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The Relevance of Transnational Networking in the Global Ministry of Fredrik Franson

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Abstract

Fredrik Franson, a dual citizen of Sweden and the USA, was an international revival evangelist, mission founder and mobiliser of the *Holiness Movement* during the last quarter of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Within 22 years, he strongly influenced the founding of thirteen faith missions, six church federations in Europe, North America and Armenia, and several independent churches in the USA, New Zealand and Australia.

This article focuses on the relevance of transnational networking for the global ministry of Franson. Starting with a short overview on Franson's life and work, it specifically shows the influence of transnational political and economic developments, transnational trade routes and the importance of the transnational networks of the *Evangelical Alliance*, the *Holiness Movement,* the *Sunday School Union,* and the faith missions for the founding of new missionary societies and church federations by Franson.

Key words: Fredrik Franson, Transnationalism, Transnational networking, Faith Missions, Evangelical Alliance, Holiness Movement, Sunday School Union

1. Introduction

Fredrik Franson lived from 1852 to 1908, was born in Sweden, emigrated to the USA with his parents and operated from there as international evangelist, founder of churches, church federations and mission societies, visiting more than fifty countries.

The importance of Franson for mission history stems from the fact that in the span of only 22 years, thirteen faith missions, numerous churches and six Free

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Church federations emerged as a result of his ministry. His eschatology led to an urgency for Christian mission. Franson also developed new methods of missionary work: follow up meetings in Europe and evangelisation courses across social classes as an instrument of recruitment of new missionaries for Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Franson's life and work are presented here in the light of the prevailing transnational connections in politics, economy, international traffic and religion. Modern industrialisation was gathering momentum, railways and navigation by sea were expanding, and Christian networks such as the *Evangelical Alliance*, the *Holiness Movement* and the *Sunday School Union* and the faith missions experienced considerable growth in which Franson participated.

The key question of this article is: what effect did the enhancing factors of transnational infrastructure and Christian networking have on the ministry of Franson?

In historical research about faith missions, transnationalism has hardly been considered as an important aspect of their expansion. Yet the question is justified, in which way the political, economic and social development of Europe after 1871, as a time of peace, enhanced Christian mission. In which sense is there a vital connection between eased travel, facilitated by the growing worldwide network of railway lines and modern steamship routes, accelerated forms of communication and the establishment and expansion of the missionary societies founded by Franson?

2. The influence of transnational political developments

In a first step, the political situations of European countries and the USA and their enhancing factors for the ministry of Franson are considered.

2.1 The influence of the British Empire on the ministry of Franson

The Pax Britannica can be characterised as the political, economic, social and religious golden age of the British Empire (Ferguson, 2004). Great Britain was the leading power in world and colonial politics of the 19th century (Hildebrand, 1997).

The Pax Britannica contributed essentially to the political stability in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent and Ceylon, Pakistan, Hongkong, Australia and New Zealand, the whole Pacific Rim, Argentina and North America. The Pax Britannica allowed Franson to travel under the protection of a world power, to preach the Gospel in different cultures and to send new missionaries into all continents. Christians in Great Britain also took the lead in Christian networking by founding the *Evangelical Alliance*. Franson profited as a member of the British Section.

2.2 Franson's interest in Germany

After the German Reich was founded in 1871, Germany's industry and economy experienced significant growth. The German Reich developed from an agricultural state to a mainly industrial country with growing cities. Until the beginning of the First World War the industrial production increased by 600% and exports by 400% (Scriba, 2016).

At the world conference of the *Evangelical Alliance* in Copenhagen in 1884, Franson recognised the potential political, economic and religious influence of Germany on world mission. In the following years, he visited Germany four times, namely in 1885, 1887/1888, 1889 and 1899. The growing cities Berlin, Wuppertal and Frankfurt were predestined for his urban evangelism. This led to the founding of the *Freier Evangelischer Missionsverein* (Free Evangelical Mission Association), in Berlin (Reifler, 2018:59) and the *Deutsche China-Allianz-Mission* (German China-Alliance-Mission) by Carl Polnick in 1889 (Reifler, 2018:60-64). Franson also encouraged Rev. Carl Ferdinand Blazejewski in the founding of the Diaconal Federation of Vandsburg in 1899 from which emerged the *Marburg Mission* (Reifler, 2018:245).

The freedom of the press made it possible for Franson to publish his convictions in Germany: in 1887 *Die Nachversammlungen*, *betrachtet im Lichte der Bibel* (Franson, 1887), possibly in 1889 *Die edlen Söhne Zions* and in 1890 *Weissagende Töchter* (Franson, 1890), a defence of women preaching the Gospel in public, as well as numerous articles in the *China-Bote*, the official magazine of the *Deutsche China-Allianz-Mission*. The first missionaries dispatched by this missionary society had all been motivated personally by Franson (Schnepper, 2007:142).

2.3 Franson's ministry in France

Franson profited from the process of industrialisation in using the expanded railway system of France between September 1886 and April 1887. In a short time, he was able to travel from Geneva to Grenoble, Lyon, Valence, Toulouse, Bordeaux and Marseille and to preach in different denominations that identified themselves theologically with the *Evangelical Alliance* (Reifler, 2018:196-197).

2.4 Franson's ministry in the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary

Franson's ministry in Austria-Hungary fell in the time of Emperor Franz Joseph (1830–1916). He mainly used the dual monarchy for transit travel in 1887 and 1894.

On his second journey through Austria in 1894 he apparently preached in the Baptist Church of Budapest. From groups within the Reformed Church he received financial support for his ongoing international evangelistic ministry. Franson's vision was that a dozen Swedish missionaries would continue the evangelistic out-

reach in Hungary (Franson, 1894). Although Franson's ministry in the dual monarchy Austria-Hungary was limited, it reveals his transnational networking and effort to evangelise this country.

2.5 Sweden as home and field of ministry of Franson

At the beginning of the 19th century Sweden was tired of its centuries of wars against Russia, Poland, the Balkan states, Denmark and Prussia. Sweden was a poor, economically exhausted and backward agricultural state.

In 1842, Sweden introduced compulsory schooling. Between 1815 and 1850, the Swedish population grew from 2.5 to 3.5 million inhabitants. In 1850, 90% of the population still lived in rural areas (Swedish Institute, 2012:2). In 1865 and 1866 the old Swedish Reichstag, which was predominantly representing the nobility was disbanded, the economy was deregulated and private business was supported. However, between 1852 and 1869 Sweden was hit by a strong economic recession, combined with a severe political and social crisis. This led to the emigration of 1.2 million Swedes to the USA. At the same time, Sweden benefited from diverse popular religious and social movements such as the Rosenian revival, the abstinence movement and the establishment of trade unions. About 200,000 emigrants returned to Sweden with new know-how and capital. They contributed to the industrialisation of Sweden after 1870. The expansion of the railway system led to a significant increase in the exportation of wood and iron and laid the foundation of a modern prospering Sweden in the 20th century (Stråth, 2012).

Franson, who was born on a farm in Noraskog, Pershyttan, Central Sweden, witnessed the closing of the coal mine north of Nora. In May 1869, the economic crisis forced his family to immigrate to the USA where he became a close co-worker of the renowned revival evangelist Dwight Lyman Moody (1837–1899). Sent officially as an international evangelist, Franson returned several times to Sweden between 1881 and 1899 and became an influential person in the second awakening in Sweden. He kept contacts with leading people of the Swedish awakening: Paul Petter Waldenström, Peter Fjellstedt, Erik Jakob Ekman and practically all evangelical churches, congregations and movements affiliated with the *Evangelical Alliance*. He preached in the major cities of Sweden, led thousands to an active Christian faith, and motivated hundreds of women and men in evangelistic courses to enter into full time Christian ministry at home and overseas. In 1887 Franson founded the *Helgelseförbundet* (Holiness Union), in 1897 the *Svenska Mongolmission* (Swedish Mongol Mission) and in 1900 the *Skandinaviska Alliansmissionen* (Scandinavian Alliance Mission) (Reifler, 2018:198-199, 238-239).

Franson's simple origin, his emigration from Central Sweden to Nebraska, his calling into full time evangelistic ministry through Moody, his experience as revival

evangelist and church founder among Swedish emigrants in the USA, and his repeated return to Sweden made him a founder and missionary strategist of faith missions in Sweden and shaped his character while serving on all continents (Reifler, 2018:199).

2.6 The significance of Russia for the ministry of Franson

Russia reached its largest geographical expansion in the middle of the 19th century. The political stability under Alexander II allowed Franson to travel safely in the summer of 1887 from Constantinople to Odessa and through Bessarabia to Königsberg in East Prussia (Torjesen, 1984:409-412).

Franson's transnational connections with personal friends and Christian churches in Eastern Europa and the relatively solid political, social and economic development in Russia after 1871 favoured his unhindered ministry in the region, from which world mission ultimately profited.

2.7 The USA as classic migration destination for Europeans and starting point of Franson's trips around the world

The USA was a classic destination for European migrants, among them 1.2 million Swedish citizens including Franson. The USA served also as starting point and home base for the planning and implementation of Franson's international ministry between 1881 and 1909.

Franson's trips around the world were interrupted by home assignments in the USA to found the *Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America* in 1890, to strengthen his partnership with the *Christian and Missionary Alliance* and the *China Inland Mission* and to recruit new missionaries to be sent out worldwide. His networking also included contacts to the *Chicago Avenue Church*, the *Moody Bible Institute* and the bible school movement, diverse theological seminaries, the *Niagara Bible Conferences*, the *Holiness Movement* and the churches that adopted dispensationalism as their eschatology (Reifler, 2018:28-104).

Franson's itinerant evangelistic ministry and his missionary vision in a time of political stability in the USA and Europe led hundreds of new converts of all social classes to the Christian faith, to the founding of Free Church federations and the establishment of new faith mission agencies.

3. The influence of transnational economic development

In a second step the influence of transnational economic development and its enhancement of ministry opportunities for Franson will be assessed.

The British historian Eric Hobsbawm divides the 19th century into three periods: "The Age of Revolution" (1789–1848), "The Age of Capital" (1848–1875) and

"The Age of Empire" (1875–1914) (Hobsbawm, 1962; 1975; 1987). Revolution, capitalism and empires created the cultural historical conditions for industrialisation, urbanisation, liberalisation and globalisation, which will be considered next.

3.1 Industrialisation: From artisans to modern industry, banking and international trading

Franson and his faith missions profited considerably from the process of industrialisation. The age of fossil fuels and their distribution after 1830 through steam engines, pumps, steamships, and a growing railway system led the European countries to more national and transnational integration and imperial control (Osterhammel, 2009:108). The mechanisation of industry led to higher production. Transcontinental steamships and the expansion of the railway systems led to accelerated world trade. In consequence, banking, national, and international trading reached a level never seen before.

3.2 Urbanisation: From rural areas into cities and metropolitan areas

Urbanisation, modernisation and electrification of Europe's larger cities and metropolitan areas can be seen in the example of Paris, where between 1853 and 1869 about 27,000 houses were torn down, 100,000 new houses built and more than 200 km of streets enlarged (Jordan, 1996).

More comprehensive medical care, higher education and new professional perspectives were an incentive to move from the rural areas to the growing cities and metropolitan areas. The landed gentry was gradually substituted by a new urban class of business people and financial specialists.

The missionary societies and church federations founded by Franson profited from industrialisation and urbanisation because most of them were located in larger cities and metropolitan areas such as Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, Chicago, Wuppertal-Barmen, Sydney and Shanghai. The founder of the German China-Alliance-Mission himself was a businessman from Wuppertal-Barmen (Polnick, 1904; 1920:1-20), and an important committee member was the German businessman Hermann Scholder-Develay in Winterthur, Switzerland (Schnepper, 2007:149-150).

3.3 Liberalisation: From mercantilism to free world trade

The age of revolution (1789–1848) in Europe led to a political and social liberalisation and introduced modern democracy. Successively functioning democracies emerged in France, Switzerland and the USA.

The process of democratic liberalisation replaced mercantilism by free world trade (Osterhammel, 2009:1029). The conquest of the West in the USA and the Argentinian Pampa enabled a growing consumption of meat and prosperity in North

America and Argentina as well as a better nutritional basis in many European countries (Loheide, 2011:62-81).

The construction of canals, the transnational steamships and the expansion of the international railway system accelerated free world trade. The USA was a leading country in steel production, followed by Germany, Great Britain, Russia, France and Austria-Hungary (Osterhammel, 2009:980).

Franz Xaver von Neumann-Spallart (1837–1888) analysed the rapid development of world trade between 1867 and 1884. Within 17 years foreign trade increased from 44,214 billion German Marks to 64,973 billion Marks, an increase of 65% (Neumann-Spallart,4 1888:8/76). Between July 1892 and July 1894, the monthly income of the *German China-Alliance-Mission* increased from 468.64 Mark to 550.88 Mark, which is a growth of 17.5% within two years (*China-Bote,* 1892:6; *China-Bote,* 1894:96). It seems likely that the growing purchasing power of the mission friends had a direct influence on the generosity in favour of the *German China-Alliance-Mission*.

3.4 Globalisation: From national currencies to Latin Monetary Union and gold standard

One of the most remarkable achievements of the European countries in the 19th century was the development of national currencies, which in 1866 led to the founding of the Latin Monetary Union. This in turn led to price stability until the outbreak of the First World War (Thiemeyer, 2009).

An alternative to the Latin Monetary Union was the gold standard, which already existed in Great Britain since the 18th century. In 1873 Germany, Denmark and Sweden also accepted the gold standard, Norway in 1875 and after the 1880s also France and the rest of the countries that were already members of the Latin Monetary Union (Osterhammel, 2009:1042). The gold standard was more than a transnational currency system. It served also as a regulatory system of the world economy: prices became internationally reliable, comparable and measurable, which led to prosperity in Europe and North America (Osterhammel, 2009:1047).

These fascinating changes in the world economy made the financial aspects of faith missions controllable and contributed to their gradual growth. Arndt Schneppers confirms these developments in the two oldest German faith missions, the *Neukirchener Mission* and the *German China-Alliance-Mission*, between the years 1899 and 1938 (Schnepper, 2007:188-189).

The influence of transnational economic development, especially industrialisation, urbanisation, liberalisation and globalisation during the last quarter of the 19th century, enhanced considerably the global ministry of Franson and the missionaries sent through his agency.

4. The influence of transnational and transatlantic trade routes

In addition to the favourable political and economic developments, the increased ease of international travel and communication was a further facilitating factor for Franson's ministry on all continents.

4.1 The European river transportation routes and the Suez Canal

The construction of British canals started already in the 18th century but reached its peak in the 19th century. Between 1760 and 1860, 44 canals were built, of which 6,800 km were navigable (Way, 1993:8). An enormous amount of capital, technology, organisation and discipline and a large number of labourers made canal construction one of the most progressive industries (Osterhammel, 2009:980).

The most spectacular canal constructed was the Suez Canal (162 km) between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea that was built between 1859 and 1869. The canal was a joint venture of many countries. The money came mainly from France, the coal from Great Britain, wood from Croatia and Hungary, the workforce from all over Europe and Arabian countries (Montel, 1999). Franson passed through the Suez Canal on his first world trip at the beginning of March 1894 when he travelled to India and China. It shortened his journey to China by months compared with the circumnavigation of South Africa, which James Hudson Taylor in 1865 still undertook.

4.2 The advantage of transcontinental and transatlantic transportation

In 1885, the German Reichstag decided to open a transcontinental connection to East Asia and Australia, which led to the construction of 31 new steamships between 1898 and 1908. This development was decisive for the economic and political growth of Germany (Kludas, 1987).

The missionaries of the *German China-Alliance-Mission* profited from these new transcontinental connections. They left Genoa on 27 October 1890 on the German steamship *Sachsen*, travelled through the Suez Canal and reached Shanghai already on 3 December 1890 (DCAM, 1892:25). Hudson Taylor spent 23 weeks from Liverpool round South Africa to reach Shanghai on the clipper *Dumfries* in 1853 (Pollock, 1966:27).

A further example of shortened routes is Franson's trip on the Euphrates from Basra to Baghdad. Franson made this trip on a steamboat and spent 5 days (Franson, 1905). In earlier times, the boats without motor took about one month for the same route (Hofmann, 1844:233).

These historical observations support the assertion that the canal constructions and shortened routes with modern steamships contributed to the rapid expansion of home bases for Franson's faith missions in Europe and the USA.

4.3 The expansion of railway networks

Franson was an avid user of the railways of his time. The prototypes of modern railways developed originally in Germany and Great Britain in the mining industry, starting in 1787 with the first horse-drawn coal mining trains in Germany. The first steam locomotives were built in Great Britain in 1804 and 1812. In Germany, the construction of steam locomotives started in 1815 and the first railway connection was inaugurated on 24 April 1837, connecting Leipzig with Dresden (Mück, 1985). It was the Cologne cathedral bridge, opened in October 1859, which provided a crucial link for a transcontinental European railway connection from Belgium through Germany to Königsberg and from there through Hungary to Trieste.

In Switzerland, the most challenging project was the alpine tunnel of the Gotthard with a distance of 15 km inaugurated in 1882 (Jung, 2006). Eight years after its opening the first missionaries of the *German China-Alliance-Mission* travelled from Barmen via Switzerland, using the Gotthard train to reach Genoa in order to get to China by steamboat. This new travel route shortened the time by about 2 days (DCAM, 1892:25).

In the Ottoman Empire, it was the vision of Sultan Abdul Hamid II to build the Baghdad railway system to connect the provinces from Constantinople to Baghdad. To that end, an alliance with the German Emperor Wilhelm II was established to enable a journey of 13 days from Berlin via Vienna, Belgrade, Sofia and Constantinople to Kuwait at the Persian Gulf. The project was started in 1903 (Schultze, 2005). When Franson travelled through the Euphrates-Tigris region and Greater Armenia in 1906, he might have used the 200 km line from Burgulu to Konya which had already been completed in 1904 (Yosul & Sahar, 2015:9). However, the sources to not tell whether he did (Reifler Diss,nd : 212).

Russia built the Trans-Siberian railway system between 1891 and 1901 to connect Vladivostok on the Pacific Ocean with the West of the country. A further connection through Manchuria to China was inaugurated in 1896 (Reifler, 2018: 210).

In the continental European countries, as well as in the USA and India, close-knit railway networks emerged, each composing several tens of thousands of kilometres.

This illustrates how Franson's repeated trips through Scandinavia and through almost all continental European countries, Russia, India, Persia and Armenia in a relatively short time would never have been possible without the expansion of a modern railway system during his lifetime.

4.4 The acceleration of transnational and transatlantic communication

The acceleration of transport also eased long distance communication, which benefited missionary work. In an era of digitalisation, it is difficult to imagine how com-

plicated and expensive transcontinental communication was in the 19th century. In the second part of the 19th century, transcontinental communication was enhanced by steamships, post carriages and expanding railway connections.

Letters were the most common form of communication between the mission fields and the sending countries. Intercontinental steamships as well as the growing railway connections were used for transmitting prayer letters, general information and money. Franked envelopes from China, which are in the archives of missionary societies in North America and Europe show how long it took to transmit a message from East Asia to Europe or North America.

To give some examples: In early March 1892 Josef Bender, missionary of the *German China-Alliance-Mission*, wrote an article for the *China Bote* about the missionary conference in Chucheo, China. The report was published within six and a half months in Germany, on 15 October 1892 (*China Bote,* 1882:17-18). On 14 July 1892, Elisabeth Bäumer wrote an article in China that was published in Germany after three months on 15 October 1892 (*China-Bote*, 1892:21). Franson himself wrote a letter, about his planned trip to India, dated 9 March 1894 from the Suez Canal. The letter was published five weeks later in Germany (*China-Bote,* 1894:67-68).

These sources demonstrate that the transmission of information between China and Germany, including editorial work, took about three months and between Egypt and Germany five weeks. This accelerated communication was only made possible by steamships. Supporters of mission societies received the latest news from the mission fields around the world with much less delay than in the past and this encouraged them to sponsor and send even more missionaries.

European river transportation, the opening of the Suez Canal and new steamships routes, the worldwide expansion of railway networks, and the significant acceleration of transnational and transatlantic communication considerably eased the founding and growth of new faith missions inspired and founded by Franson.

In a next step, the influence of transnational and transcontinental Christianity on Franson and his missionaries and the benefits they derived, will be considered.

5. The influence of transnational and transcontinental Christianity

With regard to transnational political, economic and infrastructure developments, Franson and his missionaries were passive beneficiaries. Regarding transnational and transcontinental Christianity, however, Franson was not only a beneficiary of increased networking, but also an active contributor.

Transnational and transcontinental Christianity of the 19th century had a greater influence on the ministry of Franson than so far presented in scholarly research about faith missions. Four interwoven networks were of particular importance for

Franson: the Evangelical Alliance, the Holiness Movement, the Sunday School Union and the Faith Mission movement (Reifler, 2018:179-193).

5.1 The Evangelical Alliance

Franson was accepted as a member of the British Section of the Evangelical Alliance on 11 May 1882 at the age of 30 years (Evangelical Alliance, 1882). The Evangelical Alliance served Franson as a transnational and transcontinental network for his evangelistic campaigns and trips around the world. A brief reflection on the history of the Evangelical Alliance in the 19th century helps to understand the importance of this movement for Franson's transnational and transcontinental ministry and networking.

The Evangelical Alliance was founded on 14 April 1846. At the founding meeting 920 people from 53 denominations participated. 84% of the delegates represented Great Britain, 8% the USA and 7% continental Europe and the rest of the world (Randall, 2001:1). For many Christians, the founding of the World Evangelical Alliance was an answer to prayer for the unity of Christianity (Hauzenberger, 1986:88). It was a groundbreaking impulse for the ecumenism of believers (Hille, 2014).[3]

The founding meeting in London was followed by a number of world conferences: 1851 in London, 1855 in Paris, 1857 in Berlin, 1861 in Geneva, 1867 in Amsterdam, 1873 in New York, 1879 in Basel, 1884 in Copenhagen, 1891 in Florence and 1896 again in London (Hauzenberger, 1986:105). These world conferences contributed to the consolidation and global expansion of the World Evangelical Alliance.

As from 1881, Franson was an active member of the Evangelical Alliance. From 30 August to 7 September 1884, he represented Sweden as a delegate to the Eighth World Conference of the Evangelical Alliance in Copenhagen. There he met about 2,000 delegates from Europe and North America (Vahl, 1884; Evangelical Alliance, 1884:305-332).

Franson's networking with the *Evangelical Alliance* led to new contacts. This resulted in a personal invitation by Anna von Weling to participate in the first German Alliance conference in Bad Blankenburg, Thuringia. Franson and the leader of

[3] The creed of the Evangelical Alliance demonstrates its broadly Reformed roots. The emphasis lies on the salvation history of God the Almighty and his grace in creation, salvation and judgement. It also confirms the binding authority of Scripture for faith and action, teaches the sinfulness and lostness of man, the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ and the justification of the sinner alone by grace, the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion, new birth and sanctification and the priesthood of all believers which empowers them with evangelism. It also testifies to the visible return of Christ. The declaration mainly confirms the apostolic faith and the reformed confessions, yet without specifying detailed questions of baptism, the understanding and practice of leadership, ecclesiology or eschatology. The basic convictions of the Christian faith are emphasised and not minor dividing theological aspects (see Evangelical Alliance, 1847).

the *German China-Alliance-Mission* Carl Polnick were part of the 28 participants representing the Evangelical Alliance and the Holiness Movement (Ohlemacher, 1986:87).

The Evangelical Alliance offered Franson the largest evangelical network of transnational and transcontinental connections in his time for his worldwide ministry in church and mission.

5.2 The Holiness Movement

Franson's international evangelistic ministry would hardly have been possible without the Holiness Movement in Scandinavia, the USA, Germany and southern Africa. He profited considerably from the transnational network of the Holiness Movement, from which he stemmed and of which he was an active promoter.

Already in 1856, the first "holiness-conference" was held in the UK at Christ Church in Barnet, London with about 1,000 participants. These conferences, also called the "Mildmay-Conferences" can be regarded as the model for the holiness movement of Oxford und Brighton (Railton, 2000:73-74).

The historical development of the Holiness Movement in the USA was different. The first conference of the Holiness Movement took place in 1867 in Vineland, New Jersey (Dieter, 1996:86). Further conferences were held in 1868 in Manheim, Pennsylvania (Dieter, 1996:56), in 1869 in Round Lake, New York (Dieter, 1996:91), in 1870 in Hamilton, Massachusetts and in Oakington, Maryland (Dieter, 1996:99). William Edwin Boardman (1810–1886), Robert Pearsall Smith (1827–1898), Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875), Phoebe Palmer (1807–1875) und Dwight Lyman Moody (1837–1899) were the main representatives of the North American Holiness Movement (Reifler, 2018:186).

After the 1870s a second phase of the Holiness Movement emerged in Great Britain due to the awareness of spiritual yearning in many state and free churches (Dieter, 1996:130). Holiness conferences were held in 1874 in Broadland and Oxford, and in 1875 in Brighton and Keswick, Lake District (Dieter, 1996:138ff).

From the historical perspective, it is interesting to see how Franson came into contact with the Holiness Movement in the USA and later in Scandinavia. Already during 1876–1877, he was influenced by his mentor Moody, mainly through his participation in the evangelistic campaign in Chicago, his membership in the *Chicago Avenue Church* and his being sent out as their first missionary. Before leaving for his first international evangelistic campaign in Europe, Franson participated in the *Scandinavian Baptist Deeper Life-Conference* in Altamont, Iowa from 11 October to 13 October 1878. In Sweden, Franson and his colleague evangelist Nelly Hall were regular speakers at the Torp Conferences of the *Helgelseförbundet* (Holiness Union), which he founded (Reifler, 2018:186-187).

Franson knew how to make effective use of his contacts to representatives of the Holiness Movement. An example is his visit of the famous May Meetings in 1882 in the healing house of *Bethshan* in London where he met Elizabeth Baxter (Wisemann, 1928) and Rev. William Edward Boardman (Bundy, 2001:40). While staying in Basel, Franson visited the director of the *Pilgermission St. Chrischona* (Pilgrim Mission of St. Chrischona), Carl Heinrich Rappard. Rappard had imported the emphasis on holiness from his participation in the "Oxford blessings" to St. Chrischona and had a lasting effect on the *Theological Seminary of St. Chrischona* and the German Fellowship Movement for decades (Ohlemacher, 1986:12).

Later Franson also developed a dynamic partnership with one of the most important representatives of the Holiness Movement in the USA, Rev. Albert Benjamin Simpson, founder of the *Christian and Missionary Alliance* (Niklaus, 1986). Franson recruited 200 missionaries for Simpson's *Christian and Missionary Alliance* to serve in China (Torjesen, 1984:553-588).

Franson's personal friendship with James Hudson Taylor and the *China Inland Mission* was also a consequence of his transcontinental connection with the *Holiness Movement*. Most missionaries recruited by Franson were dispatched to the *China Inland Mission* (Reifler, 2015:24-32).

On his 16-months evangelistic trip through southern Africa (Reifler & Sauer, 2019), Franson stayed in the home of one of the most prolific writers of the Holiness Movement, Rev. Andrew Murray (1828–1917), who was born in Scotland (*De Kerkbode*: 11 July 1907). It was Murray who issued the invitation for Franson to preach in southern Africa (Torjesen, 1983:122).

These examples show clearly how the Holiness Movement became a platform for Franson to establish new contacts and forms of partnership in evangelism and transcultural mission and biblical and discipleship training.

Franson's contacts to Moody, Sankey, Ekman, Fjellstedt, Hall, Christlieb, Rappard, Simpson, Baxter, Boardman, Hudson Taylor and many others show how well he was connected with representatives of the Holiness Movement.

5.3 The Sunday School Union

The Sunday School Union played an important transcontinental networking role mainly in the beginning of Franson's international ministry.

The engagement in educational work is part of the revival movements in Great Britain in the 18th and 19th century. It was the print shop owner Robert Raikes (1735–1811), who in London started the first Sunday School among socially neglected children. He taught them to write, told Bible stories and explained the catechism (Power, 1863). In 1785, this educational vision led to the founding of the *Society for the Support and Encouragement of Sunday Schools* in London. Some

of these schools in Great Britain existed already before 1785. The new movement triggered a boom of Sunday Schools, which finally led to the official founding of the *Sunday School Union* through non-conformists on 13 July 1803.

The founding of further Sunday School Unions in other countries followed in the 1820s in Canada, and in 1824 in the USA. By the year 1833, about 45% of all children in Great Britain regularly attended a Sunday School (Hutchinson, 2012:71).

With the introduction of general compulsory education in Great Britain, the main focus of the *Sunday School Union* gradually changed. The original social-diaconal movement was of national significance. This changed to an interdenominational and transcontinental non-government organisation and Christian missionary network. The Sunday School Union financially and practically supported Christian education for all ages through didactic materials, curricula, training programmes and conferences for teachers and church members. On the non-occidental mission fields the Sunday School Union helped to support national female as well as male catechists and evangelists (Watson, 1853).

Franson's transcontinental connection with the Sunday School Union goes back to the famous May Meetings in London in 1882 where he gave the opening address to their 79th Annual Conference (*Sunday School Union,* 1882:XIV). During the May Meetings, he was also accepted into the British Section of the Evangelical Alliance (Evangelical Alliance, 1882).

Through his participation in the May Meetings in Exeter-Hall in London, Franson became familiar with the *Sunday School Union* and the work of many British faith missions and Christian ministries and thereby gained a new vision for the challenge of worldwide missionary work (Fiedler, 2018:51).

Later Franson wrote about the personal impact the May Meetings had on him:

> When I left America for the first time to come to Scandinavia sixteen years ago, and after I had served here for a year, I went to England as a delegate to a Sunday School meeting. I heard then in London a message on the heathen, which I remember made a great difference to me. Of course, before this I had already been concerned with the missions in Scandinavia. I had done what I could. I had offered what I could. I even had spoken what I could on behalf of the heathen overseas. But in all of it, there was no particular drive. After this, however, overseas mission meant something different to me (Franson, 1897).

Franson's direct contacts to the Sunday School Union were not that intensive in the following years of his transcontinental ministry as back in 1882. But his vision to support Christian education in the mission-founded churches in the non-occidental world remained strong and vivid. His support for Christian education in the local

churches becomes evident in his recommendations for the missionaries in China, who were urged not to forget to invest in local Sunday School ministry. Franson argued that Sunday School ministry needs constant attention. Well-trained pupils of the local Sunday School should receive further educational help to become themselves Sunday School teachers. In all cities in China, solid Sunday Schools should be established (Meyer, 1895:95).

As missionary representatives and delegates from the Holiness Movement took part in the 79th Annual Conference of the Sunday School Union in May 1882, this helped Franson to build a further transcontinental network for his evangelistic ministry in more than 50 countries.

5.4 Faith Missions

The fourth transnational network of Evangelical Christians in the second part of the 19th century were the faith missions, which emerged mainly from the Holiness Movement. The faith missions, in contrast to the former classical mission societies, were different in their financial system, their interdenominational character and their understanding of ministry. In recent mission history, James Hudson Taylor's *China Inland Mission*, founded in 1865, is considered to be the first faith mission (Fiedler, 1992:65ff).

The history and development of the faith missions is in many ways special. The "norma normans" of the Bible is binding for faith and work, as well as the complete confidence in God's provision to support the missionaries, a holy lifestyle and vivid spirituality characterised by a personal relationship with God, passion for people without a relationship with God, readiness to suffer for Christ, a sacrificial lifestyle, readiness to serve wholeheartedly, flexibility and innovation in mission methods (Franz, 1991:13-15; Reifler, 2009:221–222) as well as ecclesiological and theological independence (Fiedler, 1992:65).[4]

Classical mission societies established earlier differ in their motive for mission, their missionary methods and their missionary principles. Faith missions received their name due to their new financial system. They received their financial support through voluntary gifts from individuals who were moved by the Spirit to support the missionaries. Schnepper regards the "faith principle" as one of the fundamental characteristics of faith missions. To ask for support was a "no-go" in the faith missions of the 19th century (Schnepper, 2007:27).

In the English-speaking world the best known faith missions of the 19th century were the *China Inland Mission* (1865), *Christian and Missionary Alliance*

[4] Today, faith missions identify themselves with the Lausanne Movement for World Evangelisation and the World Evangelical Alliance and they are often called interdenominational missions.

(1887), *The Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America* (1890), the *Sudan Interior Mission* (1893), and the *Africa Inland Mission* (1895) (Covell, 2000:353-354).

Franson himself maintained not only excellent contacts with the *China Inland Mission* and the *Christian and Missionary Alliance*, but also influenced strongly the founding of thirteen new faith missions and six Free Church federations in Scandinavia, Germany, Switzerland, the USA and Armenia.

Franson's networking with the Evangelical Alliance, the Sunday School Union and the Holiness Movement allowed him to recruit young people for missionary service in the whole world. Where it was not possible to work in partnership with an already functioning missionary society, he founded a new faith mission. This did not happen as a protest against established mission societies but rather as a result of wanting to reach as quickly as possible the unreached people groups of this world. The founding of the *German China-Alliance-Mission* 1889 in Barmen may serve as an example. Franson took part in the annual missionary conference of the *Neukirchener Mission* and tried to convince its leadership to work in partnership with James Hudson Taylor in China. The *Neukirchener Mission* declined to work with the China Inland Mission, because their priority was to strengthen their mission fields in Africa and Java. Inspector Hermann Mandel, Fredrik Franson and Carl Polnick agreed that Polnick should start the new faith mission in Barmen (Dreibholz & Dannert, 1939:2-4).

It is quite obvious that Franson was not only a beneficiary of the globally operating network of faith missions, but also in many ways one of their fathers and founders who actively fostered them. His evangelistic journeys around the world, study tours, evangelistic campaigns, evangelistic courses and Bible courses, in more than 50 countries and on all continents, gave him a comprehensive and solid information about the actual status and spread of mission work. This motivated him to establish new faith missions in order to reach the unreached with the Gospel.

A comparison between Franson and other founders of faith missions of his time in my further studies has shown that he was one of the most important mission mobilisers of the Holiness Movement (Reifler, 2018:222-230).

Franson benefited from the exchange of ideas and connections with his contemporary "colleagues" James Hudson Taylor, Henry Grattan Guinness, Albert Benjamin Simpson, C.T. Studd and H. Karl Kumm, some of whom complemented and surpassed him in other aspects: Franson never founded a theological seminary or missionary training institute. Most likely, he did not have "disciples." He never led a local church, a church federation or missionary society. The specific merit of Franson lies in his worldwide evangelistic ministry in more than 50 countries, and in the founding of new faith missions and church federations. Franson was a mission

Founding	Name	Origin and Progress
1884	*Det Norske Misjonsforbundet* (Norway)	*Emerged from the Lammers Free Churches* in Norway (1856)
1884	*The Evangelical Free Church of North America* (USA)	
1887	*Helgelseförbundet* (Sweden)	1997 fusion with *Evangeliska Frikyrkan*
1887	*Den Norske Kinamisjon** (Norway)	*Today Evangelisk Orientmisjon* and part of *OMF International* (Norway)
1888	*Det Danske Missionsforbund* (Denmark)	
1888	*Fria Missionsförbundet i Finland* (Finland)	Since 1923 *Suomen Vapaakirkko* (Finland)
1889	*Den Frie Østafrikanske Mission* (Norway)	Since 1899 part of *Det Norske Misjonsforbundet* (Norway)
1889	*Deutsche China-Allianz-Mission** (Germany)	Since 1892 *Allianz-Mission* (Germany)
1889	*Schweizer Allianz Mission** (Switzerland)	Since 2017 *SAM global* (Switzerland)
1890	*The Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America* (USA)	Today *The Evangelical Alliance Mission* (TEAM) (USA)
1895	*Finska Alliansmissionen* (Finland)	Since 1923 *Suomen Vapaakirkko*
1897	*Svenska Mongolmissionen* (Sweden)	Since 1951 *Svenska Mongol- och Japanmissionen,* since 1982 part of *Evangeliska Östasienmissionen,* today *OMF International* (Sweden)
1899	*Vandsburger Diakonie-verband** (Germany)	From which emerged the *Deutscher Gemeinschafts- und Diakonieverband* and the *Marburger Mission* (Germany)
1900	*Kvinnliga Missionsförbundet* (Finland)	
1900	*Svenska Alliansmissionen* (Sweden)	
1901	*Det Norske Misjonsallianse** (Norway)	
1902	*Scandinavian Seamen's Mission* (Australia)	
1903	*Scandinavian Seamen's Mission* (China)	
1906	*Armenian Spiritual Brotherhood* (Armenia)	*Armenian Brotherhood Bible Churches* (Armenia)

*Faith missions and Free Church federations strongly influenced by Franson

mobiliser, mission founder, disseminator, mission strategist, persuader, mentor and networker within the Holiness Movement of the last quarter of the 19th century.

Franson's ability to work in co-operation with the Evangelical Alliance and his Congregationalism gave the "Alliance-Missions" which he founded their firm ecclesiological identity and empowered them at the same time to work interdenominationally both in their home context and in the expansion of Christian mission in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Hardly any other contemporary mission leader was as well informed as Franson about the spiritual and missionary situation in the world, and connected globally with mission agencies of diverse countries and denominations.

6. Franson's trips around the world

Due to his travel reports, mission articles and publications in the last quarter of the 19th century, Franson became the publicist of the growing "Alliance-Missions" on all continents.

Thus, the transcontinental and interdenominational networks of the Evangelical Alliance, the Holiness Movement, the Sunday School Union, and the faith missions played a decisive part for the transnational ministry of Franson and his new faith missions and Free Church federations.

7. Conclusion

Franson's international ministry was eased by a time of relative political stability and peace, enormous industrial and economic developments (industrialisation, urbanisation, liberalisation and globalisation) in many countries of Europe, the Near East, the Indian subcontinent and East Asia.

National and transcontinental travelling and infrastructure with growing railway networks, steam ships, the newly opened Suez Canal and eased ways of communication helped Franson and his missionaries to spread the Gospel to unreached people groups on all continents.

Franson's missionaries profited also from the acceleration of transnational and transatlantic communication. Contacts through letters between the mission fields and the sending countries considerably eased and became faster than earlier in the mission history. This also applied to the publication of information in missionary magazines.

The freedom of speech in Scandinavia, Germany and the USA helped Franson to publish his missionary experiences and observed missionary strategies around the world in mission magazines and books distributed by the newly created faith missions.

Swedish Christian immigrants in the USA formed not only the Federation of the Evangelical Free Church and the Scandinavian Alliance Mission, but also financed the international mission ministry of Franson and his missionaries.

The condition in France, Austria-Hungary and Russia eased Franson's transit travel and evangelistic revival ministry and the resulting strengthening of the local churches and congregations of denominations, which were connected to the Evangelical Alliance.

Franson's extensive religious networking and his making use of secular transnational infrastructure help to explain why he was able to found numerous churches, thirteen faith missions and six church federations within 22 years.

Franson as an international travelling revival evangelist profited from the extensive network of the Evangelical Alliance, the Sunday School Union, the Holiness Movement and the faith missions which presented him with a transnational platform of contacts, invitations to attend conferences, opportunities to organise evangelistic campaigns, follow-up meetings and evangelistic courses and to study mission methods on all continents.

Franson's membership in the Evangelical Alliance gave him transnational support and resonance from national and local representatives of this network. Thus, his participation as representative of the Swedish Evangelical Alliance at the World Conference of the Evangelical Alliance in Copenhagen in 1884 enabled him to come into contact with other members of the Evangelical Alliance, which gradually led him becoming a welcome guest and conference speaker of the international network, such as in Bad Blankenburg, Germany in 1886.

Franson's lecture at the 79th annual meeting of the universal Sunday School Union in May 1882 was not only a door-opener to new international contacts but also an eye-opener for the necessity of an educational mandate and the urgency of transcultural mission.

Franson as child of the Lutheran Rosenian Pietism of Sweden was deeply shaped by a personal spirituality that accompanied him during his whole life. His spirituality was characterised by a vivid orthopraxy as common in the Holiness Movement: Bible reading, believing in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit, healing, awareness of being lost without Christ, readiness to live a holy life, to have open eyes for the social challenges in an industrialising society, and engagement in world mission. Therefore, it is not astonishing that Franson was invited to participate in the annual holiness conferences in Torp, Sweden or that he received a personal invitation form Rev. Andrew Murray to visit southern Africa.

Franson's trips around the world and many contacts to members of the Evangelical Alliance, the Holiness Movement, the Sunday School Union, the faith missions and also mission stations of classical mission societies on all continents qualified him as pioneer of Christian networking in church and mission from which we still benefit today.

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