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THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY  
AND ITS COUNTERPART IN THE MALAGASY CULTURE :  
IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVENTIST EDUCATION

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The Malagasy traditional culture has been surpassed and almost obliterated by the western civilization (including Christianity) in colonial times. Therefore, the present educational policy in the country is now to restore the originality of the traditional culture, and enhance its richness.

Malagasy is now the language used in teaching most subjects in the state primary and secondary schools. Moreover, the students learn not only the language, but the traditional culture as it is shown in civilization and literature. Deeper investigations and studies are carried out in different domains at the University. But the problem is that all this is to be taught in an "objective" way, no matter whether it hurts, or is opposed to one's religious beliefs and opinions. Therefore, how can an Adventist teacher manage to teach some subjects which are practically anti-biblical? How can he deliver the message of salvation along with anti-biblical theories?

AN ANTI-BIBLICAL SUBJECT : THE TROMBA

I. PRESENTATION

Here is an example of such anti-biblical subjects, in the domain of civilization.

The "tromba" is a religion based on the faith that the spirits of the dead kings (and sometimes queens) can still be found alive in living persons, and work for the good of the living people. They can be asked to heal the sick, look for lost things, name people with evil intentions, or for any other particular reason.

The following "tromba" manifestation takes place during a yearly celebration. It lasts a few days.

(a) The place.

Each ceremony takes place in and outside a "sacred house". The audience are not allowed to wear shoes inside. Nobody, but the priest, is allowed to touch the table (the altar) and the other furnishings (some utensils) and a chest in which are kept a few garments - the ceremonial garments. Moreover, everyone entering the house gets a mark made with white clay powder and placed on their foreheads, before attending the ceremony.

(b) The persons involved in the cult.

- The priest : He is the organiser of the ceremony. His daily work is that of a wizard, a healer, a medium. He is the one who "detects" the persons who are supposed to have spirits at the time of another special ceremony. Here, he conducts the service. He is wearing a long garment and holding a stick with a small bell fixed at one end.

- The "tromba be" : The person on whom the spirit will come down. He may be a man or a woman, old or young. He or she may be possessed by one or more spirits. When the spirit takes possession of him/her, the "tromba be" becomes a "Zanahary" (which literally means "the one who has created", that is to say a god, one who has a supernatural power).

- The musician(s) : One, two or three... (not many) persons, especially hired for the occasion, playing a traditional cord instrument.

- The audience, formed by

- people who have come from many parts of the country to attend this annual ceremony, for they have personal requests.

- people from the neighbourhood, coming just for curiosity and for food : this annual ceremony is an occasion for eating meat and drinking alcohol.

- visitors who have come for curiosity too (i.e. tourists), or for studies (students, college teachers, etc.)

(c) The ceremony.

It may last a few days (3, 5 or even 7 days), with breaks during which people go back home. The following scenes are only aspects of the ceremony :

1. The scene of the possession.

Rhythmical music is being played, accompanied by the audience's clapping of hands.

The priest sprinkles the sacred water on the audience, he sprinkles the incense throughout the room and in front of the "tromba be" who is still wearing ordinary clothes. The priest offers him or her alcoholic drinks.

The music, the incense and the alcohol arouse and speed up the coming down of the spirit. When it takes possession of the "tromba be", the latter falls into a trance, a state of unconsciousness, and then speaks in a strange language by which the priest knows the identity of the coming spirit (especially in the case when the "tromba be" has more than one spirit in him), this garment is a long, white garment, but the cap often changes (turban/cap, hat, etc.) Now the "tromba be" is called "zanahary". Now it can give the audience the solutions to their problems.

Sometimes the "zanahary" wants to put aside his divine nature and recover his human nature. To do so, he kneels down in front of the altar, and acts as if he is about to vomit. After a few minutes, he takes his garment off. Then he is an ordinary man, talking, joking, smoking, with the other people.

### 2. The scene of sacrifice

The animal for the sacrifice is usually a male goat or a bull, young and without any defects. Pigs are not accepted as sacrifices, for they are considered unclean. After the animal has been consecrated to the spirit, it has its throat cut. The priest collects a small quantity of blood in a bowl, and sprinkles it on the corners of the sacred house--on some occasions, the possessed person kneels down before the slaughtered animal to drink fresh blood from it. Then the animal is cut into pieces. The priest collects pieces of flesh from every part of the animal (i.e. from the head, the shoulder, the hump, etc.) and cooks them in a special pot with a lot of water. The rest of the animal will be shared between all the people present.

### 3. The scene of the bathing

The "sacred" pieces are now boiling in the water. The "zanahary" immerses his chest and arms in it. It is a rite of purification.

## II. PARALLELISM WITH BIBLICAL CEREMONIES

Obviously, the manifestation of "tromba" is based on the anti-biblical theory of the immortality of the soul. Some parts of these rites can be considered as a faint echo of the original ceremony prescribed by God in the Old Testament, but as a whole, they do not reflect the actual message God has put in these ceremonies.

If we go deeper, we acknowledge that all these rites are nothing but a counterfeit, a false show of a genuine, sacred, solemn ceremony, whose importance is so vital for the whole of mankind : Christ's ministry in the sanctuary in heaven. Many details in the holy ministry has been imitated and, at the same time, distorted to ridicule, and conceal the very importance of God's plan of salvation for the perverted mankind. The parallelism between certain symbolical facts is so subtle, so close that it is practically difficult for a non-Christian to distinguish the genuine from the imitation, the truth from the disguise.

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Here are some examples :

A. The sanctity of the place of worship.

Taking shoes off :cf. Exodus 3 : 5  
:" The priests were not to enter  
:the sanctuary with shoes upon  
:their feet. (S p.29)

-----  
Sacred furnishings and service :cf. 1Sam. 6 : 19 ; 1Sam 13 :9-14  
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Some of the furnishings :  
bowls - plates containing water:  
-----

Sprinkling of water :cf. Ezekiel 36 : 25  
:To clean for all filthiness from  
:sin.

-----  
Alcohol and incense to obscure the mind. :Incense has been commanded by  
:God (Ex. 40 : 27) and in  
:Rev. 8 : 4, it is added to the  
:prayers of saints.  
:"The offering of incense  
:signified that only the  
:righteousness of Christ could be  
:acceptable to God."  
:(DA, p. 439)

Garment :  
-the bell fixed at one end of the stick :  
- white garments and turban :- Zechariah 3 : 3-5  
:Joshua's filthy garments are put  
:off and he is clothed with  
:garments and a fair mitre is set  
:upon his head.  
:- The white raiment is purity of  
:character : the righteousness of  
:Christ imparted to the sinner.  
:4 T 88

B. The coming of the spirit

- spirit of dead people : = the Holy Spirit

Results : :cf. Acts 2:4 ; 1 Cor.12:9,10  
- "strange tongues" :Gifts from the Holy Spirit  
- power to heal, to work miracles :  
- "Zanahary" = a god who can give solutions to any problems : God can do everything  
(can heal, even the most delicate disease such as sterility,  
can find lost things... :

C. Combination of divine nature and human nature 318

The "tromba be"  
possessed by the spirit, becomes  
a "zanahary" = a god.

:  
:Christ : the Son of Man. He  
:shared the lot of man ; yet  
:He was the blameless Son of  
:God. He was God in the flesh."  
:(DA, p.311)

He can put aside this divine  
nature as he pleases after a  
short ceremony.

:  
:- Ridiculing Christ's  
: righteousness (that we may  
: compare with a garment we can  
: put on or take off as we  
: like)

D. The mark of the foreheads  
Mark with white clay powder on  
every on-looker, before entering  
the sacred house.

:  
: Servants of God received a  
: seal on their foreheads.  
:(Rev. 7 : 3)

The sign, or seal of God is  
revealed in the observance  
the seventh-day sabbaths ? The  
Lord's memorial of creation".  
8 T 117

E. The role of music  
Difference : rhythmical music  
= to excite.

:  
: The sacred choir lifted  
: their voices in praise to God,  
: and the melody of their voices  
: was accompanied by all kinds  
: of musical instruments.  
:(CS.p.42)

F. The sacrifice  
1. Animal for the sacrifice  
-young bull or male goat-  
unblemished animals.

:  
: cf. Leviticus 1 : 3,10  
: - John 1 : 29 - the Lamb  
: of God.

2. It was killed in such a  
way as there is blood-shedding  
(there is no strangulation)  
blood-shedding is necessary  
in all ceremonies to honour the  
spirit.

:  
: The blood representing the  
: forfeited life of the sinner,  
: whose guilt the victim bore, on  
: was carried by the priest  
: into the holy place and  
: sprinkled before the veil,  
: behind which was the ark.  
: containing the law that the  
: sinner has transgressed..."  
:(GC, p. 418)

It is sprinkled in the corners  
of the house.

4. The flesh  
- presentation of some pieces  
as gifts to the spirit  
- the meat is boiled

:  
: Lev 9 : 20  
: = special gift to the Lord for  
: the priests  
: Lev. 8 : 34  
: "the flesh was then eaten by  
: the priest..." (GC,p.418)

G. <u>The bath</u> or purification rite (immersion of upper part of the body in the water)	:	. Priests were"... to wash both their hands and their feet before ministering in the tabernacle or at the altar or burnt offering." (S p.29)
	:	. Immersion of the whole body in baptism (Rom. 6 : 4)
H. <u>The priest</u> He plays the role of	:	Christ, the High Priest
(a) priest : he conducts the service.	:	Heb 8 : 1-2
	:	
(b) a mediator between the "zanahary" and the human beings	:	Christ our Mediator : Heb 7 : 24-25 "Christ pleads His blood before the Father in behalf of sinners" (GC, p. 421)

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### III. A DANGEROUS SITUATION

This manifestation of the "Tromba" is only one example of Satan's work in disguising and distorting God's truth. These ceremonies are superficial and concern just the external aspect of fundamental truths presented by the heavenly sanctuary.

"Satan can present a counterfeit so closely resembling the truth that it deceives those who are willing to be deceived" (GC, p.528)

A. The root of this deceit is the belief in the immortality of the soul. But if we go deeper, we see it is nothing more than the continuation of the age-old conflict between good and evil. It has always been Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation falsehood in a very convincing way : the scenes are visual, there's a great show of magic.

B. When man is separated from God, he becomes independent. The deceit is that God is not absent but "He has nothing essential to say about what the world is like or what about how man would live." ( The Transforming vision, Walsh-Middleton, p.115) Such a position leads to the denial of God's revelation.

Here, it is believed that God has revealed Himself to kings, but He did not care of a people, of individual. He has got a relationship with the leaders of the countries and has given them special recommendations for leadership and establishing specific culture, so Malagasy culture has been received and transmitted by a wise king : Andrianampoinimerina who addressed his son, Radama thus, on his dying ; "When I die, I'll leave you my body to be buried, but my soul will stay with you..." (In Tantaran'ny Andriana, p. 1052-1053), and now this king is doing his duty, leading his people through the mediation of the "tromba be".

C. God's love is unrelated. Even God is not love. He has cursed man and his environment, but dead kings, man's mediators, have found a solution to these curses. God is not explicitly represented as opposed to love, but his strange and silent behaviour can be interpreted as selfish carelessness.

D. Man can be risen to the superior orders and becomes a god, when the spirit or the dead would like it, and if it is satisfied with alcohol, music, incense, given to it. This god-man is careful, and can solve specific problems.

E. In this ceremony, the very foundation of God's salvation is upset and nullified because "wrong" (or "sin") does not concern God. He is too far from it ; He has delegated His authority to somebody else, easily within the reach of man.

It can be concluded that Christ's coming is not necessary, resurrection of the dead is irrelevant because dead souls do not die, their life is still going on even beyond the grave. And the message of the Three Angels announcing God's judgment, God's solution for the sin problem, is unnecessary.

F. There was a chest in the earthly sanctuary which contained the tables of stone with the law of God written on them. And in the heavenly sanctuary, we have the ark of the covenant, containing the Ten Commandments, and showing God's throne established upon his divine law.

But law is absent in this religion, therefore, there is no disobedience to the law and no sin.

No law, no "mercy seat" necessary, none of God's grace. Sin is mainly the breaking of social laws. It can be forgiven through works = (animal sacrifice, gifts...). Redemption is irrelevant and unnecessary. So Christ's incarnation can be substituted by the spirit-possessed "tromba be", and His righteousness by white garments.

Joshua, the high priest, was clothed with Christ's garments in the context of God's judgment, but there these garments have no relation with the salvation of man.

H. The blood-shedding is not related to the sacrifice which was necessary to redeem us, but it is just to quiet or to satisfy some requirements of a god. Its deep meaning is lost. One is not asked to repent, not to forsake the wrong one has committed, and the inescapable consequence of sin, such as physical disease, social problems, financial problems, etc. can be solved by the "tromba be", so man does not worry about sin.

The result is the same as in the developed countries, where scientism, technology, economics and people have separated man from God. Here, ancestral religion and denial of the gospel brought in by western agencies has separated man from God, pulling down the whole plan of redemption.

"Satan is striving continually to bring in fanciful suppositions in regard to the sanctuary, degrading the wonderful representations of God and the ministry of Christ for our salvation, into something that suits the carnal mind. He removes its presiding power from the hearts of believers, and supplies its place with fantastic theories invented to make void the truths of the atonement, and destroy our confidence in the doctrines which we have held sacred since the third angel's message was first given."

(Christ in His Sanctuary, pp. 10, 11)



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WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE ?

I. The teacher's mandate about culture : to enhance the Malagasy culture.

A. The Malagasy CULTURE and Christianity in the National life

In most formerly colonized countries like Madagascar, Christianity is often associated with the Western civilization, for it has been brought in by Western colonizers. Therefore, the Nationalists' rejection of the Western civilization often implies, too, in many different ways, the rejection of Christianity.

In Madagascar however, we can't say the Malagasy people have practically rejected Christianity (for 54% are Christians) but they are still firmly attached to their traditional culture and pride themselves on it. They think it is in no way less valuable than the Western (=Christian) culture and often prove to be more practical and socially "effective".

B. Comparaison between some Christian and Malagasy points of view

1. God \* "Jehovah", the Creator, Omniscient and omnipotent but condescends to redeem the mortal man through His Son Jesus-Christ.

\* The Malagasy people believe in "Zanahary", Creator, omniscient and omnipotent too. The malagasy notions of this God are, however, still vague. He's believed to live in an unknown place, somewhere above our heads, to have servants ; he has authority on life and death, has authority on every individual's fortune or misfortune, according to their good or wrong doings. Because of these vague notions of "Zanahary" (from oral tradition such as tales), He seems to be more distant than the "Razana" (ancestors) who play the role of mediators between Zanahary and man, who are closer to man for they were formerly human beings, too, and moreover, were formerly members of the family.

2. Sin \* "The breaking of God's law" in the Holy Scriptures (1 John 8 : 4). It pays its wage : death. Solution : faith in Christ's redemption.

\* In the Malagasy culture, the breaking of a law (moral and mainly social laws) is greatly feared, for it does not allow the law-breaker to go on living quietly. It wages : the "tsiny" and "tody". he has encountered Zanahary and the Razana's anger, so some misfortune is expected to pour down on him and his family, sooner or later, and that is justice for he deserved it. The Malagasy have this belief so deeply rooted in their hearts that it practically rules their daily lives. They do nothing without asking for the "Razana" advice beforehand, through the : "ombiasy, mpisikidy, mpanandro" (magicians, healers-astrologers) to avoid their disgrace and discontent. Solution : good works.

3. Life \* The Bible teaches : "we are all strangers and refugees" on this earth (1 Pet 2 : 11), therefore we should not set our hearts here but "fix our minds on heavenly things". Col 3 : 1,2

\* The Malagasy culture sets our life as durable, for it is still going on beyond death. The Razana (dead ancestors) can still communicate with their living relatives (in dreams, through the "ombiasy"...). During his life on earth man is to pass through different stages to rise his statute from that of an infant to the "Razana", the supreme and final rites of initiation for statute change : the baby's first hair cutting, circumcision, marriage, death, the renewing of the corpse's shroud...)

4. Fellowship \* for Christians, love for Christ results in love for men fellows.

\* The Malagasy pride themselves on their fellowship. Fellowship is a social duty. It guarantees social peace and the individual's security : if you help others at work ("valin-tanana") or in different occasions, you are sure to be helped, too.

Thus, endowed with these various beliefs, the Malagasy people (Non Christians and even Christians) behave and act with this concern for God's and the "Razana's approval".

#### C. To enhance the Malagasy culture

The teacher in his classroom is asked to enhance the Malagasy culture, and particularly, to teach some beliefs which are the very negation of the gospel itself. he must face these problems and not avoid nor escape them, for they are widely spread that everyone is compelled to meet them in their special lives.

#### II. The teacher's mandate as a SDA Christian teacher.

But God is calling the Christian teacher too, for He has a special message for this time : "to every nation and kindred, ant tongue and people", whatever their worldview and their culture may be, saying : "Fear God, and give glory to him ; for the hour of his judgment is come ; and worship him that made heaven, and the sea, and fountains of water." (Revelation 14 : 6,7)

#### A. The times in which we are living.

Jesus is coming again, and we hope, very soon, but before He comes and because he comes soon, sin problems are to be resolved in the individual. Judgment is the way of God to resolve radically these problems. He is longing to have us accept the everlasting gospel, which is the present truth for today ; He has planned to blot out our sins on the Day of Atonement, and so we are required to repent and afflict our soul.

"We are now living in the great Day of Atonement." CS p. 26, and our charge is "to reveal to the universe, to the world fallen and to the worlds unfallen, that there is forgiveness with God, that through the love of God, we may be recovered to God."

(FE p. 370)

B. A "must" for today.

In the parable of the Ten virgins, Jesus has told us about our time, and from the Spirit of Prophecy, we quote :

"At the appointed time, the Bridegroom came to the marriage, the reception of His kingdom. They that were ready went in with Him to the marriage, and the door was shut. They were not to be present in person at the marriage ; for it takes place in heaven, while they are upon the earth. The followers of Christ are to wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding. Luke 12 : 36. But they are to understand His work, and to follow Him by faith as He goes in before God. It is in this sense that they are said to go into the marriage." (GC, p. 427)

We are now living in the Day of Atonement, and we are to understand Jesus's work in the sanctuary in heaven.

"The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth... It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects, and be able to give to every one that asketh them a reason for the hope that is in them." (GC,P.45)

"God's people are now to have their eyes fixed on the heavenly sanctuary, where the final ministration of our great High Priest in the work of judgment is going forward, where He is interceding for His people."

C. Righteousness by faith.

And what is the message coming from the heavenly sanctuary, at this hour of judgment ; what is the everlasting gospel for these students and people who are deceived ? They are to confess them to their Mediator. The answer to our question has been given by the Spirit of Prophecy : "Several have written to me inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered : It is the third angel's message in verity." Review and Herald, April 1; 1890.

Therefore, Satan's deceptive power is to be broken. It is to be outrun. Truth is to be unveiled and preached as quickly as possible, truth that is opposed to beliefs and culture deeply rooted in the daily life. The teacher, as every Adventist, is called to get into the forefront of the battle.

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"The Lord gives a special truth in an emergency. Who dare refuse to publish it ? He commands His servants to present the last invitation of mercy to the world. They cannot remain silent, except at the peril of their souls. Christ's ambassadors have nothing to do with consequences..." (GC, pp. 609,610)

#### HOW TO FIGHT ?

Like David was opposed to Goliath, the teacher is to go ahead in the name of the Lord of Hosts.

##### I. By God's power

First, the teacher is to claim for God's promises to work for him and to help him. He is to be conscious that he is not wrestling "against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Ephesians 6 : 12)

##### A. A reservoir of power.

##### 1. Personal relationship with God.

The teacher must become vitally connected with God, through surrender of himself to Him at every moment for "there is no neutral ground in the universe : every square-inch, ever split-second, is claimed by God and counter-claimed by Satan." (C.C. Lewis, quoted by Walsh-Middleton, in "The Transforming Vision", p.7)

"We must unite with Christ - there is a reservoir of power at our command, and we are not to remain in the dark, cold, sinless cave of unbelief, or we shall not catch the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness." Review and Herald June 24, 1893.

We are told to spend a thoughtful hour each day on contemplating the life of Jesus. We can read the life of our Saviour in the Bible or in the Spirit of Prophecy for this purpose. We are changed to His image by beholding Him, in His love for us.

##### 2. Fellowship in devotional life.

- \* Weekly prayer meetings can be organized for the teacher.
- \* Special weeks of prayer for teachers and administrative staff may help to create a deeper devotional aspect in the social life.

##### B. Angels'mighty help especially in this battle.

We may expect angels'mighty help :

"Those opposing the teachings of spiritualism are assailing, not man alone, but Satan and his angels...Satan will not yield one inch of ground except as he is driven back by the powers of heavenly messengers." (GC, p.359)

"Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the merits of the Saviour. God would send every angel in heaven to the aid of such a one, rather than allow him to be overcome." (1T, p.17)

### C. The Latter Rain.

The outpouring of the latter rain has been promised for the proclaiming of the message or righteousness by faith.

"Thus the message of the third angel will be proclaimed...The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions... The sins of Babylon will be laid open... all will be unmasked." (GC, p.606)

So we are to ask God to fill our life with all the conditions to receive the latter rain, to subdue our will to His will, and to reclaim the promise by earnest prayers and by increasing faith, "as the third angel's message swells into a loud cry, great power and glory will attend its proclamation. The faces of God's people will shine with the light of heaven." (1T, pp.16,17)

## II. INTEGRATING FAITH AND LEARNING

### A. Creating a new background.

We have seen that the cultural environment of these students is an atmosphere of Satanic witchery. Therefore, a new background is to be created for them, not at the very moment when the teacher faces his civilization lesson, but this background is to be spread out all along the year, by -

#### 1. A true knowledge of God.

"High education is an experimental knowledge of the plan of salvation and this knowledge is secured by earnest and diligent study of the scriptures." (CT,P.11)

Bible studies adapted to this situation in which students would learn to know God as love, to get an experimental knowledge of God, studies that lead to independent decision to side with the Redeemer, to open their eyes to see what is invisible, to lead to the full development of self, strengthen soul and mind.

These studies will cover the present and urgent needs of the students in each class, and are intended to give the individual the opportunity :

- to acknowledge that he can't save himself
- to get him to know his personal Saviour, and accept Him,
- to know eternal life.

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In short, each Bible lesson is to include the gospel as a whole, to present God's readiness in giving us Christ's fullness instead of our nothingness. Therefore, every essential landmark is the plan of salvation is to be studied in each class, but from a different angle, and with different degrees, and always accounting for the general perspective. For the secondary school, the plan of salvation can be presented in a different light, according to the form.

- First year of secondary school : in the light of God's power
- Second year of secondary school : in the light of God's love
- Third year of secondary school : in the light of God's care
- Fourth year of secondary school : in the light of God's faithfulness
- Fifth year of secondary school : in the light of God's holiness
- Sixth year of secondary school : in the light of God's wisdom
- Seventh year of secondary school: in the light of God's fullness.

Emphasis is to be put essentially on the different stages of this plan, including the creation, the fall, the cross, the sanctuary, the imminent coming again of Christ, and the present preparation for this advent.

## 2. The truth for today

### a/ The Day of Atonement :

What about the Day of Atonement, and what is our part in it ?

During ten days, and especially on the Day of Atonement, the gatherings in the ceremonial system were to afflict their souls to be sure that all their sins had been confessed, and transferred to the sanctuary. (Leviticus 23:24,27 and 16:29,30). And now, as we are in the great Day of Atonement, in the realization of God's plan of redemption, our life is to be one of deeper and deeper repentance.

"For ten days they [the disciples] entered into a special season of heart searching and prayer, making things right with one another and with God. What might be the results if the church today would unitedly spend ten days truly seeking the Lord? Joe Engelkemier (Prepare the way, p.46, p.48) Could you not grasp His promises of the latter rain from the sanctuary, with tremendous faith in Christ's righteousness and in God's faithfulness, just as in the apostolic times ?

b/ Specific lessons of the "Loud Cry" - unveiling Satan's deceit, and based on righteousness by faith with a special presentation, as individual as possible, about - Christ's second coming : why ? when ? how ? and God's purpose and will to prepare us for this second coming, giving us repentance and forgiveness  
- judgment prior to this second coming and getting a solution to the sin problem by blotting out all repented sins.

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- state of the dead and God's solution for death uprooting the origin of death by taking it over Him and giving no eternal life instead of it.
  - law and grace : perfect righteousness claimed by God's eternal law has been accomplished by Jesus-Christ, is imputed graciously to repentant and believing sinner for his salvation and becomes as a result more and more actual in his daily life.
  - The Sabbath, as a memorial of God's work of creation and new creation for us and in us.
  - the spurious Sabbath (Sunday) as a memorial of righteousness by works.
  - the baptism as a new birth in a new relationship with God.

These seven lessons stress the different points that have been distorted or hidden in the counterfeit of the heavenly sanctuary in Malagasy culture. They point to the artifices of the devil, and unmask his deceitful teachings. But at the same time, they point to God's truth, as the everlasting gospel that is to be preached in this special time of atonement.

3. Baptismal classes - are to be organised to show how to practice a SDA religious life. For instance-

- What is it to have a personal relationship with God, and how to live it ?

- What is a life of prayer, of faith ? How to have a practical devotional life ? How to apply Sabbath School lessons ; how to behold Jesus and be transformed to His image.

- How to get an experimental practice of tithe paying, of health reform, etc.

- How to observe the Sabbath, etc.

Add to these items all the doctrinal points which have not yet been studied.

All this background is necessary, not for facing the lesson about civilization only. It is not to be considered as a series of lessons only, but as a new atmosphere, different from the one in which the student has lived, a new way of life that is to be firstly recognized in the teacher's life.

"The Lord would have the teachers consider the contagion of their own example. They need to pray much more and consider that the convictions which flow out from a well-ordered life and a godly conversation, from a living, decided Christianity, are the preparation of the garden of the heart for the seeds of truth to be planted for a fruitful harvest, and for the Son of Righteousness when He comes with healing in His beams." (1 SM, p.133)

B. Methodological approach : The "tromba", presented by the Malagasy language and civilization teacher : Terminal form level (last year in the secondary school)

"Is it the Lord's purpose that false principles, false reasoning, and the sophistries of Satan should be kept before the minds of our youth and children ? Shall pagan and infidel sentiments be presented to our students as valuable additions to their store of knowledge ?... God forbid !" (CT, P.25)

Such a warning leads us to act wisely.

1. Analysis of the problem by all the teachers concerned about it :

- Malagasy
- Philosophy
- Languages : French ; English (western culture)
- History
- Bible

2. Interdisciplinary approaches

- a/ The actual Christian culture compared with the western culture (History teacher)
- The entrance of Christian culture : why has it been associated with the western civilization.

b/ Biblical approach :(Bible studies teacher)

1. The actual Christian culture is not a Jewish culture (some cultural problems met by first christian church about Jewish culture)

2. The origin of all cultures (God's intent in creation)

3. Cultural beliefs and Christian life

c/ Philosophical approach :(Philosophy teacher)

The Biblical view is opposed to the western civilization, e.g. the Greek way of thinking, which set up the "psyche" as the genuine basis of knowledge, therefore it sets up the spirit as an immortal reality, whence the ethnocentric attitude of the African man and his denying any assimilation phenomenon presented by western civilization.

- Philosophy teaching and the very object of philosophy are nothing but counterfeited shows of God's truth : man is the starting point and the completion of what he idealizes (sets up as perfect), instead of hoping for Jesus, who is not only the Model, but above all, his own substitute.



## d/ The Malagasy culture : (Malagasy teacher)

1. The entrance of Christian culture (based on immortality of the soul beliefs)
2. The entrance of Christian culture
3. The Malagasy social culture (life and fellowship)
4. The present Malagasy religious culture and the "tromba".

3. Discussion with synthesis in a chapel service with students and teachers about the subject :

- Conflict between good and evil around the truth about the sanctuary.

4. Collaboration with the church and the family for SDA students, and parent visitation for non-SDA students : (to create new fellowship on christian basis)

5. There is no definite recipe for this lesson :

Preparation has been done but the lesson can turn in another way, as the Holy Spirit may intervene. The students may find these elements by themselves and direct the lessons differently. The teacher must be aware of God's instruction every day and for every lesson, at every moment.

"Every teacher should daily receive instruction from Christ and labour constantly under His guidance." (CT, p.231)

"True success in any line of work is not the result of chance or accident or destiny. it is the outworking of God's providences, the reward of faith and discretion, of virtue and perseverance... God gives opportunities ; success depends upon the use made of them." (P.K, p. 486)

#### CONCLUSION

The subject has been treated in the depth dimension, not superficially. Explanations of the external manifestations of the false teaching about the immortality of the soul would not be sufficient.

It is to be uprooted at the origin. All the applications and implications of this false theory in the daily life have been opposed by a positive way, actually by creating a spiritual background without any negative mention or relation to the false theory : the truth has been presented in its beauty and purity. The subject has also been treated in the breadth dimension, with the co-operation of all the teachers concerned. So students feel the unity of the truth and its changeless aspect throughout time and space.

The everlasting gospel, empowered by all the power given unto Jesus in heaven and in earth is working and efficient, in this last stage of the great controversy between Good and evil in our student's heart.

Such a process is standing against a deep-rooted false teaching and adopted all the time along by the whole nation so time is necessary to its spreading out, and the lesson about the "tromba" would be considered as a "test" but not as a lesson, to check if the Christian worldview has been adopted. If this checking out is right, we can consider that the education purpose for the year has been reached.

But "let us not forget that as activity increases, and we become successful in doing the work that must be accomplished, there is danger of our trusting in human plans and methods. There will be a tendency to pray less, and to have less faith. We shall be in danger of losing our dependence upon God, who alone can make our work succeed ; but although this is the tendency, let us not think that the human instrument is to do less. No, he is not to do less, but to do more by accepting the heavenly gift, the Holy Spirit." (Review and Heralds, July 4, 1893.)

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