

preparing her dissertation for publication Vance ignored most of the recent scholarly studies on women in Adventism. Her bibliography makes no reference to John Beach's *Notable Women of Spirit* (1976), Una Underwood's *Women in Their Place* (1990), Selma Mastrapa's *Notable Adventist Women of Today* (1995), Patricia Habada and Rebecca Brillhart's *The Welcome Table* (1995), Lourdes Morales-Gudmundsson's *Women and the Church* (1995), or Nancy Vyhmeister's *Women in Ministry* (1998), to mention a few. In fact, only five sources bear dates after 1994. The "crises" she describes primarily concerned the North American Division church (as do all of her surveys and interviews), not the global church. Most of these "crises" made little impact in Central and South America, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Asia, where over 90 percent of Seventh-day Adventists live today.

Allowing even one Adventist scholar to proofread her manuscript would have saved Vance from several embarrassing gaffes such as the Sixth Commandment forbidding adultery (32); incorrect spelling for General Conference President Arthur G. Daniells (77, 95) and Glacier View (82); placement of Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church in California (202); the idea that Seventh-day Adventists study Sunday School lessons (114); and the notion they "voted down" righteousness by faith at the 1888 Minneapolis General Conference session (85). It would have saved her from asserting that Hiram Edson claimed to have had a vision on the sanctuary message in 1844 (26); that ministerial ordination is required for baptizing and leading out in Communion services (61); and that Dudley M. Canright attended the 1919 Bible and History Teachers' Conference (77) to spread his anti-Ellen White views.

Despite these shortcomings, however, Vance's book will help readers of other denominations and Adventist laity to become better informed about Seventh-day Adventist history, beliefs, institutions, and internal church struggles over the past century and a half. Scholars may also benefit from Vance's unique application of sociological theory to sectarian development.

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BRIAN E. STRAYER

Werblowsky, R. J. Zwi, and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. 764 pp. Hardcover, \$95.00.

This comprehensive *Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*—with nearly 2400 entries—was designed as a companion volume of *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (3d ed., 1997). The term "Jewish religion" covers the cultural, legal, and even ethno-national factors, as well as the religious and theological domains; this understanding fits better the specific quality of Jewish religion than most current religious systems.

The first question that may arise about this new *Dictionary* concerns its relevance, considering the existence of the monumental *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Two assets, however, justify the presence of this dictionary. First, its *presentation*—its easy-to-use format, in a single volume, makes the book convenient and more practical to consult. Each entry is concise and treats the essentials of the topic, while extensive cross references allow for additional relevant information.

Its system of transliteration is clear, simple, and consistent (the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* uses no less than three systems).

The second major asset of this dictionary is its *actuality*: its coverage of topics that are presently relevant, such as "Holocaust Theology," "Theological Aspects of the State of Israel," and religious events that took place more recently, especially in the United States (e.g., the death of the rabbi-messiah Schneerson in 1994) and in Israel (the recognition by the Israeli Supreme Court of the legitimacy of Reform and Conservative conversions in Israel). Also, the articles have incorporated recent bibliographical information, including journal articles since 1980.

The only major weakness of the *Dictionary* derives from the assumptions by the editors that after the Holocaust, Jewish scholarship revolves essentially around two new centers: Israel and the United States. Accordingly, the editors of the *Dictionary*, both from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and visiting professors in American universities, have chosen their contributors mostly from these two centers and totally ignored, for instance, the intellectual and religious vitality of the French contribution. Important names such as Edmond Fleg, Georges Vajda, Shmuel Trigano, and Emmanuel Levinas have been omitted (while most of them are mentioned in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*). And Jewish philosopher André Neher has been merely (falsely?) identified as "a historian of Jewish thought."

In spite of this "geographical" deficiency, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* remains a clear, comprehensive, and well-balanced instrument; and indeed, an ideal introduction to Jewish religion. It is a useful resource, not only for every religion student or scholar, but also for the general reader.

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JACQUES DOUKHAN

Wells, Ronald A., ed., *History and the Christian Historian*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. vi + 248 pp. Paper, \$23.00.

Twenty-five years ago two Calvin College historians, George Marsden and Frank Roberts, edited a book entitled *A Christian View of History?* (Eerdmans, 1975). As the question mark indicates, the issue of whether a Christian might interpret the past in a distinctive manner was open to debate. With the impact since the appearance of that book of the various theories commonly described as postmodernist, however, academics have increasingly recognized that every scholar is "situated" and therefore understands a subject from a particular perspective. Although ethnicity, gender, and class are the elements usually identified as shaping perspective, Marsden in recent books has argued that religious belief is an equally important factor in shaping one's scholarship.

The current discussion has shaped *History and the Christian Historian*, a collection of essays, and given it a direction that distinguishes it from earlier anthologies on the relationship of Christianity to the academic study of history. Section I, entitled "Perspective and Theory," begins with Marsden's argument that the Christian perspective makes a difference in scholarship. Shirley A. Mullen and C. Stephen Evans then address the contested issue of historical truth, the former arguing for both the possibility and limitation of truth statements, while the latter seeks to open up room for consideration of the possibility of miracles by critical