International Conference: Pietism- Methodism- World Christianity

Andrew Walls Centre for the Study of African and Asian Christianity.

Hope University, Liverpool June 21st -23rd, 2013

BUNYAN’S PILGRIM’S PROGRESS: AN EXCELLENT INSTRUMENT OF PROTESTANT MISSION

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*abstract*

*Bunyan’s The Pilgrim’s Progress is one of the most influential books of the Protestant pietistic movements in the last few centuries.*

*The missionaries who were inspired by the Revival Movements and went out to preach the Gospel in parts of the world that were newly discovered or newly accessible: India, China, Korea, Japan, and many parts of Africa, have not only translated the Bible in the local languages, but in many cases offered to the new Christians a translation of The Pilgrim’s Progress. As a result, this book has been of fundamental importance to Churches established through protestant missions all over the world, a fact that seems to have been overlooked by researchers on the History of Christian Missions. .*

*To begin with, this article offers an introduction to the personality of the author: John Bunyan (1628-1688), and to the content of the book. Secondly, I will describe how the book was used by missionary societies, with a special attention to Africa. Finally, it will draw a balance in view of the actual challenges of the Church in Africa. It will argue that the book has at the same time both hindered the development of an African theology, but also inspired Christians to remain firm in the resistance against political oppression, and actually may serve as a counterbalance against the influence of the so-called Prosperity Gospel.*

***John Bunyan***

John Bunyan (1628-1688) was a Congregationalist preacher and a self-educated man who lived at the end of the turbulent period of civil wars in Great Britain between the royalists in favor of one national Episcopal Church, and the protestant republicans, and independent puritans.

After the of decapitation of the King Charles I in 1649, Cromwell who was the self proclaimed Lord Protector from 1653-1648, had inaugurated a period of religious freedom for the protestant independents. The Restauration of the kings, of the House of Stuarts, introduced a period of persecution of the protestant Dissenters. In 1662 the Episcopal Church was restored as the only accepted church.

When Bunyan was 32 years of age, he was condemned for organizing illicit meetings where he was preaching. He was held in detention for twelve years (1660-1672) in Bedford, a city at about 60 miles north of London. When he was released, he was chosen as the pastor of the Congregationalist Parish of Bedford. He remained in this ministry until his unexpected death in 1688. Through his preaching and the publication of a great number of books and tracts, he became an influential man in the South-Eastern region of England, which earned him the name of ‘Bishop Bunyan’, the fervent Congregationalist.[[1]](#footnote-1)

In fact, Bunyan was not a fanatic, but instead a man of conviction, a non-conformist and an independent thinker. When he was arrested, he defended himself by saying that the word of God cannot be bounded, or enforced by the functionaries of a national Church, governed by the State.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Contrary to the assertions of several biographers, Bunyan, although an autodidact - he had only elementary schooling – was well read in both the profane and theological literature of his time, and throughout his life was an avid reader. For several periods of his imprisonment, the guards allowed him to read books and to have time to write.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Bunyan suffered many spiritual crises and depressions, which find their expression in passages of the book.[[4]](#footnote-4) His capacity to self-reflect enabled him to describe the intimate life of believers through a well developed sense of pastoral care. Bunyan had a great imagination, possessed a deep practical psychological knowledge, and had developed a cordial pastoral attitude, which he expressed in his writings, his preaching and counseling. He was also an excellent story teller. However, the administration of church affairs was not one of his favorite activities.

Bunyan wrote many tracts and books, of which two hold a dominant place: *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, and his autobiography: *Abounding Grace*, written in prison.[[5]](#footnote-5)   
In this spiritual autobiography Bunyan describes how the doctrine of predestination, which he learned in the circles of Calvinists, caused him serious spiritual trouble. He goes on to say that he found a great release through reading Martin Luther’s Commentary of the Epistle to Galatians. He says: “I do prefer this book of Mr. Luther upon the Galatians, (excepting the Holy Bible) before all the books that ever I have seen, as most fit for a wounded Conscience.’[[6]](#footnote-6) (Sic, GS). Like Luther, Bunyan ardently sought the assurance of his salvation by trusting in the grace of God.

The American professor of English literature, Daniel V. Runyon, suggested that the attention that Luther gave to the use of allegory as a didactic instrument, inspired Bunyan to write *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, as the allegorical interpretation of the Christian life.[[7]](#footnote-7)

***The Book* The Pilgrim’s Progress**

The book is presented as the dream of the author featuring a character called *Christian,*  who makes his pilgrimage from the *city of destruction* towards the *celestial city*.[[8]](#footnote-8)

The author sees in his dream a man in dirty clothes, and a great burden upon his back, reading in the Bible, exclaiming: What shall I do to be saved? A man approaches him, called the Evangelist, who gives him a parchment roll, with the following words written on it : “Fled from the wrath to come “ (Mt. 3,7). Then he shows him a lamp shining from a great distance. He promises him that by walking towards this light, he will discover a small door, a ‘wicket-gate’. While knocking on this door, it will be opened by a man who will answer his question.

‘So I saw in my Dream, that the man began to run; Now he had not run far from his own door, but his Wife and Children perceiving it, began to cry after him to return: but the Man put his fingers in his Ears, and ran on crying, Life, Life, Eternal Life: so he looked not behind him, but fled towards the middle of the Plain.’[[9]](#footnote-9)

After having left his wife and his children, the man carries on the path in the direction of the narrow door he had been shown. Two fellow-citizens try to detain him- one is named O*bstinate*, the other *Pliable*. But *Christian* succeeds in convincing *Pliable* to join him, while *Obstinate* returns downtown. The two approach a swampland, which they must cross. When they are starting to sink, *Pliable* gives up. Christian remains alone, deeply immersed in mud of the *Slough of Despondency*, by the heavy weight of his burden. After various encounters and interruptions, and a teaching session in the house of a master called *Interpreter*, he arrives, by a very steep path, at the place where he sees the cross of Christ.

And there, his face concentrated on the cross, he suddenly feels his back bag losing its weight, and is released from the burden of his sins. Filled with great joy, he receives new clothing, a mark on his face, and a sealed roll which he must present at the gate of heaven.

This decisive and moving moment in front of the cross, as the place of a personal encounter with Christ, is only the beginning of a long journey. It will be a journey full of temptations, interior doubts, combat and conflicts with powers or with people who seek to divert him from the good way. Such is the life of Christian. A way full of risks, difficult choices, at times loneliness, setbacks and uncertainties, but also moments of joy and relief. All these tests can be overcome by the consolation of the Holy Scriptures, which gives courage, direction and perseverance. All of these various moments are told by Bunyan as an attractive and captivating adventure.

After the crucial moment in front of the cross, Christian comes to the hill *Difficulty*. But near this hill is a crossroad. *Formalist* and *Hypocrisy*, two travelling companions, take the way which seems to them less tiring; both fall into a ravine and find death. Christian, on the other hand, takes the difficult way; arrives at the top where he finds some rest. He then sets out again to reach in full safety the *Palace Beautiful,* where the porter, *Watchful*, welcomes him cordially. Three girls, attractive but pure, *Prudence , Piety and Charity*, are ready to listen to his story in the *Chamber of* *Peace*. They offer him the armor of God: the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of the faith, and the sword of the Spirit, which Christian will need in his struggle against the enemies he will encounter, men like : *Desire, Mistrust, Pride, Vanity, Illusion, Seduction,*and *Shame.*

After the *Palace Beautiful,* he crosses the *Valley of Humiliation*, where he must fight *Apollyon.*

‘The monster was hideous to behold, he was cloathed with scales like a Fish (and they are his pride) he had Wings like a Dragon, and out of his belly came Fire and Smoke. When he was up to *Christian,* he beheld him with a disdainful countenance, and thus began to question with him.

Apol. Whence come you, and wither are you bound?

*Chr*. I come from the City of *Destruction*, which is the place of all evil, and I am going to the City of *Zion.*

Apol. By this I perceive that thou art one of my Subjects, for all that Country is mine; and I am the Prince and God of it. How is it then that thou hast ran away from thy King? Were it not that I hope thou maiest do me more service, I would strike thee now at one blow to the ground.

*Chr.* I was born indeed in your Dominions, but your service was hard, and your wages such as a man could not live on, for *the wages of Sin is* death; therefore when I was come to years, I did as other considerate persons do, look out, if perhaps I might mend myself. [[10]](#footnote-10)

After a strong argument and a violent combat, Christian manages to strike him a blow with his lance, and *Apollyon* flees.

Christian crosses then the *Valley of the Shadow of Death* (Ps. 23), inhabited by all kinds of sinister and threatening powers and fears, and is plunged into a deep darkness.

At the end of the valley, *Christian* must cross by a place full with blood, bones and ashes, corpses of pilgrims who had formerly walked this way, and had become victims of tyranny and human violence. He must also cross two caves, places of dwelling of two giants, who had been powerful in the past. The one, *Pagan,* had died, while the other, *Pope, was* very old and without power, passed his time by corroding his nails.

*Christian* walks a long stretch together with *Faithful.*  At one point *Christian* and *Faithful* enter into discussion with *Talkative,*  who is able to explain the Christian faith very well to them. *Talkative* leaves them at the moment that *Christian* asks him: ‘Standeth your Religion in Word or in Tongue, and not in Deed and Truth?’

Both arrive in *Vanity Fair*, a place organized by *Apollyon, Beelzebub* and *Legio*. They are both ridiculed and attacked there. Accused of being agitators who have come to disturb the fair, they have to defend themselves before the judge *Hatred-of-Well*. *Faithful*, still attacked for having offended the honorable men, Lord *Oldman*, Lord *Carnal Delight*, the Lord *Luxurious*, the Lord *Desire of Vain-glory*, Lord *Lechery* and Sir *Having Greedy*, is finallytortured to death.

Carrying on his way alone, *Christian*  comes into contact with different people such as *By-Ends*,  *Mr. Facing-Bothways, Mr. Hold-the-World, Mr. Save-all, Mr. Gripe-Man and Mr. Money-Love.* But he is relieved when he meets *Hopeful* and moves forward with himas his companion.

One day, after having drunk the water of the river of the life, both are allured to a place called *By-Path-Meadow*, from where ran a road parallel with their own but that looked much more comfortable. However this path leads to a *Castle,* called *Doubting-Castle*, inhabited by the *Giant Despair* and his wife *Diffidence*. Taken by *Despair,* they lived several days in alarming anguish. The giant advises them to kill themselves, using a knife, a cord or poison. But the prisoners comfort each other with the words: ‘*the time may come that gives us a happy release: but let us not be our own murderers*’. All of a sudden Christian remembers that on his chest, very close to his heart, he carries a key called *Promise* which opens any lock in *Doubting-Castle*. So they escape.

Continuing on their way, they meet with *Atheist* and a young man *Ignorance* respectively, with whom they have long conversations. Soon they enter the country of Beulah, ‘My Delight’, where the sun shined night and day, and where they were within sight of the City of Zion.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Before arriving at the City, they have to cross a deep river. *Hopeful*  helps Christian to arrive at the other shore by keeping Christian’s head above water, and by quoting from Psalm 73, and angels reassured him by saying that the river will seem less deep to the extent that he has faith in the King of the City. Arriving at the shore where other glorious companions are attending them, they leave their *Mortal Garments* behind them. They are directed towards the Gate through which they hear already the songs of praise. At the time that they enter the Gate, the two pilgrims are transfigured and covered with clothing which is shining like gold.

At this time the author of the dream awakes and the story ends

Bunyan wrote a second book, which speaks about the voyage of Christian’s wife and their children, who follow him the same way. This book, commonly called *The Pilgrim’s Progress*,  *Second Part*, was published in 1684. In this book Bunyan answers the criticism that he received from others or had felt for himself, that the first book was centered too much on Christian alone, because he had given up his family.

***The character of the book* : *an initiation into Christian life*.**

Bunyan’s book is a guide to the spiritual life of a Christian, without being a summary of the Christian doctrines, or a textbook or catechism. It is rather an initiation into the Christian faith, presented in the form of an enthralling allegorical history, full of humor and wisdom. One of the implicit messages is that someone who listens to the Gospel does not lose his own character: *Christian* is a personality different from that of *Hopeful* , who is not identical to *Faithful*.

The rather long dialogues - Christian speaks with *Ignorant*, *Atheist*, *Talkative* and several others - are too lively to be considered as polemics, although they contain some features against the positions of the Catholic Church of the seventeenth century. Above all, the book is the work of a minister of great pastoral wisdom. It offers a specific approach to the Bible based on a thorough personal reading.

H. Wheeler Robinson, an Old Testament scholar of the beginning of the twentieth century, wrote: `We are not likely to see in the Bible just what Bunyan did – a dramatic commentary on our lives in all its details’.[[12]](#footnote-12)

The book propagates sober Christian ethics, and suggests that Christians need to be wary of wealth and cheap amusement and entertainment. It presents a thorough individualism: Christian leaves his wife and children in order to gain eternal life. However, Christian is not always travelling alone. Often, he is accompanied by others. The faithful help each other in troublesome situations. The liturgical life of the Church with its sacraments is not mentioned. Only one allusion is made to baptism: arrived at the foot of the cross, Christian receives new clothes and a sign on his forehead.

The book may be placed in the category of great works on initiation to the Christian faith and life, like the *Rule of St. Benedict* (480-547) and *The Imitation of Christ* of Thomas a Kempis (c. 1380-1471). The scene where Christian crosses into the valley of the humility, in *The Pilgrim’s Progress* makes one think of certain passages of the rule of Benedict where this attitude of humility takes a paramount place. [[13]](#footnote-13)

The Irish playwright Bernard Shaw, calls Bunyan ‘the artist-philosopher’, and praises his talents as a literator. He makes a comparison between the scene where Bunyan describes the combat of Christian against Apollyon and a particular scene of Shakespeare and comments: ‘This is the same thing done masterly. Apart from its superior grandeur, force and appropriateness, it is better claptrap and infinitely better word music’.[[14]](#footnote-14) Henri A. Talon, Professor of English Literature, wrote: The Peoples in *The Pilgrim’s Progress* are nearly all ‘flat characters’ as E.M. Forrester would say, and yet they are capable of swelling out, of becoming round, of giving impression of human depth like those in *Pickwick Papers.* Bunyan knew how to awake his reader’simagination. His slightest flick of the brush is more suggestive than another man’s stroke.[[15]](#footnote-15)

The book is regarded as a major element of the development of prose in the English literature.

***Life as a pilgrimage***

The basic concept of the book is human life seen as a pilgrimage. By the elaboration of this metaphor that is to be found in the Bible (Psalm 119,19; Hebrews 13; 2 Corinthians 5,6), John Bunyan expresses a conviction deeply anchored in Western Christianity. The Confessions of Augustine were characterized as an Odyssey of the heart, *peregrinatio animae*.[[16]](#footnote-16) Augustine says that pagan spirituality is characterized by a cyclic movement, whereas Christian spirituality is a forward movement leading to salvation.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Unlike the Catholics, Protestants because they were so concerned with the development of a civil society emphasizing the activity of individuals, had no spare time for making pilgrimages as people did in the Middle Ages. For them, the pilgrimage becomes a metaphor for their spiritual life.

Calvin regarded life as a form of combat, a pilgrimage, a slow and sometimes painful learning process, a test, a pedagogical voyage towards eternity.[[18]](#footnote-18) Max Weber characterizes Calvinism as the doctrine of *systematic self-control*.

John Bunyan elaborated on this particular metaphor. *Christian* does not look back but instead he looks forward . He is involved in a ongoing combat and his life is characterized by process of training in a continuous progress.

Therefore, the initiation of Bunyan expresses a Protestant spirit. The Dutch theologian Jaap De Lange more specifically characterizes Bunyan as the representative of the British Puritanism. “The Puritans created ‘a new kind of Englishman’, a generation of rebels and pioneers, with an earnestness and a missionary drive that was unknown up to then. Today Puritanism is associated with a restrictive morality and a culture of sexual guilt and shame. But in the middle of the seventeenth century it exemplified a religious and social dynamism that is comparable to Marxism in the nineteenth century rather than with modern fundamentalism.”[[19]](#footnote-19)

***The diffusion of the book***

After the first edition was published in 1678, the book reached North America, where many of *dissenters*, with whom Bunyan had an affinity of spirit, had emigrated. Since then the book has been republished many times up until today. Several abridged versions have been published. For example that of John Wesley in 1766.[[20]](#footnote-20) Over the course of centuries, the story of the Pilgrimage of Christian has been expressed in the form of drama, film, and even an opera.

The book was published in Amsterdam in 1682 in a Dutch translation, and in 1685 in a French translation. On the basis of the Dutch translation, a German translation was published in Hamburg in 1685.

In Germany the book was popular in the pietistic circles. Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769) who took a central position in the Pietism of the Low Rhine, and who translated several books into German, among others the *Imitatio* *Christi* of Thomas a Kempis, knew the books of the English Revival. According to the German researcher Auguste Sann, Tersteegen must have known and have appreciated the book of The Pilgrim’s Progress.[[21]](#footnote-21) Hermann Francke (1663-1727) and Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714) read and propagated the works of John Bunyan. Also in the circles of the Moravian Brothers, the works of Bunyan were popular, the Count Zinzendorf (1700-1760) himself having read *The Pilgrim’s Progress* in its youth.[[22]](#footnote-22) In Hungary, the book was translated in 1778, and has known several translations since.[[23]](#footnote-23)

The organization that largely has contributed to the worldwide translation of The Pilgrims Progress was the *Religious Tract Society,* founded in 1799 in London as a fruit of the Revival movement. It was an interdenominational organization whose board of directors consisted of an equitable representation of Protestant *Dissenters* and representatives of the Church of England. Up to 1989, the *Religious Tract Society* the supported financially the translation and edition of *The Pilgrim’s Progress* in at least 91 languages and dialects, of which eight were in China.[[24]](#footnote-24)

The work of Bunyan was widespread not only in the circles of the pietism, but also in circles of the Enlightenment . The text of Bunyan was translated into Russia in 1782, and was republished in 1786-87 and in 1881. G. Kosyakov affirms that these translations influenced writers like Pushkin, Tolstoy, Gogol and Dostoyevsky. The poem *the pilgrim* by Pushkin contains a passage which is a free translation of the book of Bunyan; in its turn this poem inspired Tolstoy.[[25]](#footnote-25)

The painter Vincent van Gogh in was deeply influenced by *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.[[26]](#footnote-26)

***Protestant missions and The Pilgrim’s Progress***

The Protestant mission societies, the majority of which were created in the nineteenth century as fruit of the Pietism and Revival movements and were particularly active Africa and Asia, regarded among their first priorities the translation of the Bible into the vernacular languages. They created schools to teach people how to read, particularly the Bible, which takes a prominent place in Christian life. A great number of Protestant missionaries also made efforts to translate Bunyan’s book as well. The leaders themselves had been inspired by it. Often, the book was introduced into the schools created by the missions. As a result Bunyan was also read in many Christian families.

The Chinese theologian John T.P. Lay who recently published a book on the Christian literature translated into Chinese in the nineteenth century, notes: `Throughout the nineteenth century, the English works of quite a few popular Christian authors were translated into Chinese. John Bunyan’s Christian classic, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, usually remained the number one priority’.[[27]](#footnote-27) In his evaluation, he notes that often a literal translation of the occidental traditions failed to communicate effectively to Chinese audiences, but success stories were not totally absent, with special reference to *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, one of the elementary and narrative works that was well accepted especially among the lower classes.[[28]](#footnote-28)

Already in the middle of nineteenth century, several translations in various Chinese dialects were published, of which that of the Scottish missionary William Chalmers Burns (1815-1868), of the *English Presbyterian Mission,* translated into the Mandarin dialect, that appeared in 1852, was the most famous.[[29]](#footnote-29)

Jonathan Spence, in his biography of Hong Yiuquan, the founder of Taiping, notes that it *The Pilgrim’s Progress* of was one of the favorite books of this Chinese leader of the rebellion in the years 1850.[[30]](#footnote-30)

On several occasions the book initially appeared in the form of a serial in a newspaper, where samples of the translations were published during the whole translation process. This was the case in several countries in Africa and in Japan, where Shunkichi Murakami, published in 1876 his translation into Japanese in his newspaper *Shichi-ichi Zappo* (Murakami is regarded as the founder of the Congregationalist Church of Japan). Let us note that the New Testament in Japanese was published in 1880, whereas a complete translation of the Bible was published in 1887.[[31]](#footnote-31)

Isabel Hofmeyr, who did research on the influence of *The Pilgrim’s Progress* in Africa, has published a list of the translations by Protestant missionary organizations all over the world.[[32]](#footnote-32) This list may be summarized as in the following table:

North America: 3 translations: Create, Dakota and Eskimo.

Africa: 80 translations

Asia and Oceania 48 translations

Asia of the South: 24 translations (of which several in the Indies).

China: 8 translations

South-western Asia: 8 translations

Oceania: 11 translations

**Table 1:** The number of translations of *The Pilgrim’s Progress* based on the data collected by E. Hofmeyr.

Most of the translations were made by British missionaries, but also organizations of the European continent, made some translations. The Parish Mission produced three translations: in Sotho (South Africa ); in Galwa (Gabon) in 1915 and Lozi (Zambia) in 1943. The Mission of Basle published a translation into Douala, spoken in parts of the actual Cameroun, of which the first edition was made by Joseph Ekollo in collaboration with the missionary E. Schuler in 1897, which was then revised by G. Ittmann in 1941.[[33]](#footnote-33)

British Missionary Societies : 39 translations

United States Missionary Societies: 7 translations

European missionary Societies: 13 translations

**Table 2:** the number of translations published by Missionary societies ordered according to the geographical principle.

***Bunyan in Africa***

During more than two centuries the book of Bunyan has been of great influence on the Protestantism in Africa. The greatest number of translations of the book was produced at the beginning of the twentieth century, a period when funds of the organization’s missionaries decreased, but where however thanks to the funds for the Christian literature, like the *Religious Tract Society* in Great Britain, several translations could be published. It should be noted that after the independence of the Churches, especially around the year 1960, the book was nevertheless reprinted in several countries.

19th century: 17 translations

1900-1940: 47 translations

1950-1960: 16 translations

**Table 3:** The number of translations in Africa of the Pilgrim’s Progress.

Also in Africa the book of Bunyan was translated occasionally before the completion of a bible translation. This was the case in Rwanda. After having completed the translation of the New Testament, which was published in 1931, the Anglican missionary Harold Guillebaud started the translation of *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.[[34]](#footnote-34) This translation was published in 1933. The book was reprinted, in 1959, 1979 and in 1980. The complete translation of the Bible was only completed in 1957.

***Motives for the translation of* The Pilgrim’s Progress**

Within the circles of missionary societies, it was so obvious to them as to why they were translating *The Pilgrim’s Progress* that they only seldom provided reasons for it in the forewords of the editions.

J.J. Fuller, a black missionary, of Jamaica, in the service of Baptist Missionary Society, wrote in his foreword to the first translation in Douala (Cameroun) in 1885, quite simply as motivation: `The necessity has long been felt of some literature which we could put into the hands of the natives of the Cameroons in their own tongue, who are just being taught to read, and which will tend to expand their knowledge of the Christian religion so different from their former superstition. I have, therefore, thought that no book , apart from the Holy Scriptures, translated for them by Rev. Alfred Saker, would help them as much as the present volume can, and my earnest desire is that it will prove the blessing anticipated when the task was begun.’ [[35]](#footnote-35) Later, E. Schuler, a missionary of the Mission of Basle, mentions the pressure exerted by the Douala Christians who pushed him to publish in 1897 a revision of this translation.[[36]](#footnote-36)

However, certain missionaries have indicated that the book was translated because it transmits the Christian message in the comprehensible form of a voyage of a person and not in the form of an abstract reasoning, which often characterizes the books of catechetic education.

Thus Mrs Meg Guillebaud mentions that her father, Harold Guillebaud, had translated *The Pilgrim’s Progress* in kinyarwanda, because he regarded the book as `*the gospel* *acted out* `. He found that the book was in accordance with the African mentality and in keeping with the way of communicating in Rwanda. He was delighted by the number of the Rwandese metaphors and proverbs that Samsoni, his Rwandan language assistant, had advanced which exactly expressed the significance of the allegory of the life of Bunyan.[[37]](#footnote-37) The success of the translation of the book was often due to a close cooperation between missionaries and young Christian gifted in their mother tongue.

In the same way, the German missionary, Johannes Ittmann, mentions his motivation to undertake the revision of the first translation in Douala. ‘The book depicts the way of salvation in a practical and allegorical form. Its colorful presentation echoes with people who think and express themselves in images. […] The missionaries (who made the first translation, GS) saw in this book a perfect instrument for the achievement of their task, and people who have some knowledge of the book, are always looking after it, as they made the experience that it strengthened them in their Christian conduct. The white or black preacher, who knew this book profoundly, could always refer to certain episodes of the voyage when he wanted to explain several doctrines in a clear and practical way.' [[38]](#footnote-38)

Sometimes the translation is done in successive stages: the translation in Lokole (Congo) was started with Rev W.H. Stapleton in 1905, then continued by Rev H. Sutton-Smith in 1909-1910 and finally completed in 1916 by Charles E. Pugh.

The importance of Bunyan’s book is well illustrated by the history of its translation into Tsetswana. Introducing the third translation in Tsetswana, the translator Alexandre Sandilands writes in 1954, that Robert Moffat had begun it in the years 1840 and that his translation was finally published in 1848, seventeen years before the edition of the complete Bible. In 1892 a major revision undertaken by Rev Roger Price was published. A third translation was published in 1954 by Alexander Sandilands, who reveals his difficulty in translating the book because of the evolution of the language and the interpretation of the Christian faith after three centuries. ‘For one thing , the English language has changed considerably in the three hundred years since Bunyan was preaching and writing in it; a modern translator has to put the story and the argument (mentally at least) into his own English, finding out as nearly as possible exactly what Bunyan meant, before he can translate it worthily into another tongue. Again, theology has changed; Bunyan’s approach to the Christian faith is not always identical with that of the Christian Church in the twentieth century; and it is probable that many readers will want to skip some of the rather dreary theological arguments towards the end of the book. Nor does the Church today use the Bible in the extremely literalist (or sometimes allegorical) way in which we find it used in *The Pilgrim’s Progress.* The Levitical hare, unclean because it chews the cud but parts not the hoof, the leviathan and the war-horse of the Book of Job, and the imagery of the Song of Solomon, are all grist to Bunyan’s evangelical mill; and all appear to us as highly fanciful, artificial and unedifying. But Bunyan himself, in his greatness, has given us to leave to jettison what may be mistaken or out-dated:

*`What of my dross thou findest there, be bold*

*To throw away, but yet preserve the gold;*

*What if my gold be wrapped up in ore?'*

Sandilands also decided to eliminate certain illustrations, which according to him darkened the text of Bunyan rather than to return it more clearly.[[39]](#footnote-39)

***The influence of The Pilgrim’s Progress in Africa***

The book of Bunyan has influenced most of the Protestantism from the end of nineteenth century until present day.

As I have already said, in many countries *The Pilgrim’s Progress* has been translated into the vernacular before a complete Bible translation had been published. In many protestant circles the book was popular during a period of several generations. Where this has been the case, inevitably the Bible, once translated, must have been read and studied, at least in the beginning, from the viewpoint of the author of *The Pilgrim’s Progress*: John Bunyan. Readers of the Bible must have used Bunyan’s book as a standard for the reading of The Scriptures.

The enthralling history with the multiple events written in the style of a master storyteller contributed certainly to the popularity of the book in Africa, where the communication is often made in the form of a tale. The element which had certainly to speak to the imagination of the African readers is the constant presence of the characters incarnating the forces of the evil against which Christian is constrained to struggle constantly, and the joy of being protected by the arms of faith which allows him to overcome the attacks of Apollyon, the personification of evil.

The new Christians have read Bunyan’s book in their family or individually, and studied the text in the schools established by the missions. Often they were also stimulated by important personalities of their communities. The Prophet Harris, preacher in Liberia (ca*.*1865-1929), carried always the Bible and *The Pilgrim’s Progress* with him*.*[[40]](#footnote-40) Simon Kimbangu, the Congolese prophet, knew the book, and was influenced by it. He did not propagate the book, but when he tells the story of having received the collection of the chants for his community directly from heaven, he tells the story that when he once had to cross a river and was completely wet, the Songbook that he carried had remained completely dry. A similar event is told in the book of Bunyan.[[41]](#footnote-41)

The book has been also used for teaching in the schools founded by the missions; in the areas where the elite was English speaking, the book was also useful for the courses of English. The colonial regimes that often stressed the importance of education, supported the availability of the book in schools.[[42]](#footnote-42)

It is rather difficult to indicate precisely in more that general terms to what extend *The Pilgrim’s Progress* has influenced protestant Christianity in Africa. The situations in the different countries are too different from each other, and the book of Bunyan was only one of the many factors that have affected Christianity. Nevertheless it is worth while to place to the foreground some particular situations in order to see if some general trends may be deduced from these.

***Difference per region***

Professor Isabel Hofmeyr shows that the character and the extent of the diffusion of the book depend on the circumstances in the different regions of Africa.[[43]](#footnote-43)

In East Africa, only the country of Kenya has thirteen translations. The edition of these translations was for a greater part supported by the *East African Literature Office*, a semi-governmental organization.

Also in West Africa, where 21 translations were counted, the book was used for teaching in the schools. In colonial times for the purpose of learning English, but also during the postcolonial period, when the translations of *The Pilgrim’s Progress* provided for texts in the vernacular languages.

Central Africa was mainly under colonial influence of Belgium and France, two countries where the Catholic Church played a dominant role. The Baptist Missionary Society (BMS), active on the banks of the River Congo, played an important role in the translation and the distribution of the book as these Baptists being deeply influenced by the Revival.

Beside the Baptists of Great Britain, and the Methodists of the United States, several other missionary societies were active in the region, often sent by small Protestant communities, such as the Pentecostals of Sweden. These missionary societies went to the heart of Africa with the book of Bunyan as one of the most important sources of inspiration, and as tool for the rudimentary theological formation of the new Christians as well as for their own personnel, who in many cases had not followed any sophisticated theological schooling. Being given that the Belgian authorities and the Catholic Church had a great influence on the francophone educational system, the book was used for teaching within the smaller evangelical enclaves. As a result the book contributed also to fraternity and the conscience of unity among these various Protestants.

In Rwanda, the book had a great impact on Protestantism. My former colleague, a Rwandan pastor, once told me that the pupils at the teacher training college at Shyogwe, in the center of Rwanda, where the book formed part of the study programme, recognized themselves in the characters described in the book of Bunyan in Kinyarwanda and nicknames drawn from the book were given like Simple, Presumption, Watchful, Pliable, Talkative.

Still in 2000, the leaders of the Episcopal Church in Rwanda took the initiative to organize the translation of the book which is often called the Second Part of *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.[[44]](#footnote-44) The Anglican bishop, Mgr Augustin Mvunabandi, who has translated the greater part of this book said, to give reason for his translation: “the large impact of the first book of Bunyan on the edification of the Protestant Christians in Rwanda, and the concern for the production and distribution of new Christian literature for the protestants in Rwanda”.[[45]](#footnote-45)

In Southern Africa at least 23 translation of *The Pilgrim’s Progress* have been published. In the course of the nineteenth century, British societies had a great influence and the colonial regime and eager to promote the British culture, subsidized schools and books such as Bunyan’s book.

Isabel Hofmeyr studied the place that *The Pilgrim’s Progress* occupied at the Institute of Education *Lovedale*, that was founded in 1824, in present day Eastern Province. *Lovedale*  has been regarded as the `cradle of the black leaders `of South Africa. *The Pilgrim’s Progress* took a prominent place in both the ordinary curriculum and during extra-curricular activities. Bunyan’s book was made the object of study both in the English courses, and those of the Xhosa languages: analysis of the text, discussions on various subjects tackled in the book, memorizing the course of Christian through the world, and was presented in dramatic expression.

This education where both the language and characters of Bunyan’s book received a lot of attention , provided students, many of whom became the black leaders of South Africa, with points of reference for the political debate.

Isabel Hofmeyr, gives several examples of political resistance inspired by the words and thoughts expressed in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*:

- During years 1880, a black political activist in the Cape resisted against participation by blacks at the elections for the council that would take decisions that were discriminative towards blacks. In his argumentation he referred to the passage in *The Pilgrim’s Progress* where the *Giant Despair* recommended *Christian* and *Hopeful*  in *Doubting-Castle* to commit suicide before he himself would torture and kill them, and quoting the pilgrims he said: ‘For our part, we say we must not accept the counsel to do away with our own selves. If we must die, it must not be by our own hands’.[[46]](#footnote-46)

- When, in the years 1920, difficulties emerge within the African National Congress: greed, competition, corruption and competitions, somebody critically observes the situation and expresses himself as follows: ‘the ANC cannot climb the mountain *Difficulty* if it does not change its conduct.’ The presupposition is here that the political struggle is a journey with numerous obstacles, as is elaborated in the images provided by the book of Bunyan.

- In a political poem in the years 1940 an author expresses himself as follows : ‘We have to swim , comrades’, being an allusion to the deep river that must be crossed before arriving at the heaven of political liberation.

Another comparable example is given by Bengt Sundkler who mentioned the resistance of the Christians of the Cape, against a law introduced in 1894 by the Prime Minister for the Cape, Cecil Rhodos, a law which made the Africans feel discriminated against. Influenced by the reading of the Xhosa translation of Bunyan, they argued : ` Why should a pass be forced upon people who have demonstrated in every way that they are loyal British subjects … For we are all equals under Queen Victoria.’ [[47]](#footnote-47)

These anecdotes make clear that reading Bunyan’s writings evoked in new converted Christians a spirit like that of the puritans, who were qualified by De Lange ‘a generation of rebels and pioneers', a spirit of independence before authorities who impose themselves. We may conclude: Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress* was able to create a self-confidence and a spirit of combat for the independence of the population of South Africa.

It is worthwhile questioning who has served as an icon or example to these political activists: the person of John Bunyan himself, who, according to the tradition of English *Dissenters* , resisted against the royalists who wanted to impose a uniform Church of England, together with heavy taxes, or the figure of *Christian* in *The Pilgrim’s Progress,* who exemplifies many features and autobiographical characteristics of the author .

Perhaps it is not necessary to answer this question. It is for sure anyhow that one of the main characteristics of the book is the emphasis on the personal faith, seen as a personal engagement to leading an active life of a Christian. A Christian who is ready to serve God and their neighbor. This is what the Protestant missionaries contributed by introducing Bunyan’s book.

In African societies that are characterized by a particular community spirit, - I am, because we are, as the Ugandan professor John Mbiti clearly formulated – Bunyan’s writings made it clear that Christians may arrive in situations where this personal responsibility before God is more imperative than customs and constraints of the community. In this way the Christian faith has become a liberating force.[[48]](#footnote-48)

This being said, it should be taken into account that the God of Bunyan is before all the Saving God, who loved the world so much that He sent his only Son so that whoever believes has eternal life (Jn 3,16).

Where Bunyan’s book is read, without taking into consideration the historical and political context, the world is reduced to the field where evil intentions and forces have free play. The world is nothing more than the *City of Destruction* from where one has to flee. Following this line of thought, more positive aspects of the world, the world as Creation of God, as *theatrum gloriae Dei*, do not play any role. In that case God’s grace is reduced to His offer of personal salvation, and the Christians ethics are limited to personal ethics, not open towards social ethics. When God as the Creator of the world is not taken into account, the eschatological perspective of the Christian faith is constricted to personal salvation.

The Bunyan as an author is an independent citizen, for whom obedience with the political and ecclesiastical authorities is subordinate to his duty to justify himself in front of God.

The Christian described by Bunyan, however, is a person who regards life as a passage through a provisional world, full of dangers and evil, towards heaven. At this point the limits of the book for developing a Christian social ethic are clear.

Leaders of the young Christian Churches that have become independent in the second half of the twentieth century, felt tasked with the responsibility to develop their country into a modern nation, and did not find in the book a direct inspiration for that task.

Still another limit of the book needs to be mentioned in this context. *The Pilgrim’s Progress* has certainly contributed to a negative attitude towards the traditional African religion. The readers of the book have crossed with Bunyan’s *Christian* into the valley of the *Shadow of Death*, at the end of which two were caves, in which two giants had their residence: one was the *Pope*, representing the power of Rome, the other was *Pagan.* Pagan was dead. *Christian* had simply to go his way, without dealing with this *Pagan*. The message to be taken from this is that all religious expressions that are not Christian is to be seen as paganism or superstition. But paganism being ‘dead’, it was not to be taken serious, or reckoned with.

Often, the missionaries who introduced the book of Bunyan were not sincerely interested in African culture, the ground where the Christian faith had to be planted. African religion was simply called *superstition*. The book has certainly contributed to a negative attitude towards African culture and its African religious expression. It is legitimate to say that the book did not appeal to a sense of cultural awareness, and left the new converts with empty hands in questions regarding the inculturation of the Gospel. Through this it has inhibited the development of an awareness for the need of a proper African theology.

This does not imply that the book has lost all value or actuality. When asked about the value of *The Pilgrim’s Progress* in today’s Africa, Pastor Hitimana Naasson, the former president of the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda, replied that the book offers a much more reliable idea of what a Christian life means than the message of many a pastor preaching the modern Prosperity Gospel. It is not appropriate to tell people that a true believer receives Gods grace in the form of richness and good health. Quite to the contrary: he or she who undertakes the voyage towards the *Celestial City* meets with many difficulties. Their task is to surmount them by faith, hope and love.[[49]](#footnote-49)

In conclusion, we can say that the book of John Bunyan, has contributed to the creation and edification of Protestant Christianity in Africa and elsewhere, thanks to its form of an original story in which a deep knowledge human soul and of the biblical message is elaborated in a way that is accessible to people from very different educations and cultures. We may characterize the book as a psychology of the Christian faith. The book has contributed to the individual conscience and individual responsibility, and to the development of a personal Christian ethics.

However, the book does not inspire a vision for social Christian ethics. It has hindered the development of a open-minded African theology.

In spite of that, Bunyan and his book have inspired numerous Christians to take responsibility in situations of oppression, to take positions of independence, with a self consciousness s grounded in the freedom founded in the Gospel of God’s Abounding Grace.

1. H. van ‘t Veld, *De pelgrimsstaf is in mijn hand. John Bunyan. Een biografie,* Utrecht: de Banier, 2004, 217. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In November 1660 he wrote an account of his arrest in which he defended himself: *A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan, Minister of the Gospel at Bedford, in November 1660*. This tract was published by James Buckland, London, in 1765. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The biographer Richard Greaves speaks about the widespread myth that Bunyan only read two books: the Bible and Luther’s Commentary of the Epistle to the Galatians. Although Bunyan did not have more than a rudimentary schooling, before his conversion he took note of ballads and of medieval love songs and the reading of newspapers also took an important place; after his conversion he read a great number of theological works. Two books were favorite: The Commentary of Luther of the Epistle to the Galatians, and *The Book off Martyrs,* a popular encyclopedic book on the life of the martyrs, written by John Foxe*.* Richard Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory*. *John Bunyan and English Dissent,* 2002, pp. 603-607.

   During the year 1679, Bunyan probably read Luther’s Commentary of the Epistle to the Galatians for a second time (p. 389). Moreover, Greaves indicates that Bunyan himself gave rise to this myth to be illiterate in his autobiography *Grace Abounding to the Chief off Sinners.*  Greaves, 2002, 606. This spiritual autobiography of Bunyan is to be placed in the tradition of his time. See: John Stachnieski and Anita Pacheco in their `Introduction' into their book *John Bunyan, Grace Abounding and other Spiritual Autobiographies*, Oxford: OUP 1998, xxviii. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Bunyan’s autobiography, *Grace Abounding,* gives insight to these psychological crises. Greaves writes: ‘The Pilgrims Progress acquires a new dimension when read as the work of an author who battled these mood disorders’. Greaves 2002, p. 602. See also: the Richard Greaves’ biography Chapter 2 : Spiritual and Psychological Crisis. Greaves 2002, 30-74. William James has also mentioned this. He writes in this respect ‘He (Bunyan, GS) was a typical case of the psychopathic temperament, sensitive of conscience to a diseased degree, beset of doubts, fears and insistent ideas, and a victim of verbal automatisms, both motor and sensory’. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience. A Study in Human Nature*. New York: The Modern Library, 1929, p 154. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The complete title is: *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners : Or, A Brief and Faithful Relation Of the Exceeding Mercy of God in Christ, to his poor Servant John Bunyan.* Bunyan wrote this book between December 1665 and February 1666. The book was published in 1666. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, paragraph 130*.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Daniel V. Runyon, ‘Luther’s influence on Bunyan’s Use of Allegory’, *Bunyan Studies* no. 14 (2011), 76-84. Luther mentions the use of allegory by Paul and Jesus, in relation to the passage Gal 4, 8-21, where according to him Hagar and Sarah represent liberty and servitude respectively. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The complete title of the book is: *The Pilgrim’s Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come*. Ed. James Blanton Wharey and Roger Sharrock. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960; reedited with corrections, 1967. Another critical edition is: John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim’s Progress, edited by Cynthia Wall. An authoritative text; contexts, criticism.* Norton Critical Edition. New York : Norton & Company, 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, New York, 2009, 12-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, New York 2009, 46-47. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. In Isaiah 62, 4 Beulah : ‘Espoused’ and Hephzibah: ‘My Delight’, are two new names for Jerusalem, the old names being ‘Forsaken’ and ‘Desolate’. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. H. WHEELER ROBINSON, *The Life and Faith of the Baptists*, p. 13. Quoted by: R.H. COATS, M.A., *John Bunyan*, London: Student Christian Movement, 1927, p. 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The rule of Saint Benedict speaks about the three fundamental attitudes of the life in a monastery: obedience, silence and humility (chapters 5,6 and 7). Not less than 70 verses of the rule speak about humility. Humility is then a basic concept for the spiritual life, which implies opening towards the reality around us and which presupposes a major knowledge of oneself. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. G.B. Shaw, *Dramatic Opinions and Essays*, flight. I, p. 142, Quoted by: R.H. COATS, M.A., *John Bunyan* p. 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Henri A. Talon, *John Bunyan: The Man and His Works*, London: Rockliff 1951, 218. According to a fragment edited in Cynthia Wall’s edition of *John Bunyan, The Pilgrim’s Progress*, New York, 2009, 393-395. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The Dutch theologian Frits DE LANGE, in an article entitled `Life as a Pilgrimage. John Bunyan and the Modern Life Course', that I used as a source of inspiration for this paragraph, refers to the book of R.J. O' Connel, St Augustin' S Confessions: *The Odyssey of the soul*, Cambridge, Mass. 1969. Frits DE LANGE, `Life as a Pilgrimage. John Bunyan and the Modern Life Course`, in: P.N. Holtrop, F. of Lange, R. Roukema (eds), *Passion of Protestants*, Kampen: Kok 2004, 95-126, also accessible at http://home.kpn.nl/delangef/pubbunyan.htm#\_ftn12. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Augustin, The City of God, XII,14. Quoted by Frits DE LANGE. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Frits DE LANGE refers to John Calvin, *Constitution* III, iv, 4, where Calvin refers to 2 Cor 5,6. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Frits DE LANGE, ‘Life as a pilgrimage. John Bunyan and the Modern Life Course’. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. John Wesley, *The Pilgrim' s Progress from this World to that which is to come*. Abridg' d by John Wesley, M.A. 1743, 5th ED. 1766. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Auguste Sann deduces this from certain expressions in the foreword with the translation of *The Imitation of Christ* by Tersteegen. Auguste Sann, *Bunyan in Deutschland*. *Studien zur literarischen Wechselbeziehung zwischen England und den deutschen Pietismus.* Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, 1951, p. 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Auguste Sann, *Bunyan in Deuthschland*, p. 15-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Jenö Szigeti, ‘ Eighteenth-century Hungarian Protestant Pietist Literature and John Bunyan’, in: M. van Os, G.J. Schutte, *Bunyan in England and Abroad. Papers delivered at the John Bunyan Tercentenary Symposium, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 1988.* Amsterdam: VU University Press 1990, 133-139.  [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. John T.P. L. Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps. The Enterprise of translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth Century China*, Collection: Collectanea Serica. Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica, Sankt-Augustin (Allemagne): Steyler Verlag 2012, 131, note 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Gennady Kosyakov, ‘Bunyan in Russian Literature’, *Bunyan Studies*, Vol. 14 (2010), 96-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. In May 1875, Vincent van Gogh got rid of all his books, and wrote to his brother: `John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress,* Thomas à Kempis, and a translation of the Bible; I don’t want anything more’. Mentioned by Kathleen Powers Erickson, `Pilgrims and Strangers: The Role off *The* *Pilgrim' S Progress* and *The Imitation of Christ* in Shaping the Piety off Vincent van Gogh', *Bunyan Studies,* Vol. 4 (Spring 1991), 7-36. (The quotation is taken from page 8). Kathleen Powers refers to *The Complete Letters of Vincent van Gogh* (Boston, 1985), I, 170. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. John T.P. Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps*, p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. John T.P. Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps*, pp. 218-227. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. John T.P. Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps*, p. 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Jonathan Spence, *God's Chinese Sound. The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom off Hong Xiuquan*, London: HarperCollins Publishers 1996, 144; 280-282. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Kazuko Nishimura, ‘John Bunyans Reception in Japan', *Bunyan Studies*, Vol.1, no 2 (Spring 1989), 49-62. Later, other translations of *The* *Pilgrim’s Progress* appeared in Japan: the translation by Ka-iseki Matsumura was published in 1886 by the English Baptist missionary W.J. White; in 1904, a third translation, by Koki Ike; the fourth translation, by Unshu Matsumoto in 1913. The last translation was particularly popular. In 1890, the first national newspaper *Kokumin-No-Tomo* ranked *The Pilgrim’s Progress* as number five on the list of the best Western novels. The book is then also used in the English courses in schools.

    Between 1869 and 1909, one counts moresix translations of works of Bunyan in the Japanese language, of which *The Pilgrim’s Progress* was the most important. Between 1938 and 1959 still five other translations appear. The illustrations in the various editions are adapted to the Japanese context. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Isabel Hofmeyr, *The Portable Bunyan. A Transnational History of The Pilgrim's Progress.* Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004. ISBN 0.691 11656 3, 240-24. Hofmeyr indicated that this list is not exhaustive, but probably the most complete (p. 242). [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Auguste Sann, *Bunyan in Deutschland*, 1951, p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Meg Guillebaud, *Rwanda: The Land God Forgot? Revival, Genocide and Hope*. London/Large Rapids: Monarch Books, 2002, 47-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. J.J. Fuller, Preface in: *Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s progress in the Dualla language*. London : Alexander & Shepheard 1885. A copy of the book is present in the collection of the Trustees of the John Bunyan Museum and Library, Bedford. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. E. Schuler, in his foreword to the translation of *The Pilgrim’s Progress: Londo la Mudangweni – Die Pilgerreise zur seligen Ewigkeit von Johann Bunyan, übersetzt in die Duala-Sprache*, *Kamerun, Westafrika*. Basel: Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft, 1979, 1. A copy of this book is present in the collection of the Trustees of the John Bunyan Museum and Library, Bedford. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Meg Guillebaud, Rwanda : *The Land God Forgot?*, p. 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. J. Ittmann, in a letter to August Sann in 1949. The letter is quoted in Auguste Sann, *Bunyan in Deutschland*, 31-32. (The text gives my translation from German, GS). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Preface written by the Canadian Missionary Alexander Sandilands, for the 1960 edition *The Pilgrim’s Progress* in Tsetswana, edited by the London Missionary Society, Tiger Kloof, Cape Colony 1960. A copy of the book is present in the collection of the Trustees of the John Bunyan Museum and Library, Bedford. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Bengt Sundkler and Christoph Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa*, Cambridge, CUP, 2000, pp. 197-201. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. The story is mentioned by Isabel Hofmeyr, *The Portable Bunyan*, 28-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. In this context we can mention the translation of the book in *Ukanyama,* a language of Ovambaland spoken in what is presently Namibia. The person of the Ministry for Education in South Africa in charge of education in Ovambaland asks in 1950 a Finnish woman, the nurse Linda Helenius, a missionary known for her knowledge of the Ukanyama language, to check and to correct before its publication the translation made by Anglican missionaries. The book was to appear in the teaching program of the schools. The supervisor of the Finnish mission recommends sister Helenius to accept this request, taking into consideration that this action could improve the relations between the Finnish Lutheran missionaries and the Anglican Church in the region. Jani Uuksulainen, *Sairaanhoitaja Linda Helenius Suomen Lähetysseuran lähettinä Ambomaalee 1921-1952.* Yleisen Kirkkohistorian pro gradu-työ. HYTTK. Thesis of Licence in Church History (not published), University of Helsinki, 1999. Archives of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Helsinki. Code HP XLII 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Isabel Hofmeyr,  *The Portable Bunyan*, pp. 76-136. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. *Umugenzi. Igice cya kabiri. Muka mukristo n’abana be mu rugendo rujya mu ijuru*. Kigali : Seclar, 2000. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Message sent to the author, 6 December 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Hofmeyr quotes here Archibals Campbell Jordan, *Towards an African Literature : The Emergence of Literary Form in Xhosa.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973, 92-93. Voire: Hofmeyr, The Portable Bunyan, p. 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. They protested against the Glen Grey Act. The quotation was given in John A. Chalmers, *Tiyo Soga: a page of South African mission work* (Edinburgh 1877). See : Bengt Sundkler et Christoffer Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa*, Cambridge: CUP,2001, p. …(to be checked GS)*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. This contribution has been well formulated in Heinrich Balz, *`Ought' and `Is'. With Christian Ethics Race for Cameroun, taught in the Nyasoso Theological College in 1976-1978.* Reedited for internal use in the Theological Seminary Kumba. Berlin 1997, paragraph 27: Farming development and Pilgrim'’s progress: the heritage of the social Basel Mission for social ethics, pp. 64-65. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Interview with Pastor Hitimana Naasson, Kigali, 12th March 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)