about sixteen years old.⁴

Oberg attended elementary school at the *Escola Complementar* of Porto Alegre, graduating later in Ponta Grossa, state of Paraná. He began secondary school at the *Ginásio Regente Feijó*, also in Ponta Grossa. From 1928 to 1931 he attended the *Ginásio Paranaense* (now *Colégio Estadual do Paraná*), in Curitiba. As a student, Oberg worked at the State Secretariat of Agriculture and Public Works and desired to become an engineer. The director of the department in which he worked promised that he would help him in whatever way he needed. Nonetheless, after a severe internal conflict, he changed his plans and enrolled at Brazil College (now referred to as UNASP-SP), where on September 30, 1933, he achieved his degree in theology.⁵

After graduation, Oberg was the only one in his class who did not receive a call to join the Adventist work, so he decided to go into canvassing. In February 1934 he was invited to be an assistant officer at the Paraná-Santa Catharina Mission, where he served until February 1936. Following that, he worked as a Bible Instructor under the supervision of Pastor Siegfried Hoffmann in the city of São Paulo. After a few months, Oberg held his first series of meetings in the district of Belém, São Paulo city.⁶

In January 1937 Oberg accepted a call to serve at Brazil College, where he taught History and Mathematics until December 1938.⁷ Following that, he served at the São Paulo Conference as director of the Educational and Youth departments until March 1942.⁸ He taught again at the Brazil College from March to December 1942, and enrolled at the College of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters of the University of São Paulo (USP)⁹

From 1943 to 1948 Oberg was director of the Educational and Youth departments of the South Brazil Union Conference, with headquarters in São Paulo, and also taught classes at Brazil College.¹⁰ On March 9, 1944, Oberg married Irene Erna. The wedding was officiated by Pastor Rodolpho Belz in the city of Curitiba, Paraná. From this union four children were born: Renato Artur Oberg, Renir Clélia Oberg Ramirez, Reneri Solange Oberg de Arruda Câmara and Renair Denise.¹¹ On January 6, 1945, he was ordained to the pastoral ministry at the chapel of the Brazil College.¹² In April 1946, he achieved the Licentiate and Bachelor's degree in Geography and History from the University of São Paulo.¹³

In 1948 Oberg accepted the call to be director of Taquara Academy (now Cruzeiro do Sul Adventist Academy), where he also taught Drawing and French.¹⁴ In 1949 he was invited to be president of the Rio Grande do Sul Conference, where he served until 1952. After that he received a call from the Rio-Minas Conference to pastor the Central Church of Rio de Janeiro.¹⁵

In 1954 Oberg was invited by Brazil College to teach at the Theology department, where he taught Biblical Archeology, History of Civilization, History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, History of Missions, and Christian Education. He served there until 1959, when he accepted the call to pastor the Central Church of Curitiba, state of Paraná. In the following year, he was director of Paraná Adventist Academy (now Paraná Adventist College), where he also taught Sacred History.¹⁶

In 1962 Renato Oberg was called to lead the departments of Education, Temperance, and Youth at the East Brazil Union Mission, today Southeast Brazil Union Conference (USEB).¹⁷ In 1963 he served provisionally as

director of Northeast Brazil Academy (ENA), which had suffered intense damages from a flood. On returning to the East Brazil Union, he received a scholarship from the church to study a Master of Arts program at Andrews University, graduating in 1966.

Returning to Brazil, Oberg continued as leader of the Educational department of the East Brazil Union until 1975. During this period he organized many congresses at conference and union levels. One of them was held January 7-11, 1969, at Recife, state of Pernambuco, focused on Evolution and the Bible. Presented at the Congress was the project the *Handwritten Bible*, carried out by the Youth Society of the East Brazil Union Conference.¹⁸

Oberg achieved a Doctoral degree in History with the thesis *João Huss, Um Injustiçado?* (John Huss, a victim of injustice?) from the University of São Paulo in 1973. In January 1976 he was called by the South American Division to translate and adapt religious education workbooks for the 5th to 12th grades, to be used at Adventist schools. He retired in January 1980, but continued to give lectures and preach. Renato Oberg spoke five languages: Portuguese, English, French, German, Latin, and was competent in Hebrew.¹⁹ Renato died December 5, 2013, at age of 99, in the city of Bragança Paulista, São Paulo.²⁰

Renato Emir Oberg served the Seventh-day Adventist Church for 46 years as a pastor, teacher, writer, translator and historian. He spent much of his life working in the educational field and publishing theological writings. He wrote the book *A Nossa Bíblia e os Manuscritos do Mar Morto* (Our Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls).

SOURCES

Chagas, Ivo Palmeira. "Biografia do Pastor Renato Emir Oberg." Monograph, Brazil College, 1999.

SDA Memory Brazilian Encyclopedia,

http://www.memoriaadventista.com.br/wikiasd/index.php?title=Renato_Emir_Oberg

Oberg, Renato Emir. "Breve Relato de Minha Vida." *Minha vida de pastor: cinquenta e três pastores jubilados falam de sua vida e de seu ministério*, editado Tercio Sarli. Campinas, SP: Certeza Editorial, 2009.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association. Various years.

NOTES

1. Ivo Palmeira Chagas, "Biografia do Pastor Renato Emir Oberg." Monograph, Brazil College, 1999, 2.

2. Renato Emir Oberg, "Breve Relato de Minha Vida," *Minha vida de pastor: cinquenta e três pastores jubilados falam de sua vida e de seu ministério*, ed. Tercio Sarli. Campinas, SP: Certeza Editorial, 2007, 415, 416.

3. Ibid., 415.
4. Chagas, 2.
5. Oberg, 416, 417.
6. Oberg, 417; and Chagas, 8.
7. Chagas, 8.; "Brazilian Training School," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1938, 239; and "Brazilian Training School," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1939, 245.
8. "Sao Paulo Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1940, 192.; and Chagas, 8.
9. Chagas, 8.; and Oberg, 418.
10. Chagas, 8.; "South Brazil Union Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1944, 150; and "South Brazil Union Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, Washington, D.C., Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1948, 153.
11. Oberg, 421.
12. Chagas, 6.
13. Oberg, 418; and Chagas, 4, 5.
14. "Taquara Academy," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1949, 287.
15. Oberg, 419.
16. Ibid, 420; and Chagas, 9.
17. "East Brazil Union Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1963, 180.
18. Oberg, 420; and Chagas, 5, 10.
19. Oberg, 421; Chagas, 10, 11.
20. Enciclopédia da Memória Adventista no Brasil, http://www.memoriaadventista.com.br/wikiasd/index.php?title=Renato_Emira_Oberg.

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