Introduction

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Over the past sixty years Pietism Studies have experienced nothing less than a revolution. The field has gone from being the small preserve of predominantly German historians, theologians and polemicists to an international and multidisciplinary intellectual endeavor. Fueled by the work of leading scholars in the field such as Kurt Aland, Martin Schmidt, Johannes Wallmann, Martin Brecht, and Hartmut Lehmann among others, as well as the journal *Pietismus und Neuzeit*, and the recently completed four volume *Geschichte des Pietismus*,[1] the academic understanding of Pietism has been transformed by innovative and methodologically distinctive works that portray much more fully the cultural and theological impact of the movement on western Christianity since the Reformation. Much of this pioneering work has occurred under the watchful eyes of several distinguished historians. It is now, however, safe to say that scholars from a number of different fields are discovering that a genuine picture of modernity and of the dynamics of religious practice and experience in the modern era requires an understanding of the multivalent phenomenon of Pietism.[2] That all scholars in all fields have taken notice of this fact, however, is not yet true. Much work is yet to be done, and it is hoped that this volume will further the task of helping scholars from different intellectual disciplines and different religious traditions understand the significance and importance of Pietism.

In March of 2009 over 100 scholars and practitioners gathered at Bethel University in Saint Paul, Minnesota for a conference on "The Pietist Impulse in Christianity." This volume is a collection of some of the best papers from that gathering. For those who know the history of Bethel, it was appropriate that such a conference would be held at this Christian Liberal Arts University—the largest research conference Bethel had hosted up to that point in its history—but for others some explanation is required.

The roots of Bethel University lay in the Swedish Pietist movement of the nineteenth century, a movement shaped by an array of impulses coming from German Pietism (both Hallensian and Moravian) and Anglo-American revivalism (especially in the work of the

1. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993–2004).

2. As Jonathan Strom notes at the beginning of his important article, "Problems and Promise of Pietism Research," *Church History* 71 (2004) 536–54: "Research on Pietism—once the distinct province of German church historians—has become increasingly international as well as interdisciplinary in scope as Germanists, musicologists, social historians, and historians of Christianity explore the influence of this movement in Europe and North America" (536).

English Wesleyan George Scott and the "Holiness Movement").[3] John Alexis Edgren was most responsible for the founding of Bethel Seminary in 1871 in Chicago, Illinois as a part of the Baptist Union Theological Seminary at the University of Chicago. Through a variety of twists and turns, this seminary made its way to St. Paul, Minnesota and merged with a Baptist secondary school.[4] Over the course of time, Bethel developed a four-year liberal arts college that came to understand itself as part of the broader "evangelical" family of institutions and was a charter member of the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (the CCCU), an organization founded to link together evangelical institutions of higher learning. In the contentious context of American evangelicalism, Bethel College and Seminary was and Bethel University is committed to understanding itself as a Pietist institution.[5]

That Bethel was a Pietist institution before it was an evangelical institution goes a long way in explaining why it was a fitting place to host the conference out of which the present volume has arisen. But no less important has been the institution's involvement in the diverse phenomenon of American evangelicalism. This is because in large measure the evangelical movement in America,[6] which in the 1940s emerged from the confines of Fundamentalism, is heir to nineteenth century revivalism and figures like Charles G. Finney, Asa Mahan, and A. J. Gordon, among others. Though American evangelicals have often understood themselves as the carriers of Protestant orthodoxy, especially through the mediations of the Princeton School, most of the communities that have come to identify themselves as evangelical are rooted more in the revivalism of the nineteenth century—a movement and phenomenon which has far more in common with Pietism than with Protestant orthodoxy, both historically and theologically.[7]

3. See Pentiti Laasonen, "Erweckungsbewegungen im Norden im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert," in *Geschichte Des Pietismus,* Band 3, *Der Pietismus im neunzehnten und zwanzigsten Jarhundert*, edited by Ulrich Gäbler (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000) 321–57; David Bundy, *Visions of Apostolic Mission: Scandinavian Pentecostal Mission to 1935* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2009) 31–132; Nicholas Hope, *German and Scandinavian Protestantism 1700–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995) 154–65; Karl A. Olsson, *By One Spirit* (Chicago: Covenant Press, 1962) 18–46; and Adolf Olson, *A Centenary History, As Related to the Baptist General Conference of America* (Chicago: Baptist Conference Press, 1952) 1–42.

4. For a discussion of the origins of Bethel Seminary and its roots in Swedish-American Baptist Pietism, see Norris A. Magnuson, *Missionsskolan: The History of an Immigrant Theological School* (St. Paul, MN: Bethel Theological Seminary, 1982); Virgil A. Olson, "Historical Interpretation of Eighty-Five Years of Bethel Theological Seminary History," *Bethel Seminary Quarterly* 5 (November 1956) 12–17; ibid, "History of Swedish Baptist Pietism," *Baptist Pietist Clarion* 6/1 (June 2007) 1, 8–11; and ibid., "Baptist Pietist Marks: The BGC as a Pietist Influenced Community of Believers," *Baptist Pietist Clarion* 6 (June 2007) 3–5, 20.

5. On the influence of Pietism in the history of Bethel College/University, see G. William Carlson and Diana Magnuson, "Bethel College and Seminary on the Move," in *Five Decades of Growth and Change: 1952–2002, The Baptist General Conference and Bethel College and Seminary*, ed. James and Carole Spickelmier (St. Paul, MN: The [BGC] History Center, 2010) 29–31, 49–50, 55–57; and Christopher Gehrz, "Recovering a Pietist Understanding of Christian Higher Education: Carl H. Lundquist and Karl A. Olsson," *Christian Scholar's Review* XL:2 (Winter 2011), 139–54.

6. When what is generally called "evangelicalism" today first emerged in the twentieth century in the United States, it was called neo-evangelicalism. However, during the 1970s the "neo" was dropped.

7. See W. R. Ward, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); and idem, *Early Evangelicalism: A Global Intellectual History, 1670–1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

American evangelicalism's connection to Pietism has, until recently, been largely ignored or intentionally suppressed, though that is beginning to change, as evidenced by the inclusion of an entire chapter devoted to "Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in North America" in the important *Geschichte Des Pietismus*. The author of that article, Mark Noll, notes that though it may seem strange to include discussion of evangelicalism in a general history of Pietism it is "easily justified."[8] The important work of W. R. Ward is also significant in this regard. In his 1992 study, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening*, Ward offered one of the first and most comprehensive demonstrations of the connections between Continental Pietism and its Anglo-American counterparts in the seventeenth through the eighteenth century. Ward's work argues that throughout the eighteenth century Continental Pietism and Anglo-American evangelicalism constituted a single phenomenon.[9] Bethel's complex relationship to American evangelicalism, then, has been a complement to its own Swedish Pietist roots, offering further justification for its participation in and, indeed, hosting of, a conference on Pietism.

The relationship of evangelicalism to Pietism raises yet another interesting dynamic which helped to frame the conference and this volume, and that is what the conference organizers called "the Pietist impulse."

"Was ist Pietismus?"[10] It may come as a shock to many to find out that this question is not easily answered. There is in fact a rather tense and ongoing scholarly debate as to what precisely we mean by the term "Pietism." Positions range from understanding Pietism as a very specific and circumscribed event that occurred primarily within German Lutheranism, to the argument that Pietism is the result of a broader "crisis of piety" that occurred in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century in Europe, to the more recent argument put forth by Hartmut Lehmann, in agreement with Ward, that Pietism should be understood as part of the wave of renewal and reformist movements occurring from the seventeenth century onwards, whose central unifying motif was the attempt, "to build God's Kingdom."[11]

Lehmann's proposal is the most expansive definition to date and offers a lens by which to understand Pietism as part of a broader dynamic occurring across the Trans-Atlantic

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On the false-consciousness of evangelical historiography, see Donald W. Dayton, "Some Doubts about the Usefulness of the Category 'Evangelical,'" in *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*, ed. Donald W. Dayton and Robert K. Johnston (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991) 245–51; and idem, "'The Search for the Historical Evangelicalism': George Marsden's History of Fuller Seminary as a Case Study," in *From the Margins: A Celebration of the Theological Work of Donald W. Dayton*, ed. Christian T. Collins Winn (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2007) 255–80.

8. "Evangelikalismus und Fundamentalismus in Nordamerika," in *Geschichte Des Pietismus*, vol. 3, 466.

9. See also, Ward's *Early Evangelicalism: A Global Intellectual History, 1670–1789*, where the identity of Pietism and British evangelicalism is demonstrated throughout.

10. This is the title of the seminal article by Johannes Wallmann, in *Pietismus und Neuzeit* 20 (1994) 11–27. For a helpful discussion of the debates over the nature of Pietism see, Jonathan Strom, "Problems and Promises of Pietism Research."

11. These positions are discussed in outline form in Strom, "Problems and Promises of Pietism Studies," 536–49. Lehmann's most recent articulation can be found in his "Pietism in the World of Transatlantic Religious Revivals," in *Pietism in Germany and North America 1680–1820*, eds. Jonathan Strom, Hartmut Lehmann, and James Van Horn Melton (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009) 13–21, 18.

world from the seventeenth up into the early part of the twentieth century. One of the key distinctions, though not the only one, between Lehmann and Ward is the former's willingness to allow for a longer time-frame, one that may potentially include contemporary developments. This framework allows one to talk about a shared "impulse" that unites historically, geographically and culturally disparate phenomena such as Pietism, Puritanism, Wesleyanism, revivalism and evangelicalism. Undoubtedly, as the contents will testify, the present volume has been influenced by Lehmann's approach to this question.[12] It is in the attempt to understand and to map some of the connections of this influential and widespread impulse—which the conference imagined as a "Pietist impulse"—that shapes the current volume and the essays contained in it.

Definitional differences notwithstanding, another productive tension evident in the current volume, is between those for whom Pietism is largely a phenomenon of the past, and those for whom Pietism is a living tradition which still has a significant contribution to make to contemporary Christian communities. In this regard it is significant to recall the early poem of Joachim Feller, a friend of August Hermann Francke, which is one of the earliest attempts at Pietist self-definition and captures the essentially practical and spiritual aims of the movement:

> The name of the Pietists is now known all over town.
> Who is a Pietist? He [*sic*!] who studies the Word of God
> And accordingly leads a holy life.
> This is well done, good for every Christian.
> For this amounts to nothing if after the manner of rhetoricians
> And disputants one puts on airs in the pulpit
> And does not live holy as one ought according to the teaching.
> Piety must above all rest in the heart.[13]

Much, though admittedly not all, of the dynamic for Pietism centered on the need for an experiential Christianity that was based on a conversionist understanding of salvation, producing and produced by small group bible study, holy living, devotionally directed hymnody and worship, missions and reform motivated social service, and the cultivation of an irenic spirit. For many it is precisely this dynamic that needs to be recovered and rearticulated to further equip the Christian church to face the many contemporary challenges of our era. It is hoped that the essays in this volume will inspire the needed intellectual and devotional *ressourcement* that our times demand. Pietism began as an effort to "leaven the church" with a heart religion and break the bonds of a culturally captive Christianity—this challenge remains relevant for today's Christian communities.

The volume is divided into eight sections. In the first section, "Pietism and the Pietist Impulse" contributors weigh in on the debate regarding the nature and significance of Pietism and the "Pietist impulse." Our first chapter highlights an aspect of the broader contribution that the study of Pietism can make as Roger Olson works out a descrip-

12. Admittedly, this does not mean that all of the contributors identify with this particular position. Nonetheless, the volume as a whole is framed by the approach of Ward and Lehmann.

13. As quoted in Dale Brown, *Understanding Pietism*, rev. ed. (Nappanee, IN: Evangel Publishing, 1996) 13.

tion of what the "Pietist impulse" looks like within a distinctly American context—that of American evangelicalism. Though undoubtedly shaped by other impulses, nonetheless, Pietism has contributed significantly to the distinctive contours of evangelical religion in America, a fact that makes knowledge of Pietism indispensible for understanding religion in America. Peter Yoder's essay is an argument to allow the Pietists themselves to have a voice in defining what Pietism was or is. He develops an interpretive strategy for negotiating the differing conceptions of Pietism that were internal to the movement of German Pietism, which he calls "prototype theory," drawing on the work of George Lakoff. What emerges from this first section is not a settled definition of "Pietism," but rather a sense of the potential interpretive value that the study of Pietism has to offer both to historical studies and to contemporary discussions about theological and ecclesial identity, as well as the considerable challenges that continue to face Pietism Studies.

In "Continental German Pietism" contributors take up themes and questions dealing with some of the central figures in German Pietism. Douglas H. Shantz explores the contribution that the wide-spread practice of alchemy in the early modern period made to the religious imagination of early Pietists, in particular to the central Pietist motif of "new birth." Jonathan Strom offers a substantial analysis of the important though ambiguous challenge that the "priesthood of all believers"—more properly titled the "spiritual priesthood"—presented to the traditional ecclesial and social order of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The contribution of Pietists to the study of history and to the development of modern historical consciousness is highlighted by James D. Smith III through an introduction and translation—with Laura Verseput—of the Introduction of Gottfried Arnold's seminal "Nonpartisan History of the Church and Heretics," which appears here for the first time in English. This is followed by Eric Swensson's consideration of the remarkable Silesian "Children's revival" and Timothy Salo's discussion of the debate that raged between Orthodox and Pietist polemicists during the eighteenth century. The juxtaposition of these last contributions highlights two important emphases within German Pietism in the eighteenth century: the concern for the practice of piety whose ultimate aim was the revival of church and society; and the concern of Pietists to offer an intellectually rigorous defense of Pietist theology, countering the criticisms of Lutheran Orthodoxy.

"Pietism under the Conditions of Modernity" deals with the complex question of the relationship of Pietism to modernity. Eric Carlsson utilizes important Pietist motifs to help illumine the internal dynamic and historical genesis of Johann Salmo Semler's critical historical theology. Though imagined as a repudiation of Pietism, Semler's theology is shown to be indebted to Pietism in important ways. Tenzan Eaghll performs a similar diagnosis on the so-called "father of modern theology," Friedrich Schleiermacher, especially in his early writings. As Eaghll outlines, Schleiermacher melded together key aspects of the Pietism that he had internalized as a youth with the spirit of Romanticism, a potent mix which ultimately led to the writing of *The Speeches on Religion to Its Cultured Despisers*, a seminal text of German Liberal theology. In his contribution on Søren Kierkegaard and Nicolai Grundtvig, Kyle Roberts argues that the conflict between these two was in many ways a conflict between different forms of Pietism. Roberts' essay highlights the fact that

the Pietism of the nineteenth century offered multiple strategies and trajectories for dealing with the challenges of modernity.

"Wesley the Pietist" is an intervention in the ongoing scholarly discussion of the relationship between John Wesley and Pietism. As Geordan Hammond shows, for a clearer picture of Wesley's relationship to Pietism to emerge, scholars will need to widen their scope beyond Wesley's engagement with the Moravian movement to include the other dominant form of Pietism in the eighteenth century: the Pietism of Halle. Thomas Buchan shows the deep influence of Pietism on Wesley through a consideration of the influence of Pietist historiography—specifically the work of Gottfried Arnold—on Wesley's construal of the so-called "Constantinian fall of the Church." Shirley Mullen's contribution does not so much map the Pietist contribution to Wesley's view of education as sketch out the contours of that vision, offering a provocative suggestion for further engagement with the educational heritage of Wesleyanism and Pietism.

In "Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Trans-Atlantic Scandinavian Pietism," contributors explore how Swedish and Norwegian Protestants drew inspiration from German Pietism but cultivated their own distinctive responses to the "Pietist impulse," both in Scandinavia and North America. Reexamining the contributions of Paul Peter Waldenström as a longtime member of the Swedish parliament and state church assembly, Mark Safstrom concludes that this editor of *Pietisten* and founder of the Swedish Mission Covenant (and so forefather of the Evangelical Covenant Church in America) articulated a political philosophy whose emphasis on pluralism and moderation stemmed directly from his pietistic theological principles. Gracia Grindal reveals that the German Pietist interest in Bride mysticism that began with Johann Arndt continued to fascinate Pietists in nineteenth-century Scandinavia, particularly two hymn writers: Berte Kanutte Aarflot, one of the many women to play leading roles in the Hauge revival in Norway; and her more famous Swedish counterpart, Lina Sandell. Following Scandinavian emigrants across the Atlantic, David Gustafson describes how J. G. Princell and other Swedish Pietists who formed what is now the Evangelical Free Church of America found "kindred spirits" in the revivalist movement led by Dwight L. Moody. Finally, Kurt Peterson, and R. J. Snell offer Karl A. Olsson, the Evangelical Covenant writer and former president of North Park College and Seminary, as evidence that Pietists have developed their own models of Christian higher education—Olsson's rooted in classically Pietist themes of conversion and new life.

Going beyond the particular experience of Scandinavian emigrants, "The Pietist Impulse in North American Christianity" adds four more examples of how the "Pietist impulse" took root among Christians in the United States and Canada, focusing particularly on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Alice Ott examines the development of Pietist hymnody in the Harmony Society, a group of German Separatists led by George Rapp who left Württemberg in 1804-1805 and founded utopian communes in Pennsylvania and Indiana. Glen Scorgie tells the story of the Swiss evangelical missionary Henriette Odin Feller, exploring the "missional piety" that inspired and shaped her work with the Grande Ligne Mission in mid-nineteenth century Quebec. Cindy Wesley tells of another European missionary to North America, August Rauschenbusch. While his son Walter may be more

famous in American religious history, as the leader of the Social Gospel movement, Wesley finds that the elder Rauschenbusch had extensive influence himself, promoting Pietism among German-speaking immigrants by editing a newspaper, writing tracts, and training colporteurs and pastors. Still another European mission to the New World—that of Moravians among African slaves in the eighteenth century—bore remarkable fruit, according to Peter Heltzel. He proposes that the theology of Martin Luther King Jr., who appealed to the Pietist ideal of *ecclesiolae in ecclesia* in developing his notion of the "inner church," demonstrated how the "Pietist impulse" had been transformed by its encounter with prophetic black Christianity.

Finally, the three chapters in "The Pietist Impulse in Missions and Globalizing Christianity" each take up Hartmut Lehmann's proposal that the map of Pietism be expanded such that "mission-fields in Africa and the Far East" be considered alongside Europe and North America.[14] Richard Pierard reviews the substantial contributions of Halle, Herrnhut, and Württemberg Pietists to the awakening of Protestant missions in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Christoffer Grundmann points out that healing was a key concern for the first Pietist missionaries sent out from Halle, drawing on the resources of that Pietist center's renowned pharmacy. He continues the story of medical missions with two pietistic physicians active in the Anglo-American revivals of the nineteenth century: Peter Parker and George Dowkonnt. Victor Ezigbo muses that the Württemberg Pietists sent to the Gold Coast by the Basel Mission encountered an indigenous people with whom they shared a "pietistic consciousness"—a kind of intercultural, interreligious redefinition of the "Pietist impulse" that challenges scholars to be ready to ask "Was ist Pietismus?" in many languages other than German, English, and Swedish.

Despite the startling array of Pietist impulses on display in this volume, there are notable gaps. First, aside from Emilie Griffin's self-consciously ecumenical "benediction," the absence of Roman Catholic (and, for that matter, Orthodox) voices in this conversation is striking. Is the "Pietist impulse" necessarily a Protestant or evangelical impulse? Griffin thinks not. She argues that basic Pietist attributes like active love, the experience of conversion, and a devotion to Jesus Christ "should be formative for every Christian believer," and recounts the story of Carl H. Lundquist, the former Bethel president whose pietistic interest in devotional practices led him to study Catholic spirituality. Other scholars have suggested that there are, at the very least, echoes of Pietism in certain kinds of Catholic and Orthodox piety, such as monasticism and mysticism.[15] Second, while a handful of Anabaptist scholars did take part in the research conference, it is unfortunate that this collection does not include contributions from scholars or practitioners in the Mennonite or Brethren traditions. In particular, the historiographies of denominations like the Mennonite Brethren, Church of the Brethren, and Brethren in Christ testify to the

14. "Pietism in the World of Transatlantic Religious Revivals," 18.

15. For two recent examples exploring the connections between Pietism and pre- and post-Reformation Catholic traditions, see Willem J. op 't Hof, "Protestant Pietism and Medieval Monasticism," in *Confessionalism and Pietism: Religious Reform in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Fred van Lieburg (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2006) 31–50; and Salvador Ryan, "From Late Medieval Piety to Tridentine Pietism? The Case of Seventeenth Century Ireland," in ibid., 51–69.

complicated relationship between Pietism and Anabaptism in Europe and North America, by turns fruitful and antagonistic.[16] Particularly if they are willing to entertain a definition of the term as expansive as Lehmann's, future scholars of Pietism may find themselves drawn more and more into conversation with those who study and inhabit the Catholic, Orthodox, and Anabaptist worlds.

In spite of these lacunae, the essays gathered here constitute a single mosaic, bringing into clearer focus the complex phenomena of Pietism and the "Pietist impulse" which has animated much of modern Christianity, especially in the Atlantic world. It is hoped that the volume will contribute to a clearer understanding of some of the religious dynamics which have shaped recent history, as well as highlighting the potential that the "Pietist impulse" may have for facing the many challenges of our contemporary era.

16. See, for example, Astrid von Schlachta, "Anabaptism, Pietism and Modernity: Relationships, Changes, Paths," in *Pietism, Revivalism and Modernity, 1650–1850*, ed. Fred van Lieburg and Daniel Lindmark (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008) 1–22; and Paul Toews, "Differing Historical Imaginations and the Changing Identity of the Mennonite Brethren," in *Anabaptism Revisited: Essays on Anabaptist/Mennonite studies in honor of C. J. Dyck*, ed. by Walter Klaassen (Scottdale, PA: Herald, 1992) 155–69.