

Christianini, Arnaldo Benedicto (1915–1984)

THE BRAZILIAN WHITE CENTER – UNASP (2)

The Brazilian White Center – UNASP (2) 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. The following are the team members: Melissa Querido Batista, Priscila Carvalho dos Santos, Allan Sleyter Soares de Atayde, Jonatan Ferreira Nascimento, and Leo Eduardo Menegusso Valenzi.

Arnaldo Benedicto Christianini was a pioneering Seventh-day Adventist pastor, editor, and educator. He was born on March 2, 1915, in the city of Bariri, São Paulo. However, his parents, Giuseppe Christianini and Santa Clara Bonviccini Christianini, would later move to another town, Bebedouro, where Arnaldo would start his education. Arnaldo had two sisters, Alice and Maria Luísa.¹



Arnaldo Christianini

Photo courtesy of Brazilian White Center - UNASP.

Conversion

Arnaldo was born in a Catholic household, later converting to Presbyterianism. His first encounter with Adventism came through some books he bought from young colporteurs, whom he considered “naïve” and “intrusive” at the time. However, he did not read the material, which he referred to as “Adventist drivel,” but rather he donated it to libraries.²

Before he became an Adventist, he was a Freemason who was intensely involved with politics, at times getting into altercations about it.³ That, in addition to the problems he had with his church’s doctrine, made him abandon Christianity. Later, Arnaldo was convinced by one of his politically-involved friends to invest his money in politics. In the subsequent elections, he lost all his money and his friends, who abandoned him. After failing politically, financially, and morally, he moved and began studying Adventism, eventually converting.⁴ In the end,

the same books he had dismissed, especially *The Dawn of a New Day*, *The Marked Bible*, and *Mary Kennedy's Victory*, were responsible for his conversion.⁵ Thus, after Bible studies with Pastor Siegfried Hoyler and Professor Hélio Serafino, he was baptized in 1953 by Pastor Itanel Ferraz at the Adventist Church of Campinas, São Paulo.⁶

Education and Ministry

Arnaldo graduated college in 1943 from the Escola Superior de Comércio in São Paulo. Being a natural scholar, he acquired numerous certificates in Accounting, Commerce, and Mercantilism courses. To qualify as an ordained pastor, he took Adventist theological extension courses (including some from Andrews University).⁷

He began working in Adventist circles in 1958 at the Brazilian Publishing House (CPB) as a writer. During this time, he served as editor for the magazines *Ministério*, *Mocidade*, and *Nosso Amiguinho*, edited and translated books such as *A Arte Cristã de Vender* (*The Christian Art of Selling*), *Happiness for Husbands and Wives*, and *Ellen G. White: Messenger to the Remnant*.⁸ In 1963, he worked in administration as a teacher and treasurer for the Northeast Adventist School in Belém de Maria, Pernambuco.⁹ He returned to CPB in 1972, where he worked until his retirement in 1975. There, he translated other books, such as *Como Vencer la Depresion Nerviosa* (*How to Overcome Nervous Depression*), and *I'd Like to Ask Sister White*; served as editor-in-chief for two years, and was responsible for the *Adventist Review*.¹⁰

He was a versatile worker who contributed to the dissemination of the message in various ways. However, his performance in the literary field is particularly noteworthy. Besides being a diligent translator and editor, he authored several books and approximately 8,000 articles and newspaper texts.¹¹ He also worked as a district pastor for the church of Concórdia, Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais; a treasurer of the Northeast Brazil College; as well as treasurer, and served in the Public Relations and Temperance departments of the Minas Gerais mission.¹²

Literary Work

The gift of writing he possessed was dedicated to defending the Bible and the gospel message. Most of the books he wrote were theological in nature and aimed to glorify the Creator. *Rosal de Sarom*, for example, is a book of Christian poems that uses poetry to praise the Lord,¹³ while *Subtilezas do Êrro* (*Subtleties of Error*) refutes many objections to Adventist belief and doctrine.¹⁴ Others, like *O Ídolo de Quarta-Feira* (*The Wednesday Idol*), which challenges the theory that Jesus died on a Wednesday,¹⁵ and *Radiografia do Jeovismo* (*Radiography of Jehovahism*), which discusses the biblical application of Jehovah's Witnesses' doctrine, seek to demystify ideas contrary to the Word of God.¹⁶

He also participated in various Brazilian and Portuguese literary societies. Some of these included the former Brazilian Writers' Association, the Union of Professional Journalists of the State of São Paulo, and the Union of

Companies Owning Newspapers and Magazines in the State of São Paulo.¹⁷ A follower of Textual Criticism, he was appointed as the Adventist Church's representative on the Permanent Review and Consultation Committee of the Bible Society of Brazil from 1969 to 1974.¹⁸ He is also the author and composer of the hymn *Somos um Pequeno Povo Mui Feliz* (*We Are a Very Happy Little People*), number 222 in the New Brazilian Adventist Hymnal,¹⁹ and the founder of the newspapers *Jornal Hoje* and *Correio de Pirajuí*.²⁰

Personal Life, Retirement, and Final Years

Pastor Christianini married Inah Pulino Christianini (1911-1997) in Bebedouro, São Paulo, on December 31, 1938. They had two children, Paulo Roberto (1939-2019) and Vera Helena. Inah was deeply involved with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She worked in Women's Ministry and children evangelism, as well as serving as chief cook for the Northeast Brazil College as a volunteer.²¹

In September 1975, he retired due to health reasons. However, he remained available to the Church, writing articles and translating even during his retirement.²² At the Ibero-American Adventist Editorial Council held in Rio de Janeiro in August 1983, he was honored for his significant literary output, as was Luiz Waldvogel and Siegfried J. Schwantes.²³

Arnaldo Christianini's life was surrounded and dedicated to the written word. His dedication to God is evident in the literary works he produced throughout his life. Likewise, the pastor's final thoughts can be seen in his last letter, which concluded with these words: "I cannot write anything else. My message (of life) has been given. I am just waiting for my translation." On the same day he wrote that letter, September 17, 1984, he passed away due to cardiac complications.²⁴

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2. Arnaldo Christianini, "Minha Conversão à Mensagem do Advento," *Revista Adventista* (April 1954): 23-24.
3. Vera and Otávio Belz, interviewed by Melissa Querido Batista; Arnaldo Christianini, "Por Êsses Caminhos de Deus," *Revista Adventista* 25, no. 5 (May 1957): 26.
4. Arnaldo Christianini, "Minha Conversão à Mensagem do Advento," 23-24; Arnaldo Christianini. "Por Êsses Caminhos de Deus," *Revista Adventista* (May 1957): 26; Vera and Otávio Belz, interviewed by Melissa Querido Batista.
5. Rubens Lessa, *Casa Publicadora Brasileira: 100 anos* (Tatuí, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 2000), 77.
6. Arnaldo Christianini. "Minha Conversão à Mensagem do Advento," 23-24.
7. Vera and Otávio Belz, interviewed by Melissa Querido Batista.

8. "Pastor Christianini Aposenta-se," *Revista Adventista* 70, no. 11 (November 1975): 16; Arthur White, *Ellen G. White: Mensageira da Igreja Remanescente*, 2nd edition (Tatuí, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 1993); Haroldo Shryock, *A Felicidade Conjugal*, 4th edition (Santo André, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 1959); Lessa, Rubens Lessa, *Casa Publicadora Brasileira: 100 anos* (Tatuí, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 2000), 88.
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