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## Idealisation, Conflict and Maturation: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Historiography

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## **Idealisation, Conflict and Maturation: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist His- toriography**

**Daniel Reynaud and Arthur Patrick.<sup>1</sup>**

Between 1844 and 1863, fragments of disappointed Millerism developed the landmark ideas, the denominational name and the basic structure of what is now the Seventh-day Adventist church (abbreviated as SDA, Adventist/Adventism) with its membership established in 203 nations.<sup>2</sup> Millenarianism prolonged the Second Great Awakening in the United States, but when its Millerite expression collapsed in 1844, Sabbatarians began a new pilgrimage. It was natural for them to cherish concepts that seemed valuable during their experience before the Great Disappointment. For instance, William Miller (1781-1849) was a son of the Enlightenment deeply influenced by the writings of Robert Ingersoll (1733-1799), Thomas Paine (1737-1809), and Ethan Allen (1738-1789). But instead of retaining sceptical rationalism, after his very evangelical conversion to the Baptist faith in 1816, Miller nurtured a “common sense” hermeneutic that frequently determined what he discovered in Scripture. Further, with mathematical precision,<sup>3</sup> Miller interpreted his Bible in the light of history—it was by design that his main book in its many editions was entitled *Evidences from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ About the Year A.D. 1843, and of His Personal Reign for 1,000 Years* (first edition 1833, expanded 1836 and thereafter). Miller always demanded evidence; Scripture was, for him, authority; history appeared to spotlight his era as a time when remarkable fulfilments of Bible prophecy were anticipated.<sup>4</sup>

Early Sabbatarian Adventism cherished all three of Miller’s components: evidence, Scripture and history. Two of its three founders were formerly ardent Restorationists. Joseph Bates (1792-1872) and James White (1821-1881) had been members of the Christian Connection as well as Millerite ministers.<sup>5</sup> The third co-founder of Sabbatarian Adventism,

Ellen Gould Harmon White (1827-1915), was a Methodist well schooled in John Wesley's notion of "Primitive Godliness". During a thirty-year period, 1858-1888, with the concepts of Restorationism and Millerism in the backs of their minds, Adventists idealised biblical/prophetic, Protestant Reformation and Evangelical Revival history, envisioning themselves as continuing and completing the processes initiated by Christian reformers of earlier times. History, for the Adventists, was a means of demonstrating the engagement of God in human affairs, with the Adventists themselves as the heirs of God's promises and the objects of his current activity in the world. The pursuit of history was, however, in the hands of lay people or minimally-trained clergy and teachers; professional historical endeavour was little considered because it—especially secular history—was seen as either lacking necessary spiritual insight or as consumed with worldly affairs.

### *Nineteenth-century Idealists: Smith, White and Jones*

Three prominent Adventist writers who made extensive use of history were: Uriah Smith (1832-1903), the most influential editor of Adventist publications; Ellen Gould White (1827-1915), a leading writer whose work gained major influence by reason of her prophetic claims; and Alonzo Trevier Jones (1803-1923), a prolific writer on historical and theological issues during Adventism's second generation.

Like most early Adventists, Uriah Smith was largely self-educated. Of Smith's three chief works dealing with history, the most important and influential was published as *Thoughts Critical and Practical on the Book of Revelation* (1867) and *Thoughts Critical and Practical on the Book of Daniel* (1873), before being combined as *The Prophecies of Daniel and Revelation*. Later the tome appeared in many editions and revisions and is still in print. Smith used history to validate his interpretation of biblical apocalyptic, listing his sources at the end to indicate his reliance upon classic works of Protestant history. His second major historical work was *The United States in Prophecy*, later rewritten as *The Marvel of Nations*, which traced the history of the USA from the perspective that divine providence was guiding its development. He did not discount conventional history, arguing that "[t]here are works already published which leave nothing to be desired in this direction", but he argued that "[i]f we believe that there is a God who rules in the kingdoms of men (Dan 5: 21), we must look for his providential hand in human history, in the rise, career, and fall of the nations and peoples of the world".<sup>6</sup> A third work by Smith that mer-

its consideration within this discussion was *Our Country's Future*, which interpreted Bible prophecies deemed to apply to the future of the USA, with the expectation that history would bear out his version. Smith based much of his historical writing on the work of historians, almost always Protestant historians with whose opinions he agreed. Smith did not see himself as revising such opinions or providing primary research into historical events. He felt that the work of historians had already established the facts; his aim was to provide what they had missed—God's point of view. Smith saw prophecy and history on a continuum: from history anticipated to prophecy fulfilled.

Ellen White, the most influential writer during Adventism's first seventy years, received formal education only until the third-grade when, at the age of nine, a severe head injury ended her school career. However, like many of her Adventist peers, she was self-educated through a lifetime of reading, though her selection of reading matter was somewhat constrained by her ideological and religious interests. Hence, she read the Protestant historians whose world-views were similar to her own, and heavily reflected such views in her writings. White outlined in five major volumes—*Patriarchs and Prophets* (1890), *Prophets and Kings* (1917), *The Desire of Ages* (1898), *The Acts of the Apostles* (1911), *The Great Controversy* (in various editions between 1858-1911)—the activity of God in biblical and religious history from creation to the Second Coming. Like Smith, White took an exclusively providential point of view, explaining each event in terms of God's interaction with the affairs of men.

White's use of history had a special import that the writings of other Adventist authors of her era did not possess. The others could be quite dogmatic in their views, but none claimed direct revelation through supernatural visions in the way White did. During her lifetime, the authority of her historically-related writings was questioned. Further, White and her son William, who acted as her spokesperson and interpreter both during her life and after her death, made revealing comments on her attitude toward and use of history. Ellen White specifically claimed direct revelation of historical events, which she characteristically described as "scenes" or "views", or which her son depicted as "flashlight pictures". On one occasion, William said she was able to stop him while he was reading Wylie's *History of Protestantism* and tell him accurately about events described in the pages he had not yet read aloud, saying that she had seen the events in vision. William emphatically declared that she was not dependent on historians as other writers were. Yet, at the same time, Ellen White disavowed her writings as a standard of historical accuracy, routinely

can be made only upon the basis of the word of God—the Bible. Upon that basis *this* history is composed.”<sup>13</sup> Jones made no pretence of writing history, but merely of compiling and applying it. His contribution was to expound the hand of God in all these affairs, and link history to the Bible, particularly biblical prophecy. Yet Jones differed particularly from Ellen White by claiming no originality and by quoting all his sources as the authority for his historical statements.<sup>14</sup>

These early Adventist historical writers did not consider themselves as in any way rewriting the basic historical data: they merely accepted as true the material presented in particular works of history. They were not attempting to revise historical opinion, working as if from “received” texts. Essentially, all three saw history as apologetic, not critical. They used history to support their theology, rather than conducting a critical enquiry into the past. To them, history traced the establishment of the pure apostolic church after the resurrection of Jesus, followed by its gradual decline and apostasy. Then, from the Reformation onwards a gradual restoration of apostolic truth occurred, in which the latest (and last) chapter was the Adventist movement.

### ***Twentieth-century Professionals: Numbers, McArthur and Land***

The practice of history in Adventism had changed one hundred years later (1958-1988), with its struggles and crises over a growing emphasis on critical historical engagement by professionally-trained historians as they treated religious and secular history as well as the history of the Adventist movement. While there had been a number of critics of the church prior to this period, none broke the mould of using history from a theological point of view. However, the development of a professional historical approach to issues began tentatively in the 1950s, gaining momentum as university-educated historians took up positions of scholarship in Adventist institutions in the 1960s and 1970s. From 1969, scholarly debate within the church found a voice through *Spectrum*, the journal of the Association of Adventist Forums, an independent Adventist organisation which, while loyal to the church, frequently explores and debates issues that official church papers are reluctant to host. Other publications like *Adventist Heritage: A Journal of Adventist History* and *Adventist Today* also provided sites for historical debate. Gradually, Adventist scholars such as Howard B. Weeks, Richard W. Schwarz, Siegfried Schwantes, Godfrey Anderson and Ronald D. Graybill tested the possibilities of critical church history that was not wholly apologetic, willing to raise problematic issues which

emerged from a critical reading of primary sources. Recent Adventist approaches demonstrate more awareness of the complexities of history, are less likely to assume the perspective of God, and are more open to alternative and non-linear explanations of events. However, the work of historians is not uncontested, as lay people, some church administrators and even some historians attempt to preserve the older, safer approach to history in the face of interpretations that appear to threaten established beliefs.

The works of three historians illustrate a much more mature approach to denominational history. Professor Ronald Numbers is an eminent historian of science at the University of Wisconsin, formerly employed by the SDA church, but now self-described as an agnostic. Professor Benjamin McArthur of Southern Seventh-day Adventist University in Tennessee has contributed significantly to the ongoing debate about the role of history in the church. Professor Gary Land of Andrews University in Michigan is a leading writer of SDA history and has done much to foster historical understanding within the church.

In the early 1970s, serious academic debate began about the writings of Ellen White. While maintaining a desire to improve her influence, several scholars “insisted upon using objective scholarship and a critical examination of sources”. This led to a debate about White and the use of history in her writings, which was conducted with the presupposition of her role as inspired writer.<sup>15</sup> However, Numbers initiated a major shift in approaches with his seminal study of the health writings of Ellen White. Numbers refused to begin with presuppositions about divine inspiration, restricting himself to more objective, historical criteria. He concluded that ideas White claimed to have received purely via inspiration were in fact borrowed from concepts in currency at the time through the publications of popular proponents of health reform. Furthermore, Number contended that White changed her ideas over time.<sup>16</sup> His major book, *Prophetess of Health* (1976), sent shock waves through academic and administrative church circles. *Time* magazine commented on it, while the church’s official paper, *Review and Herald*, tried to minimise its implications by editorialising that it did not challenge the faith of a mature Adventist. Numbers’ work was endorsed by a number of respected Adventist scholars as a “thoroughly researched and clearly written ... first-class piece of historical scholarship”. Several Adventist historians took issue with minor or major aspects of his work, but none contradicted it outright. Church administrators responded in a variety of ways, attempting to tone down its conclusion that White borrowed many of her ideas, while at the same time almost tacitly accepting that Numbers was essentially correct. The ensuing debate

opened up the tensions that arise when the historian-believer writes on issues involving divine interaction with humanity.<sup>17</sup> Since the activity of God is not a matter subject to the usual rules of historical evidence, faith and historical methodology clash. However, the process of dealing with the potentially disturbing conclusions helped move Numbers from a professing Adventist to an unbeliever. He continues to publish copiously in areas of science history and has received many accolades for his work. The debate he began has rumbled on for decades, with another historian, Gary Land, labelling the church's official response as "inadequate", and calling on the church to review its stand on inspiration.<sup>18</sup>

Benjamin McArthur made an important contribution to the understanding of the role of history within Adventism with his article "Where are historians taking the church?" published in *Spectrum*, November 1979. McArthur charted the rise of professional Adventist historians, and saw the dilemma that came with that, as the enthusiastic amateurs of the early movement eventually and inevitably gave way to highly specialised scholars. He observed that historians are no longer the guardians of tradition, but rather have evolved into social critics.<sup>19</sup> The historical methodologies they use are different from the historical approaches of earlier Adventist writers, leading to vastly different conclusions and awakening conflict. He made overt the problem for historians of faith which had emerged during the debate over Numbers' book, stating that: "The discipline's insistence on finding causal explanation within the temporal realm heightens the problem, for it seemingly counters the assumption that God acts directly in the affairs of humanity," noting that God's leading was not susceptible to historical methodology.<sup>20</sup>

McArthur considered the impact of this new wave of historical research on Ellen White could adversely affect her standing as an inspired writer. He compared the process under way in Adventism with what had happened in the Jewish community, where thinking shifted from blind belief to one with a long historical hindsight. The effect in Judaism was one of secularisation, and he feared the same impact on Adventism. Historical scrutiny was likely to lead to a more tentative attitude to White's writings as inspired and prophetic, losing their normative authority. On the other hand, it would move Adventism closer to its tradition of rationalism, claiming that truth could bear the closest scrutiny.<sup>21</sup> The paradox was that many Adventists would struggle with the tension between traditional views of White's inspiration and the findings of research which would show other sources than visions for many of her cherished positions. But while these tensions were real, there could be no going back to the former,

simple ways. However, McArthur considered that relatively little of the revisionist work had filtered down to the grassroots, and he speculated that conservative attitudes could prove resilient to change.<sup>22</sup> Time has shown that this forecast was not wide of the mark: a fundamentalist attitude to White's inspiration waxes and wanes, but still remains prevalent in many church circles, while the debate has created a church with a much greater diversity of views on White's role than ever before.<sup>23</sup>

Gary Land was one of the first professionally-trained historians in the church, and one of the first to see himself as a researcher rather than just a teacher. He is part of a group of historians who have taken a professional and critical approach to Adventist history, shaking up established notions. He admires much of the recent scholarship, and recognises the need for more of it, for he sees history as being at the heart of Adventist identity.

Like McArthur, Land wrote a major article exploring the development of historiographical consciousness in Adventism, drawing many similar conclusions. The main area of debate was clearly studies of Ellen White, where the contributions were quite uneven in quality, hardly surprising considering the relatively confined academic world in which many of the participants moved, and their lack of exposure to broader historical research. Nevertheless, Land suggested that the existence of a debate in itself was healthy, prompting further scholarship which eventually delved into the realm of whether or not a distinctive Adventist approach to history could exist. This philosophical debate essentially turned on whether "the rationale of all history should be illuminated by ecclesiastical history and not vice versa", as proposed by one conservative historian. Numbers reacted by stating his preference for "honest agnosticism" rather than "pious fraud", while others like Land refused to accept unhistorical subordination.<sup>24</sup> Land

pointed out that the traditional way of describing God's hand in history implied an almost deistic separation of God and the world, whereas the Bible presented God as both immanent and transcendent. This meant, then, that God is always active in history. But because, in the light of revelation, some events are more meaningful than others, the Christian historian, rather than emphasizing God's intervention, will seek to understand the meaning of events within a Christian framework.<sup>25</sup>

In his 1980 article, Land identified further study that needed doing, including work on institutional history, twentieth century history, and intellectual history. That Adventist history also needed to be done by non-Adventist



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historians, to draw in larger concerns, was illustrated by a volume Land edited for publication (*Adventism in America: A History*) by a non-Adventist press in 1985. Such scholarship needs to disseminate its findings in popular fashion to inform Adventist audiences while retaining scholarly integrity. There is also a need to take seriously the connection between history and philosophy. Land wrote: "if we are to survive and make our research understood, we must be able to articulate the relationship between critical history and religious belief." He also called on historians "to engage theologians and denominational administrators in dialogue about the meaning of our history and its implications for our beliefs and practice".<sup>26</sup>

Land has taken to heart his own advice. Although somewhat beyond the scope of this paper, his book *Teaching History: A Seventh-day Adventist Approach*<sup>27</sup> is a fascinating study of the philosophical issues arising out of the engagement of Adventism and history, and in it he addresses the nature and shape of what a specifically Adventist philosophy of history might be. It is not the methodology that is different so much as the philosophical emphasis and focus.

### ***A Recent Attempt at Writing Adventist History: "The Ellen White Project"***

A conference held in Portland, Maine, 22-25 October 2009, has potential to transpose into a new key the long-continuing discussion about a crucial aspect of Adventist historiography. As a working conference, it followed a long series of forward initiatives taken in various parts of the world. Now, in the light of this event, the future of the effervescent dialogue and dialectic about Ellen White has never seemed brighter.

To write good Adventist history, historians require access to primary sources. Although Everett Dick in 1930 established a benchmark for Millerite historiography, it took another four decades for the Adventist community to develop a group of well-trained historians who effectively made public the results of their (still limited) access to primary documents about Ellen White. The processes described in Jonathan Butler's illuminating essay, "The Historian as Heretic", would rob Adventism of several of its finest scholars between 1976 and 1983.<sup>28</sup>

Interestingly, the numbers of participants in important history conferences held during 1919, 1982 and 2009 are quite similar. But the composition of the 2009 group vastly contrasts with the all-Adventist attendees

at the earlier conferences. The official list of participants in Portland included 66 names, about a third of whom were persons of non-Adventist background, mostly well-known authors who have written effectively about American religious history. The rest of the attendees were raised as Adventists, or embraced the faith, before writing doctoral dissertations or publishing studies that in some way illumine the life and writings of Ellen White. A number of the attendees contributed substantively to the intense discussions of the 1970s and 1980s before the church marginalised their participation. Fifteen other participants are current employees who are contributing to the present understanding of Ellen White due to their background as historians. A smaller number of professionals were present from such disciplines as biblical studies, theology and sociology.

The potential of the Maine conference may be assessed in the light of observations like the following.

First, credible historiography thrives on effective access to primary sources by competent professionals. In this respect, the Portland conference towers far above all its parallels. Adventist Studies in general (and its sub-set Ellen White Studies in particular) are now quite thoroughly democratised. History demonstrates that access to resources for effective study could be prevented by an administrative decree as recently as 1982. Currently an unquantifiable array of primary documentation is available to anyone who has a computer connected to the Internet. If acclaimed doctoral dissertations, refereed journal articles and scholarly books are measures of competence, many of the historians who participated at Portland are of world status. Such a climate for research and dialogue was beyond the wildest dreams of Adventist historians as recently as 1982. The conference revealed that a wide consensus has developed regarding the historical Ellen White. A present need is for effective interpretation to further develop along the lines of the scholarly volume that is anticipated, perhaps later in 2010, as an outgrowth of the conference.

Second, the conference highlighted crucial chapter topics that focused the efforts of 21 authors. At the foundation of the assigned chapters was a biographical sketch of Ellen White and a review of the historiographical volumes produced about her, from the early Adventist period to the present. Next, the religious culture within which Ellen White ministered was observed as influencing the methods she chose to shape the Sabatarian community and build a new denomination, considerably through her testimonies. One specialist contextualised Ellen White's early religious experiences; another depicted her engagement with health issues; others

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treated subjects as complex as race relations, or mind and metaphysics; yet another offered perspectives on her attitudes toward popular culture. Larger contexts for the conference were provided on the first night by the scholar who wrote a recent biography of Harriet Beecher Stowe, and on the second night by an established author who is writing a new biography of Billy Graham. Next, Adventist understandings (and misunderstandings!) of Ellen White were considered, as was her engagement with American society, her theology, her eschatology, her roles as institution builder, author and public speaker. Other chapter authors explored Ellen White's perceptions of women's roles and education, how observers outside of Adventism interpreted her writings and the nature of her legacy. The reflective, concluding hour of the conference began with a six-member panel whose members addressed the theme "Ellen White: Looking Forward".<sup>29</sup>

Third, an effective dialogical process pervaded the conference. Two specialists were appointed to respond to each chapter, one an Adventist, and one a non-Adventist. Chapter authors had the option to comment briefly about the scripts that were already circulated to all attendees before the conference, then respondents shared their written observations. Next, for about ten of each 45 minutes, roving microphones facilitated the vigorous group discussion that was likely to spill over into informal conversations in the dining room or on the streets of Portland. Therefore, the conference maximised the exchange of perceptions between two groups: people who had sought for decades to understand Ellen White's life and writings, and acknowledged specialists in American religious history.

Unlike any earlier era in Adventism, adequate primary sources are now readily available for serious study. The Adventist community has developed women and men who are able to offer competent leadership in the daunting process of interpreting these extensive documents coherently. Further, the conference organisers planned effective communication between specialists in Ellen White Studies and other scholars whose lives are devoted to understanding American religious history in its broad contexts. These three considerations facilitated a constructive outcome for the Portland event.

The organisers of the 2009 conference have given Adventists and the scholarly world a fresh opportunity to foster a mature, sustainable understanding of Ellen White amongst believers and the wider community, especially that of North America. From a handful of disappointed Millerites, the Second Advent Movement is now a world religion of sixteen

million baptised members. Currently it has a new opportunity to transcend the unnecessary conflicts and the false assumptions about its “mother” that have been both pervasive and destructive in the past.<sup>30</sup>

### **Conclusion**

It is apparent that Adventism has had diverse views on history. Its founders considered history to be relatively simple and definitive, an apologetic tool for proving their interpretation of biblical prophecy. Early Adventist writers did not see themselves as writing history, but as subordinating history to religion, and they considered this to be the appropriate relationship between the two. However, one hundred years later, Adventist historians had adopted a more diverse range of views. While some saw themselves as maintaining the traditions of apologetics, others tackled the difficult issues that arose when modern historical methodology was applied to sensitive areas of Adventist faith and tradition. The result is a growing body of history that identifies and recognises the complexities of the component issues. The newer history is open to alternate explanations and different perspectives, and is more aware of the problem of trying to link human events to the actions of God.

### **Endnotes:**

1. Daniel Reynaud is Associate Professor of History, and Arthur Patrick is Honorary Senior Research Fellow, both at Avondale College, NSW. This paper was presented at the “Divining the Past” conference of the Evangelical History Association, 23 July 2010, Robert Menzies College, Macquarie University, New South Wales, Australia.
2. For the general history of Adventism, its ideas and personalities, see Richard W. Schwarz and Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (revised edition; Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 2000); and Don F. Neufeld (ed.), *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, (second revised edition; Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996). The *Encyclopedia* comprises Volumes 10 and 11 of the *Commentary Reference Series*.
3. Miller’s hermeneutical system is well described by Kai Arasola, *The End of Historicism: Millerite hermeneutic of time prophecies in the Old Testament* (Uppsala: Arasola, c. 1990). Whereas Miller claimed fifteen lines of biblical evidence pointed to 1844, Adventists dismiss all but one of the fifteen. They also totally distance themselves from many of the enthusiastic claims of rank-



and-file Millerites.

4. Cf. George R. Knight, *Millennial Fever and the End of the World* (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press, 1993) 56; note sources for the study of Millerism in Arthur Patrick, *Annotated Introduction to the Field of Adventist Studies for Higher Degree Students* (Cooranbong, NSW: Avondale College, 2009) 3, 8-9. A recent, substantial contribution to the discipline is David L. Rowe, *God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2009).
5. See entries including "Christian Connection", "Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)", "Primitivism", and "Restoration Movement" in Daniel G. Reid (coordinating ed.), *Dictionary of Christianity in America* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1990).
6. Uriah Smith. *The Marvel of Nations: Our Country: Its past, present and future, and what the Scriptures say of it* (Battle Creek MI.: Review and Herald, 1887), preface.
7. See for example Ellen G. White, Letter 14, 1889; Letter 48, 1894; Letter 86, 1906; Letter 56, 1911 in the Ellen G. White/Seventh-day Adventist (EGW/SDA) Research Centre, Avondale College; Introduction to *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View CA: Pacific Press, 1950) x; W. C. White's comment on the Introduction to *The Great Controversy*, 1911 quoted in Arthur L. White, "Toward a factual concept of inspiration, II: the role of the visions and the use of historical sources in the 'Great Controversy'," EGW/SDA Research Centre, Avondale College, DF65-a, 20, 22, 24-25.
8. Donald R. McAdams, "Shifting views of inspiration: Ellen G. White studies in the 1970s," *Spectrum* 10.4 (March 1980) 28-31.
9. Ellen G. White, Introduction to *The Great Controversy* (1950 ed.), xii.
10. McAdams, "Shifting views of inspiration," 29, 34, 35; Gary Land, "From apologetics to history: the professionalization of Adventist historians," *Spectrum* 10:4 (March 1980) 93.
11. Cf. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* 4, 520, written circa 1880.
12. Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905) 441-442.
13. Alonzo Trevier Jones, *The Empires of the Bible from the confusion of tongues to the Babylonian Captivity* (Battle Creek, MI.: Review and Herald, 1898) preface, v.
14. Alonzo T. Jones. *The Peopling of the Earth, or historical notes on the tenth chapter of Genesis* (Oakland CA.: Pacific Press, 1887) preface.
15. McAdams, "Shifting views of inspiration," 27-31.
16. Land, "From apologetics to history," 94.
17. McAdams, "Shifting views of inspiration," 31-34.

18. Land, "From apologetics to history," 95.
19. Benjamin McArthur, "Where are historians taking the church?" *Spectrum* 10:3 (November 1979) 9-10.
20. *Ibid.*, 11.
21. *Ibid.*, 12-13.
22. *Ibid.*, 14.
23. For an illuminating perspective on these issues, see Benjamin McArthur, "Point of the Spear: Adventist Liberalism and the Study of Ellen White in the 1970s," *Spectrum* 36:2 (Spring 2008) 45-56.
24. Land, "From apologetics to history," 96.
25. *Ibid.*, 97.
26. *Ibid.*, 98-99.
27. (Berrien Springs, MI.: Andrews University Press, 2001).
28. For its latest publication, see the Third Edition (2008) of Numbers' 1976 volume, *Prophetess of Health*.
29. Land, Numbers and Patrick were amongst 21 authors assigned to write chapters; Benjamin McArthur was one of 42 scholars designated as respondents. For further details, GOOGLE "The Ellen White Project."
30. It is too early to interpret the potential countervailing influence of the General Conference president elected on 25 June 2010. Ted N.C. Wilson's remarks during his first news conference and subsequent world-session sermon identified him clearly with the stances of the Adventist Theological Society rather than with those of the Adventist Society for Religious Studies. Cf. Arthur Patrick, "Contextualising Recent Tensions in Seventh-day Adventism: 'A Constant Process of Struggle and Rebirth?'" *Journal of Religious History* 34:3 (September 2010) 271-287.