

Unitarian Universalist International Engagement:

*History and Vision
in Three Parts:
Part I – The First 125
Years*



Unitarians and Universalists
have been internationally
engaged from their earliest
institutional years.



The American Unitarian Association was more than 80 years old in 1909, when President Samuel May wrote in his Annual Report...

President Samuel A. Eliot wrote in the
AUA 1908-9 Annual Report:



“I am confident that one of the best ways to have a large and growing life at home is to have a **vision of the great possibilities of service abroad**, and that the best way to have a beneficent service abroad is for us to have **a rich, deep life at home.**”



And, looking back at **111**
years of international
engagement ... **in 1937** ...
American Unitarian
Association President Louis
Cornish wrote ...

AUA President Louis Cornish wrote in the AUA 1937 Annual Report:



“It cannot be too often repeated that our foreign work began at the First Annual Meeting of the Association in 1826, when the Secretary was requested to open correspondence with groups of like-minded religious people in other lands.”



President Louis Cornish continued...

"In 1829, Rev. Henry Ware, Jr. was chosen [as AUA Foreign Secretary]. *Ireland, the Cape of Good Hope [S. Africa], Geneva, India, Transylvania, Canada, Holland, Switzerland, France, Germany, Scotland, the Sandwich Islands [Hawaii], New South Wales [Australia], Buenos Aires, Wales, Iceland and Japan* are names recurrent in the reports through our first fifty years."



President Cornish concludes...

"In the work of coordinating religious liberalism all over the world, our Association has been a leader for eleven decades.

This long perspective should be clearly before us in...foreign relations."



But, developing “perspective” will also require critical reflection...

Paternalism, Elitism, and Racism were present throughout ***our history*** of international engagement.

Reverend Mark Morrison Reed’s Black Pioneers in a White Denomination, for example, documents how the decisions and correspondence of key AUA leaders were littered by these tendencies, especially in regard to the mission work of Unitarian minister, Reverend Egbert Ethelred Brown, first in Jamaica and later in Harlem.



The International Perspective: A Disclaimer

A complete account of Unitarian and Universalist International Engagement includes information about:

- The many places around the world where faithful relationships have developed with Unitarians, Universalists and interfaith colleagues;
- Our involvement in interfaith events including the Parliament of World Religions;
- Our leadership in organizations like the International Council of Unitarian and Other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers (later IARF), and the World Conference of Religions for Peace.



While these are all important parts of our story of international engagement, this presentation will focus on three “Mission Areas” for Unitarians and Universalists during the 19th and 20th centuries:

- India
- Japan
- Philippines

Beginning

with....




Unitarian Engagement in **India**



Unitarianism in India

- **1793** - William Roberts (born Thiruvenkatam Vellala Mudaliar on September 30, 1758 in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu, India) discovers Unitarian tracts (by Joseph Priestly and Theophyllus Lindsey) while working as a servant in England. When he returns home to Madras (Chennai), India, he brings the tracts with him.
- **1813** – W. Roberts begins holding worship services at a new Unitarian Church in Madras (Chennai).
- **1818** – W. Roberts requests missionary assistance from American and British Unitarians. He receives materials and limited financial assistance, but not a missionary as requested.



British and American Unitarians learn about William Roberts in the pages of the *Christian Reformer* in January 1818. In these articles British Unitarian leader, Thomas Belsham, who has been corresponding with William Roberts, is rebuked by one of the magazine's readers:

"One articulate observer took Belsham to task for his statement that the possibility of inducing anyone to 'submit to the difficulties and perils of a missionary life in order to propagate pure and uncorrupt Christianity... is an event *more to be desired than expected.*' 'And why not **EXPECTED?**' the reader retorted..."



'if Unitarianism be worth believing, it must be worth propagating.' "

from Unitarians in India
Spencer Lavan
p28

Meanwhile, in Kolkata...



Raja Rammohun Roy is gaining broad notoriety in India and internationally for his social, political and religious reform ideas.

He writes about Jesus and Christianity with a “unitarian” theology, and promotes a reformed-Hindu Vedantism that acknowledges a unified “Godhead”.



Unitarianism in Kolkata

1821 - Rev. William Adam – a Baptist missionary in Kolkata – begins working with Rammohun Roy on a Bengali translation of the New Testament. In the process, and through conversations with R. Roy, ***Adam declares that there is no proof of the Trinity in the New Testament.*** He informs the American Baptist convention that he is now a Unitarian. The Baptists refer to this as “the case of the second-fallen Adam”

1821 – Adam and Roy create a “**Calcutta**” **Unitarian Committee.**



Rammohun Roy and Rev. Adam in Kolkata...

1822 – Adam details a plan to send missionaries to Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and Colombo with a staff of four in each locale. Instead he receives support of \$600/year from British and American Unitarians.

1824 – Rammohun Roy and Adam correspond with American Unitarians including Rev. Jared Sparks and Rev. Henry Ware, Sr. The *Christian Register* reports on Unitarianism in Kolkata.

1826 – Henry Ware's *Berry Street Lecture* of 1827 calls for Unitarian clergy to support the Indian mission.

Adam writes "O, what a wide door is open for Unitarians here if they would only enter and take possession!"

Unitarian minister, Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, describes why Unitarians have a responsibility to “extend their sympathy to... the world”



1. Unitarians believed that anyone could be saved, regardless of whether he was a Christian or not;
2. Unitarians had been critical of the way in which Christian missions had been conducted – the “waste of excitement, money and life.”

Tuckerman ends with the recommendation:

“Instead of sending twenty or thirty men, let Unitarians spend their money training two or three without narrowness or bigotry.”



But it is not to be...

1828 – R. Roy decides not to pursue Unitarianism, but to organize Hindu “unitarians” into a “Brahmo Samaj (Society of the Worshippers of One God”. His work with the Unitarian mission in India ends in 1829.

1830 – Adam resigns as a Unitarian missionary and eventually declares that he entirely regrets his association with Unitarians. The Unitarian Mission in Kolkata ends.

1833 – Rammohun Roy dies while lecturing in England.

1838 - The Unitarian “Society for the Promotion of Christianity in India” votes to disband, and gives its funds to the Benevolent Fraternity of Unitarian Churches. Outside of this storm, the Unitarian Church in Madras continues to exist.



Unitarianism and India: The tale begins again...

- **1854** – Unitarian minister, Rev. Charles Brooks, visits India for 2 months. He makes contact with Rev. Roberts in Chennai and finds that this Unitarian community has survived against unlikely odds.
- Rev. Brooks makes contact with the Brahmo Samaj and remaining Unitarians in Kolkata.
- Rev. Brooks returns home, reports his experiences to the AUA Trustees, and they decide to initiate a new mission in Kolkata, sending Rev. Charles Dall.

Reverend Charles Dall brings American Unitarianism back to India (June, 1855)




- Within 6 weeks of arriving, Dall writes to say that he has an active congregation of 50 souls in Kolkata and that he plans to build a school..
- In 1857 he baptizes Jogut Chunder Ganguli, who becomes the first “Brahmin” to set foot in America. Ganguli is ordained in Boston in 1860 with Edward Everett Hale and James Freeman Clarke present. He remarks that he will return to India, “to bring the light of Christianity to the superstitions of the Hindoos. (sic)”
- Ganguli is named director of Dall’s “School of Useful Arts”
- 1860 – Dall’s School has 295 pupils
- 1862 – Conflict erupts between Dall and Ganguli. Ultimately Ganguli is censored by the Kolkata mission.



Dall's ministry continues...

- **1866** – An AUA Hindu Girl's School opens in Kolkata. It has **96 pupils** enrolled in 1877.
- **1860s and 70s** – Dall develops a friendship with **Keshub Chunder Sen**, a Brahmo Samaj leader. Ultimately theological conflict develops between Brahmos and Unitarians. The conflict heightens when Dall joins the Brahmo Samaj, though he declares he is still a Unitarian Christian.
- **1880's** – Dall provides tracts for **Hajjom Kissor Singh in the Khasi Hills of North East India**.
- **1886** – **Charles Dall dies**



*“What began in excitement
and idealism ended in
controversy, pettiness, and
much disillusionment.”*

Unitarians in India

Spencer Lavan

p.130

But, as it turns out, all is not lost...



Rev. Jabez T. Sunderland
(Unitarian Minister in Ann Arbor,
MI) travels to India - 1895-6.

- Sunderland visits the Chennai Unitarians. William Roberts Jr. (the son of the church's founder) is the minister, but the congregation is "crippled by want of funds". Eighty people attend a service led by Sunderland.

Rev. Jabez T. Sunderland visits India

- Reverend Sunderland visits the Khasi Hills Unitarians.
- He spends time with Hajjom Kissor Singh who led Khasis to Unitarianism after becoming disillusioned with the Presbyterianism of Welsh missionaries.
- Founded in 1887, the Unitarian Union of North East India is influenced by traditional Khasi tribal faith, by the Brahma Samaj, and by British and American Unitarianism.




Hajjom Kissor Singh



But, the missions report at the 1891 meeting of the AUA mentions nothing about India. Instead...

(according to Appleton's Annual Encyclopedia)



... The report of the Board of Directors spoke of the increasing breadth, variety, and amount of the work of the association, which now included **Hungary** and **Japan**, and extended on the American continent from **Winnipeg** on the north to the **Gulf of Mexico** on the south...



1891 AUA Missions Report

The association pays \$500 annually toward the support of a church in "Buda- Pesth," Hungary, and the British and Foreign Unitarian Association does the same. This society had grown steadily in numbers and strength, had gathered five "sister churches "around itself, and had within the year erected a fine church building.



1891 AUA Missions Report

The mission in Japan had resulted in the formation of a Japanese Unitarian association, of which many of the people had become members. Several 'religious societies akin to the Unitarian parishes had been gathered, and three Japanese had become preachers of the Liberal faith.



1891 AUA Missions Report

The missionary work of the Universalists in Japan was recognized as kindred with that of the Unitarians: assurances of regard and sympathy were conveyed to the ministers and churches of that denomination. The desire was expressed for increased acquaintance and closer co-operation with them, and concurrence was pledged with any arrangements that may be made for co-operation with the Universalist missionaries or the German Liberal brethren laboring in Japan.



But not a word about India.

So, along with the AUA,
let's turn our attention to...



Universalist and
Unitarian
Engagement in
Japan



Missions to Japan

Both the **Universalist Church of America** and the **American Unitarian Association** organized and financed significant missions to Japan, beginning in the late 19th century.



Universalist Mission to Japan

1890 – Rev. George Perin, Rev. Isaac Cate and Miss Margaret Shouler are sent to Japan as missionaries. **They bring \$61,000** with them - twice what they thought they'd need - to support the mission for 5 years. Contributions to the effort had been excellent. They purchased land, built a wooden church and dedicated it on Christmas Day 1890.

Within 18 months Rev. Perin had started English classes, established a theological school, had begun printing a monthly newsletter, had set up several preaching outposts, and could count 150 converts!



Excerpt from a Universalist Missionary Report in 1890:

The Rev. Dr. George L. Perin, missionary in Japan, said: "The organization of its mission in Japan was the most logical thing the Universalist Church ever did. The motive is the desire to impart the great truths of Universalism because men need them. Its aim is to convert men to the Christian life. Its method is to educate native preachers, and develop a Japanese church. The results vindicate the movement thus far: 1. A theological school established with ten students. 2. A girls' school with native teachers and fifty pupils in Shizuoka. 3. The school in Tokyo with ten pupils, and foreign teachers. 4. Two organized churches, with two buildings and two pastors, five preaching stations, six evangelists. 5. A monthly magazine printed in Japanese and contributed to largely by native writers. 6. More than a million pages of books and pamphlets translated and published."



Universalist Mission in Japan, (con't)

In **1891** an additional missionary is sent to Japan – Reverend Clarence Rice - he inaugurates preaching stations in Shizuoka and Sendai.

Rev. Shigetaro Akashi graduates from Uchu Theological School (started by Perin) in 1894 and is sent to start a church in Nagoya.

The Mission is off to a great start!



Further important dates for Universalist Mission to Japan

1899 – Reverend Gideon Keir arrives in Japan.

But Staff turnover was causing problems

1900 – Reverend Cate arrives in Japan.

1902 – Miss Catherine Osborn, with financial support from Universalist layman Lucien Blackmer, and with Rev. Cate establishes the “Blackmer Home for girls” in Tokyo.

But...

1906 – Three Universalist Churches close

And, yet...

1907 – The Universalist mission starts a **Midori Kindergarten** in Tokyo

1912 – The Midori Kindergarten has **80 pupils**

1914 – **Annual aid from American churches almost doubles to \$14,000!**

1917 – **A new Universalist church opens in Shizuoka**



Universalist Japan mission, (con't)

Rev. Keir returns to the U.S. in 1917.

And, he identifies 4 stages in the mission's history:

1. rapid expansion,
2. period of testing,
3. period of contraction,
4. revival of hope.

After 25 years there are 4 locations where services were held every Sunday and 2 occasional preaching stations. There are 5 indigenous Japanese ministers and 4 American missionaries. There are 360 youngsters in the Sunday School, and approximately 500 church members.



Universalist Mission to Japan, (con't)

1919 – Rev. Samuel Ayres arrives and restores the Central Tokyo church

Tame Imai, Chujiro Kawabata and Kiyoshi Sato studied in America and were ordained as ministers

1923 – Yokohama Earthquake destroys Central Dojin Church.

1925 – Rev. Ayres returns to the U.S. Rev. Henry Cary and his family replaces him in Japan. Missionary Georgene Bowen joins them.

1932 - "Japanese Universalist Convention" is founded.

Before Rev. Cary's death in 1936 he doubles the number of Universalist churches to 6. He had "wonderful plans, but no money"

1935 – Shizuoka church closes, congregation moves to Sakurayama (Tokyo) Church. It becomes the Central Dojin Christian Church.

1940 – Japan's "Religious Organization Law" leads to the Universalists putting their churches into the care of the Congregationalists.



Universalist Mission to Japan, (con't)

- WWII wrecks havoc on the Mission. No American Universalist workers remain in Japan. Blackmer Home and Dojin House are destroyed. The Sakurayama (Central Dojin) Church is demolished.
- Mr and Mrs. Ike guard the mission's records during the War.

POST WWII -

- 1950 – Rev. Carlton Fischer (from the Universalist Service Committee) comes to Japan and works with the Japanese Universalists. Plans are made to build a kindergarten and offices for the Dojin Foundation in Tokyo. Work is completed in 1952.
- 1951 – The UCA finances the building of a church center at Komagane City, and provides funds for a Nursery Care Centre there. It will be organized and run by the Rev. and Mrs. Shidara.
- 1954 - Toshio Yoshioka and Satoshi Arai return to Japan after studying at St. Lawrence theological School. Rev. Arai is appointed the minister of the Dojin Christian Church in Tokyo. Its young membership increases rapidly.
- 1962 – Rev. Sakae Hayakawa becomes minister of Dojin Christian Church. He retires in 1981.



Universalist Mission to Japan – later years

- 1983 - Japanese Universalists complete a new church building for the Dojin Christian Church.
- 1981 – Rev. Michio Akashi – who studied at Meadville/Lombard Theological School in the 1950's - becomes the minister of Dojin Christian church.
- 1983 – Rev. Inoue becomes another minister of Dojin Christian Church. Rev. Akashi becomes “chief minister” and visits various UU Churches in America.



An interesting unintended effect of the Universalist mission, according to Meadville/Lombard Theological School Professor David Bumbaugh

“Universalists, who were accustomed to proclaiming a gospel centered upon correcting the teachings of the Christian church regarding eternal punishment, found themselves dealing with a population not tainted by that particular error. The Japanese had no attachment to the doctrine of hellfire and damnation. While the Japan mission had minimal impact upon Japanese society as a whole, it did impact Universalism in the United States. It forced Universalists to confront the question of whether Universalism had any mission beyond that of correcting the teachings of other Christians. And if so, what might be the content of that mission, the peculiar message of Universalism?”

Source:

<http://www.uusterling.org/sermons/special/special%202002-03-17.htm>



The Unitarians also had a major Mission in Japan starting in 1887

In his report to the AUA in 1889, after serving in Japan for a little longer than a year, Rev. Arthur May Knapp, leader of the mission, includes the following comments:



Unitarian Mission in Japan

“It is only as the **representatives of a great religious movement** looking for co-operation, and not as the missionaries of a sect seeking converts, that your envoys can be of any possible use either to Japan or to your Association”

And...

“Setting before yourselves as your main purpose an organized effort **not to make converts, but to co-operate with the leaders of Japanese thought and life** in solving the religious problem of their land by the application of Unitarian principles, the first necessity of which will confront you will be that of sending to Japan a force of men which in numbers and ability shall be equal to the task of giving impulse and direction to the life and thought of the empire...”



Unitarian Mission in Japan

The AUA sends another missionary, Reverend Clay MacCauley. A year after arriving, he is the only Unitarian missionary in Japan. His immediate requests are:

- for an assistant who will focus on learning Japanese, and
- funds to build a headquarters/church/school in Tokyo. This is accomplished in 1894.



Unitarian Mission in Japan

- 1895-9 – The American missionary staff and its financial support from AUA steadily decrease.
- 1896 – British Unitarians recall their missionary from Tokyo.
- In 1899 American Unitarian missionaries return home, and the Japan mission is put in the hands of the Japanese. Rev. McCauley returns to Japan, but acts as a counselor, not a leader.
- 1900 – American Unitarian Association celebrates its 75th anniversary and receives ambassadors from various international Unitarian and liberal groups, including the Japanese Unitarians.



Unitarian Mission in Japan

- In 1911 Sakusburo Uchigasaki – who had graduated from Manchester College (Unitarian) at Oxford, England, becomes the minister of the Tokyo Unitarian church... He serves for 5 years.
- From 1918-1920 Rev. John Day serves the Unitarian Church in Tokyo, but it was in decline.
- 1923 - Tokyo-Yokohama earthquake destroys Unitarian Church building, and Unitarian Association is dormant.




Unitarian Mission in Japan – later years

- 1948 – Rev. John Nichols Booth arrives in Japan – sent by AUA to reorganize Unitarianism in Japan. The Japan Unitarian Association is re-formed and Michio Akashi begins studying at Meadville/Lombard Theological School. Reverend Akashi affiliates with Universalists upon returning to Tokyo.
- The Unitarian congregation in Tokyo – known as Kiitsu Kyokai – is led by Shinichiro Imaoka. It is always a small gathering, and offers a syncretistic theological outlook.
- In 1972 Rev. Imaoka is honored with a Doctor of Divinity degree from Meadville/Lombard Theological School. In later years he is also honored by the World Conference on Religion and Peace and the International Association of Religious Freedom.
- Rev. Imaoko dies in 1988 at the age of 106.



Universalist and
Unitarian
Engagement in
The Philippines

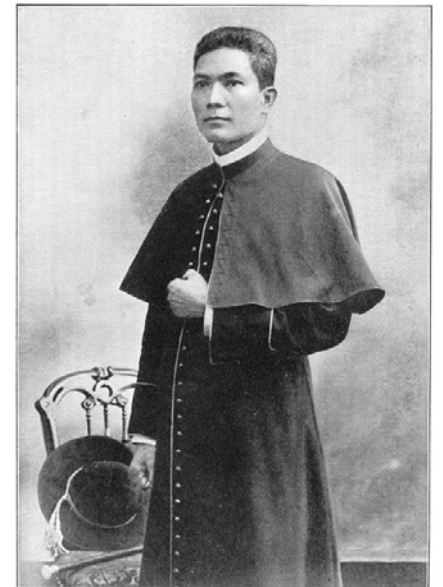


Universalists and Unitarians become involved with religious people in The Philippines in two distinct ways:

- Engaging with Archbishop Aglipay and the Independent Church of the Philippines
- Engaging with Reverend Toribio Quimada and the U(U) Church of the Philippines.

Independent Church of the Philippines

- 1899 – Gregorio Aglipay – a Catholic priest – is named vicar general of the Independent Church of the Philippines. William Howard Taft – Governor General of the Philippines and a Unitarian is named vice-president of the Church. Aglipay and Isabelo de Los Reyes (the Bishop of Manilla) promote a free-thinking, liberal leaning theology.
- 1931 – Aglipay visits US Unitarian Churches with AUA President Louis Cornish, and receives an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Meadville/Lombard Theological School.
- 1937 – Louis Cornish visits The Philippines as president of IALCRF (forerunner of IARF).





AUA President Cornish, writing in *Time* magazine in 1937

“More important, who is Archbishop Aglipay? Born 76 years ago, educated in Catholic schools, elevated to the priesthood for pure motive, not as you say "because it seemed to offer material advancement," he was made superintendent of a district and performed many of the duties of a bishop. In those distant days no Filipino was made a Bishop. Together with other distinguished Filipinos, in 1905 he led many people into the Independent Church. You say that this church is credited today with 1,000,000 members. Witnesses credit it with 3,000,000 members...

Time 3/8/1937



AUA President Cornish, writing in *Time* magazine in 1937 (con't)

...True, Aglipay was in arms against the U. S. Government, but when he became convinced that the contest was hopeless he surrendered. Since his surrender he has loyally upheld the administration. After William Howard Taft retired from the Governorship, he accepted the position of honorary President of the Independent Church. All through his administration he was a friend of Archbishop Aglipay. **From its beginnings, the Unitarians all over the world have been interested in the Independent Church.** . . . In 1931 Archbishop Aglipay, together with Bishop Isabelo de los Reyes, son of the distinguished publicist of Manila, came to this country as guests of the Unitarian churches of the U. S. and Canada. They were received most cordially by many churches, colleges and universities and by men in public positions."

***Time* 3/8/1937**



Theology

American Unitarian theology and the theology of the Independent Church of the Philippines are very similar, as demonstrated in the writings of one of its leaders, Bishop Isabelo de los Reyes...



De Los Reyes writing in 1939


“Our church has retained from the Roman Catholic Church all that was found reasonable and harmless. The vestments and many of its magnificent ceremonies, that possess so great an appeal for the Filipinos and other artistic peoples, were retained, **but with a rational interpretation. What is a myth to science must be a myth to us.** Rejecting all ecclesiasticism, we preserve the real teachings of Jesus: **“Love to God and of our fellow beings.”** We retain images on our altars, just as the American Unitarians have retained the figures of saints in stained glass windows, but not for worship. The images to us are only reminders of the eminent virtues of the persons interpreted.

Muir, p. 20



De Los Reyes writing in 1939 (con't)

We maintain always that modern science must inspire our doctrines; hence since our establishment we have declared that through evolution man has become what he is to-day. We admit no miracles. **We believe in God as the Mysterious Energy that keeps the Universe and** that gives life and directs all beings. We always have maintained that the Bible has many interpolations and inaccuracies. Yet we consider the Bible as a holy book with many excellent lessons. **We believe that all the scriptures of the world contain good."**



Louis Cornish tries to bring the opportunity for a close relationship with the Independent Church of the Philippines to the attention and support of the AUA, but is unable to.

Ultimately de Los Reyes leads the Independent Church of the Philippines into a formal relationship with the Episcopal Church. But, that direction **is hardly a foregone conclusion.**



This bit of history led Reverend Fred Muir in his book “Maglipay Universalist” to ask...

“It was estimated that the Philippine Independent Church had 4 million members. Imagine: Had the American Unitarian Association voted to establish faith ties with the PIC, how might this have shaped Unitarian Universalist history and future?”

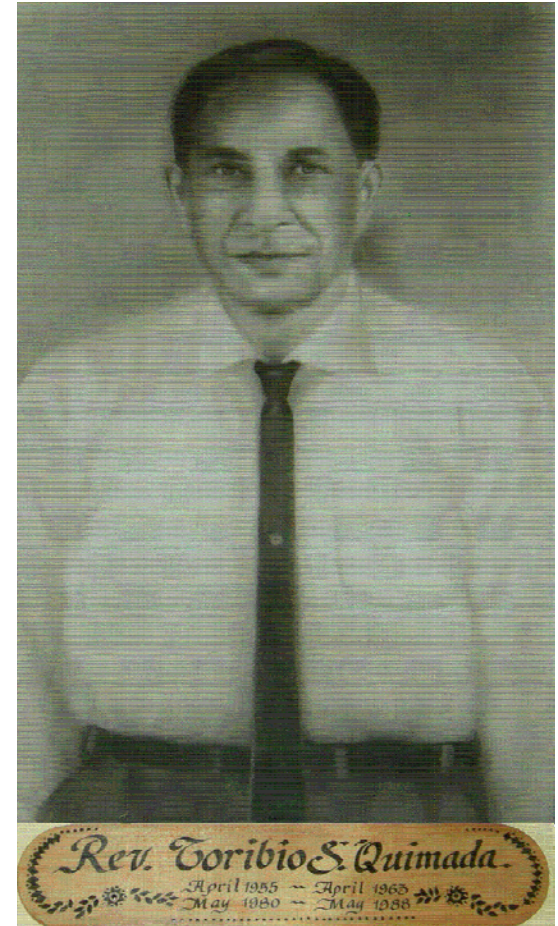
A great question.



A Second Opportunity for Engagement in The Philippines

Reverend Toribio Quimada

and the U(U) Church of the Philippines





Toribio Quimada's story

In 1937 Toribio Sabandija Quimada, a Catholic Filipino, reads the Bible with a rationalist eye, decides to leave the Catholic Church and becomes an ordained minister with Iglesia Universal de Cristo in 1943.



Toribio Quimada's story (con't)

"In 1951, a new resource arrived by mail in a most out-of-the-ordinary way. He received a letter wrapped in an old newspaper from a leader in a congregation he served requesting a baptism for a church family. What a surprise to find that the newspaper wrapper included a listing of Protestant denominations in the United States.: ' He immediately went to the letter 'I' for 'iglesia' then to the letter 'U' hoping to find *Iglesia Universal de Cristo*. Instead, what he found was the Universalist Church of Wisconsin.' (Sienes 1994b, 7)"



Toribio Quimada's story (con't)

He writes to the address, but his correspondence is unanswered. He tries again when he discovers the address of the Universalist Church in Gloucester, MA. That congregation's minister forwards his letter to the Universalist Service Committee's executive director, Rev. Carlton Fisher, and a relationship with the Universalist Church of America is formed.



Toribio Quimada's story (con't)

Quimada grows more and more theologically liberal, and he is excommunicated from his church in 1954. But, the nine congregations he serves continue to support him. He requests help from the Universalist Church of America, and though they have no missionary to send they are agreeable to help in other ways.

On April 25, 1955, the Universalist Church of the Philippines is officially recognized by the government of The Philippines.

And, Quimada begins to preach universal salvation with the conviction and purpose of early 19th century American Universalists.



Toribio Quimada's story (con't)

The Universalist Service Committee provides funds for Rev. Quimada to pursue a theological education.

Quimada begins a public ministry in rural Negros Island, siding with the poor peasants against powerful political interests

Tragically, on May 23, 1988,
Reverend Toribio Quimada is martyred.



Universalist Church of the Philippines becomes UU

In 1988, the UUA changes its bylaws so that it is possible for congregations outside of North America to join the Association. A month after Toribio Quimada is martyred, the UU Church of the Philippines becomes a UUA member congregation.

Today there are 25 UUCP congregations and 2500 Unitarian Universalists in the Philippines.



**We study and examine our
history...**

So that our future might be
brighter still.



4 learnings from the **First 125 Years**

1. There was little long-term success when Americans sought to create Unitarian or Universalist congregations around the world.



4 learnings from the **First 125 Years**

2. There were moments of temporary success at providing social service ministries in various parts of the world.



4 learnings from the **First 125 Years**

3. Indigenous Unitarian/Universalist movements with indigenous leaders fared better, ie. Madras, Khasi Hills, and The Philippines.

Sometimes American U/U's created effective global relationships with these leaders, sometimes not.



4 learnings from the **First 125 Years**

4. We had a poor record of sustaining commitments.

And, yet, let us call back to mind President Samuel A. Eliot's words from the AUA 1908-9 Annual Report:

“I am confident that one of the best ways to have a large and growing life at home is to have a **vision of the great possibilities of service abroad**, and that the best way to have a beneficent service abroad is for us to have a **rich, deep life at home.**”





Discussion Questions:

- In what ways did Unitarians and Universalists support a “vision of the great possibilities of Service abroad”?
- How did Unitarians and Universalists fail to embrace such a vision?
- Are Paternalism, Elitism, or Racism noticeable in our history of International Engagement.



Discussion Questions:

- What were the high points of the Unitarian mission to India? What were the low points?
- What is the legacy of the Unitarian mission to India?



Discussion Questions:

- What did the Universalist and Unitarian missions to Japan share in common – in the beginning of the period, and at the end of it?
- What were the high points and low points of the missions to Japan?



Discussion Questions:

- Were there significant theological similarities between American Unitarians and the Independent Church of the Philippines?
- What might have prevented a closer relationship between these two organizations?



Discussion Questions:

- Why did Reverend Quimada become a Universalist?
- Why was Reverend Quimada martyred?
- Why is it important that American UU's know Reverend Quimada's story?



Discussion Questions:

- Are there other learnings from *Part I: The First 125 Years* that you can identify?



Thank You

Thank you for your time! For additional information about the history of U/U international engagement, please contact the International Resources Office at the UUA.



Additional Reading

- Two key texts used in this presentation were:
- Lavan, Spencer. Unitarians and India. Boston: Skinner House, 1977.
- Muir, F. John. Maglipay Universalist: A History of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines. Annapolis, MD, 2001.



You've reached the end of
Part I

You might also enjoy

Part II: The Next 50 Years

And

Part III: Looking Ahead



Unitarian Universalist International Engagement:

*History and Vision
in Three Parts:
Part I – The First 125
Years*

The End