

## PIETISM IN TWO WORLDS: TRANSMISSIONS OF DISSENT IN GERMANY AND NORTH AMERICA, 1680–1820

Conference at Emory University, March 4–6, 2004. Co-sponsored by Emory University and the GHI. Conveners: James Melton (Emory University), Dirk Schumann (GHI), Jonathan Strom (Emory University).

Participants: Ruth Albrecht (University of Hamburg), Christopher Clark (Cambridge University), Donald F. Durnbaugh (Juniata College), Katherine Carte Engel (Rutgers University, Camden), David Freeman (Emory University), Ulrike Gleixner (Technical University of Berlin), Hartmut Lehmann (Emory University/Max Planck Institute for History), Benjamin Marschke (UCLA), Mary Odem (Emory University), Douglas Palmer (Emory University), Alexander Pyrges (University of Trier), Helene M. Kastinger Riley (Clemson University), Anthony Gregg Roeber (Pennsylvania State University), Hans-Jürgen Schrader (University of Geneva), Jon Sensbach (University of Florida), Douglas Shantz (University of Calgary), William Bradford Smith (Oglethorpe University), Stephen J. Stein (Indiana University), Willi Temme (Kassel), Axel Utz (Pennsylvania State University), Hermann Wellenreuther (University of Göttingen), Renate Wilson (Johns Hopkins University).

Pietism studies have seen a renaissance in recent years as scholars across the historical disciplines have sought new ways of framing the interaction of religion, culture, and politics. The importance of Pietism has long been recognized in shaping Protestant society and culture in Europe and North America, but as a field of historical inquiry, it is only in the last thirty years that interdisciplinary approaches have broadened Pietism studies beyond the former limits of historical theology and provided a new level of methodological innovation. To capitalize on these developments, the GHI and Emory University invited leading scholars from Europe and North America to participate in an interdisciplinary conference on Pietism and the Atlantic world.

From the late seventeenth century, when the first Pietist refugees fled to North America, Pietism has been a transatlantic phenomenon. Pietists established strong networks of communication, commerce, and support between Germany and the New World. North America became important not only for refugees fleeing persecution in Europe, but also as the home of a society whose relative openness allowed Pietists to experiment with new forms of evangelization and to create new social and ecclesiastical structures.

Reflecting the current historiographical disagreements on the scope and meaning of Pietism, the conference opened with a session on “De-

fining Pietism in the World of Transatlantic Revivals." Donald Durnbaugh led off with a paper on the communicative networks established by radical Pietists between colonial North America and Europe. Durnbaugh noted that one constituent element in many definitions of Pietism is its eclectic nature, in which Pietists sought adherents and like-minded spirits across ecclesiastical, territorial, class, and economic boundaries. Using examples of the Philadelphian movement, Ephrata community, and radical separatists and the networks they established across Europe and North America, Durnbaugh argued for a trans-national and trans-confessional understanding of Pietism. Hermann Wellenreuther explored the varieties of Pietist movements in North America among German immigrants: the followers of Zinzendorf, the independently minded Pietists from Württemberg and Baden, and the institutional Hallensian Pietism represented by Heinrich Melchior Mühlberg. The conflicts that erupted centered less on theological doctrines than on the understanding and governance of the church, and in particular the role of the laity vis a vis the clergy. Wellenreuther argued that the conflicts between Mühlberg and the more radical Pietists led to a distinctly American synthesis of German Pietism, in which elements of both persisted in the emerging denominational structures. Chris Clark took up the question of Pietist definitions in the context of millenarian thought and the role of the conversion of the Jews. The goal of Jewish conversion was not limited to Pietists in the seventeenth century, but Clark described the unique elements of Pietist schemes in which Christian reform and Jewish conversion were closely linked. Moreover, Pietists were particularly concerned with the socio-economic status of Jews in Germany, and sought to draw Jewish converts away from what they saw as the morally damaging professions of itinerant trading and peddling. These concerns profoundly shaped the Pietist understanding of Christian mission. Clark concluded with two challenges for further research: one for an investigation of the affinity of Pietist and Enlightenment views of Jews and second for longer-term study of millenarian views in German history and the burden placed on the conversion of the Jews within them.

The second panel focused on new directions in Pietism research. Ruth Albrecht drew on feminist and gender studies to analyze the work of Johanna Eleonora Petersen, the most prominent woman writer in early Pietism. Petersen, Albrecht argued, is particularly difficult to categorize because of the highly learned nature of her works and the way in which her ideas transcended typical gender boundaries. She criticized earlier interpretations that understood Petersen's visions as typically feminine. In an analysis of her theological writings on chiliasm, she proposed instead that Petersen subordinated these to a Biblicism that was typical of the radical Frankfurt Pietists. Benjamin Marschke took up Pietists and the

Prussian state through an analysis of the military chaplains. He argued that the relationship of Pietism and Prussia has been neglected since the seminal work of Hinrichs and Deppermann, and that a reappraisal would especially benefit from an analysis of the patronage systems in place. Marschke detailed the Pietists' dogged pursuit of their confessional interests in Prussia through the placement of chaplains, and portrayed the collaboration with the state as far more contentious than has often been assumed. In his conclusion, he called for scholars to broaden the scope of research beyond its preoccupation with the leading figures of August Hermann Francke and Gotthilf August Francke. Alexander Pyrges built on social and communications systems theory as he analyzed the extensive correspondence between the Georgia Pietist community in Ebenezer and recipients in North America, the British Isles, and the continent. Arguing that networks and communicative practices were central to Pietist identity, Pyrges showed how the letters of the Ebenezer community revealed its changing character as the settlement grew from a gathering of Protestant refugees in the 1730s to a largely self-sustaining community in the late eighteenth century. Pyrges described how the semantic dimension of Ebenezer and the 'pious community' still had force even as the network itself began to dissolve.

In the third panel, on migration and dissent, Hans-Jürgen Schrader emphasized the peripatetic nature of radical Pietists, especially the Inspirationists. Following their movement from France to Germany and eventually North America, Schrader described how they incorporated new adherents and prophets along the way. Because their legal status was never certain, even in the more tolerant territories of the Empire, persecution periodically necessitated migration from one territory to another, which also allowed them to gather and strengthen awakened communities beyond political boundaries. Schrader advocated studying the religious aspects of the Inspirationists alongside secular notions of poetic inspiration that emerged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In his paper on Jakob Böhme, Jane Leade, and Eva von Buttlar, Willi Temme followed the migration of religious ideas across Europe. In particular, he focused on the idea of the restoration of the image of God in humankind. Temme described how the idea of the divine Sophia in Böhme's work was transformed through its English reception in Pordage and Leade. In the thought of the visionary Leade, Temme argued, Sophia assumed dynamic new associations with mother, womb, and rebirth. Consequently, the apocalyptic sun-woman of Revelation Twelve is removed from the metaphysical and placed into the realm of history. In this more embodied sense, the transfigured Böhmenist ideas were transmitted back to the radical Pietists in Germany, including von Buttlar around 1700. In the third paper, Douglas Shantz drew on Berger's understanding

of modern religiosity and the characteristic ideas of mobility and 'homelessness' and applied them to radical Pietists in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Focusing on two radical clergymen, Andreas Achilles in Brandenburg and Heinrich Horch in Hessen, Shantz followed their persecution and forced relocations. In the context of their migration, Shantz argued that the gathering of the pious in conventicles took on special meaning for both, and that they incorporated notions of homelessness into their theological worldviews. Once their wanderings ceased, however, the conventicles lost their centrality, even as their sectarian and chiliastic views remained.

In the last panel of the day, on dissent and migration, Ulrike Gleixner returned to the question of gender and Pietism research. Noting the lack of attention given to women in traditional scholarship on Pietism, Gleixner proposed incorporating new sources and re-appropriating older ones in order to develop narratives and counter-narratives that would address issues of women in history, femininity, masculinity, and the role of gender difference in establishing power. Using examples from Lutheran Pietism of Württemberg, Gleixner argued that Pietism enabled women to expand their participation and agency in religion. This was the case not only in the beginning of the movement, as some scholars have argued, but continued throughout the eighteenth century. These changes, Gleixner pointed out, inevitably led to tensions within Lutheran Pietism, which did not challenge the traditional subordination of women in the family. Pietism expanded women's activities and the concept of "spiritual equality," but it did not lead to a Pietist demand for civil equality. In his paper, James Melton took up Protestants who were eventually expelled from Salzburg and migrated to the Pietist settlement of Ebenezer near Savannah. Focusing on Thomas Gschwaendl, a miner in the Gasteinertal, Melton examined how he and other members of his network practiced their faith secretly and maintained their confessional identity in the midst of persecution. Although celebrated in Germany as the "Urpietisten," Melton found no Pietist influence or contact with the Gasteiner Protestants prior to their expulsion. Melton argued that the culture of alpine mining produced a tightly-knit religious solidarity that preserved their Protestantism and may also have predisposed them to choose the risky option of a transatlantic voyage to America. Jon Sensbach described the role of the Moravian Church in evangelizing among enslaved Africans in the Caribbean during the eighteenth century. German-speaking missionaries converted thousands of slaves in the Danish West Indies and in British colonies. As a result, Sensbach argued, the roots of black Protestant religion in the Atlantic world are closely connected with Germany and continental Pietism. Sensbach focused on the life of Rebecca Protten, a free mixed-race woman from the island of St. Thomas. As a Moravian

preacher to African women, Protten helped organize the earliest black congregation on the island, illustrating the role of women in creating black Protestant Christianity, and the transatlantic connections forged by evangelicals in the shadow of the notorious triangle slave trade of the eighteenth century.

The next day's panels began with one devoted to Pietism and migration to North America. Helene Kastinger Riley described the challenges and controversies among Pietist immigrants as they vied for religious leadership in Georgia. With support from Halle, the Salzburg refugees settled near Savannah at Ebenezer, but they were challenged by Zinzendorf's followers, the Moravians, who had much more success in their attempts to missionize the Native Americans. Although the Moravians eventually abandoned Georgia, Riley described how another Pietist, Christian Gottlieb Priber, developed his utopian ideals among the Cherokee. When his activities conflicted with Oglethorpe's colonial designs, he was arrested, and he died in captivity. Katherine Engel noted that much scholarly attention has been focused on the Moravian settlement of Bethlehem and its unusual communal economic system known as the Oeconomy. The consequence of this emphasis has been to evaluate Bethlehem largely in connection with European and European-American religious trends, specifically in comparison with European Moravian towns. The result has been effectively to disconnect Bethlehem and its distinctive economy from the missionary work which both animated it and distinguished it from its peers. By returning Bethlehem to its proper context within the Moravian mission project, Engel argued, the central puzzles of the town's history—the origin, meaning, and eventual dissolution of the Oeconomy—resolve themselves into practical strategies for serving the economic needs of the missions and the larger Moravian community. In the third paper, Renate Wilson focused on what the archives in Halle and Herrnhut can tell us about the development of philanthropic institutions in the eighteenth century. By examining the account ledgers and other financial records, Wilson argued, historians can gain a much better picture of the larger network of financial support for Pietist institutions, and she described the complex ways in which noble patrons, strategic loans, as well as unpaid labor, especially that of women, enabled the Francke Foundations to flourish financially. Wilson demonstrated how Halle's trading activities remained strong through much of the eighteenth century, only to decline after the death of Gotthilf August Francke in 1769 in Europe.

The sixth panel presented the work of recent Ph.D. recipients and graduate students. David Freeman opened the panel with an investigation of the Dutch 'Further Reformation,' or *nadere Reformie*, and the refugees in the German city of Wesel. During a twenty-year occupation of the

city by the Spanish from 1609 to 1629, a remarkable level of toleration and religious diversity developed. Although the Reformed church was returned to prominence as the public church in Wesel, the idea of the 'pure' church propagated by the Further Reformation brought the Reformed church into repeated conflict with the tolerant religious spirit of the city. Caught between the concepts of pure and public church, Freeman argued that it was only in the small, francophone Walloon church that the ideals of the Further Reformation could actually be realized. In his paper on Jansenism in the eighteenth century, Douglas Palmer described how a Jansenist "Republic of Grace" developed in Utrecht that complemented the Enlightenment's "Republic of Letters." Drawing on Habermas's understanding of the public sphere, Palmer argued that the Jansenism represented an eighteenth-century reform in which laity were not just spectators but directly engaged in the politics of religion in the eighteenth century. Citing the provincial councils in the Dutch Republic as well as their extensive use of print to circumvent French censorship, Palmer argued that the Jansenist project paralleled Protestant Pietism in its relationship to the Habermasian public sphere. In his paper, Axel Utz observed that while in Christian Europe Pietist reform movements were designed to transcend cultural, social, and political boundaries, outside Europe and European colonial enclaves, these distinctions had no meaning and were replaced by a more basic Christian-heathen dichotomy. Utz described the attention paid to the concept in the late seventeenth century and how cultural geographers sought to map Europe's heathen past as well as the expansion of Christianity in Europe. Because Europeans saw a heathen past as part of their own heritage, Utz argued, they developed a generally sympathetic attitude to contemporary heathen. At the same time, this also implied a progressive superiority of Christianity to the backwardness of heathens. Both attitudes influenced the Pietists' approach to Native American and South Asian culture.

The last session was a roundtable discussion on Pietism in the Atlantic World. Hartmut Lehmann emphasized the continuing problems of defining and categorizing Pietist movements, particularly the ways in which the movement is periodized and divided into national groups. A. G. Roeber called for a wider understanding of Pietist movements in North America, especially the heirs of Halle Pietism. Roeber was particularly critical of the failure of American historians of religion to integrate continental Pietism into their understanding of American evangelicalism. Surveying the standard works on American religious history, Stephen Stein concurred with much of Roeber's comments, and pointed to the weak understanding of the impact and definition of Pietism in most scholarship on American religious history. Jonathan Strom highlighted a number of current challenges facing Pietism research, and sought to de-

lineate a number of new directions for further research on Pietism in the Atlantic world. The conference closed with a reception and tour of the Pitts Theology Library on the campus of Emory University.

The conference drew additional participants from Emory University and the greater Southeast who actively participated in the sessions. One of the goals of the conference was to bring researchers in North America and Europe into closer dialogue, and throughout, the conference was structured to allow dialogue and discussion in the sessions, as well as informally at meals and receptions. Plans have been made to publish selected conference papers in a volume edited by James Melton, Jonathan Strom, and Hartmut Lehmann. Emory hosts the conference website at <http://candler.emory.edu/RESOURCES/PIETISM/>.

*Jonathan Strom*