

Adventism and North American culture: between republican ideals and eschatological expectation in the development of the interpretation of Revelation 13

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Abstract

Rooted in the Millerite movement, Seventh-day Adventism shared a particular interest in Bible prophecy, and the Sabbatarian Adventists who emerged from it focused early on the two-horned beast of Revelation 13:11–17. The Seventh-day Adventist Church remains the only sizeable evangelical denomination whose prophetic system centers on the interaction between Roman Catholicism and American Protestantism, an end-time scenario lying at the core of its eschatological motif of the mark of the beast. How this distinctive reading first took shape, however, has received limited attention. This study investigates the first steps in the development of Adventist thought concerning the United States as a prophetic figure, examining how the cultural, political, and religious factors of the nineteenth century shaped this interpretation and its relationship to republican and Protestant ideals. Tracing the interpretation from its antecedents through Andrews, Loughborough, and Uriah Smith, the study shows how early Sabbatarian Adventists identified America with the two-horned beast on the basis of its western location, republican government, Protestant principles, and rapid growth, while reading Spiritualism, slavery, and Sunday legislation as its draconic acts. It further argues that, after the Civil War, Ellen G. White broadened this reading into a worldwide, principle-based framework, less bound to factual fulfillments and to the shifting course of American politics, that became the denomination's mainstream interpretation well into the twentieth century.

Keywords: Sabbatarian Adventism, history of Seventh-day Adventism, Revelation 13, United States in prophecy.

Resumen

Arraigado en el movimiento millerita, el Adventismo del Séptimo Día compartió un interés particular por la profecía bíblica, y los adventistas sabatarios que surgieron de este movimiento centraron tempranamente su atención en la bestia de dos cuernos de Apocalipsis 13:11–17. La Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día sigue siendo la única denominación evangélica de tamaño significativo cuyo sistema profético se centra en la interacción entre el catolicismo romano y el protestantismo estadounidense, un escenario escatológico que constituye el núcleo de su interpretación de la marca de la bestia. Sin embargo, el proceso mediante el cual esta lectura distintiva tomó forma ha recibido una atención limitada. Este estudio investiga las primeras etapas del desarrollo del pensamiento adventista acerca de los Estados Unidos como figura profética, examinando cómo los factores culturales, políticos y religiosos del siglo XIX moldearon

esta interpretación y su relación con los ideales republicanos y protestantes. Al rastrear esta interpretación desde sus antecedentes hasta las contribuciones de J. N. Andrews, J. N. Loughborough y Uriah Smith, el estudio busca mostrar cómo los primeros adventistas sabatarios identificaron a los Estados Unidos con la bestia de dos cuernos basándose en su ubicación occidental, su forma republicana de gobierno, sus principios protestantes y su rápido crecimiento, mientras interpretaban el espiritualismo, la esclavitud y la legislación dominical como manifestaciones de sus actos draconicos. Además, se argumenta que, después de la Guerra Civil americana, Ellen G. White amplió esta interpretación hacia un marco global basado en principios, menos dependiente de cumplimientos fácticos específicos y de los cambios en el panorama político estadounidense. Esta reformulación llegó a convertirse en la interpretación predominante dentro de la denominación durante gran parte del siglo XX.

Palabras clave: Adventismo sabatario, Historia del Adventismo del Séptimo Día; Apocalipsis 13; Estados Unidos en la profecía.

Introducción

Rooted in the Millerite movement, Seventh-day Adventism shared a particular interest in Bible prophecy. The certainty that the Earth is in its last days comes mainly from interpreting the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, books so often quoted and studied at the beginning of this religious movement. After a growing understanding of the validity of the seventh-day Sabbath, the so-called Sabbatarian Adventists focused on the two-horned beast of Rev 13:11-17. The identification of this second beast was the first new doctrine the Adventists introduced after coming out of the shut-door period.¹

The Seventh-day Adventist church is the only sizeable evangelical denomination to have a prophetic system of interpretation centered on the interaction between Roman Catholicism and American Protestantism. This end-time scenario is at the core of the entire Adventist eschatological motif of the mark of the beast. This study, therefore, investigates the first steps in the development of Adventist thought concerning the United States as a prophetic figure, examining how the cultural, political, and religious factors of the nineteenth century shaped this reading and its relationship to republican and Protestant ideals.²

¹ Malcolm Bull, and Keith Lockhart, *Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 58.

² The most significant work on the development of this Adventist perspective of the two-horned beast is the one by P. Gerard Damsteegt, but because of the nature of his research, he did not go deep enough into the developmental processes of this Adventist understanding. P. Gerard Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 196-216. With a more sociological and political approach, there are the PhD dissertations of Eric D. Syme and Douglas Morgan. Both are more focused on the relationship between the Adventist Church and the nation of the United States—the same with Jonathan Butler's chapter in *The Rise of Adventism* book. The theological development of the understating of the two-horned

Antecedents of the Sabbatarian Adventist Interpretation of the Two-horned Beast

At the end of the Middle Ages and during the Renaissance, the study of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation flourished. Gradually, biblical expositors would increasingly adopt a historicist method of interpretation. By the time of the Reformation and post-reformation, two points became common denominators: "First, the Papacy is the predicted Antichrist, under its various prophetic symbols; and second, prophetic time is to be understood on the recognized year-day principle".³ However, regarding the interpretation of the second beast of Revelation, opinions were very much divided.

Many in the 17th and 18th centuries identified the second beast as variations of the papacy authority, some specific pope, or even the Jesuits.⁴ Others maintained the position that it was the Byzantine Empire.⁵ Some opted for England or the Holy Alliance of Russia, Prussia, and Austria.⁶ With the coming of the tumultuous French Revolution, Lorenzo Dow, the eccentric itinerant American evangelist, identified the second beast of Revelation with

beast is marginal. Eric D. Syme, "Seventh-day Adventist Concepts on Church and State" (American University, 1969), Douglas Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2001), Jonathan M. Butler, "Adventism and the American Experience", in *The Rise of Adventism*, ed. Edwin Scott Gaustad (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), 173-206.

³ Le Roy E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1948), 2:783.

⁴ Some examples that identified the two-horned beast as the papacy: Joseph Mede, *The Key of the Revelation* (London: Phil. Stephens, 1643), Matthias Hoë von Hoënegg, *Commentariorum In Apocalypsin B. Apostoli Et Evangelistae Johannis* (Lipsiae & Francofurt: Impensis Haeredum Schtirerianorum & Johannis Fritzsche, 1671). A significant example that identified the second beast as Jesuitism is Johann Albrecht Bengel, *Erklärte Offenbarung Johannis oder vielmehr Jesu Christ* (Stuttgart: Fr. Brodhag, 1834). Johann Burke argues that Bengel identified this beast as Jesuitism or freemasonry: Johann Christian Friedrich Burk, *A Memoir of the Life and Writings of John Albert Bengel*, trans. Robert Francis Walker (London: William Ball, 1837), 301-303. Le Roy Froom also presents a table with multiple historicistic interpretations of the second beast in this post-reformation period: Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, 2:787.

⁵ John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, vol. 11 (Philadelphia: Pritchard and Hall, 1791), 299.

⁶ Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic*, 15.

Napoleon.⁷ And few interpreters in the first half of the 19th century, arguing that the fourth beast of Daniel 7 and the first beast of Revelation 13 are not the same as the two-horned one, associated this second beast with Protestantism.⁸

The Sabbatarian Adventist inherited many of its historicist interpretations from Millerism; however, many Millerite publications did not address the topic of the two-horned beast.⁹ William Miller interpreted this beast as the papacy and the same power as the first beast of Rev. 13 in a different form.¹⁰ He reasoned that both beasts are extensions of the fourth kingdom of Daniel 7:7. Rev. 13:11, according to Miller, gives a “discovering of the same beast [first one] in his

⁷ Lorenzo Dow, “Hint to the Public, or Thoughts on the Fulfillment of Prophecy in 1811”, in *Biography and Miscellany* (Norwich, CT: Lorenzo Dow, 1834), 16-21. Froom also provides a table with the major non-millerite interpretation of Rev. 13, including the second beast in Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:400.

⁸ For example, John Bacon, *Conjectures on the Prophecies: Written in the Fore Part of the Year 1799* (Boston, MA: David Carlisle, 1805), 26, Samuel M. McCorkle, *Thoughts on the Millenium with a Comment on the Revelations* (Nashville, TN: Republican & Gazette, 1830), 54-58. It is possible that the first expositor to identify the second beast with America was Isaac Backus. He was a Baptist American minister and a champion of the concept of religious freedom in the 18th century. Backus accused the protestant countries of Germany, England, and America of being as intolerant and persecutors as Roman Catholicism. He linked this protestant oppression with the two-horned beast. Isaac Backus, *The Testimony of the Two Witnesses Explained and Improved* (Providence, RI: Bennett Wheeler, 1786), 33, 45. See also Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:1099.

⁹ William Miller’s rules of biblical interpretation were largely adopted by the Sabbatarian Adventists. So far as apocalyptic hermeneutical principles are concerned, Seventh-day Adventists introduced few if any new principles. Don F. Neufeld, “Biblical Interpretation of the Advent Movement”, in *Symposium on Biblical Hermeneutics*, ed. Gordon M. Hyde (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1974), 113. With the publication of Miller’s *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843* in 1836, he discusses in the introduction his rules of prophetic interpretation. A systematized version of his rules appeared later in 1841. Rule number 13 is particularly related to the fulfillment of prophecy as a historical event. For Miller, every word of the prophecy (after the figures are understood) must be literally fulfilled. If one word lacks fulfillment, it is because the prophecy refers to another event or has a future development. William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843* (Troy, NY: Kemble & Hopper, 1836), 3-10, Joshua V. Himes, ed., *Views Of The Prophecies And Prophetic Chronology, Selected From Manuscripts Of William Miller; With A Memoir Of His Life* (Boston, MA: Moses A. Dow, 1841), 22. Another version of Miller’s rules appeared at Apollos Hale, *The Second Advent Manual* (Boston, MA: Joshua V. Himes, 1843), 103-106. This version contains 13 rules, and the rule mentioned above is number 12.

¹⁰ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843*, 55.

ecclesiastical power”.¹¹ For him, both beasts of Revelation comprehend the same power as the second “exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him” (Rev 13:12). The image of the beast and the papal ecclesiastical is an image of Daniel 12:11 daily sacrifice abomination.¹²

Josias Litch, a Methodist Episcopal minister who accepted Miller's message in 1838, had assumed that Napoleon Bonaparte was the two-horned beast. He reasoned that the second beast was gradually appearing after the imprisonment of the Pope in 1798. This fitted Napoleon, appointed by the French commander-in-chief of the foreign nation army in 1798. With the notion that horns are kingdoms, the two horns represent France and Italy, which crowned Bonaparte as emperor in 1804 and 1805, respectively. Napoleon “spoke like a dragon” (Rev 13:11) when he assumed the Roman authority of the Caesars.¹³ As the beast “exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him” (Rev 13:12), Litch argues that Napoleon had restored the papacy, healing the wound (Rev 13:3).¹⁴

By 1848, Litch had given up this view and expected that power to be developed in the future, but he didn't know which power would be that. At the time, he thought that “it is a power yet to be developed or made manifest as an accomplice of the Papacy in subjecting the world. It will be a power which will perform miracles and deceive the world with them”.¹⁵ A clearer understanding of this power will be developed only in the Sabbatarian Adventism. They were the first ones to identify the two-horned beast as the United States of America.

¹¹ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843*, 56.

¹² Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843*, 56-57.

¹³ Litch quotes a circular mandate of Bonaparte, dated July 13, 1809, illustrating this point: “Though our Lord Jesus Christ sprang from the blood of David, he sought no worldly empire; on the contrary, he required that in concerns of this life men should obey Caesar. His great object was the deliverance and salvation of souls. We, the inheritors of Caesar's power, are firmly resolved to maintain the independence of our throne, and inviolability of our rights”. Josias Litch, *Prophetic Expositions; or A Connected View of the Testimony of the Prophets Concerning the Kingdom of God and the Time of Its Establishment*, 2 vols. (Boston, MA: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 1:106.

¹⁴ Litch, *Prophetic Expositions; or A Connected View of the Testimony of the Prophets Concerning the Kingdom of God and the Time of Its Establishment*, 1:107.

¹⁵ Josias Litch, *The Restitution, Christ's Kingdom on Earth, the Return of Israel, Together with Their Political Emancipation; the Beast, His Image and Worship: also, The Fall of Babylon, and the Instruments of Its Overthrow* (Boston, MA: Joshua V. Himes, 1848), 131-133.

The First Sabbatarian Adventists Interpretation of the Two-horned Beast

The yet incipient Sabbatarian Adventism continued to study the Bible prophecies seeking light and guidance for the scattered movement. They sustained the same millerite hermeneutical principles of typology and historicism associated with the day-year principle.¹⁶ After the Great Disappointment of 1844, these principles gave them eschatological significance for what occurred in 1844 and provided them the drive to continue understanding their living times.¹⁷ The historicist outline also gave them certainty concerning their placement near the end of history but freed them from tying that certainty to the vicissitudes of future events.¹⁸

In 1847, in one of their earliest publications, James White identified the two-horned beast as the image of the beast, the last oppressive power that “treads down the saints” during “the last struggle under the seven plagues”.¹⁹ By the time of Rev. 13:11-18, the saints will pass through the period of Jacob’s trouble (Gen 32:6-7). White argues that in “the last closing strife with the Image Beast”, a decree goes forth that “as many as will not worship the image of the beast shall be killed”.²⁰ The saints will cry day and night for deliverance, but Christ will come to rescue them.²¹ In the same pamphlet, Ellen White wrote that “the first beast changed the Sabbath and the Image Beast had followed on after,

¹⁶ For the historical development of the use of the day-year principle, see Alberto R. Timm, “Miniature Symbolization and the Year-Day Principle”, *AUSS* 42, no. 1 (2004): 149-167. Douglas Morgan proposes that the Baconian inductionism principle of knowledge organization was also a key to Miller’s rules of interpretation and also to the Sabbatarian approach to the Bible and Prophecies, so they continue to address prophecies by methodological induction and not deduction. Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic*, 21-22.

¹⁷ Both principles of historicism and typology were key for the new understanding of the meaning of 22 October of 1844. The “cleansing of the sanctuary” (Dan 8:14) could not be the Second Coming of Christ, but the antitype of Leviticus 16 and Daniel 8. In accordance with the inductive process, Adventists combined these passages and concluded that they all point to an event in heaven; there is, the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary by a pre-advent judgment. The methodology is evident in O. R. L. Crosier’s article that influenced the thinking of future Sabbatarian Adventists. O. R. L. Crosier, “The Law of Moses”, *The Day Star Extra*, Feb. 7, 1846, 37-44.

¹⁸ Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic*, 23.

¹⁹ James White, Ellen White, and Joseph Bates, *A Word to the “Little Flock”* (Brunswick, ME: James White, 1947), 9.

²⁰ White, White, and Bates, *A Word to the “Little Flock”*, 10.

²¹ White, White, and Bates, *A Word to the “Little Flock”*, 10.

and kept the Pope's, and not God's Sabbat".²² Both agreed that the second beast is a different power than the first, but they did not clearly identify it.

The first Adventist pioneer that addressed this topic more extensively was Hiram Edson in 1850.²³ Edson discarded the possibility of the two-horned beast being Napoleon for two reasons, (1) the second beast was rising in 1798, and by that time, Napoleon was a well-established power, and (2) neither he exercised all the power of the first beast, associated to miracles.²⁴ He concluded that "the two-horned beast is Protestant Rome and is the seventh head [of Rev. 13:2, 17:9,10]".²⁵ The two horns are civil and ecclesiastical power and represent the beast's lamb-likeness. The liberty of conscience was the grand principle of the Protestants churches, and the civil power became deeply imbued with the same spirit, protecting, sustaining, and upholding the churches in this principle.²⁶

Edson also linked the oppressing of the second beast and the image of the beast as the imposition of the Sunday keeping instead of the seventh-day Sabbath, following the steps of the first beast, the papal Rome.²⁷ The two-horned beast performs miracles and wonders (Rev 13:13), interpreted by Edson as technological advancements such as the improvement in navigation and the

²² White, White, and Bates, *A Word to the "Little Flock"*, 19. Ellen White already presented in this publication the idea that this beast will oppress the saints in the context of observing the Sunday instead of the seventh-day Sabbath. She wrote that to receive the mark of the beast, "all we were required to do, was to give up God's Sabbath, and keep the Pope's". That concept of oppression was late developed by Hiram Edson, J. N. Andrews, and others.

²³ Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*, 196 (note 236). Edson extensively presented his view on the second beast of Rev. 13 in Hiram Edson, "An Appeal to the Laodicean Church", *The Advent Review*, Extra, Sep., 1850, 9-13.

²⁴ Edson, "An Appeal to the Laodicean Church", 9.

²⁵ Edson, "An Appeal to the Laodicean Church", 9.

²⁶ Edson, "An Appeal to the Laodicean Church", 9. Actually, the first time this interpretation appeared was in March 1850, earlier than Edson's article. George W. Holt interpreted the lamb character of the beast as Protestantism and Republicanism, which is the first time that this understanding appeared published in a Sabbatarian publication. He also analyzed the dragon character of the beast as the doctrine of the false Sabbath, namely the catholic Sunday. George W. Holt, "Letter from Bro. Holt", *The Present Truth*, March, 1850, 64.

²⁷ The conventional Seventh-day Adventist notion that the mark of the beast is the keeping of Sunday in the context of civil imposition was already very present in the discussions of the two-horned beast and Rev. 13. Hiram Edson also recognizes the mark of the beast as keeping the Sunday, under the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. The Sunday keeping is "their most prominent characteristic MARK". Edson, "An Appeal to the Laodicean Church", 10.

magnetic telegraph that connected the world as a “common neighborhood”.²⁸ For him also, the miracles of the lamblike beast recall the counterfeiting of Jannes and Jambres, the Egyptian magicians that falsified the miracles of Aram and Moses. Edson understands the Rochester knocking spirits, a sign of the work of this second beast.²⁹

In his understanding, he wrote that when the law preventing the sabbath keepers from buying and or selling (Rev 13:17), the image of the beast “will make void the law of free toleration, and the right of liberty of conscience”.³⁰ Hiram Edson does not clearly say what he understands explicitly as Protestant Rome, but it is possible to infer that he thinks in the context of American society.³¹ That interpretation will be expanded next year, and Andrews will be the first to name the two-horned beast as the United States of America.³²

²⁸ Edson, “An Appeal to the Laodicean Church”, 12.

²⁹ It is possible that Hiram Edson was one of the first in Sabbatarian Adventism to realize the eschatological role of modern spiritism under the authority of the two-horned beast and the image of the beast. Edson, “An Appeal to the Laodicean Church”, 13.

³⁰ Edson, “An Appeal to the Laodicean Church”, 13.

³¹ By the end of 1850, Hiram Edson, and George Holt, were not alone in their understanding. In a letter to James White, published in November of 1850 in the *Present Truth*, Hiram S. Case wrote that while “Bro. Rhodes was showing me the third angel's message, the light in relation to the two horned beast... came to my mind at once... that the two horned beast is the power of Church and State”. Since “the Papal Beast was church and state united, an image must be like the thing imitated; therefore, the image-beast is composed of church and state united - Protestant churches and Republicanism”. H. S. Case, “Letter From Bro. Case to James White”, *Present Truth*, Nov., 1850, 85. Case, in 1853, would be disfellowshipped from the Seventh-day Adventist Church and published the periodic *Messenger of Truth* to criticize James White's Leadership and reject Ellen White's visions. See Merlin D. Burt, “Bibliographic Essay on Publications About Ellen G. White”, in *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*, ed. Denis Fortin and Jerry Moon (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2013), 152.

³² Trevor O'Reggio and Dojcin Zivadinovic propose that Edson was the first Sabbatarian Adventist to identify the two-horned beast with America. However, others, such as Douglas Morgan, prefer to identify J. N. Andrews as the first one. It is not difficult to infer that Edson meant America as Protestantism Rome, because of his description of the State and Protestant churches. However, it is very fair to say that he does not identify the beast by stating that it is America. Andrews was the first one to publish this interpretation. See Trevor O. Reggio, and Dojcin Zivadinovic, “The Connection Between Slavery and Prophecy as It Relates to the American Nation in the Writings of the Adventist Pioneers During the Antebellum Period”, *History Research* 2, no. 5 (May 2012): 321, Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic*, 15.

The United States as the Two-horned Beast of Revelation 13 in the Adventist Sabbatarian Movement

As it is possible to see, the notion that the two-horned beast and the image of the beast are related to Protestantism was already unmistakably accepted by many Sabbatarian Adventists by 1850.³³ Even the eschatological relation between the Sabbath as the seal of God,³⁴ and the Sunday keeping imposition as the mark of the beast were also somewhat developed by this

³³ Another excellent example of this interpretation is the first Sabbatarian Adventist prophetic chart prepared by Otis Nichols in 1850. It is possible that the content of this chart was designed by Samuel W. Rhodes in September and engraved by Nichols later. In this chart, the two lamb-like horns of the beast are identified as Republicanism and Protestantism. This view is aligned with Edson's that the two horns represent civil and ecclesiastical power.

On January 31, two hundred copies of the chart were announced by James White, and the Lithographer also prepared a hundred additional copies. James White, "The Chart", *Second Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Jan, 1851, 38. A high-resolution scanner of the chart can be accessed in: Otis Nichols, "A Pictorial Illustration of the Visions of Daniel and John and Their Chronology", Adventist Digital Library, last modified May 24, 2016, 1851, accessed April 21, 2023, https://adventistdigitallibrary.org/adl-421839/pictorial-illustration-visions-daniel-and-john-and-their-chronology?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=af71bef5d7d54c23e531&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=1. Both Ellen White and James White approved the publication of this prophetic chart. Ellen White wrote that "on our return to Brothers Nichols the Lord gave me a vision and showed me that the truth must be made plain upon tables and it would cause many to decide for the truth by the three angels' messages with the two former being made plain upon tables". James White recognized the value of the publication: "the new chart, published by bro. Otis Nichols... has been found to be a great help in examining the evidences of our position, and in teaching them to others. we esteem it a treasure. It is valuable because it beautifully illustrates the most sublime and important truths of revelation, which are particularly applicable to the present time." Ellen G. White, *Letter 28* (Nov. 27, 1850), James White, "The Design of the Chart", *Second Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Feb., 1851, 46. See also Michael W. Campbell, "Nichols, Otis (1798–1876) and Mary (Bird) (1800–1868)", Sep. 29, 2022, accessed April 21, 2023, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=DIPQ>.

³⁴ Joseph Bates was responsible for first developing an eschatological dimension of the Sabbath; however, his interpretation did not reach the identification of the two-horned beast. For Bates, the sealing message of Rev. 7 was not an abstract concept, but rather an active final proclamation just before the Time of Trouble. See for example: Joseph Bates, *A Seal of the Living God. A Hundred Forty Four Thousand of the Servants of God Being Sealed* (New Bedford, MA: by the author, 1849), 3–45.

time.³⁵ However, the crystal-clear identification of the two-horned beast and many theological and historical understandings were extensively developed by John N. Andrews in his publications.

Andrews was considered one of the most educated early Adventist ministers; the respect held for him by the community gave him a status as second in leadership only to James White.³⁶ He has the distinction of having his name on the masthead of the *Review* even longer than James White. He was a member of the editorial team or committee almost continually from 1850 to his death in 1883 in the mission field.³⁷ In 1846, he became convinced about the seventh-day Sabbath and became an apologist for Sabbatarian Adventist doctrines.³⁸

At age 21, in 1851, he published his apocalyptic interpretation of the two-horned beast in the *Review and Herald*.³⁹ The high interest of the Sabbatarian Adventists in identifying the two beasts of Rev 13 was frequently presented in the context of the third angel's message of Rev 14:9-12. From 1845 to 1849, the third angel's message emerged as the central theme of the new Sabbatarian Adventist theology.⁴⁰ As a result, to rightly understand this message, they must

³⁵ As early as 1847, Bates also designated the Sunday observance as “a mark of the beast”. Joseph Bates, *The Seventh Day Sabbath, a Perpetual Sign, from the Beginning, to the Entering into the Gates of the Holy City, According to the Commandment*, 2nd ed. (New Bedford, MA: by the author, 1847), 59.

³⁶ Gilbert M. Valentine, *J. N. Andrews: Mission Pioneer, Evangelist, and Thought Leader*, *Adventist Pioneer Series*, ed. George R. Knight (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2019), 20.

³⁷ Valentine, *J. N. Andrews: Mission Pioneer, Evangelist, and Thought Leader*, 21.

³⁸ Richard W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1979), 60.

³⁹ John N. Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, *Second Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 19, 1851, 81-86.

⁴⁰ Damsteegt states that before 1849, the emphasis was laid on the “commandments of God” (Rev. 14:12), but after 1849, there is an additional quest into the significance of the meaning of the “beast and his image” (Rev. 14:9). Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*, 192. That is one of the reasons that the first more comprehensive attempts to identify the two-horned beast in the Sabbatarian Adventism movement flourished in 1850 and 1851. Regarding the first two angel's messages (Rev. 14:6-8), they believed, at the time, that the millerite movement had already accomplished that. The editors of the millerite periodical *Sign of the Times* confirmed that they thought that the judgment hour of the first angel's message was at hand. J. V. Himes, J. Litch, and S. Bliss, “The World has had the Midnight Cry”, *The Signs of the Times*, Sept. 20, 1843, 36-38. Charles Fitch amplified Miller's understanding that the Babylon of the second angel's message was not only the papacy but the protestants that had to reject the message of the soon Second Coming of Jesus. William Miller, “Miller's Lectures—No. 1: The Harvest of the World”, *Signs of the*

have to define the meaning of the “beast and his image” (Rev 14:9). That is what Andrews tried to accomplish in his first article on this topic.

The kick-start made by Andrews was to locate the Sabbatarian movement in the expectancy of the second coming, the reason why they, as a people, were so interested in “the events which precede the coming of the Just One”.⁴¹ He argues that the second beast would “come on the stage of action about the close of the first beast’s dominium, at the end of the 1260 years”⁴² and was to “cause the world to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed, which shows that its period of action is this side of 1798”.⁴³

The identification of the two-horned beast by Andrews can be summarized in five biblical arguments: (1) the second beast is a different power; “the location of the two-horned beast is not in the ten kingdoms of the fourth beast [Dan. 7:7-8]” because the first beast of Rev 13 did not give his seat to another power.⁴⁴ (2) He assumes that the course of world empires “has been ever tending westward” from Asia, Greece, and Rome in Europe. Once the Roman Empire, represented by the ten horns, occupied the remaining territory west to the Atlantic, the rise of this power must come further west.⁴⁵ (3) The third angel’s message “pertains almost entirely to the action of the two-horned beast”, making it “the last one with which the people of God are connected”.⁴⁶ (4) The westward course of Christianity implied that the territory of the two-horned beast “is to be the field of the angel’s message... are to be brought out”.⁴⁷ Lastly, (5) the rise of the two-horned beast differed from any other beast of Daniel and Revelation. These latter beasts arose out of the water because of the striving of the winds (Dan 7:2; Rev 13:1),⁴⁸ symbolizing the overturning of “the powers that preceded them, by means of general war”.⁴⁹ This is a direct

Times, July 1, 1840, 50, Charles Fitch, ‘*Come Out of Her, My People*’ (Rochester, NY: Joshua V. Himes, 1843).

⁴¹ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 82.

⁴² Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 82.

⁴³ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 82. Andrews quoted Litch in his undertaking of the second beast as accomplice of the Papacy in subjecting the world. Litch, *The Restitution, Christ’s Kingdom on Earth, the Return of Israel, Together with Their Political Emancipation; the Beast, His Image and Worship: also, The Fall of Babylon, and the Instruments of Its Overthrow*, 131, 133.

⁴⁴ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 82.

⁴⁵ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 82-83.

⁴⁶ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 83.

⁴⁷ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 83.

⁴⁸ Based on Rev. 7:1-3; 17:15, the winds were interpreted as wars, the water as people and nations.

⁴⁹ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 82.

contrast to the second beast, which “seems to arise in a peaceful, or lamb-like manner from the earth”.⁵⁰

Based on these arguments, Andrews concluded that the two-horned beast pointed to nothing less than the United States.⁵¹ Like most Americans, the Sabbatarian Adventists believed the foundation of Americanism was unique and wonderful.⁵² The religious freedom ingrained in the constitution and the egalitarian position for all humankind was cherished as exceptional in all world history. That is why Andrews followed Edson and Holt in identifying the two horns of the lamb-like beast as the “Republican civil power, and its Protestant ecclesiastical power”.⁵³ Based on the horns of the beasts of Daniel 7 and 8, he inferred that the ten horns of the fourth beast - the Roman empire divided, and the little horn – the Papal church, symbolize the full power of the beasts. Hence, the horns denoted civil and religious powers. The same should be applied to the two-horned beast.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 82. Andrews added that America had been a refuge for many Christians who desired to obtain religious freedom from the persecution against protestants resulting from the Counter-Reformation movement in Europe. The fact that these people “did not stablished their power by overturning another power, but... planted themselves in an uncultivated waste and laid the foundation of a new government” could be understood as emerging out of the earth and not the sea. He also argued that the power of America has trebled since the first settlement, by the addition of vast territories. Because of its onward progress, it was seen arising from the earth. Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 83. See also Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*, 197-198.

⁵¹ Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*, 197. Other Adventists before had tried to see America in the prophecy, locating the United States in the Apocrypha of 2 Esdras and in the book of Daniel chapter 7, in the oppression of the little horn. They emphasized the rising rate of crimes and oppression present in the country’s government in the 19th century. E. R. Pinney, and O. R. Fasset, “The Vision of the Eagle”, *Western Midnight Cry*, 1845, 37-40. This article was published before in *The Voice of Truth* in Jan. 1845. Joseph Bates in 1847 also saw the United States in the prophecies of Revelation, but not in chapter 13. While commenting on the “third woe” of Revelation 8, Bates unleashes an attack on the United States government for its involvement in the Mexican War. He declared: “The third woe has come upon this nation, this boasted land of liberty; this heaven-daring, soul-destroying, slave-holding, neighbor-murdering country”. Joseph Bates, *Second Advent Waymarks and High Heaps or a Connected View, of the fulfillment of Prophecy, by God’s Peculiar People from the Year 1840-1847* (New Bedford, MA: Press of Benjamin Lindsey, 1847), 47-48.

⁵² Butler, “Adventism and the American Experience”, in *The Rise of Adventism*, 181.

⁵³ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 83.

⁵⁴ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 83.

Between January and May of 1855, Andrews published eight articles regarding the third angel's message and the two-horned beast in which he expanded his understanding, providing more details in his reasoning.⁵⁵ This series was published later in book format with five posterior editions.⁵⁶ In this new publication, the absence of a crown on the horns of the two-horned beast, in contrast to the first beast of Rev 13, was interpreted by him as another allusion to the United States and its republicanism. Andrews declared that "the two-horned beast is emphatically a government of the people, and whatever is done by the people may be said to be done by the beast".⁵⁷

Additional evidence for the location of the second beast was provided by John Loughborough in 1854.⁵⁸ He interpreted the characteristic of the two-

⁵⁵ John N. Andrews, "The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 1]", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Jan. 23, 1855, 161-163, John N. Andrews, "The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 2]", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Feb. 6, 1855, 168-171, John N. Andrews, "The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 3]", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Feb. 20, 1855, 177-178, John N. Andrews, "The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 4]", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 6, 1855, 185-187, John N. Andrews, "The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 5]", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 20, 1855, 191-196, John N. Andrews, "The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 6]", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 3, 1855, 201-204, John N. Andrews, "The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 7]", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 17, 1855, 209-212, John N. Andrews, "The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 8]", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 1, 1855, 217-218.

⁵⁶ John N. Andrews, *The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12* (Rochester, NY: Adventist Review Office, 1855), John N. Andrews, *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6-12, Particularly the Third Angel's Message, and Two Horned Beast*, 2nd ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Office, 1860), John N. Andrews, *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6-12, Particularly the Third Angel's Message, and Two Horned Beast*, 3rd ed. (Battle Creek, MI: SDA Publishing Association, 1872), John N. Andrews, *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6-12, Particularly the Third Angel's Message, and Two Horned Beast*, vol. 4th (Battle Creek, MI: SDA Publishing Association, 1877), John N. Andrews, *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6-12, Particularly the Third Angel's Message, and Two Horned Beast*, ed. 5th (Battle Creek, MI: SDA Publishing Association, 1886 and 1892).

⁵⁷ Andrews, "The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 6]", 201.

⁵⁸ J. N. Andrews was one of the responsible for the conversion of John N. Loughborough and his wife. In late September of 1852, Andrews was a drawcard speaker at a more extended evangelistic meeting in Rochester City, NY. Loughborough, his wife, and seven other friends attended the meetings. He was convinced at the time by Andrew's arguments that the law of God was not abolished by the cross. A week later, the Loughboroughs and the seven friends met with Andrews and studied further the complex arguments about the mark of the beast, the two-horned beast, the third

horned beast as exercising “all the power of the first beast before him” (Rev 13:12) using a New Testament translation of Nathan N. Whiting, in which the expression “before him” is translated “in his sight”.⁵⁹ Therefore, Loughborough concluded that the papal beast is located at Rome, in the eastern continent, “while the two-horned beast is located in the west, and is performing his wonders, they of the eastern world behold, wondering”.⁶⁰

Loughborough also harmonizes with Andrews in the characteristic of republicanism in the second beast. He understands the command of the two-horned beast made by those who “dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast” (Rev 13:11) as clear evidence of a republican and

angel’s message, and the heavenly sanctuary. On the first Sabbath of October, the twenty-year-old part-time Adventist Christian preacher, with his wife and seven friends, attended the worship of the Sabbatarian Adventists in Mt. Hope Avenue. Valentine, *J. N. Andrews: Mission Pioneer, Evangelist, and Thought Leader*, 192. The beginning of the conference in Rochester is mentioned by George W. Holt, “Appointments”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Sept. 16, 1852, 80. Loughborough published his first article in the *Review* defending the perpetuity of the law in John N. Loughborough, “From Bro. Loughborough”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Nov. 25, 1852, 110. For the most comprehensive work about J. N. Loughborough, see Brian Strayer, *J. N. Loughborough: The Last of Adventist Pioneers* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2014).

Regarding the two-horned best, Loughborough joined Andrews in associating it with the United States. Both shares very much the same ideas. Loughborough published two articles in the *Review* with his first findings in 1854. Both articles were printed later in pamphlet format. John N. Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast [Part 1]”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 21, 1854, 65-67, John N. Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast [Part 2]”, *The Two-Horned Beast [Part 1]*, March 28, 1854, 73-75, 79, John N. Loughborough, *The Two-Horned Beast* (Rochester, NY: Review Office, 1854). He enlarged upon this study in four articles published in the *Review* in 1857. These four late articles were also published in book format in the same year. John N. Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast of Rev. XVIII, Symbol of the United States [Part 1]”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 25, 1857, 57-60, John N. Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast of Rev. XVIII, Symbol of the United States [Part 2]”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 2, 1857, 65-68, John N. Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast of Rev. XVIII, Symbol of the United States [Part 3]”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 9, 1857, 73-74, John N. Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast of Rev. XVIII, Symbol of the United States [Part 4]”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 16, 1857, 76, John N. Loughborough, *The Two-Horned Beast of Revelation XIII, a Symbol of the United Sates* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Office, 1857).

⁵⁹ Nathan N. Whiting, *The Good News of Our Lord, the Anointed; from the Critical Greek Text of Tittman* (Boston, MA: Joshua V. Himes, 1849), 470.

⁶⁰ Loughborough, *The Two-Horned Beast*, 25, Loughborough, *The Two-Horned Beast of Revelation XIII, a Symbol of the United Sates*, 73. See also Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*, 198.

democratic form of government. "The dwellers on earth or the territory of this beast, it seems, have a part to act in this work".⁶¹ This clearly marks the United States as the scene of action. It portrays, he said, "the manner in which laws are made here: by representatives of the people".⁶²

Following Edson, both agree that technological and economic development was an essential characteristic of fitting America in this prophecy of Rev 13. This beast "doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men" (Rev 13:13). Andrews observed that "the increase of knowledge in every department of the arts and sciences, has indeed been without precedent on the world's past history".⁶³ He also mentioned the speed of traveling and the control of humans in nature as elements of wonder.⁶⁴ For Loughborough, because the beast was "coming up" (Rev 13:11), he interpreted it as a figure of American progress in numbers, power, and pride.⁶⁵ America's railroads, steam engines, postal services, territorial and population expansion are the "great wonders" of the second beast.⁶⁶

Andrews also describes wonders of a different kind: the deceiving influence of American spiritualism and necromancy in the world. These communications with spirits were becoming an everyday occurrence, and "protestants are the chief actors in all this".⁶⁷ Loughborough also highlights the "astounding wonder" of Spirit Manifestations as characteristic of American

⁶¹ Loughborough, "The Two-Horned Beast [Part 2]", 74.

⁶² Loughborough, "The Two-Horned Beast [Part 2]", 74.

⁶³ Andrews, "Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV", 84.

⁶⁴ Andrews wrote: "We see the chariots with the speed of lightning coursing their way through the land, and with similar speed are men enabled to traverse the mighty deep. Nahum ii. 'The fire of God' (the lightning, Job I, 16 ; Exodus IX, 16) is literally brought down from heaven Such is the wonderful power man has obtained over the elements". Andrews, "Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV", 84. He also considered the principles of Republicanism and Protestantism as wonders by themselves as would raise the expectation of many to liberate the oppressed world. He remarked: "What is needed throughout the world to relieve its inhabitants of their oppressions, but that Republicanism should remodel all their civil governments? The leaven of its principles has deeply diffused itself throughout the nations of earth. In proof of this, witness the revolution of 1848, which shook nearly all the thrones of Europe. And what is so well calculated to develop and to maintain religious freedom, as Protestantism. With the diffusion of these free principles may we not expect a scene of prosperity and triumph to the church; a period of emancipation to the poor enslaved nations of earth?". Andrews, "Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV", 84.

⁶⁵ Loughborough, "The Two-Horned Beast [Part 1]", 66.

⁶⁶ Loughborough, "The Two-Horned Beast [Part 1]", 65-67.

⁶⁷ Andrews, "Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV", 84.

Protestantism.⁶⁸ Quoting Rev 13:14, he remarks that “in this nation men are to be clothed with some power by which they can perform miracles, and thereby deceive men” using different forms of spiritual demonstrations.⁶⁹

By the 1850s and 1860s, Uriah Smith was already emerging as a theological reference among Sabbatarian Adventists.⁷⁰ He followed Andrews and Loughborough’s steps in identifying the two-horned beast as The United States.⁷¹ Starting in June 1862, in the middle of the formal organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, he began to publish a weekly commentary, chapter by chapter, of the book of Revelation entitled *Thoughts on the Revelation*.⁷² He agrees with the geographical location in the west, the timing of the beast “coming up” around 1798, and the wonder-working power of Spiritualism. He also points out that the two horns without crowns represent a

⁶⁸ Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast [Part 2]”, 74.

⁶⁹ Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast [Part 2]”, 74.

⁷⁰ Uriah Smith was a teenager when gone through the 1844 disappointment with his Adventist Mother. Then in September 1852, he attended a conference of Sabbatarian Adventists in Washington, NH. There he was convinced by the perpetuity of the law. After 12 weeks of study, he decided to become a Sabbath-keeping Adventist. The next May, just after turning twenty-one, Uriah joined his sister Annie at the *Review* office in Rochester. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant*, 81.

⁷¹ He, as an editor of the *Review*, published in 1857 a series of three articles identifying the United States with the two-horned beast. The justification of such an interpretation is very similar to what Andrews and Loughborough had proposed before. Uriah Smith, “The Two-Horned Best: Are the United States a Subject of Prophecy? [Part 1]”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 12, 1857, 148-150, Uriah Smith, “The Two-Horned Best: Are the United States a Subject of Prophecy? [Part 2]”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 19, 1857, 156-157, Uriah Smith, “The Two-Horned Best: Are the United States a Subject of Prophecy? [Part 3]”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 26, 1857, 164. Just three months later, Loughborough published his enlarged understanding of the topic in a new series at the *Review*.

⁷² The series was connected to the Battle Creek Sabbath School, directed by Uriah Smith. They passed at least twice by the book of Revelation, and James White acknowledges that “they had found a better harmony than they had before seen, and clear light on some portions of the book”. James White, “The Book of Revelation”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 3, 1862, 4. This series was published in 23 parts in the *Review* between June 3, 1862, to February 3, 1863. The text was later revised and enlarged in 1865 and published in 1867 with 330 pages. In 1881, in the third edition, the commentary about the book of Danial was added to the one about Revelation. Smith's commentary on Revelation became standard in the denomination and a best-seller. See Alberto Tasso Barros, *La macroestructura del Apocalipsis de Juan: Exposición histórica y análisis comparativo*, *Serie de Investigaciones Bíblico-Teológicas Upeenses*, ed. Alvaro F. Rodríguez (Lima: Ediciones Theologica, 2021), 157.

republican power, not monarchical or kingly, as the monarchy was the generally accepted form of government at that time.⁷³

Unfortunately, for the early Adventist Sabbatarians, the lamb-like appearance of freedom and progress defended by America was an illusion. America was considered a hypocritical power because it looked like a lamb but spoke like a dragon (Rev 13:11).⁷⁴ They fiercely criticized this other side of totalitarian and oppressive authority shown in practice by the United States. Two major issues were emphasized by them: (1) the existence of slavery and (2) the betrayal of the protestant principle of freedom with the imposition of the Sunday laws.

Slavery as an identifier of the *Modus Operandi* of the Two-horned Beast

The twofold character of the second beast of Revelation 13 is marked by looking like a lamb but speaking like a dragon. Therefore, the elevated principles are only pretense. If the American government indeed upheld the republican concept that all men are free and equal, Andrews questioned how they hold “three millions of slaves in bondage” and “why is that the Negro race are reduced to the rank of chattels personal and sold like brute beasts?”⁷⁵

Later, he criticized the “downward course” of the nation on African slavery as a warning “of the abyss into which it is about to plunge”.⁷⁶ Andrews declared that the Fugitive Act of 1850 was “the most infamous law of the nineteenth century”.⁷⁷ And then the 1854 congress, “not satisfied in this act of infamy”, had passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act opening the new territories to slavery “hitherto sacredly guarded from that withering curse. What next only God knows”.⁷⁸ For Andrews, the protestant churches were in apostasy, forming

⁷³ Uriah Smith, “Thoughts on Revelation”, *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Nov. 11, 1862, 188.

⁷⁴ Jonathan Butler proposed that Sabbatarian Adventists understood America in the lamb-like form from the 1770s through the 1830s, but in the 1840s and 1850s, it had revealed its dragon nature. Different from the Millerites that saw the United States as an inherently evil government, their Adventist successors opined that America had once been a good government and only lately had gone bad. See Butler, “Adventism and the American Experience”, in *The Rise of Adventism*, 181, 185.

⁷⁵ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 83-84. See also Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic*, 17.

⁷⁶ Andrews, “The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 6]”, 203.

⁷⁷ Andrews, “The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 6]”, 203.

⁷⁸ Andrews, “The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 6]”, 203.

eschatological Babylon. Their sins include “war, slavery, conformity to the world, pride, intemperance, politics”.⁷⁹

Similarly to Andrews, Loughborough made a strong and explicit connection of slavery to America’s fulfillment in prophecy.⁸⁰ With a sense of imminence, looking at the slavery situation in the world, he concluded that the fact that “all other nations have abolished slavery, or declared it to be piracy, and the traffic is dying away” while it still existed in the United States was firm evidence of his identification of the two-horned beast.⁸¹ In 1957, Loughborough again argued that the institution of slavery is a mark of “the dragon spirit that dwells in the heart of this hypocritical nation” in contrast to loft claims of the constitution.⁸²

Merritt E. Cornell, a Sabbatarian Adventist evangelist that worked closely with James White and Loughborough, produced interesting material with the purpose of “remove the prejudice that everywhere exists against such truths as the ‘Second Advent near’”.⁸³ In which he compiled sayings of many “good great and good men, both in the past and present” who testified “in favor of that which the world and nominal churches now term ‘Infidelity’”.⁸⁴ He aims to show that the Adventist Sabbatarian message was not strange and exclusive. He follows the established perspective, identifying the two-horned beast as the

⁷⁹ Andrews, “The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 3]”, 178. Sometimes the concept of Babylon in Andrews’s publications had an all-inclusive meaning. Andrews defined it as comprising “all the corrupt religious bodies which have ever existed, or which exist at the present time, united to the world, and sustained by the civil power”. John N. Andrews, “What is Babylon?”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Feb. 21, 1854, 37. See also Reinder Bruinsma, “A Historical Analysis of Seventh-day Adventist Attitudes Toward Roman Catholicism: 1844-1965” (University of London, 1993), 133-134.

⁸⁰ Reggio, and Zivadinovic, “The Connection Between Slavery and Prophecy as It Relates to the American Nation in the Writings of the Adventist Pioneers During the Antebellum Period”, 323.

⁸¹ Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast [Part 2]”, 75.

⁸² As Andrews, Loughborough mentions the Fugitive Slave Bill of 1850 and the 1854 act for the abrogation of the Missouri Compromise as signs of this dragon characteristic of America. Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast [Part 2]”, 75.

⁸³ Merritt E. Cornell, *Facts for the Times* (Battle Creek, MI: The Author, 1858), v. For a valuable biography of Cornell, see Marlene Steinweg, “Merritt E. Cornell: In the Spirit of Peter”, *Lest We Forget*, First Quarter, 1996, 3-6.

⁸⁴ Cornell, *Facts for the Times*, v.

United States. He published a picture of the beast highlighting slavery and rigid creeds [dogmas] as the two identification marks.⁸⁵

With less emphasis than Andrews and Loughborough, Urias Smith also linked slavery with the two-horned beast. He admitted that the dragon voice was not yet fully developed, but enough had been heard to identify it.⁸⁶ It was counterintuitive that the same government, which declared all men equal in the Constitution, held in “abject servitude over 3,200,000 humans”.⁸⁷ In the commentary of Rev. 13 published in the *Review* in 1862, Uriah Smith reflects the same idea of the image published by Cornell in 1858. The two draconic characteristics of the beast are (1) to maintain “about four million of human beings” in the Southern states “in in the most abject and cruel bondage and servitude”; and (2) theological bodies that had adopted “a creed-power, which is as inexorable and tyrannical as is possible to bring to bear upon the consciences of men”.⁸⁸

The infamous 1850 Slave Fugitive Act could be seen as one of the great motivators behind identifying the two-horned beast as the United States. Rhoades did not write much about his ideas, but he was one of the significant voices of this interpretation.⁸⁹ Rhodes had a personal acquaintance with Gerrit Smith, a leading abolitionist and seventh-day Sabbath observer. Smith was a featured speaker in the most crucial anti-Fugitive Slave Law meetings on

⁸⁵ Cornell, *Facts for the Times*, 51. He quotes Josias Litch, John Wesley, newspapers from America and Europe, and government documents in his intent to prove that Sabbatarian Adventists were not away from reality in interpreting the second beast of Rev. 13 as the United States. Cornell, *Facts for the Times*, 51-79. In an evangelistic report that he sent to the *Review*, he referred to the Fourth of July celebration, in closing, as the “celebration of American Slavery, alias Independence and Liberty”. Merrit E. Cornell, and George W. Holt, “Tent-Meeting in Jackson, Ohio”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, 1857, 80. Because of the influence particularly of the restorationist movement, the early Sabbatarian Adventists were against any form of creed. Until today the unique form of creed to Seventh-day Adventists is the Bible. There is an emphasis on the concept of the Present Truth and in the progressives of God’s revelation. See Merlin D. Burt, *CHIS674: Development of Seventh-day Adventist Theology [Class Outlines]*, 5th ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Center for Adventist Research, 2019), 5, 30, 69, 184, 211.

⁸⁶ Smith, “The Two-Horned Best: Are the United States a Subject of Prophecy? [Part 2]”, 156.

⁸⁷ Smith, “The Two-Horned Best: Are the United States a Subject of Prophecy? [Part 2]”, 156.

⁸⁸ Smith, “Thoughts on Revelation”, 188.

⁸⁹ The Fugitive Slave Act was signed on Sept. 18, 1850. In November 1850, there is written evidence that Rhodes was preaching about the two-horned beast. See, for example, Rhodes’ influence on H. Case’s acceptance of this message (note 30).

August 21-22 in Madison County, NY, Rhodes's hometown.⁹⁰ Furthermore, Rhodes was the first mentor to Andrews and a traveler companion in many evangelistic meetings between 1850 and 1851.⁹¹ Rhodes did not leave a written legacy of his interpretation of Revelation 13. Still, he could influence Andrews, who articulated these ideas in his *Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV*, published in 1851.

With the proximity of the Civil War, Adventists were, in general, Republicans, even quoting some discourses of Abraham Lincoln in the *Review*.⁹² James White noted that those Adventists who voted in the 1860 presidential election did so for Lincoln. He even mentioned that he didn't know "of not one man among Seventh-day Adventists who has the least sympathy for secession".⁹³ The reason for this position was that "for the past ten years the *Review* has taught that the United States of America were a subject of prophecy, and slavery is pointed out in the prophetic word as the darkest and most damning sin upon this nation".⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Kevin Burton is the one who proposed this trace of the Fugitive Slave Act and the role of slavery in the Sabbatarian prophecy interpretation. See Kevin M. Burton, "Adventists and the Military", in *Oxford Handbook of Seventh-day Adventism*, ed. Nicholas P. Miller (New York: Oxford University Press, 2024), 824.

⁹¹ The evangelistic meeting of Paris, MN, in late November of 1850, at Cyprian Stevens's home served as a launching platform for Andrews's public ministry. This meeting was led by Rhoads, and two weeks later, Andrews joined him in an early-winter preaching itinerary to eastern Maine and Vermont. Valentine, *J. N. Andrews: Mission Pioneer, Evangelist, and Thought Leader*, 137, 143. Ellen White was present at the meeting and enjoyed Rhodes's approach to preaching the "plain-cutting truth". Ellen White, *Letter 30* (1850).

⁹² Butler, "Adventism and the American Experience", in *The Rise of Adventism*, 185. For example, the *Review* reprinted the full text of Lincoln's "House Divided" speech in 1858 addressing the danger of slavery. "Republican Principles", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Sept. 2, 1858, 126-127.

⁹³ James White, "The Nation", *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Aug. 12, 1862, 84.

⁹⁴ White, "The Nation", 84. James White and other early Adventists were clear in addressing slavery as a moral evil. With an eschatological stance, he viewed other Protestant churches that refused to abolish slavery as part of Babylon. See, for example, James White, "The Decalogue", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Dec. 13, 1853, 177. Ellen White was also a voice against slavery. In 1858, she published the first volume of *Spiritual Gifts* and addressed the issue of slavery in eschatological terms. American slavery, and the complicity of the American churches in slavery, was an indication of a decaying world. She declared: "The cries and sufferings of the oppressed have reached unto heaven, and angels stand amazed at the hard-hearted, untold, agonizing, suffering, man in the image of his Maker, causes his fellow-man... God's anger will not cease until he has caused the land of light to drink the dregs of the cup of

During the 1860 presidential election and the civil war (1861-1865), some could argue that Sabbatarian Adventists adhered to prophetic determinism; it is to say that no matter what, no real change was possible.⁹⁵ Although they were very clear and vocal in rebuking slavery and associating it with the tyranny of the second beast, the sense of the imminence of Jesus' Second Coming made any political participation seem futile.⁹⁶ Although very significant, this emphasis on slavery was not the only reason to identify the draconic characteristics of the lamb-like beast; religious freedom and Sunday laws were also crucial to the Sabbatarian Adventist's interpretation.

his fury, and until he has rewarded unto Babylon double". Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1 (Battle Creek, MI: James White, 1858), 192. In 1862, at the beginning of the Civil War, she wrote that "God is punishing this nation for the high crime of slavery". Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 264.

⁹⁵ Butler proposes that during the Civil War, and with necessary adaptations, in the Reconstruction period, Seventh-day eschatology was poured into a Radical Republican mold. However, this Radical Republicanism remained a paper radicalism that evoked more verbiage than action. Butler, "Adventism and the American Experience", in *The Rise of Adventism*, 187. Although it is a possible reading, it seems that the motivation behind the Adventists in their prophetic interpretation was much more biblical driven than political one. They had a strong sense of the imminent end of the world and the second coming of Jesus. In 1859, Anson Byington wrote to Smith complaining the *Review* and the Sabbatarian Adventists was paralyzed by the prophecy of Rev. 13, and therefore doing nothing about slavery. He was threatening to cancel his subscription of the *Review*. Smith answered that the *Review* was abolitionist, but he hoped that Christ would come before Byington's subscription ran out. Uriah Smith, "Reply to A. Byington", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 10, 1859. See also Butler, "Adventism and the American Experience", in *The Rise of Adventism*, 187.

Douglas Morgan, on the other hand, identified a more activist approach from the Sabbatarian Adventists during the civil war. He acknowledges the tensions between those who urged pacifism and others who favored active cooperation with the war and the antislavery cause. James White held an open mind and invited for further discussion. Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic*, 31-32, James White, "Our Duty and the Nation", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Sept. 16, 1862, 124.

⁹⁶ Before the election of 1856, in the editorial Uriah Smith declared "political neutrality". He argued that they "refuse to take part in a contest so exciting as the one which is now agitating this nation, it is right that we give an exposition of the principles on which we stand, and the reasons for our course". The basic principles that should guide their relation to the state were the "great antagonistic principles of Temperance and Intemperance, Protestantism and Catholicism, Freedom and Slavery, Republicanism and Tyranny, are all at work. And wherever these principles appear, every Christian should know which side he is on". Uriah Smith, "Politics", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Sept. 11, 1856, 152.

The Betrayal of the Protestant Principle of Freedom and the Formation of the Image of The Beast

As seen, the interpretation of the oppressive nature of the two-horned beast and the unlawful association between republicanism and Protestantism was already established in Sabbatarian Adventism as early as 1847.⁹⁷ The initial understanding that perdured within the denomination was that the persecuting power of the first beast (the papacy) would be adopted by the second beast around Sunday-keeping laws. This association between the state, Protestantism and Catholicism would be an aggression against the basic principle of freedom that, mainly, protestants should promote. Exercising “all the power of the first beast before him” would culminate in causing “that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed” (Rev 13:12, 15)

The protestant principle of “the right of private judgment in matters of conscience” would be violated when the United States enforces the death penalty on those who do not follow the counterfeit Sabbath.⁹⁸ In this endeavor, the second beast forms the image of the first, and the world would receive the unique mark of the Roman Catholic Church, the power which “changes times and laws” (Dan 7:25). This mark of the beast (Rev 13:17) would be the Sunday keeping, which the creeds of the whole Protestant world already recognize as a divine institution.⁹⁹

Already in 1854, Loughborough saw trends toward religious persecution.¹⁰⁰ The articles of the American Constitution and the First Amendment were safeguards of the principles of religious freedom based on the separation of Church and State. However, these principles had been violated by the two-horned beast regarding Sunday legislation.¹⁰¹ He declares that the Constitution “is already transgressed in a large number of the States of this Union; in the northern portion there are laws respecting the resting from labor

⁹⁷ See the already mentioned references Edson, “An Appeal to the Laodicean Church”, 9; White, White, and Bates, *A Word to the “Little Flock”*, 19.

⁹⁸ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 83.

⁹⁹ Andrews, “Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV”, 85. Loughborough considered the establishment of creeds the first step to apostasy and the basis for the formation of the beast and his image. In the formation of the image of the beast, the nominal protestant churches would take five steps; four of those steps have been taken: (1) the making of a creed; (2) making that creed a rule of faith and test of fellowship; (3) instead of the Bible, this creed became the tribunal by which men were judged; and (4) brand all as heretics who did not subscribe to the creed. The fifth step was in the future; it was the aid of civil law to enforce penalties on those whom they had branded as heretics. John N. Loughborough, “Image of the Beast”, *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Jan. 15, 1861.

¹⁰⁰ Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast [Part 1]”, 67.

¹⁰¹ Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*, 202.

on the first day of the week”.¹⁰² A year later, Andrews observes that the beast and his image is a “union of the great system of false Christianity in opposition to the saints, who are engaged in keeping the commandments of God”.¹⁰³ He also saw evidence of this scenario when “most of the state governments, which have no right to infringe upon the constitution, have already decided that the Sabbath of the Bible shall be kept on Sunday, and the judges have decided such laws to be constitutional”.¹⁰⁴

It is very possible that this cause of concern was also present here because of the Whig administration, which was enjoining a second term in the White House in the early 1850s.¹⁰⁵ The Whigs believed that religion and politics went hand in hand. They were, in general, strict Sunday keepers and thought it was the government's responsibility to maintain the sacredness of the nation.¹⁰⁶ This attitude was probably a booster for Andrews's observations in 1851 about the Sunday observance as the mark of the beast.¹⁰⁷

Although the concept of “the image of the beast”, understood as the union of church-state in America, was well established by Andrews and Loughborough in their publications between 1854 and 1855, the existence of

¹⁰² Loughborough mentions four states of the Union that such laws infringed the rights of those who keep the seventh day. He refers to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania's decision declaring Sunday travelling illegal, and the condemnation of eight Seventh Day Baptists for working on Sunday in that State. This is “a fulfillment of the text, And he spake as a dragon”. Loughborough, “The Two-Horned Beast [Part 1]”, 67.

¹⁰³ Andrews, “The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 6]”, 204.

¹⁰⁴ Andrews, “The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 6]”, 204.

¹⁰⁵ The Whig Party was formally organized in 1834, bringing together groups united in their opposition to what party members viewed as the executive tyranny of “King Andrew” Jackson, president of the United States. They borrowed the name Whig from the British party, which opposed royal prerogatives. By 1854 most northern Whigs had joined the newly formed Republican Party. To the extent that the party continued to exist, it commanded support only in the border states and from conservatives who refused to take sides in the sectional conflict. By the time of Andrews first publication in 1851, the president was Millard Fillmore, a member of the Whig party. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Whig Party”, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2023, accessed April 28, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Whig-Party>.

¹⁰⁶ Bull, and Lockhart, *Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream*, 57.

¹⁰⁷ Bull and Lockhart argue that this Whig Party's attitude was probably the immediate cause of Andrew's observation that the beast's horns “denote the civil and religious power of this nation”. However, it is more likely to be a booster or a catalyzer element than the immediate cause, since this concept of Sunday imposition appeared before in Edson, James White, and Ellen White publications in 1947 and 1850, respectively. See Bull, and Lockhart, *Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream*, 57.

State Sunday laws was not enough for the whole fulfillment of this prophecy.¹⁰⁸ Two factors must happen to fully form the eschatological setting of Revelation 13: (1) a general disposition to use the power of the State at a national level in imposing the Sunday, and (2) the extensive proclamation of the third angel's message. This would create a polarized scenario between the beast, his image, and his mark against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath (Rev 12:17).¹⁰⁹ Just that last remaining step, a national Sunday rest law, was necessary to form the "image of the beast" fully.¹¹⁰

While for the first Seventh-day Adventists, the identification of the two-horned beast was very possible, Uriah Smith understood the acts ascribed to this power as mainly the future.¹¹¹ The image of the beast was the protestants churches clothed with civil power, and "when this image is instated in power its first act is to cause, or decree, that all who will not yield allegiance to it, shall be put to death".¹¹² Uriah Smith highlighted, though, the deliverance of the saints in the context of this eschatological persecution. This death decree will never be able to be carried into effect "for deliverance is promised to the people of God (Dan 12:1)".¹¹³ A second decree would also be made related to the mark of the

¹⁰⁸ Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic*, 18. R. F. Cottrell, in 1854, declared that had passed some years since he was fully satisfied with the identification of the second beast with the United States, but it was so not clear yet for him how the image would be made. However, now he was satisfied to know that the cause which would produce the image, had been working for years. He expressed a preoccupation with the expansion of Catholics in the government and, with a very intolerant perspective, saw that with this influence, the union of State and Church would happen soon. It is important to notice that the influence of Catholicism in the American government is not a major issue between Andrews and Loughborough. Both were more focused on how Protestantism would imitate Catholicism by using the force of the State. R. F. Cottrell, "What Will Cause the Image?", *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Nov. 14, 1854, 110. See also R. F. Cottrell, "Speaking of the Image", *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Dec. 12, 1854, 134.

¹⁰⁹ Andrews anticipated that by the proclamation of the third angel's message in opposition to the Sunday laws, "by the providence of God the line of separation between the worshipers of the beast and his image on the one hand, and those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus on the other, will be most distinct and visible". Andrews, "The Three Angels of Revelation XIV, 6-12 [Part 6]", 203.

¹¹⁰ Loughborough, "The Two-Horned Beast [Part 1]", 67, Loughborough, "The Two-Horned Beast of Rev. XVIII, Symbol of the United States [Part 3]", 75.

¹¹¹ Smith, "Thoughts on Revelation", 188.

¹¹² Smith, "Thoughts on Revelation", 188.

¹¹³ Smith, "Thoughts on Revelation", 188.

beast and the imposition of the Sunday as holy.¹¹⁴ These concepts of Sunday Laws and the death decree would be developed later, especially by Ellen White in *The Great Controversy* book.

As seen, identifying the two-horned beast with the United States was a consensus among early Sabbatarian Adventists. The identification marks of the two-horned beast were focused on the western geographical position of America, the unique Protestant principles of freedom and equity in the Constitution, the rapid economic development, and the republican form of government. On the other side, the growing support for Spiritualism, the sponsorship of slavery, and the enforcement of Sunday-keeping laws pointed to the draconic acts of the second beast. The complete formation of the “image of the beast” would happen when Sunday laws reach a nationwide status, persecuting those who “keep the commandments of God” (Rev 14:12).

The Sunday Laws and the Two-Horned Beast in the First Years of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

After the American Civil War and the end of slavery, the now formally organized Seventh-day Adventist Church continued with the unique interpretation of the United States as the two-horned beast. However, the emphasis was laid now on Sunday keeping laws and the mischaracterization of the freedom principles in the American Constitution, not so much on slavery. In the third edition of Andrews’s *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV* (1872), the slavery issue is still mentioned as a feature of Protestantism apostasy but as characteristic in the past.¹¹⁵ He declared that until slavery was forcibly abolished, “the institution was upheld in the most confident manner” by most

¹¹⁴ Three concepts that appeared in Smith’s commentary on Rev. 13 published in the *Review* are developments of Andrews and Loughborough’s publications on the two-horned beat. They set the foundations that later would be expanded by him and also Ellen White: (1) the one decree related to the mark of the beast, the imposition of Sunday as holy, cutting off from all business transactions all those who do not have the mark of the beast, (2) a death decree that will not be effective because of God’s deliverance, and (3) those who receive the mark in the forehead give the assent of the mind and judgment to the beast, those who receive the mark in the hand signify allegiance by some outward act. Smith, “Thoughts on Revelation”, 188.

¹¹⁵ Andrews presents eight instances of the corruption of the truths of the Bible held by Protestantism: (1) the doctrine of a thousand years of peace and prosperity before the coming of the Lord; (2) the corruption of the ordinance of baptism, such as sprinkling and pouring; (3) the change of the fourth commandment; (4) the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul; (5) the doctrine of saints’ inheritance beyond the bounds of time and space; (6) the spiritual second advent; (7) [in the second edition] the right to hold humans beings in bondage, [in the third edition forward] the institution of slavery was upheld by most denominations; and (8) the lowering the standard of godliness in a universalism salvation doctrine. Andrews, *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6-12, Particularly the Third Angel’s Message, and Two Horned Beast*, 51-53.

protestant denominations, and leading doctors of divinity used the Bible to defend it.¹¹⁶ Besides, slavery was not abolished by the churches but by the secular power.¹¹⁷

Starting in the mid-1870s, the Seventh-day Adventist Church reached different countries and established its first health and education institutions. Both developments pushed for a new rapprochement with civil authorities.¹¹⁸ With the sense of a more comprehensive gospel commission, there was a call for moderation. Ellen White counseled at the turn of the century: “The less we make direct charges against authorities and powers, the great work we shall be able to accomplish, both in America and in foreign countries”.¹¹⁹ Accordingly, prophecy’s graphic representation of the United States also changed.

The binomial slavery and creed in Cornell’s book were no longer applied. In 1855, Uriah Smith craft a woodcut of the animal, unveiling America as a repulsive, bearlike beast with a long row of sharp teeth. In 1857, a more elaborate woodcut was made, representing both beasts of Rev 13. Nevertheless, in the 1880s, new pictorial forms gradually appeared, and the beast lost its sharp teeth and became more affable.¹²⁰ By 1905 it had appeared as the usual American buffalo, and in 1947, after World War II, it looked like a playful lamb.¹²¹ Regarding the interpretation of the two-horned beast, the emphasis shifted to the betrayal of the protestant principles of religious freedom and separation of church and State in the specific context of the imposition of the Sunday laws, mainly in the future.

¹¹⁶ Andrews was astonished that many theologians were able to skillfully make out slavery from the golden rule (Matt. 7:12). Andrews, *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6-12, Particularly the Third Angel’s Message, and Two Horned Beast*, 53.

¹¹⁷ Andrews, *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6-12, Particularly the Third Angel’s Message, and Two Horned Beast*, 45.

¹¹⁸ For an analysis of this rapprochement with civil authorities in the church after the 1870s to the turn of the 20th century, see Butler, “Adventism and the American Experience”, in *The Rise of Adventism*, 190-199, Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic*, 34-71.

¹¹⁹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 395.

¹²⁰ An example is the 1888 edition of the Bible Readings for the Home Circle which depicts the beast more like a lion than a bear and with less sharp teeth. See *Bible Readings for the Home Circle* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1888), 235.

¹²¹ Ron Graybill published an article regarding the Sabbatarian interpretation of the two-horned beast and included some of the graphical representation of the second beast of Rev. 13. It is possible to notice that as time passed by, the beast was designed in less aggressive lines. See Ron Graybill, “America: The Magic Dragon”, *Insight*, Nov. 30, 1971, 6-11.

In the 1850s and 1860s, Andrews, Loughborough, and Smith saw the United States already in the dragon phase, not the lamb-like stage. It is true that for the trio, the formation of the image of the beast was yet in the future, but they emphasized the two-horned beast already speaking like a dragon (Rev. 13:11). Besides that, in the 1880s and 1890s, national Sunday laws were introduced in the nation's Congress, raising Adventist action for religious liberty and boosting the publication of the fulfillment of this prophecy.¹²² However, Ellen G. White adopted a more balanced approach and emphasized that America still brandished the lamb-like horns of civil and religious tolerance and only in the future would speak like a dragon.¹²³

In *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, Ellen White comprehensively addressed the two-horned beast prophecy. The lamb-like spirit of republicanism and Protestantism would give way to the spirit of persecution. For her, the formation of the image of the beast is the work of the second beast, whose peaceful rise and the mild professions render a striking symbol of the United States. But when the churches, uniting upon common points of faith, shall influence the State to enforce their decrees, Protestant America will form an image of the Roman papacy.¹²⁴ That is not different from the early Sabbatarian interpretation, except for placing the dragon phase of the beast simultaneous to the formation of the image of the beast. Andrews and Loughborough highlighted with more emphasis the draconic characteristics, such as Spiritualism, slavery, and protestant apostasy, as already present at that time.

¹²² In 1888 and 1889 national Sunday-keeping bills were introduced in Congress. In 1892, the supreme court decision in the case Church of the Holy Trinity vs the United States declared America a Christian Nation. Adventists view these new bills, along with continuous imprisonments in the South for state Sunday laws violations, as indicators that the final crisis was near than ever. Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic*, 46. A. O. Tait, in 1891, summarized the development of the Sunday laws pushed by the National Reform Association and other Protestant leaderships as the fulfillment of prophecy towards a universal Sunday law in America. A. O. Tait, "A Fulfilling Prophecy", *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, Aug. 25, 1891, 533.

¹²³ Butler proposes that Ellen White departed dramatically from earlier interpretations of the two-horned beast in Butler, "Adventism and the American Experience", in *The Rise of Adventism*, 193. This statement seems unfair. Most of the concepts that Ellen White published in the 1880s in *Spiritual Gifts* vol. 4 and the first edition of *The Great Controversy* was already developed before. The first interpretations of the two-horned beast also had many future elements, particularly, the formation of the image of the Beast. Ellen White, now, gave new emphasis on a broader and more comprehensive theology of history and the spiritual role of the United States, opposing those who are faithful to God's commandments. The priority now was not so much focused in describing a broad political action of America but emphasized more the religious freedom issues. See Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic*, 51.

¹²⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4 (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1884), 277.

Ellen White embraced more broad principles of interpretation of Revelation 13 and refrained from searching for so many factual fulfilments as the early Sabbatarian interpretation did.¹²⁵ She was concentrated on the more general actions of the United States with the shift of the lamb-likeness characteristics of freedom to the nation's imposition of the Sunday as holy, culminating with the persecution of those who choose to keep the Seventh-day Sabbath.¹²⁶

Another contribution of her prophetic scheme is the threefold eschatological union of Roman Catholicism, Spiritualism, and Protestantism that will repudiate every principle of the Constitution and make provision for the propagation of papal doctrines.¹²⁷ Lastly, Ellen White brought the interpretation of the two-horned beast on a worldwide basis, not only located in America but in a whole world movement of restoration of the papacy authority and Sunday laws.¹²⁸ By the 1880s, Uriah Smith also assumed the basic prophetic outline of Ellen White and that became the mainstream interpretation within the denomination, at least until World War One.¹²⁹

Conclusion

In the late 1840s and the 1850s, the almost ignored prophetic symbol in Millerism became the focus of Sabbatarian Adventism. Their emphasis on preaching the third Angel's message of Rev 14 pushed for a clearer

¹²⁵ Usually, she focused on examples of persecution in the past, as the seventeenth century thousands of non-conformist ministers which suffered under the rule of the Church of England. For her the principle of religious freedom was the only way to avoid religious persecution, since "persecution always follows religious favoritism on the part of secular governments". White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, 4:277.

¹²⁶ White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, 4:277-286; Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and His Angels and Satan and His Angels* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1888), 563-612.

¹²⁷ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 451. Before, Spiritualism was seen as a mark of the American protestant apostasy and a dragon-like feature. Still, Ellen White applied an eschatological role to modern Spiritualism in the context of Revelation 13. See Andrews, "Thoughts on Revelation XIII and XIV", 84.

¹²⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 578-579.

¹²⁹ Uriah Smith, *Our Country's Future: The United States on the Light of Prophecy: An Exposition of Revelation 13:11-17*, 4th ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1883); Uriah Smith, *Thoughts, Critical and Practical, on the Books of Daniel and Revelation* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1883). A. T. Jones, also followed the same prophetic outline, in A. T. Jones, *The Two Republics, or Rome and the United States of America* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1891).

understanding of the two-horned beast of Rev 13:11. They started identifying it with Protestantism until Andrews clearly stated that this power refers to the United States, followed by Loughborough and Smith. They proposed that America fitted the two-fold description of the beast: the Protestant and republican lamb-like characteristics, and the apostasy, slavery, and State Sunday laws presented as draconic features. Soon, an image of the first beast would be formed in the association of the American protestant churches with the United States government to enforce national Sunday-keeping law.

They saw that in the end, the world would be polarized by those who keep the Sunday and receive that mark of the beast and those who keep the Seventh-day Sabbath and receive the seal of God in the context of the proclamation of the third angel's message of Rev 14. The Sabbatarian Adventist prophecies interpretation was very much related to what was happening in the news, at that very historical moment. But, after the civil war, especially, Ellen White would bring a broader approach to prophecy without being so focused on factual interpretations. That characteristic made her attitude less susceptible to the changing behavior of American politics and Protestantism. Further studies should focus on the impact of slavery and the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act in the association of the two-horned beast with America and on the impact of the many 20th-century wars on the interpretation of this prophecy.