

1975 Unification Church Missionary Experiences in India, Greece and other experiences in UK

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May 2017



It's hard to know where to start when telling the story of my time overseas, which began in India, in 1975. To put it in perspective, I need to begin with my first experience of God, which occurred when I was in high school. One afternoon in the woods I was thinking about my life -- who I was at home, who I was at school, and the meaning of it all.

I looked up at the sun shining in the trees and suddenly there was something more. There was a living, vibrating something that filled me with wonder and awe, and brought tears to my eyes. This experience started me on a journey that continues to this day. Sometime later, I attended a talk at our church by missionaries to Africa. They showed pictures of village people living in grass houses. They said how much they loved these very different people, and how they couldn't wait to get back. I was touched, and told God I wanted to be a missionary – but not one who ignorantly destroyed indigenous culture as happened in Mitchener's *Hawaii*.

I first learned of Divine Principle through Barbara Ten Wolde, a high school classmate. She met Jhoon Rhee in D.C. in 1965, and moved into 1907 S Street. I stayed there for a few months, as well, and witnessed at Dupont Circle. My parents then insisted I return to Montana to complete my education, which I did. When I came back in January of 1970, the center had moved to Upshur Street. I was part of the 1972 speaking tour, and the bus trip across the country with Perry Cordell and Joseph Sheftick at the helm. It was an amazing time for all of us for many reasons, one of which was because members of the four groups were working together for the first time. Miss Kim, David Kim, Col. Pak, and Mr. Choi (Nishikawa) had each worked independently, and very differently. Each group was convinced they were Abel. But all of us heard deep lectures from gentle Mr. Kim, sang potent but roughly translated holy songs, and felt the excitement of new horizons.

Father's reaction to the different groups became clear at the end of the tour. Someone asked which group was Abel. We all watched, wide-eyed, as Father kicked the chair out from under David Kim, who calmly picked himself up from the floor, straightened the chair and sat back down. There was only one group.

At the end of the tour we drew lots to see who would be pioneers in the states that had no centers. I drew Idaho, David Kim's territory! I am one of the few persons with a personal connections to all four Korean missionaries. I learned Principle from Col. Pak at S Street. As a diplomat, he was intelligent, patient and practical; each chapter of the Principle that he translated was printed separately. I came to know Mr. Choi while a student in Montana -- I visited him and his family in California. He was a maverick; his thinking extended into every nook and cranny of life and his translation of the Principle was expansive, and philosophic. Miss Kim was in charge when I returned to DC. Her commonly used translation, the red

book, was very Christian leading to surprisingly touching moments with God. David Kim was generally considered nuts by many of us on the bus team. His behavior was impossible to understand. But he inspired deep loyalty in his members.

Galen Brooks, for instance, took time off from work to drive from Oregon to California to take me to Idaho. Being a State Leader in those early days meant struggles with loneliness, financial worries, and persecution. A visiting bus team brought welcome companionship, but left increased debts. In time there were state and regional speaking tours. And then there was fundraising.

I will never forget the first shipment of ugly lime green candles that we were to sell! Somehow it all happened. We grew from 4 to 8 members, met our fundraising goals, and helped purchase Belvedere. I thought I was in Heaven when I first visited the New York property. So beautiful. And it belonged to us – I helped purchase it! Then we got the Seminary. Incredible!

When I got the call telling me I was to be a foreign missionary, I couldn't believe it. I expected my husband, Lokesh, who was from India and a state leader in Nebraska, to be the one to go to India. But no, it was me. So off I went to stay at the Seminary for the 120 days of preparation. During our training, Father announced that Mother had successfully completed her training, and Dr. Choi would return to Korea. He gave long talks, telling us to imagine being cradled in the womb and being reborn.

Listening to Mr. Sudo's exciting lectures, we developed "skin touch" with God – the tapes of which were later sent to us. We did 24 hour marathon teaching on the streets of New York City. We did prayer conditions, and took a group picture on the Barrytown steps. Finally it was time to go.

India – HOT and a Different Culture

I arrived in India at 6 a.m. It was hot. I knew it would be, but it still surprised me. I stayed with the German missionary, Manfred, who had been in New Delhi for several months and had a small apartment in a very crowded area of the city. We slept on rope beds, heard neighbors' early morning ablutions, and drank what passed for tea – hot water poured repeatedly over tea leaves in a small strainer. I argued that we should go to Mumbai, where Lokesh's folks lived. They could help us get established. It was decided I would go to see what the situation was, and maybe they would follow.

In Mumbai [1], we lived in Mankhurd – the very end of the train line. Lokesh's parents had a chicken farm with an unfinished section of the house they let us use. We had our own entrance, an Indian style bathroom (hole-in-the-floor toilet, bucket and cup for shower), and a kitchen consisting of a black stone countertop on top of a bookshelf, and a single burner kerosene stove. The windows, with opaque glass and no screens, were always open – except during the rainy season. I found the usual mosquito netting cumbersome, so I pulled a thin, loose weave sheet over my head at night to avoid bites.

The first time I went out to witness in India, I stopped two young girls on the street. They were shocked that a memsahib (white woman) would stop them, and ran away before I could tell them anything. So I went to the park. A man was sitting on a park bench, with a bundle beside him. At least he couldn't run away. As I talked, he grinned, and I could see teeth missing. Then I realized the bundle was clothes, and that he was a dhobi (clothes washer). He spoke English, but had no education. It would be hard for him to understand. I realized I had to find another way to find people! So much of what we take for religion is actually just culture and tradition. A Billy Graham associate (that I interviewed) on a Crusade in Calcutta put it this way. How much of a Fourth of July church service in Chicago is relevant to people in India? Indeed!

Ashwin, an intense college age young man, was the first person to hear all of the Principle. He listened, and pondered deeply as we traveled around Mumbai. He nearly joined, but in the end, couldn't. Not too much later, another young man seemed to accept easily, and came to live with us. He was a tall Punjabi, who took the name of my brother, Andy. He stayed in Kazuhiro's room and was very protective of me when we went by train. Trains in India are uncomfortable for women. In the crush of people there is always unwanted groping. What a disappointment when after several months we woke to find Andy gone – along with our money and my jewelry. One of the difficulties of working in such a poor country is that being friends with a "wealthy" foreigner is attractive. It makes it hard to know a person's real motives. Going out to eat with someone can present problems. If you pay repeatedly, the relationship becomes unbalanced and ends. The honorable people we met took pride in the fact that we were guests in their country, and would insist on paying for us. But this, too, could be a show to get something more from you later.

There was one Indian man, a church minister, who somehow traveled to the Seminary in NY, and had told everyone that there were 100 Unification members at his church in India. I was skeptical. Soon after I arrived in India, he came to the YMCA in New Delhi, where I was staying. The church could be registered, he said, for \$100. For \$300 it could be registered nationally. I decided to give him the benefit of the doubt – and let his true motivation be revealed. Nothing came of the \$100 I gave him. But it was a

positive experience, because it saved me future time and heart ache. He also got money from Kazuhiro, who was bitter about being tricked. Some months later I spent a day with him at his village. He gave no sign of understanding Principle nor did he mention the money. He was poor, but educated and hospitable.

I ran into Andy by chance, one day on a train to Delhi. My heart pounded, and I wanted to confront him. Instead, I very calmly said "Oh, hello! Where are you these days?" He looked very uncomfortable. In my mind I heard the words he had said so many times, "No one can take my (spiritual) treasures away." It was a blessing – I was free of my accusation, and he was now the suffering one.



Sara, Kazuhiro, Wolfgang in India

Meeting Indian Leaders

Shortly after arriving in India I had a dream. I remember only the last part – there were strings through my hands – not nails, but strings. Another time, as I woke I heard a voice saying, "Aren't you going to visit Vivikenanda?" By chance I went to the Ram Krishna Mission that day. I did not know he was the founder. When I realized, I felt I had been led to one of India's spiritual leaders. Father had told us to find them. At the turn of the last century (1900) Vivikenanda traveled to the World's Fair in Chicago to share Hindu wisdom. "Brothers and Sisters," his speech began – he was received enthusiastically. An intense person, he was sometimes different. When he went to visit his teacher Ram Krishna in rural India, he did not prepare himself by fasting and prayer like the other disciples. This led to complaints. Ram Krishna replied that his intensity burned up all the impurities – not unlike the guru himself, who had repeatedly asked God where his disciples were – and how they would find him? They will come, God replied. And they did. Vivikenanda honored his teacher by naming the mission after him.

An important Indian leader on the other side of the country, was Rabindranath Tagore, who won a Nobel Prize for his poetry in 1913. His vision for India was a return to the simple life where people could love and trust each other. He started a school, Santiniketan (Village of Peace) near Kolkata, based on the premise that when immersed in nature students would learn more easily and enjoy it more. The school is now a university and still adheres to Tagore's philosophy. The village still has dirt paths and is, indeed peaceful.

Perhaps the most well-known of India's leaders was Mahatma Gandhi, although many Indians see him as a politician, not a spiritual leader. He was not Brahmin, like Tagore, but Vaisha (merchant class). While studying in London, he nearly became Christian. Quaker pacifism and the discrimination he experienced in South Africa both profoundly affected his thinking. He developed his method of passive resistance. Satyagraha, he explains, is being willing to suffer (at the hands of your opponent) until your opponent realizes their error -- a method he learned from his wife! He wanted everyone to understand that spiritual force was stronger than physical force. His resistance movement led to India's freedom from British rule. He dressed simply because that was how the people he led dressed. He was spiritual, but practical – my

hero. When someone pooh poohed what I said, insisting that spiritual practices were not important to "real" life, I could point to India's independence. I visited the Gandhi Ashram in Kolkata and in Gurajat. At one national celebration of Gandhi's birth, heard a speech by a well-known follower. Given in English (because I asked), the speech was mesmerizing – about how Gandhi's vision was being lost, and the country losing its direction. An hour was like 5 minutes.

Jayaprakash Narayan, or simply JP, was a contemporary leader, alive when I was in India. His [2] resistance movement was a major cause of Mrs. Gandhi's State of Emergency – a 2 year suspension of civil liberties that went into effect within a month or two of my arrival in India. To protest Mrs. Gandhi's policies, JP had urged noncompliance by the army. Earlier in his life JP was a Naxalite – violent Marxist Communists in Bengal. I asked him why he changed, and he told me he couldn't deny that where Gandhi went, the people went. JP didn't fully adopt satyagraha. His method was pure means – you can't achieve peace with violent means. In the 1970s, he captured the popular imagination like no one else in India. An erroneous announcement of his death caused schools, shops and Parliament to close. Every day the newspapers had at least one news article about him. During Emergency he was under house arrest. His health became fragile, and he was on dialysis.

Despite his popularity, few people outside of India know JP. But almost everyone knows Mrs. Gandhi (no relation to the Mahatma). I interviewed her when she was out of power, and was surprised at her small stature. She was proper, courteous and spoke flawless English. She kept saying the current government didn't understand how "these people" think. It could not last. It was true that she came back to power later, but then was assassinated. As a female leader in a patriarchal culture, she inspired me. She and her family were very dedicated to India, and made great sacrifices. Her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, was India's first Prime Minister – somewhat equivalent to George Washington. Her son Sanjay, went into politics and may have become Prime Minister, but died in a plane crash. Her older son Rajiv, a commercial pilot, married an Italian woman wanted nothing to do with politics. After Dr. Gandhi was killed, he was pressed into politics, became Prime Minister and was assassinated.

Another well-known spiritual leader in India, Mother Teresa [3], inspires everyone. She was touched by the suffering of the poor and destitute – the desperately poor, the crippled people and the lepers who lay on the street, covered in dirt, begging passersby with pitifully sad eyes. No one wants to touch them; she took them in. I visited her mission briefly in Kolkata, and was struck that the building had no ceiling fans. That may seem like a small thing, but India is hot, and to be inside without a fan is like living in the cold without heat. I was also impressed that the nuns wore Indian saris. It is not the most practical dress, nor the coolest, but it respects the Indian culture.

These outstanding persons influenced my life in India, and their lives continue to inspire me.

Patna – the Alice in Wonderland City

I wanted to interview JP, and thus embarked on a wondrous journey to Patna – his home. My story begins with the accordion I brought to India, to add to our music making. The customs officer insisted it was brand new, and assessed a duty of \$1000. – probably more than my dad paid for it 10 years before. There was a lot of arguing and discussion; I refused to move for about ½ hour. Finally he stamped it on my passport and allowed me to enter. But I would have to have it with me when I left the country. After some time, I concluded that might be inconvenient if I had to leave suddenly for a short trip. Better not to have it on my passport. So I planned a short trip to Nepal, from Patna, where border controls were less strict.

My plan was to leave the accordion in the airport so IF I was asked about it by passport control, I could run and get it. At the Patna train station, I asked a man for directions to the airport. I met him later, as you will learn. At the airport, I asked the manager at the Nepal Airlines ticket counter if I could leave my bag there until I came back from Nepal, since I didn't need it. The accordion case looked like a suitcase, and I continued that impression. Further, it was tied with string and tape to look old and valueless. He asked if it was locked (it wasn't), which I assured him it was. He hesitated, then asked if I could get some Johnny Walker from the duty free shop. I was delighted. This would be my insurance policy! No one asked about the accordion when I left India.

In Nepal I discovered I didn't have Steve Conlon's (the missionary to Nepal) address. I had used his card as a sample when getting cards printed in Delhi, and apparently hadn't gotten it back. What to do? After a moment of panic, I concluded he might stand out as a foreigner living in Katmandu. So I started asking people if they knew him. No luck. Finally I remembered that he wrote for a newspaper. I called the paper, but the editor wouldn't be in until later. So, I did some sightseeing. It was late afternoon by the time I arrived at the center. Steve, Reiner and I had a wonderful visit. The Japanese missionary and a companion (introduced as his sister [4]) were illusive. The next day, back in Patna, waiting in the customs line, I heard my name on the loud speaker! The Nepalese manager greeted me, then ushered me through immigration and customs. He wanted his Johnny Walker. He asked me to join him for lunch with the manager of a new hotel and a Nepalese travel agent. My bag was in the trunk of his car, I couldn't easily refuse.

At the hotel, the lunch party grew to 7 or 8. After lunch, I was to go with the travel agent to get my bags, still in the trunk of the car. The travel agent had other things on his mind -- we ended up at his room. Realizing there was a price for getting my bags, I left him and went to the hotel manager. His secretary called him out of a meeting. "I am very sorry," I said, "but my bags are in that man's car, and I can't seem to get them." He was a kind, moral person, and was somewhat embarrassed about the situation. He would get my bags, and I should be a guest of the hotel!

One member of the lunch party was an investigative reporter from Patna. From him I got the contact info for JP, and a tip about something else. Once settled in my room, I arranged an interview with JP for the next day, and went to investigate the something else. It was a wild goose chase. The rickshaw driver took me to the ends of Patna, and could not find the address. I told him to ask someone, but he wouldn't. Finally, I ordered him to stop at a house. I jumped out, and went to the door. To my surprise, the resident who answered the door was the same man who gave me directions at the train station. He didn't know the address, so I gave up my search and went back to the hotel.

The next morning the interview with JP took place as he was having dialysis. I handed him my written questions. He read one question -- looked up and answered. Read the next -- looked up and answered. I sang him the song Guantanamera (in Spanish) -- which he liked, and that was it.

Back at the train station, with my accordion in hand, but NOT on my passport, I was stopped by a young man who said three days ago I had promised we'd have tea if we met again. I didn't remember -- but we had tea. The train came, I got on. Enroute to Kolkata, I felt like Alice in Wonderland. Where had I been? Such an interesting set of events -- so many coincidental events. What did it mean?

Ordinary life seemed rather dull compared to the magic I had experienced. Patna is one of India's oldest cities, I learned later, magically created by an ancient king at the birth of a son. During the Mauryan Empire it was thought to be the greatest place on earth. It was also the birthplace of Guru Gobind Singh, thus is one of the most sacred pilgrimage sites for Sikhs. It was and is a special place for me.

Indian Society

After a few months in Mankhurd, we needed a more centrally located place to meet people. I found a room in a cottage industry area. The building was cement, somewhat dirty and unimpressive, but there was an elevator, electricity, and plumbing. The room we had was part of a two room suite -- with no window. It was not a successful place for us, but exposed us to an amazing sector of Indian life. The building was 6 or 7 stories high, with approximately 20 suites on each floor. Each suite, and sometimes each room, held a different small business. In one room women were sewing, in another there was a small table and lots of papers, in another there were baskets of merchandize. There were few phones, and no spit and polish. Yet it was teeming with life. It reminded me of an anthill -- with everyone going every direction. Everyone wanted to make money, and set up their own enterprise.

Next, we found a room in someone's flat, with a separate entrance. It had no furniture, but was clean (more or less), and had a ceiling fan. We went there every day, to give lectures and have discussions. One of the ladies who came was a Muslim named Miriam. She was a dear, sweet person who I loved a lot. She brought a mat with her, and at appropriate times -- after washing her hands, feet and face, she went out to the balcony to pray. We shared deeply but she never joined, and somehow I lost track of her. But I remember her fondly many times.

As missionaries, we each -- the German, Japanese and American -- received a stipend from our home country. For me, that was \$300 a month. It was adequate for our lifestyle, but not enough for a flat downtown. At one point I decided to try my hand at fund-raising, to see how we might increase our income. We lived on a chicken farm, so I made a deal with the chicken owner to get a percentage of the chickens I sold. Off I went to the prosperous looking neighborhood not far away. The reception was similar to witnessing. If they opened the door at all, people were wide-eyed. Their homes, while clean, were not prosperous. Many had van car seats as a main living room couch.

Selling chickens door to door (in a vegetarian country!) was not be the way to make money! Not long afterwards, a fence was put up around the neighborhood. I hadn't realized it was a support community for the nearby nuclear, military facility. Someone got nervous about a foreigner visiting such a sensitive place!

After about a year of working in Mumbai, I became aware that only a small portion of India's population lives in cities. It seemed we should reach out to the majority in the villages, like Gandhi and Mother Teresa had done. But villagers are even poorer than those in the city and few speak English. I developed a plan to find an Indian to go to the village to work. Jobs were at a premium in India, so a job offer would receive a hundred calls in the first hour.

Why not capitalize on that, and advertise for someone to work in a village? It wouldn't pay like a regular job, but for the right person it could provide purpose. Kazuhiro and Wolfgang didn't think much of the idea, but I reasoned that in the big picture, we were not THAT much more spiritually advanced than someone willing to take on such a mission. Father trusted us, why shouldn't we trust someone else? I forged ahead, placing an ad – one ad – in the paper. The phone rang nonstop for a week. At the end, I had a perfect Indian accent -- because that was the only way I could be understood by phone. We didn't find the right person, however.

Another time, In Kolkata, I placed an ad for a correspondence course. I noted that people liked learning, and responded well to educational opportunities. The response was terrific. I worked very hard to divide up Chapter One into single sections, edited slightly and added study questions, which I read and responded to. The sections were printed by a Kolkata printer, week by week, and sent out. There responses declined each week, but after 7 weeks, there were still a sizeable number. At that point I ran out of time, money and enthusiasm, and was faced with other urgent matters.

About a year after I arrived in India, the directive came from headquarters one of us should send stories to the newly formed Newsworld newspaper in New York. That turned out to be right up my alley. I loved it. There were soooo many stories to tell. I remember looking down from the 2nd story bus window on the busy street, with people going every which way, and huge containers balanced on sturdy wooden carts, being pushed by very thin, but very strong, dark men dressed in white cloth and sandals. There were things one couldn't imagine in the west. As it turned out, however, the Newsworld editors were not as fascinated by my stories as I had hoped. Still I sent many, writing them out by hand, and going to the telegraph office to send them. Sometimes I had to copy them again by hand onto the telegram. Sending them by phone was impossible. International calls, known as trunk calls, were very expensive, and had to be booked a few hours to a day ahead. When the call came through, you had to be ready. Another problem was that the infrastructure was old. It had all been set up under the British 50-100 years earlier, and badly needed updating and replacing. The phones worked, sort of. But you had to shout to be heard.

There was no such thing as a private phone conversation! This was before the days of the internet. Because of the difficulties with telephone (not everyone had a phone anyway), mail was the most reliable way to communicate. Before long, I learned another way to communicate – use your spiritual senses. If I had a meeting and really, really didn't want to go, it probably meant the person wouldn't be there. On the other hand, if you were ready to go to the meeting way before time, it probably meant you *should* go early. I came to trust this sense, and it saved me a lot of hassle and aggravation.

India was a poor country, and this was brought home to us in many ways. Around the train station and the big hotels downtown, there were always a lot of beggars. Many of them were small children. I was told never to give a begging child anything, or you'd have a hundred more in the blink of an eye. They had cute, dirty faces, and big eyes, so sometimes I couldn't keep from giving them a few coins, and always, in a second there were so many children surrounding me that I couldn't walk. I also learned that most of them worked for an adult – Oliver Twist fashion, who took the earnings. Sometimes children were maimed to arouse sympathy and earn more money. In addition to children, there were often lepers at the train station, their arms or legs wrapped in bandages. I had never seen a leper before. It was repulsive, but also made me feel sympathy. What kind of life do they have? As it turns out, the government has provided for them, to some extent.

Every morning as I rode by in the bus, I saw poor people washing themselves, washing clothes, doing their morning toilet in whatever body of water was nearby. The saddest ones were the group that lived in the center of the city. They were dark, their clothes were dark (from soot and dirt), their cooking pans were black from soot. I watched as a mother cradled her child between her legs, searching through the child's hair for lice. Other children were playing around her. So sad.

Sympathy can quickly change to anger, however, if you are the target of clever pickpockets. Every foreign visitor I met was pick pocketed at least once. The first time was always a shocker! In the crowd one person works to distract you, while the other gets your valuables. Kathy Erickson, a missionary to Ethiopia who visited us for a few weeks, had her cloth purse slit at the bottom. A coin purse was taken from my handbag on the bus. My dad, who was visiting, had his wallet stolen. I even had a garnet stolen from my ring! I felt something, but it was so crowded I couldn't let go of the pole. When I got off the bus, it was gone. It was not just money that was stolen. Anything left unattended for 5 seconds would disappear. Homes all had bars on the windows, and you never put anything too close to the window. Some children even took my little kitten from my front porch, and left another bug infested one! Imagine my surprise when I returned to find different kitten snuggled inside the bed I had made.

Prevention is the best protection. Carry your bag in front, hold on to it at all times. Don't set anything down without watching it. Don't keep a wallet in your back pocket. And above all, don't carry a lot of money with you where pick pockets can get it. We all had body slings tucked under our clothes, where we kept our passports and stash of cash. Lokesh's mother had an interesting way to avoid thieves. She kept all her valuables in plain sight, but in containers that didn't look like they would hold anything valuable.

Anything shiny and new is a target.

In addition to thievery, there was the problem of corruption and bureaucracy. We had help setting up a house in Calcutta, trying to get all the necessary hook ups - like gas and phone. There are long waiting lists for every necessity. Nothing was available for several months, unless you paid a bribe. Even if you paid, you couldn't necessarily get what you wanted. There were just too many people.

The lady we lived with in Calcutta used to say, treat everyone well, because you never know when you'll need someone again. And it was true. Make enemies at an office, and you'll end up at the bottom of the list. When it came to train journeys across country, foreigners had some advantage. The government reserved a certain number of seats for foreigners who didn't have time to wait several months to travel. But when it came to the Post Office, we all fared the same. You had to have your foreign letter cancelled officially, or someone would steal the expensive stamp. So, you stood in line to buy the stamp, and then in another line to get it cancelled. Just to mail one letter might take most of the afternoon. At one point, after arguing with some small minded official about a ridiculous regulation and procedure (there were procedures for everything), I concluded that the reason India was known for its holy men was because the general life in India was so frustrating. You either rose above it, or you sank into a pit.

But too many people, and a lack of resources didn't always spell inefficiency. When I went to the passport office to renew my visa, I was ushered into a hallway to wait. There were bundles of paper everywhere, each carefully tied. I mistakenly assumed they would never find my previous application for a visa. I was wrong. Within a few minutes, someone came back, told me when I had applied before, what had happened, what the address was.

All my information was there! And they had found it in short order.

Travels to the Rest of India

India was a big and very diverse country, and we had seen very little of it. Kazuhiro and I decided to take advantage of the Indian Airlines special – unlimited travels within India for a week.[5] Combining that with bus and train allowed us to travel to all the corners of the country. We first went south on a bus to the beautiful, seaside state of Goa, originally an area dominated by Christians, and now frequented by hippies. Next further south to a village in Kerala and then to Kanyakumari at the very tip of India, where you can see 3 large bodies of water -- the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Ocean. We stayed in what had been a private residence during British rule – now a hotel – with huge rooms – a bathroom as large as most bedrooms, and a bedroom as large as a whole flat. All throughout South India we had coffee instead of tea, and rice 3 times a day.

Our next stop was on the eastern coast. Pondicherry (now Puducherry) was under French rule until mid-1900s, and is now the home of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram – making it a favorite site for westerners seeking Indian spiritualism. Further north to Chennai (formerly Madras), and then west to Bangalore. Now called Bengaluru, it is the Silicon Valley of India and surprisingly clean and pleasant. It was the first place to have electricity and running water, thanks to the Maharaja of Bangalore, who sent someone to bring back the technology to improve life for the people. In contrast, the Nizam of Hyderabad, a city not too far away, was known for his stinginess – although he was said to be the wealthiest man in the world!

Next we flew north to Gujarat, to see Gandhi's ashram, and then to Jaipur in Rajasthan, the magical city of red sandstone and rajas. On to Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir, territory claimed by Pakistan and one of the northern most cities in India. It is a well-known summer retreat (because it is cooler) with picturesque houseboats.

The last place we visited was clear across the country -- the state of Mizoram, east of Bangladesh, next to Burma. In a state of heightened security, there were forms to fill out and curfews to comply with. But I was amazed at how different it felt – like a different country. It was predominantly Christian and remote. While brief, these travels helped us understand the great diversity of the Indian people, and some of the political turmoil.

Kolkata

After some time in Mumbai, we decided to move to Kolkata. We stayed with Lokesh's Aunt, Chaya. She lived in a small two room flat in central Kolkata. Jhuno, her small servant girl, was more like a daughter. She brought us tea and something to eat when we came home. Chaya was a telephone operator for a big company. From an important Brahmin family, she had divorced her first husband because he wanted her to sleep with his friends, essentially. She then married a Muslim man, at a difficult time in India politically. He subsequently died of TB, at which point she had three children. She gave her son to her older, childless sister to raise, and provided for the two girls. One of the daughters had become a Unification member in Canada. So Chaya was very interested, and finally decided to live with us. She arranged for a nice house in a nice section of the city, moved all of her furniture (via the hand carts,

pushed by the thin, strong men), and we were ready to begin a new, and exciting period. We had several people ready to attend a workshop, and possibly stay with us.

Then we learned that Wolfgang had TB. He had been coughing a lot, and coughed up blood. The doctor prescribed medicine, and told him what to do so others didn't get the disease. Chaya and Jhuno immediately left. Kazuhiro and I, and two other visiting missionaries, Kathy and Mark Erickson, argued that Wolfgang should go to a sanitarium until he was better, both for his benefit and because it would be difficult to have guests. He refused.

These were dark days. One night, after an intense argument, I decided to stay in a hotel just to get away from the confusion. As it turned out, that was the very night that the soccer great, Pele, was in town, and there were no rooms anywhere, for any price!



Children from Anandaloy and their parents & families

Visit to Bangladesh

Around this time, for some reason I can't remember, I decided to go to Bangladesh. We all knew that you can make a little extra money buying things cheap in one country, and selling them at a premium in another – including items from the duty-free shop. I bought a bottle of Johnny Walker and a carton of cigarettes. The American missionary in Dacca, John Thomas (he changed his name later) was upset that I would bring proscribed items into the country. But the German missionary, Ottmar, said he'd be happy to sell the cigarettes at the German embassy.

I had no idea what to buy with the money from the Johnny Walker and the cigarettes, so I wandered the market place to find something. The dacca (Bangladesh currency) was worthless, so cash was not an option. Nothing struck me, and I started home. Out of curiosity, I stopped at a guitar shop. Most guitars I had seen made in India were lousy. So not bothering with the cheap ones, I asked to see the most expensive guitar in the shop. As I was playing it, I realized how much fun we could have with it at the center.

So I told the shop keeper that I was interested, but it was too noisy to hear. Could I take it home and bring it back tomorrow? "Send your man to see where I stay," I said – knowing full well that this trust would ONLY be offered to a foreigner. He agreed. His man walked with me to the center – a block away. We had a great fellowship night. I started thinking the guitar wasn't too bad. Maybe I could buy it. The price was almost the same as the black market value of the Johnny Walker and the cigarettes. The next day I took the whiskey in a discrete shoulder bag, and asked to see the owner. In Dacca, as in India, a crowd will gather very quickly. So I was low key. "I like the guitar -- I have something to trade," I told the owner. He wanted to see, so I went inside the shop (rather than stand at the counter on the street), and very inconspicuously showed him. He liked it. "That's not enough," he told me. "I know – how about 350

dacca more?" He agreed – I gave him the cigarette money and the whiskey, and the guitar was mine! I played it a lot in the dark days of Kolkata. I remember locking myself in my room, and playing and playing all day and all night.



Abeer, Anita and Sara in the Anandaloy Schoolroom

The Last Months in India

Finally, I decided to get a separate place. No one was going to visit us in a house where someone had TB, so it was pointless to stay there. I found a small place nearby where we could have visitors. They somewhat reluctantly agreed. It was a cute place – the bottom floor of a small house, with a small office/bedroom upstairs. Very clean and new. I loved it. I wrote a lot of poetry and recorded my songs there. Abeer, a cousin of Lokesh who lived not far away, became a frequent visitor. Anita, Chaya's daughter returned, and she and Abeer started a school for the children in the nearby squatter area in our garage. We called it Anandaloy.



Anandaloy School in Kolkata

About that time Lokesh came for a while. We had met during our college years in Montana. He too came to D.C. and became a member in 1970. But then he wanted to visit his family, so we traveled by car from Europe to India (another story). We returned to Canada where we stayed for nearly a year before coming back to DC. From 1970 we lived as brother and sister, and were blessed in 1976. Now in Kolkata, he said we could start family life. But it didn't feel right. It turns out he had had a romantic liaison, and fallen out with nearly every church leader in the US. He wanted me to dislike them the way he did, but they were my friends, so I couldn't – which made him angry. After some time, he went to Mumbai to see his family.

I was in crisis. My marriage was falling apart. I didn't know where to turn. I couldn't go to his

family – they would side with him, regardless of how much they respected and loved me. The other missionary sisters from Ceylon were far away. After much soul searching, I sent all the family things back to Lokesh's mother – a wedding sari, a gold bangle (like a wedding ring), and other (expensive) jewelry. It had been a deep relationship and it was painful. To help the healing, I vowed not to say his

name for one year. I decided to return to the US – I was not strong enough to remain in India in such an isolated situation.



George, Yoshinori, Mushtaq, Sara, Peter in Greece

Greece

I was sent to Athens almost immediately, where I mostly worked as a journalist. My stories were sent out of the UPI office. People spoke English, but Greek script was a problem. I picked up the phone book to call the Foreign Ministry and realized I didn't know the word, and wouldn't know where to look even if I did. So I called the American Embassy -- they had an English phone book! Other people couldn't read Greek either! From then on, my information came from the American Embassy or the UPI office. After I had studied Greek, on a visit to the French Embassy, I discovered I could make out the words on the French side of the directory, but not the Greek.

Peter Ellis, from England, was the European missionary. His 2 room flat was too small for Yoshinori (Japanese missionary) and me to stay. So we got an apartment in Exarchia, near the University. From time to time George Lambros joined us. He was a quiet and serious young man, unlike most Greeks who are fun-loving, gregarious, and generous – and sometimes rough. To understand the Greek character, it is important to know how they suffered during WWII. But the change was a shock for me. I was used to India, where people help each other when it rains, crowding together under whatever shelter they can find, squeezing to make room for the next person. In Athens, people run in every direction, bumping, pushing, knocking thing out of your hands – with no apology. The first time it happened to me, I cried.

Soon after I came Peter showed me his emergency fund – sent from headquarters in England. It was a tangled glob of chain necklaces. He laughed, and said I could do whatever I wanted with them. I decided to try fund raising, painstakingly sorted them out, and managed to sell quite a few. Seeing my success, Yoshinori and Peter were soon doing the same. I was pleased they followed my example, but disappointed that the fund raising money I had plans for was slowly disappearing!

Witnessing in Athens was problematic as an American female. I was a target for the gigolos, and there were few Greek women in public. So, I put an ad in the paper: "Wanted – people who love God." Two wonderful people answered -- a young man from Africa, and a young man from Pakistan, but no Greeks. Mushtaq Suleri was a cook on a ship, although his tall, slender frame made him seem more like an academic. He wasn't so interested in the Principle, but he did truly love God, and came to the center a lot, as did Joseph, the man from Africa. Mushtaq went back to Pakistan, and we kept in touch for quite a while. I have often wondered how he is faring with all the activity there.

Greeks are vigorous in general. They get up early, work hard, eat a hearty lunch, sleep, return to finish the day's work, and then spend the evening with family and friends at a taverna. The people in the office

across the street were at work before we woke up. We rushed to get to government offices before they closed at 1 pm, then wandered the empty streets as people slept during the afternoon. But it was the evenings that are most memorable. Tavernas were everywhere. Plaka, where music from one place competes with music from another, is for tourists. Greek residents go to more humble, remote gardens where the music is a quieter. A soft breeze, nice music, good company -- I came to enjoy the Greek lifestyle. Music and dance is as much a part of Greece as the beautiful blue sky and whitewashed buildings that show off bright, red flowers.



Sara interviewing the Dalai Lama in Greece

Church is not a big part of Greek lifestyle, except at Easter. The Orthodox Church is Christian, but different.

There are no chairs or benches to sit on during service, for instance. One time I went into a church to pray, lit a candle and put my money in the box. A few minutes later, an attendant blew out my candle and put it in the recycle bin.

But during Easter week, everything else stops. There are preparations including special breads and new clothes, and church services daily. Stores close for each service, so we bought extra food, because we never knew when they would be open. In the village, festivities begin with a Friday procession through town led by the priest. A huge overflow crowd waits during the service so they can file inside to light a candle. Early morning on Easter Sunday lamb roasting begins, turned round and round slowly over the fire. By noon, there is wine, music and dancing.

When it comes to cuisine, Greeks are like vegans: they will only eat what they eat. One time I invited half a dozen people for dinner. I woke up in a panic. What if they didn't like my food? I fussed all day to get everything right, and it went pretty well. BUT, I didn't serve wine – because I didn't drink it. Without the traditional beverage, the evening fell flat. It was my only Greek dinner party. But as much as they like wine, I never saw anyone drunk. They drink at mealtime, in company. The whole family is part of the sharing – young and old alike.

Greece is the birthplace of democracy, and this heritage is reflected in the Greek character. They are outspoken and argue a lot. But a Greek friend is something special. I had several Greek friends, whom I think of often. Ioannies (John) Tsortsis was a student, who eventually went to New York when he completed his studies. Luly Kaya was a sometime radio announcer, who invited us all to her village house in northern Greece. She and I became good friends, and hers was 1 of only 4 homes I was invited into while in Greece. (As I said, Greeks are private.) I spent a lot of time with Maria and Ioannis (not John Tsortsis) in their small two room flat. Maria was from South America, and may have been the daughter of an Ambassador, or some such – she was always vague, but specific enough to know there was a connection. The two of them sang and played with a band. Vasilis worked for the local paper. I met him

as a journalist, doing a story on Greek gypsies. When he found out my affiliation, he wanted me to get an interview with Rev Moon. Didn't happen!

Throughout my life, my motto was to have no regrets. But when my marriage broke, I wondered how I could not regret that. Then one day, talking with a Greek man who was divorced, I realized I had more sympathy than before. There are many divorced people in the world who need sympathy and understanding. I also felt humbled. My imperfect life meant I could not claim to be better than anyone else. I recognized that I had been somewhat arrogant. We humans are so foolish, making tiny differences into big distinctions. Before God, we are all about the same.

When missionaries Thomas Cromwell and Kanu were kicked out of Egypt, they came to stay with us. Thomas arranged a most interesting trip for four of us through Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Yugoslavia. All had Communist governments. We drove Peter's car, although he didn't come with us. Bulgaria was similar to Greece, in many ways, but everyone kept to themselves. We did see men playing soccer while riding motorcycles! In Romania, the atmosphere was more fearful. At the border, every inch of the car was searched. The guard found one pamphlet under the back seat. "What is this?" he demanded. "I don't know – keep it." I replied. After he finished searching, I waited for the others a very long time. Thomas and Kanu had recently come from Egypt, so needed inoculation. But then they found Yoshinori's journalist card (communist countries don't like journalists). There was much discussion. In the end, Yoshinori received the inoculation!

It made no sense, but at least we could continue. Bucharest reminded me of WWII movies – dim lighting and bullet holes in the building walls. It was night when we drove to a mountain overlook and got out to pray. Almost instantly we all felt we had to leave. I'm certain we were being watched. In the city, people were hesitant to talk with us except at a busy cafeteria, where they could not be watched so easily. In Hungary, we met a young lady who showed us all around. Yugoslavia was the most free of all.

One place I was unable to visit, however, was Albania, where Mother Teresa grew up. I was curious to know about life there – a very closed Communist country. Mushtaq pointed out that ships dock there, so I toyed with the idea of becoming a stowaway. Another place I was not able to visit was Mount Athos. The oldest monastic community in the world did not allow women to enter. Again, I contemplated entering clandestinely, but never did. But I did interview the Dalai Lama, on his visit to Greece.

The New York City Tribune and London



Some foreign correspondents with Sara, Robert & Chun Boon Morton

My goal was become to be a correspondent for the New York City Tribune, instead of a stringer[6]. So I went back to New York to convince the International Editor, Robert Morton. I lived at the New Yorker, naturally, and wrote some stories for the Culture Section of the paper. Finally, after about a year, I was sent to London, as the Bureau Chief (bureau of 1). Problem was, the Foreign Press Club didn't recognize the paper as being legitimate.

So they would not give me press credentials – which meant no admittance to government press briefings. The reason wasn't specified; it took me a few months to find out. Once I did, I asked for the issue with a front page picture of Mayor Koch holding our paper – predicting his landslide re-election. What could be more legit than that? The paper was sent, and I got Foreign Press credentials.

My small efficiency flat was across the street from MI6. I rode a bike everywhere in London – including to the press briefings at Downing Street (Prime Minister's residence). I asked the guard if I could lock my bike up on the fence, and he agreed! During the Falklands war I became a war correspondent – albeit without

going to the scene of battle. I reported the initial incident that started it all. I argued strongly with my editor that it was significant, and prevailed. Briefings during the war were held all over London at all hours of the day and night. Journalists were on call 24/7. It was sometimes tough to figure out what it all meant.

After the war, Robert wanted me to do a story on Friedman versus Keynesian economics. Another time he had a theory about Soviet policy and wanted some information from their embassy. I went, somewhat hesitantly, and asked to see the press officer. I was ushered into a small room with a man who didn't seem to understand anything I asked him. The answers he gave had nothing to do with the questions I asked. But I persisted. After a very long time, he finally said, "Oh, that's what you want to know. Well, I'm not able to talk about that." He knew all along, but just didn't want to answer!

After writing daily stories for some time, I became dissatisfied by the deadlines. No matter what the deeper causes of an event, or who else was involved, when the end of the day came, the story was done. When Thomas Cromwell started the Middle East Times, I started doing features and interviews. Soon that became my main focus.

The Foreign Office official learned of the change, and suggested I come to a Middle East briefings. Jews and Arabs reporters were briefed separately. I went to the former. The Jewish reporters raked me over the coals – who was I, what was the paper, who published it, etc.? They refused to let the briefing continue as long as I was in the room! A Jewish reporter told me later they would have approved me, they just didn't know.

There were many opportunities for a correspondent in London. I rubbed shoulders with journalists from all the US publications – TIME Magazine, all the newspapers (except the NY Times reporter, who apparently had sufficient status to be briefed privately!), UPI, AP. I attended two Economic Summits -- one in Paris and one in Switzerland. There were press briefings with all the leaders of Western Europe and Japan. I saw George Bush Sr., before he became President. (Most of the journalists brushed him off as a light weight!) There was a very interesting foreign press luncheon with Mrs. Thatcher, in London. She was amazing! She used her aggressive Parliament style and outdebated the usually outspoken and liberal American journalists, hands down. I visited Parliament, and the House of Lords.

One day at the Foreign Press Club, I was told it was my turn to go to the Queen's Annual Garden Party, if I wanted to. I did! Had to get a hat. A knighting inside Buckingham Palace preceded the event, at which the Queen's band played royal music. In the Palace garden, tea and cakes were served on long tables. There was a huge crowd -- everyone dressed in their finest, and on their best behavior, waiting in long lines to shake hands with the Queen, Prince Charles, and other royals.

When a Unification Church sponsored conference was held in London, Robert called all the correspondents from Europe to attend. At one point during the conference all 6 or 7 of us met with a church leader for a pep talk. He said we should get our credentials, and go to all the government briefings like other reporters. I was taken aback. He obviously didn't realize we HAD been doing exactly that.

Further, it seemed like he thought we were less competent than non-member correspondents. I may not have been the best writer, but I certainly wasn't the worst. I regularly compared my lead (the first sentence of a story) with the best London papers, and concluded it was usually on par with the Guardian and The Times. Only The Financial Times was consistently better. Whatever the regard for journalists in the church was, I felt a calling to get more education, and dig into things more deeply. I left London in December of 1985.

Conclusion

While in London, I was blessed with John Horsfall, from New Zealand. He came to London, and a year or two later we moved to Texas, where son Nathan was born. I supported us as a family by teaching guitar, and directing the choir at a Catholic Church while he went to school. Since we lived in a college town, I found a way to go back and get my PhD in Sociology. After graduation I became a Professor of Sociology at Texas Wesleyan University in Fort Worth. Unfortunately, John and I separated in 2007. I retired in 2013 and moved to Maryland.

I hope my contributions to the various situations were valuable. There were no church congregations when I left, either in India or Greece, but it wasn't for lack of trying. Over the years I have met former members who complain about things in the church. I always find those complaints surprising on two counts. First, life is what you make it. Second, my church experiences were a wonderful opportunity to see the world, to grow, to understand life. I would not have become a correspondent, and I would not have met the people I did. Likely I would not have gone the places I did, either. I have made many dear friends, and my time in India, Greece and London made me a bigger and better person. I understand people and cultures more, and feel I belong to the world, not just to one country.

Notes:

1. After 1978, there was an move to adopt Hindi as the national language to Hindi, but people in South India refused, so it remained Hindi and English. However, some city names were changed. Bombay,

Calcutta and Madras became Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai

2. He died in 1979.

3. She died in 1997.

4. Reiner told me later that they had discovered she was not his sister but a romantic partner.

5. The distances are so great, it would take a month or more to travel to all the places we went to by land.

6. A correspondent is hired by the paper – thus MUST send stories regularly, and can be asked to go somewhere, or write about a certain subject. A stringer sends stories of their own selection which may or may not be printed.