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### 2010 Adventist Historians' Conference: Friday Sessions

Nicholas Miller

Andrews University, [nicholas@andrews.edu](mailto:nicholas@andrews.edu)

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# Memory, Meaning & Faith

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March 26, 2010

## **2010 Adventist Historians' Conference: Friday Sessions**

This is Nick Miller again from the ASDAH conference here in Washington, blogging for the second day of the conference. There were concurrent sessions, so I was not able to cover them all. But most of the papers that were presented can be found online [here](#).

What follows is a summary of the presentations I was able to attend or otherwise obtain information on that I thought worth sharing.

### **Session 1: Huguenot Emigres in Transnational Context, c. 1660-1720**

#### **“Huguenots and Liberty of Conscience in Restoration England,” Greg Dodds, Walla Walla University.**

Context of debates in England over liberty of conscience were informed by treatment of Huguenot's in France. Revocation of [Edict of Nantes](#) in 1685, which outlawed and expelled all Huguenots, by Catholic King Louis XIV was matched in the same year by rise of Catholic James II to the English Throne. Both these events heightened British awareness of issues related to toleration as well as their anti-Catholic fervor.

Both sides of the debate in England over toleration of religious non-conformist used Huguenot's as a prime example. Those in favor of toleration pointed to the Catholic persecution of Huguenot's as a reason of why a religious majority should not persecute a religious minority. Those who favored religious conformity and argued for adherence to the Anglican church pointed to the loyalty of the Huguenot's to the French king as being the highest earthly authority. They argued that Catholic princes should tolerate Protestant believers because they posed no threat to civil authority. Catholics, on the other hand, as well as other Protestant non-conformists, could not be tolerated. It was believed that the former viewed the Pope as a higher civil authority than the king, and the latter were also denying the king's authority as overseer of the church.

James II, the Catholic king, was talking about toleration of Catholics and dissenters, but most English were suspicious that this was just to allow Catholic's to take over the government, and to eventually to extirpate Protestantism. More recent historians, including John Miller, believe that James II was genuinely interested in toleration.

James enforced liberty of conscience in an absolutist manner, many Protestant thinkers believed. James' kind of Catholicism was a Gallicanism form that was not approved by the Pope or most English Catholics. It echoed the French approach to Catholic modes of [royal absolutism](#), and thus James' language of toleration was viewed with suspicion as a temporary expedient. This suspicion was heightened by the fact that the French king who had supported James in exile was such a profound persecutor. Ultimately, Louis XIV religious policies in France destroyed the reign of James II in England, because the former undermined the credibility of the latter's claims to believe in toleration.

#### **“Immigrants, Toleration, and the Formation of the Liberal-State,” Lisa Clark Diller, Southern Adventist University.**

The English [glorious revolution](#) of 1688 brought a final Protestant settlement in England. Diller argues that the experience of making sense of Huguenot's among them was crucial to British views of self identity, economic policy, and notions of toleration.

Huguenot's positioned themselves as loyal to British state, as well as important to advancing British economic trade interests. Huguenots generally sided with [Whigs](#) politically, and the Whigs viewed themselves as protector of the Huguenots. They acted within the interest of their economic class, and not just their religious or ethnic identity. This helped in their

assimilation into English society.

Daniel Defoe was a great defender of Huguenots, and made arguments about their importance to development of size and success of their addition to England. Others urged that they be scattered through the country, to further assimilation and prevent collection of “foreign interests” in one place.

Huguenots wanted to build on shared identity as persecuted Protestants, rather than becoming English. They wanted to preserve their ethnic identity. This was possible for a while, but eventually intermarriage and assimilation ended a distinct Huguenot identity in England. But not before the British had been forced to confront their own notions of identity and national character in relation to a minority group with similar religious convictions but differing cultural, social, and ethnic elements.

**“Exiled Huguenots and the Construction of Temporal Identities,” David Onnekink, University of Leiden; William and Mary College, visiting.**

Identities are constructed through discourse. What is a group identity as Huguenots? Is France a reasonable part of our identity for return? Huguenots identified with the story of the captivity of the children of Israel, held in Babylon but with hopes of return to their promised land, in this case, France. They also viewed their identity in terms of Biblical prophecies. This strengthened resolve and coherence of the Huguenot’s in exile.

Prophetic notions of return caused Huguenots to believe that France was not beyond redemption and that they could perhaps someday return. They had, however, given up on Louis XIV. They placed their hope in his heir, the Dauphin, who they ascribed with qualities of good nature and desire for a more inclusive France. Construction of prophetic identity of Rome, though, with certain Beasts of Revelation indicated that the Catholic church was hopelessly given over to tyranny, hierarchy and oppression. Worship of saints and relics was evidence of this continuing system of idolatry.

Thus, France could be separated from Rome, and France was thus salvageable. What is the final identity of France in the eyes of Huguenots? Perhaps we cannot know.

**Chair and Comment: David J.B. Trim, University of Reading.**

Thanks to presenters. There are a number of themes. First, identity and ethnicity. Are they French? Are they Protestants first? Are they going to become British? Second, extent to which Huguenot’s are vehicles, used by others to make other arguments. Do they have agency, or are they largely manipulated by those around them. Third, they used widely their history of persecution in places they fled, but what does victim role do to their identity? Fourth, their role in creation of public sphere where there is a vibrant print culture.

Radical enlightenment often was foe of toleration, as single church could bring national unity. James II was a pathetic anti-Christ, but Louise XIV was a very convincing Anti-Christ. The English harp on persecutions under Mary and the Spanish Armada in creating identity. Toleration is not just a religious issue, but an ethnic issue.

Can Huguenot’s become too successful for their own good and assimilate into the mainstream through commercial success? How representative are the experiences of the Huguenot pamphleteers and polemicists? Does the Experience of the Anglo Huguenot’s differ from those elsewhere?

### **Floor Questions**

One questioner grew up as a German with a strong Protestant, Huguenot identity. He remembers growing up in the 50s that they had a strong Huguenot tradition and identity. Did this occur elsewhere? Diller says that their identity was necessary to getting help from international community in getting refugee assistance and becoming part of network of help.

Did Huguenot religious beliefs and ideas have any continuing effect? They seemed to disappear as a group in America, but they continued a separate existence in England with distinctive institutions and churches. But even in England they disappear as a community in England in the 18th century due to intermarriage. But what about the possibility of continuing contributions of their particular religious beliefs in the area of developments of liberty of conscience and resistance theory against tyrants? This is a possibility.

## **Session 2: The Gary G. Land Session in Adventist History**

### **“When Loughborough Got it Wrong: An Examination of J.N. Loughborough’s Historical Errors,” Brian Strayer, Andrews University.**

Loughborough family was obsessed with notion they were descended from British royalty, but more likely Irish. (Which is even better, says Nicholas *Patrick* Miller). Loughborough means a borough, or county, on a bay.

John never met a word that he couldn’t misspell. He even misspelled names of good friends. But he had an important work from God. In 1890, EG White opposed sending him to be a conference president towards end of his life, as she wanted him to play a wider leadership role in church, that his voice of his experiences in the early church should not be lost.

Loughborough wrote “Rise and Progress of the Advent Movement” in 1892. It was not meant to be a detached, analytical history, but it was to strengthen faith of recent converts. He died in 1924 at age of 92, having outlived all early pioneers and even outlasted many of the second generation. He wrote largely positive accounts of the pioneers, overlooking difficulties and flaws. His negative characters were those that opposed visions of Ellen White, who lost their way.

He believed that Jupiter and Saturn were inhabited by tall, majestic people who had never sinned. He expounded on vitalism, the vital force of which we have a limited amount and that can be dissipated by bad habits, poor health, and sexual excess. Modern medical science does not support this.

List of Loughborough's errors would include: Wrong date of death for William Miller, wrong date of EGW’s date for her health-reform vision, and other incidental errors of years of events within the church.

More serious oversights would include: 1888 General Conference session and the Righteousness by Faith controversy, not found in any of his histories. He seems to have friends on both sides and did not want to deal with the issues and personalities raised.

He exhibited life long support of Ellen White having witnessed visions, miracles and rebuke of secret sins. He emphasized the physical phenomena attending her visions: loss of breath, open eyes, holding the Bible at arms length. He was rebuked by Ellen White several times, which he accepted. They had a relationship of mutual trust.

Loughborough Retired from active ministry in 1907, but continued to revere her writings. Few read his works today, but his legacy endures. A street is named after him. The John Loughborough school in London, England is named for him.

### **“A.G. Daniells,” Benjamin McArthur, Southwestern Adventist University**

Why did McArthur leave teaching in TN, and go to Southwestern to be an administrator? In large part, because of the example of Daniells.

McArthur shared on Daniells’ work in New Zealand. Daniells went to New Zealand with his wife Mary, after being a young pastor in Iowa. He first went to New Zealand, and then to Australia, where he worked with the Whites in 1890s.

Daniells gets to New Zealand, with a meeting tent that was ripped and had to be replaced. He hits the ground running, with a two week series of meetings and starting a church. Had 15 baptisms, including a Maori, the first to join the Adventists.

He mentored the new converts, and then returned to Auckland, which was a very large, industrious city. Daniells ran a series of meetings for 90 days with over 100 sermons. Attendance kept rising. Soon 25 to 30 people were keeping the Sabbath. Soon, they began to plan a church building.

Daniells oversaw an orderly approach to evangelism in New Zealand, which included a strong health and temperance component. Meetings had generally favorable local press coverage. It was difficult economic times in New Zealand, which may have helped Adventist message.

Daniells primarily worked on the northern island. Daniells pitched the cotton tent in the middle of town, with a tent-house, with a wooden floor. Daniells story gives many insights into the evangelistic techniques of Adventists in the late 19th century. Must get the biography when it is published!

### **“Cultural Pluralism vs. Cultural Assimilation-A Study of [Black] Regional Conference in the SDA Compared**

**with United Methodist [Black] Central Jurisdiction/Annual Conferences and White SDA Conferences, 1940-2001.” Alonzo Greene, Jr., Oakwood University.**

Residential Segregation – not unique to US – Germany has ghettoization of Turkish immigrants, and other European countries have the same.

Hispanic communities in US also have segregation patterns.

Assimilation can be diagrammed as follows:  $A+B+C=A$ . It devalues alien culture and treasures the dominant. It is ideology of dominant group forcing others to conform to its behavior and outlooks.

Pluralist Perspective – Pluralism implies that various groups in a society have a mutual respect for one another.

$A+B+C=A+B+C$ .

Debate continues today. Do we want an integrated whole? Or do we want to maintain our group identities as possible?

Time Mag. Jan 11, 2010: Sunday morning remains most segregated time in America.

2007 surveys show that fewer than 8% of American congregations have a significant racial mix. Though larger Evangelical churches (1,000+), has become racially integrated improving from 6% to 25% in the last few years.

Black Regional Conferences – 1944-1945, have the same status and relationship as white SDA Conferences and are tied to union conference within their own geographical locations. Regional Conferences were organized in the same way as predominately White conferences with no exclusion based on race nor preclusion from involvement or membership because of their race.

The Central Jurisdiction was Separate – created in 1939 by Methodists on the Plessy Ferguson model of separate but equal.

Adventist regional conferences grew from 1940 to 1970 of 299%, versus 10.2% for the Methodist. White conference growth rate was 138% during time period. African Membership declined in UMC between 1968 from 374k to 234k in 1991 (decline of 37%). NAD membership grew from 363K in 1966 to 717k in 1990, a growth of 97%. Black SDA conference rose 223% during same period.

Cultural Assimilation – Methodists have focused on becoming assimilated into wider American culture, thus hastening their decline. Though the Black Methodists continued to increase slightly.

Pluralism v. Assimilation. Assimilation ignores the cultural heritage of various groups and thereby does not facilitate expansive congregational approach.

Major Jones observes – Had the UMC leadership been able to foresee the future, they might not have pushed for the brand of integration that involved giving up much and being received by many—almost at any price. Pluralism was not then the goal.

Rather, an integration that involved giving up much identity.

Conclusion: Cultural pluralism is superior to cultural assimilation, based on statistical data.

Other panelist challenges this, at least from the experience in South Africa, where integration did not negatively effect numbers, either in white or black communities.

**Comments From Floor.** *But*, would it matter if continued segregation did provide greater growth? Don't we want to do the right thing in re-integrating the church, whatever the effect on numbers? The younger generation views it that way. They generally view separate racial conferences as an embarrassing relic of the past, that was unfortunately necessary for a time, but is no longer. We need to find a way, not of dissolving one or the other, but of some sort of merger of equality.

### **Session 3: Religion, Diversity & Change in the West**

**“The Emerging Church: A History of the Concept,” John Markovic, Andrews University.**

Someone said, “if we were to ask Christians what is the emerging church, half would not know, and the other half would be busy planting them.” The emerging church started in mid to late 1990s? Meant to denote a new growth out of the compost of the old, traditional and dying church. Original, refreshing, promising, hope for future . . .

Emerging refers to church, emergent refers to the theology; though often used interchangeably. Not a denomination, institution, or church, but strongly opposed to denominationalism. Afraid that they will become a distinct religious group. Emerging is theological in character, concerned with spiritual transformation, spiritual re-formation.

Brian McLaren says, one of the best ways to understand things is to learn its story. Shift from modernity to post-modernity, helped start notions of emerging church as a re-envisioning of Christianity apart from western culture. Begun with ecumenical beginning with global awareness but focus on local activism. Road wave of moving away from organized religion to individual spirituality.

Post-modern, post-colonial, post-western, post-Protestant, post-Christian. Overall, it is a quest for wholistic spirituality, a search for incarnational, or sacramental community.

**Themes** (1) Continuing process in Christian history, about every 500 years, it sheds undesirable baggage. (2) Where is the repository of authority now?

Traditional view of history where unexpected events take place, such as apostasy, heresy, corruption, is replaced by a progressive, evolutionary view of the church. A book on the "Emerging Church" written by Catholics in 1975, talking about various emergent ideas, The Church Emerging From Vatican II, focusing on two documents from Vatican II – After 400 years of fortress mentality, and seeing itself as under attack, the Catholic Church has made a decision to turn and look at Protestants as brothers in the faith. The suggestion is that the emerging church reaction to modernism is in part a creation of Catholic Vatican II ideas that promote ecumenism, mysticism, and ritualism.

**Q & A** Several questioners wonder if this is not an overly broad critique. Given that there are some excesses in the movement, is it not possible that there are elements of it that are providing a corrective to the overly transcendental and propositional form of western Christianity that is more a product of Roman and Greek thought than Hebrew or Biblical culture? Can we have a return to more of a balance between the transcendence and immanence of God?

The speaker accepts that the emergent movement provides a fair critique of much modern Christian thought and practice, but that it does not offer an appropriate solution, which he characterizes as confusion. Others wonder about the criteria used to examine the movement. How does one determine what is emergent, and what is not? What criteria are used? Words and phrases? Substantive ideas? Speaker suggests that important, unique phrases can be used to trace development, including "emerging church" and "emergent church," as well as "spiritual re-formulation."

### **Friday Evening Session**

**"Comparing the Global Growth, Geographic Distribution and Socioeconomic Status of Mormons, Adventists and Witnesses," Ronald Lawson, Queens College, CUNY**

#### ABSTRACT

Mormons, Adventists, and Witnesses are all "American originals", formed in America during the nineteenth century. The fact that all three have grown rapidly and expanded globally in spite of their centralized polities raises questions concerning the significance that other researchers, and Warner's "new paradigm", have attached to the decentralization and flexibility of Pentecostals in accounting for the growth of the latter. This study contrasts the growth, global distribution, and socioeconomic status of their members. It finds that the three groups have sharply differing profiles: Adventists are concentrated much more in the Developing World, especially in the poorer countries; Witnesses and Mormons are proportionately much stronger in the Developed World, albeit with contrasting patterns there, and while both have expanded into the Developing World, they are found mostly in the economically more robust countries there. Adventists are not only more heavily concentrated in poorer regions, but within individual countries their members are also typically poorer than Witnesses and especially Mormons. Having explored these contrasting profiles, this article sets out to account for their differences.

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For Lawson's full paper and others given at the conference, [click here](#) .

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Good summaries, Nick, helpful for anyone not there and for those who (inevitably, because of parallel sessions) missed some papers.

Posted by: David Trim | [April 09, 2010 at 03:46 AM](#)

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