

interval of time separates the absence from the body and the being at home with the Lord (400). Unfortunately, Harris does not state that he presupposes the parousia in between. Several pages later he points out unambiguously that “[f]or Paul immortality was not a natural attribute of the human soul which guaranteed its survival through and after death, but a gift from God which the Christian gained at the parousia by means of the resurrection” (410). Those dying before the parousia will experience an interval of disembodiment, to speak with the metaphor used by Paul in this passage, between their death and the resurrection (402). The author concludes this pericope with a summary of 2 Cor 5:1-10, in which he mentions among other things that there is no indication that the physical body is the container of the soul, the despicable outer garment which oppresses the soul and hampers its free expression, or that the body is worthless (410).

The format of the commentary is logical and useful. Each passage is accompanied by an introduction, a translation with detailed textual notes, a thorough line-by-line exegesis, and, finally, a relevant bibliography in an abbreviated form—a format that makes the commentary accessible at any verse.

On the whole, the strength of the commentary is manifold. The substantial bibliography demonstrates that the author has worked through an impressive amount of secondary literature on the epistle. The many footnotes throughout the commentary reveal the engagement with this vast amount of secondary literature and leave one with the impression that hardly any stone remains unturned. Indexes of subjects, authors, and Greek words conclude a serious piece of scholarship. The series title makes clear that this commentary targets those who have a working knowledge of NT Greek.

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Keller, Eva. *The Road to Clarity: Seventh-day Adventism in Madagascar*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. xvii + 286 pp. Paper, \$24.95.

Question: What is the result of Seventh-day Adventist religious activity in a country such as Madagascar? *Answer:* An association of African intellectuals. This is one of the major results of this study, which is a significantly revised version of a Ph.D. dissertation in social anthropology at the London School of Economics and Political Science. The author is a Research Fellow in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Zurich, Switzerland.

The Road to Clarity is the first major publication about Adventism in Africa from the perspective of the anthropology of religion, and indeed one of the few published scholarly monographs on African Adventists. It is a unique study in that it explores the actual lives of non-Western Christians, based on a comparatively long period of participant observation—something which has been done so far by only a few scholars. After twenty months of field work, Eva Keller authentically portrays the nature of Malagasy Adventists' dedication to their faith in their particular cultural context.

After several introductory chapters dealing with Maroantsetra and Sahameloka (places where she conducted her research), Christianity in Madagascar, Adventism, and the people with whom she lived, Keller unfolds a discourse about Bible study, knowledge, and learning, and presents several chapters that discuss the problems that Adventists encounter in dealing with Malagasy culture. She comes to the conclusion that, for them, the major attraction of becoming and, especially, remaining Seventh-day Adventists is the excitement brought by study and intellectual activity. Thus, she disputes the common concept that in their religious choice, adherents of Christian churches in Africa are mainly motivated by utilitarian motives.

With *The Road to Clarity*, Keller has produced a pioneering study in several respects. First, she describes the religious activities, persuasions, and worldview of ordinary “Third World” Adventist Christians in a most empathic and realistic way, which is quite impressive given the fact that she is not personally connected to the Christian faith. It is probably not an overstatement that this is the most sensitive study of Adventism outside North America by a non-Adventist. Details which a casual observer might overlook are explained accurately, such as the importance of the “Great Controversy” motif as the framework of

theological thinking (65, 157-168) or the fact that almost everyone in local congregations is involved in decision-making processes (61). Observations on apocalyptic expectations (133-134) are as precise as a subtle discussion of Malagasy Adventists' reasoning regarding their rejection of Catholicism (65-66). Such a comprehensive picture of local Adventist believers outside the Northern hemisphere is rare.

Second, Keller provides an excellent analysis of the complexity of Adventism, Malagasy mainstream culture, and ancestral religion (169-232). On the one hand, she shows that Malagasy Adventists are really average people (68-70) and "make every effort to blend in with their social environment and to not offend anybody, if at all possible, while remaining truthful to their religious commitment" (208). On the other hand, they emphatically reject a whole array of cultural elements that they identify as unacceptable or even satanic: alcohol, exhumation ceremonies, cattle sacrifices, divination, and traditional medicine. The Malagasy and the Adventist components of identity lead to an "endless process of decision making" (235); thus life becomes "extremely ambiguous" (239). By showing that Malagasy Adventism contains elements of both continuity and discontinuity with traditional culture, Keller elucidates the composite nature of the faith to which such religionists adhere. Thus she illustrates, with an anthropologist's tools, what a theologian or missiologist would call a natural inculturation or contextualization process.

Third, the main emphasis in *The Road to Clarity* is an assessment of what Keller identifies as the major pursuit of her Malagasy Adventist friends: Bible study (85-156). Far from being a mere system of indoctrination, the Adventist Sabbath School and other opportunities of studying the Bible, such as family devotions, are regularly used for a "genuine engagement" with texts (91). Keller feels reminded of university seminars and highlights the "dialogical, discursive and participatory nature" of Malagasy Adventist Bible study and the "critical thinking" that it entails (114). She even invents a term for this practice: the "Socratic method of Bible study" (114; she uses the term twenty times). Of course, these Christians search for truth only inside a firmly established framework: the Bible. Yet by doing so, they resemble most people at most times, even academics, who commonly engage in what Thomas Kuhn in his well-known book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* calls "Normal Science," i.e., working and thinking within a fixed paradigm. Still, according to Keller, the importance and intellectual nature of Bible study among Malagasy Adventists can hardly be exaggerated, for it is the very pleasure of inquiry within the biblical paradigm that is central to their identity.

Finally, Keller arrives at a skillfully painted and complex picture of "fundamentalist" religious movements. Although in my view this awkward term should not be applied to Seventh-day Adventism as a whole, Keller uses it for these Malagasy believers in a gentle way: she identifies as a central concern of "fundamentalist" groups the refusal to accept the separation between a religious and a secular sphere (185), which does not imply the polemic tone generally associated with the word. Thus Keller arrives at an appropriate understanding of Adventist religiosity as a comprehensive system that is much more attractive than an outsider might think. From initial fears that these might be people with "whom it would be highly unpleasant to spend any considerable amount of time," she came to the conclusion that they were actually "among the most pleasant and also the most open-minded people I have ever met" (41). Like Rodney Stark and Roger Finke, who in *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion* emphasize the rationality of religious choice and spiritual dedication, Keller thus advances the view that religious commitment does not preclude rationality and open-mindedness. However, she goes beyond Stark and Finke by contending that intellectual endeavor may actually be a main factor of religious life.

Keller is to be congratulated for each of these contributions. The book stands out as a ground-breaking study, and one hardly finds a point to criticize. At times I was tempted to doubt whether the "intellectuality" of Keller's Malagasy Adventists is really all that remarkable or if perhaps it may be attributed partly to her surprise of finding Christians, especially of the committed sort, being so open-minded. However, her findings can hardly be disputed by someone who is not personally acquainted with Keller's Malagasy friends, and given the background of Adventism as a movement dedicated to an immensely rational search for truth, her thesis is definitely plausible. A limitation inherent in her

methodology is that she dealt with relatively few people, who may not be representative for the whole of Madagascar and certainly not for the whole of Africa. Yet, this is not a weakness but a dimension of anthropological research, which depends on intimate knowledge of people. The lack of a broader field of data collection, which a sociologist would prefer, is compensated in the study by a comparison between two different geographical areas and by the high level of accuracy, depth, and discernment.

The only negative point that might be mentioned is that Keller lumps Adventists together with what she calls "New Churches" (41-55, 244), i.e., the various Pentecostal and African-initiated Christian movements, which are so influential on the African continent today. Although there are structural parallels (e.g., a literal understanding of the Bible, strictness, intensity, and dedication), many of these movements differ from Adventists not only in their historical origin, but also in regard to the core of Keller's observation: the focus on intellectual activity. Keller believes that what she found "may be relevant for followers of other New Churches" as well (116), but I doubt that it will be such a central concern as in the case of Adventism.

Yet this one point where I would raise a concern does not in any way diminish the merit of the study as a whole. Most important, Keller's analysis demonstrates that further empathic investigation is needed in several fields and with different academic approaches: the beliefs, lives, and dilemmas of ordinary believers; the interaction of non-Western Christians with culture in concrete situations; the nature of the faith held by those who are labeled "fundamentalists" by outsiders; and especially the place of intellectual activity in living religion.

Scholars of religious studies, mission, or anthropology, as well as any reader interested in Christianity in Africa or in Seventh-day Adventism, will find this book extremely enlightening. One would wish that more in-depth studies of Christianity in particular contexts might become available.

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Land, Gary. *Historical Dictionary of the Seventh-day Adventists*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2005. 420 pp. Hardcover, \$80.00.

Gary Land is Professor and Chair of the Department of History and Political Science at Andrews University. *Historical Dictionary of the Seventh-day Adventists* is number 56 in a series of Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements published by Scarecrow Press. The amount of material that is densely packed into this four-hundred-page book is impressive.

Land investigates not only the official Seventh-day Adventist Church, beginning about 1860, but also the Millerite movement from which it grew. The book begins with a six-page annotated chronology covering major events in the Seventh-day Adventist Church from 1818 to 2002, followed by a nine-page essay summarizing the highlights of Adventist history, which provides the overall framework of the dictionary.

Dictionary entries range from "Academy" to "Zimbabwe." The topics cover the great sweep of the Seventh-day Adventist movement: the worldwide scope of the church, persons important to the history and current life of the church, organizational features, world missions and evangelism, publishing and media, education, doctrinal development, creation science, healthful living, and controversy. Statistics, where given, are based on the 2003 edition of the *Yearbook of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*. Because the material presented in the *Dictionary* is too vast to comment on each of these sections in detail, this review will focus on a representative sampling.

Every nation in the world in which Adventists have now or once had a presence merits some sort of entry. For example, Morocco was entered by lay workers in 1925. By 1964, it boasted five churches with 165 members; then the Moslem government prohibited mission work. By 1993, only 12 members remained, meeting in private homes. The latest report indicates that no known Adventist presence remains. On the other hand, Brazil (entered in 1893) had, according to the