The Historiographical Work of Siegfried J. Schwantes

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It is ironic but not coincidental that it took a nonhistorian to make one of Adventism's most serious ventures into the field of historiography. Whatever their virtues and specializations, Seventh-day Adventist historians are not noted for their inquiry into the nature and meaning of history. It may even be said that they are conspicuous in their avoidance of such inquiry.[1]

The reasons for neglecting what can only be called the ultimate concern of the discipline are curious. The exploration of these would divert us from the subject of this paper, but two reasons of special moment must be noted.

First, our profession has long sought for meaning in history, and for an equally long time has failed to find it. Before the nineteenth century, failure lay in a *multiplicity* of meanings: history was intelligible, hence meaningful, because it was lawful, although precisely what made it lawful was disputed, the usual options being Providence, dialectics, recurrency, and progress. Today, the failure to find meaning (which itself, for the historian, is part of a larger crisis that I shall describe later) refers to the *absence* of meaning. Sometimes this situation is ascribed to the romantic or historicist revolt against classicism that detached history from philosophy in the late eighteenth century and instituted the new relativism. Usually, the absence of meaning is ascribed to the emergence of history as an empirical discipline. Natural science itself, based as it is on general principles and laws, need not, of course, have deterred the quest for universal history. We recall the meticulous method but also the generous dimensions of Leopold von Ranke's work, and of mid-nineteenth-century positivism in general. Seemingly, history and philosophy were at the point of reunion; for — whatever

else he was — man viewed "positively" was not unique. More commonly, however, natural science atomized society and pointed up the particularity, uniqueness, and individuality of it, thereby narrowing the scope, while improving the method, of history. Historians misunderstood an adjacent discipline just as they not infrequently do today. As it became more reliable because of this misunderstanding, the discipline became proportionately less purposeful — a good example of the mixed blessing.

Second to science as a deterrent to historiographical work has been the difficulty awaiting those Christian historians who ignore the empirical restraints, yield to impulse, and attempt to orchestrate the past. Praying believingly that "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," asserting the historicity of the Incarnation, adhering to the "fullness of time" concept, in sum precluded by their theology from all but the providential option, Christian historians have been forced to the defensive by all of the questions that accompany this option. Does not the attempt to identify God's hand in history elevate the scholar to God, courting an unscriptural pretension and immodesty? Does it not invite a "cop-out" from tiresome research? Does not the hand-of-God device raise expectations for disclosure to the precarious point where failure to disclose produces disappointment and cynicism? Most important for our purposes here, does it not superimpose on human freedom a determinism which renders that freedom meaningless by reducing man to a mechanism?

Regardless of the answers, these questions clearly provide a context in which to examine the work of Schwantes as it appears in his book *The Biblical Meaning of History.* The method of science and the principle of moral freedom may deter some from historiographical work; but such people are apparently the timid, for here we encounter an attempt to make science and freedom the veritable basis *of* historiographical work. The proposal is bold and arresting and the formulation of it just plausible and judicious enough to warrant thoughtful consideration.[2]

I

It will surprise exactly no one that Schwantes discerns pattern in history, that he ascribes this pattern to Providence, and that he identifies faith as the source of the double discovery of pattern and Providence. "History is purposeful," he writes early in the book, "and is moving toward a goal of God's own choice" (p. 48). There is, he says, "a general providence guiding the broad outlines of history" (p. 31). There is evidence of "God's active concern in history" (p. 162).

How do we know all of this? Not by locating ourselves in temporal time and seeking the meaning that is discoverable by human reason, but by reaching beyond history to faith in divine revelation. After all, "God has vouchsafed for man not a philosophy of history, but a theology of history" (p. 135). Just as the contemporaries of Christ missed the significance of the Incarnation because they were "immersed in the historical continuum" (p. 139), so also will the historian who is involved in the historical process succumb to myopia and loss of perspective until he experiences the superior insights of faith.

Schwantes knows that this idea is not original with him; indeed, the many who have espoused it before him seem to lend validity to it. Yet he must equivocate precisely where its other advocates have equivocated: Are we any better for having from faith a glimpse into the ultimate coherence of history? Is that glimpse of any practical use to the working profession aside from its satisfaction-value? Or, as the *philosophes* of the eighteenth century commonly asked, is the regularity of nature only a comforting thought, or is it grounds for action? This is the hard question. It is prompted by all those persons who fervently believe but refuse to implement. An example is Bernard Ramm, who contends that

> the reality of historical revelation does not put the Christian in a superior position to write the philosophy of history. Concerning the importance of most events of history the Christian is no more enlightened than the secular historian. The Christian can give no special interpretation of the role of Bismarck . . . in the history of the German people, or of the particular form of Chinese history. Nor does historical revelation enable the Christian to offer authoritative explanations of political, economic, or sociological events which elude the secular historian.[8]

Schwantes wants to find practical value in the providential approach; and as the disclaimers multiply, we suspect that he wants to find it badly. "To accept the providential view of history," he warns us, "does not necessarily enable one to give a plausible explanation for every major turn of events in terms of an overruling moral providence" (p. 4). Again: "A fully convincing account of history as moving toward a divine goal may forever remain beyond [the] reach [of historians]" (p. 16). Again: Scripture "confers on no one the charisma to label some events providential and some not. . . . Providence is an all-pervasive and silent influence. . . . We may be convinced of the discreet and continuing operation of providence leading all history to its appointed goal [but] it would seem sheer conceit on the human level to assert a 'more' providential efficacy in one event than in another" (p. 29). Again: "To affirm [the biblical viewpoint] does not imply

that the believer can fit every minor and major event into a coherent whole. Faith in a divine providence does not necessarily confer on him the gift of prophetic interpretation. In fact, most believers are content to say that the whole of history will eventually reveal a meaning, and that for the time being we see more often than not 'only puzzling reflections in a mirror' " (1 Corinthians 13:12 NEB) (p. 146). A final disclaimer is the statement that "divine providence must be assumed to be active in the totality of history [although] in most areas it eludes positive identification" (p. 163).

Without being perverse, I suggest that disclaimers can become self-denying when they are overused. By saying so often what he cannot do, Schwantes discloses exactly what he wants to do and what, in fact, he will attempt to do. Meaning assumed without illustration, Providence without examples, might be the lowest common denominator among Christian historians, but such caution cannot remove Schwantes from the gamesmanship of playing God. He remembers in his despair that God is sufficiently reasonable to disclose at least a modicum of His activity. "It would be idle," he says as he gains confidence, "to speak of . . . a plan if it must remain forever unidentifiable in the play and counterplay of events which make up human history" (p. 15). In another passage Schwantes finds it "consistent with the Biblical concept of man created in God's image, capable of holding communion with his Creator, that, within the limits of man's finitude, God's ways should be intelligible to him. The operation of divine providence within the historical process should be at least partially discernible and capable of conveying meaning to man's mind" (p. 119). Again: "Granted that . . . the points where the suprahistorical touches the historical are not occurrences open to the ordinary historical rules of evidence . . . it would yet be reasonable to expect that a loving Father would vouchsafe for man some glimpses of His benevolent providence" (p. 145).

Schwantes rounds the corner and takes the offensive with the help of two major devices, both of which peculiarly stem more fully from his own creative mind than from the biblical page. As a science major in college, he learned about the end-of-century investigation by physicists and chemists into the nature of matter — a perennial issue in Western philosophy — and about the startling conclusions wrought by this investigation. In particular, he discovered and subsequently never forgot the quantum theory of Max Planck that in 1900 undermined the traditional "verities" of mechanistic physics. We are all familiar in general, if not in detail, with the proposition that radioactive masses emit energy in discontinuous rather than continuous "packets" or quantities, and with the corollary that particles of such emis-

sions tend to defy the efforts of man precisely and completely to measure them. And we appreciate the extent to which such conclusions reduced the likelihood, or removed the possibility, of the objective reality so confidently assumed by the positivists, especially when combined with the contemporary work of Albert Einstein. What may surprise us is the significance for history in general that Schwantes assigns to these findings.

Far from being a harbinger of despair, the discovery of quanta rewards the patience and vindicates the fidelity of all those Christians who endured an unfavorable metaphysics during 1600-1900, a metaphysics in which nature seemed too uniform, regular, and predictable to permit divine intervention. Our world, says Schwantes, quoting a scientist at Oak Ridge, is manifestly one "in which indeterminacy, alternative, and chance are real aspects of the fundamental nature of things," and, Schwantes adds, "if this is true of nature, it should be even more true of man who transcends nature by the power of thought" (pp. 24-25). Therefore —

> the view long held of strict determinism in history must be likewise replaced by the concept of the openness of history. At every turn of events history is confronted with innumerable alternatives. Which alternative will be taken is, from the secular point of view, purely a matter of chance. But from the point of view of faith, the alternative taken may be a matter of Providence. . . . [Science] gives to the uncertainty surrounding every turn of events the name of chance. . . . But this new realization of the openness of history is exactly what the Christian recognizes as opportunity for divine providence [p. 25].

Openness, then, typifies nature and society, repudiates determinism, and invokes Providence. But is not Providence merely a more transcendent form of determinism? For Schwantes it is not. The revolution in physics discloses latitude for Providence and dispels misgivings about identifying God in history; but Schwantes has yet to say how Providence actually utilizes the newly found "openness," a challenge which leads him to a second major device.

Notwithstanding the undergraduate years, Schwantes is also a theologian. Indeed, so informed is he about the centrality of man's nature as a theological issue that his work becomes a veritable anthropology. Foremost, of course, is the *Imago Dei,* the image of God in the human person; and a vital part of that is the freedom of man. Unfortunately, that freedom is somewhat latent, because man tends to squander it (although this is itself a free act), especially because original sin distorted God's image in man.

Hence, man must recover the freedom that will make him truly human and that will restore in him the divine image. Man *desires* to make such recovery, because freedom as desire is a divine implantation. Man is *able* to

make such recovery only in an atmosphere conducive to experiencing freedom, for the exercise of it is the surest multiplier. Does such an atmosphere exist? Yes — because, open and fluid, history abounds in the alternatives and choices without which freedom would be a vain pursuit and a senseless pursuit. How, then, does God use the openness which the tiny quanta disclose? He uses it to remind man that the freedom universally sought is attainable (pp. 19-37, 177-186).

It is a sufficient reminder. If every book must have a thesis, this is a book, for Schwantes is ready to propose a thesis that will unify his work: the "unquenchable thirst for freedom is the chief propelling force in history" (p. 36). The idea recurs in variant forms, but the variance is only stylistic. Whoever elevated the world to "a higher stage of political and moral freedom" performed a providential mission (p. 104). "To follow the trail of freedom . . . is to follow where the Spirit is leading" (p. 164). "We propose that the enlargement of freedom is the motif that introduces meaning better than any other into . . . history" (p. 165). "History [is] on the side of freedom" (p. 177). A final statement of the thesis sums up all that we have said: "Through the enlargement of the areas of freedom, as well as by the well-timed advances of science, divine providence has been leading history to its appointed goal" (p. 192).

II

Evaluating is harder than describing. As we turn to this task it is well to note some considerations that compound the difficulty of evaluation and to moderate the criticisms to be made.

First, it is unfair to demean a book that raises and attempts to answer the questions that we anxiously avoid. I contended earlier that we are reluctant to "do history" in the truest sense, and my point here is that the work of Schwantes is rendered significant merely by what it undertakes to do, irrespective of its success.

Second, we are dealing here with universal history. The book commences with the breath of life and ends with the life after death, which is to say that its scope exceeds the competence of any reviewer.

Third, it is possible that the book is noteworthy more for its historical than for its historiographical content. Unfortunately for Schwantes, only the latter is assessed here; but in fairness to him I shall digress to the substantive portion of the book in order to bring us closer to its author's established expertise.

The saga of freedom is a bewitching theme, and our teaching would be

enlivened by the illustrations which Schwantes supplies. He penetrates the Egyptian mind of the Amarna era in order to identify the momentary decline of polytheism and the concomitant upsurge in "the notion of freedom under law" (pp. 74-75, 83). He criticizes the corporate tendency in Mesopotamian civilization, but finds among the pastoral Amorites, especially Hammurabi, a "stress upon individual freedom" (p. 83). Cyrus of Persia becomes "the free agent of a divine providence to set in motion influences which would promote the cause of freedom everywhere" (p. 96). Alexander the Great propels the world to yet "a higher stage of political and moral freedom" (p. 104), for in his era the city-state is gone — that institution so often considered the matrix of democracy, but in reality so deleterious to democracy.

So it goes. The hazards of corporation notwithstanding, the Christian Church becomes the instrument of freedom par excellence; but of course the Church apostasizes, constricting freedom, plunging man to a nemesis in the actualization of his nature. Yet the Reformation of the sixteenth century, abetted by nationalism and humanism, turns the tide in that search for the "freedom which makes men truly human" (p. 181). The crescendo of the Reformation precipitates the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century and the constitutionalism of the nineteenth.

Where are we at present? Has history as a sort of purifier emancipated man from tyranny and become his saviour? Not quite, for technology, although "providentially guided" (p. 191), threatens freedom. Besides —

> the historical trend toward greater freedom for the plodding masses has been wrongly interpreted as signifying that man's redemption is effected by the historical process. . . . Man is a rebel in chains which cannot be broken, because they are forged with the refractory links of alienation from God. Only through reconciliation with his Creator are man's Promethean bonds effectively and permanently broken. History may, at best, create the environment in which this reconciliation takes place. It does so by surrounding man with a climate of freedom in which moral decisions are possible [p. 178].

Following the "trail of freedom" with Schwantes is an energizing experience, and one is tempted to square it with the charts. But, to repeat our third and lengthiest qualifier, the perspective of this paper is historiographical and not historical. With that perspective we must now measure the argument of Schwantes the historiographer.

God in history, which I acknowledge in faith, is not deepened as an affirmation, nor improved in utility, by the device I shall hereafter call the freedom device. The failure of this device to deepen affirmation, which will

not concern Schwantes because it was not his purpose, lies in what for me is the already unequivocal nature of that affirmation. Its failure to improve the utility of a belief for the working historian, however, which I think *was* Schwantes' central purpose, becomes the main shortcoming.

Making God the impulse behind every quest after freedom, then identifying the freedom-fighter, then claiming a breakthrough in the disclosure of God, acquires utility only if (*a*) it can be shown to be valid and (*b*) it can be shown to be not only valid but also desirable. The accuracy of a theory renders it usable; appeal assures that it will in fact be used. We must examine the work of Schwantes from both standpoints.

With respect to validity, the freedom device, as I read it, is extremely weak, and this is because it violates a central antithesis in Christian thought — namely, the portrayal of man as both free and determined. Schwantes would prefer that man be either/or. For him, we resolve antitheses by declaring their components identical, when in fact we do it, if at all, only with cognitive power.

At times, it is true, Schwantes attempts to balance the picture, to maintain and define both freedom and its limitations, but the attempt results in exactly the imprecision that we would expect from so large an undertaking. Are we really better off for Schwantes' having said that "it is possible to admit a general providence guiding the broad outlines of history, yet allow a broad scope for individual freedom" (p. 31)? Does it help to say that "the Biblical view of history rejects causal determinism, . . . rejects the view that history is completely undetermined . . . [and upholds the view] that history remains ever within God's reach" (p. 32)? Is it very meaningful to call God "the guarantor of the intelligibility of any given historical event . . . [and] the guarantor of history for all time" (p. 35)?

Understandably, Schwantes aborts this effort and shifts to the either/or thrust that seems to invalidate the book. On the one hand, he implies that man is not really free at all. History is not its own saviour. An extrahistorical force shapes and patterns it; this force is Providence, and God's role involves not only the creation of circumstances in which man can be free but also the periodic activation of man's quest after freedom. Saying that God wills something is tantamount to saying that man acts *because* God so wills. Therefore, man's end may be freedom, but the means to that end seem to fall short of freedom, and the commonplace indictment of providential history, namely, its denial of freedom, would seem to pertain here. Indeed, we have a philosophical counterpart of that strange imperial urge which forces men to be free.

On the other hand, Schwantes suggests, and I think more strongly suggests, that man is entirely free, which is surely the biggest surprise of a book that claims to be a theology of history (p. 135). Our first glimpse of this tendency is the author's unexpected appreciation of sixteenth-century humanism (pp. 172-173), but the point is argued in the abstract as well.

To exercise moral freedom, we are told, man requires a climate of freedom, which is to say, *other* kinds of freedom. It is not my intention to question the relationship which Schwantes posits between the exercise of a moral decision and the climate of freedom in which one lives, although I personally believe the relationship is as likely to be inverse as it is to be direct. Parenthetically, I think of Martin Buber's assessment of the Jewish mind under duress. Rather, precisely because those "other freedoms" lack specification, they bespeak absolute freedom and thus the author's penchant for either/or.

But let us suppose that our estimate of Schwantes in this regard is unfair. After all, one might argue that the all-or-nothing handling of freedom, or the ambivalent handling of freedom, actually attests to the author's struggle with a thorny problem and shows his appreciation of, rather than his neglect of, the central tension between freedom and determinism. If *this* interpretation of the book is true, its validity stands, pending further examination, and we can turn to the question of desirability in order to see whether what might be usable has sufficient appeal to recommend one's use of it.

To appeal to the working historian, a thesis must be valid — and I have some doubts about this one. But a thesis also finds its appeal or lack thereof in the historian's own predilections. In this regard, not many will rush to Schwantes. The freedom device retrogresses to monocausality; to a politicized, libertarian, or Whig interpretation of history; to a simplistic and romanticized dialectic; and to that fondness for eulogy which we call filiopietism.[4] The argument is replete with the polemics against government and corporation that spring so readily from evangelical Christianity.

But with the question of desirability, as with that of validity, second thoughts arise. I am not ready to condemn the freedom device or, more generally, the providential view of history, as undesirable. My reason provides the perspective in which I want to leave Schwantes.

What inclines me toward his viewpoint, while wishing it were more validly constructed, is the situational crisis that historians face today. I need not belabor a special dimension of this crisis encountered by Seventh-day Adventist historians, for we are fully aware of the urgent demand on us,

due in part to the cost factor, to render our courses sufficiently unique (i.e., Christian, if not sectarian) to warrant their increasing price.[5] The providential view of history is a way of doing this that should not be rejected unless and until a better way is found. Certainly it can be said that alternative methods of Christianizing our courses are not coming forth in any plentitude, either (*a*) because there are no alternatives, or (*b*) because we fail to see alternatives that do avail themselves, or (*c*) because we doubt the need to Christianize our courses in the first place.[6]

But it is the more general antihistorical or ahistorical bent of our era that concerns me here. History as a discipline, unlike so many others, begs almost in vain for legitimation. We are no longer servants of a profession whose utility is proved and widely assumed. As any freshman class in civilization reminds us, we are practitioners of a lost art whose dissemination now seems puzzling and irrelevant. In the words of *Phi Delta Kappan:* "For most students, courses in history close rather than open doors to the past. The content seems to bring answers to unasked questions, to supply materials that one does not need, to explain that which has not yet troubled the reader, and to satisfy where there is no curiosity."[7] The German-American historian Hans Meyerhoff speaks of "a strange loss of historical appetite."[8] The great British historian J. H. Plumb writes that "few societies have ever had a past in such a galloping dissolution as this."[9]

When we look at the thwarting factors around us, it is little wonder that history as a valuable enterprise suffers. There is existential philosophy, that ubiquitous villain and the factor that prompted Schwantes to write his book. "The indifference for past history," he laments, "is the recognized hallmark of existentialism" (p. 134). We know that the alienated person locates the meaning of life not in what he considers a capricious and uncongenial history but in that last resort which happens also to be a starting-point, namely, the individual self (although we admit that such melancholy often arises from and is maintained by a powerful scrutiny of the past by existentialists).

Then there is the rapidity of fundamental change, or, in Schlesinger's words, "the constant acceleration in the velocity of history."[10] So bewilderingly different is the present from even the recent past that students increasingly and quite naturally doubt the relevance of a past they pretend to have superseded. In addition, the misuse of the past by radical historians of the New Left, though not only by them, construes and discredits it. Their impetuous search for a "usable past" reminds us of Plumb's axiom that "where the service of the past [is] urgently needed, truth [is] at a discount."[11]

Furthermore, the antiauthoritarianism of our time either necessitates or at least accommodates a rebellion against history, the thing which in addition to religion and philosophy traditionally buttressed authority. Diplomatically speaking, our enumeration should also include America's very early and very moralistic repudiation of Europe and Europe's past, although this factor somewhat contradicts my belief that the requiem of history is a recent development. Seemingly, we never *did* have a taste for history here in America.[12] Finally, as I said at the outset, history is less purposeful when more reliable. That is, a discipline that is exacting, critical, analytical, antiquarian, and in all respects professional, easily jettisons the claim to meaning, law, or design.

In the aggregate, these factors seem, at least in the minds of the current generation, to nullify the traditional values of historical study. The pleasure, adventure, and discipline of the detective-historian may remain, although these were at best side-benefits. It is also true that history as a major literary form is untouched, if not better off. Nor do these factors disallow for the peculiar nostalgia for the past that of late has become a commercial bonanza.[13] But the essential values of history were its ability to orient in time and to exploit a meaningful past for the purpose of predicting the future, and these values are severely jeopardized by the factors mentioned.

III

Are we therefore a beached whale, helplessly and odorously floundering in an unfriendly habitat, or is there yet a passage into the current of time? To such a jugular type of question, the kind that impugns our reason for being, there must be an answer, for we cannot wish it out of existence. I contend that the providential view of history, revitalized by Schwantes, provides an answer that should not be rejected unless and until a better way is found. It is a fact worthy of both illustration and explanation that a suprahistorical view is especially suited to antihistorical times.

Anyone cursorily acquainted with contemporary historiography knows that "Christian interpretations of history, in the Augustinian tradition, have reasserted themselves strongly."[14] To the general public, but also to the specialist, Christian solutions to the problem of history satisfy as they have seldom satisfied in the past. The names of Karl Löwith, Reinhold Niebuhr, Christopher H. Dawson, and Arnold Toynbee are sufficiently representative.

To say why there should be such a juxtaposition of antihistorical and suprahistorical thought, we need only consider the obvious. History's burden of proof is staggering, and escape into faith conveniently restores meaning

to history while avoiding the seemingly fruitless search for meaning *in* history. By acquiring meaning (never mind the method), history acquires value, for meaning opens up predictive possibilities which restore to humanity one of the mainstays of its earlier confidence. History again becomes serviceable to society.

I conclude this description and evaluation of Schwantes' work with five brief propositions.

1. Empirical science and moral freedom, which preclude much historiographical work, are no hindrance for Schwantes. Instead, they are the basis of his work.

2. Recoiling from what we might term deistic historiography, Schwantes seeks to demonstrate the utility of belief for the historian. It is a gigantic undertaking.

3. The degree of success with which he does this depends on the strength of his thesis in terms of its validity and desirability.

4. I have taken a mixed position with respect to each, primarily in order to relate his work favorably to the crisis in legitimation faced by the history profession today.

5. We are left with a warning: either the providential theory solves this crisis, or the crisis will be solved in other ways — for our courses must be somehow Christian, and history must somehow reclaim its value. I would only hope that these needs could be met in alternative ways that exact lesser prices than a leap into faith and a surrender of history to art. In my judgment, the search for alternatives must therefore continue, and we can thank Siegfried J. Schwantes for his probably unintended acceleration of that search.[15]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1 Two essential essays on historiography from a Seventh-day Adventist perspective are Ronald L. Numbers, In defense of secular history (a review of George Edgar Shankel's *God and Man in History),* SPECTRUM (Spring 1969), pp. 64-68; and of Gary Land, History from an Adventist perspective (a review of Jerome B. Clark's trilogy on *1844),* SPECTRUM (Summer 1970), pp. 81-84.

2 The book in question is Siegfried J. Schwantes, *The Biblical Meaning of History* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1970). Professor Schwantes is chairman of the department of religion at Middle East College in Beirut, Lebanon. He received the bachelor of arts from Pacific Union College in 1938, a master of arts from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in 1949, and a doctor of philosophy from Johns Hopkins University in 1963. In 1965 he published *A Short History of the Ancient Near East,* for which he was awarded first prize by the Baker Book House of Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is the author of two other books and of numerous articles.

3 Bernard Ramm, *Special Revelation and the Word of God* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 1961), p. 97.

4 The heroes of this book are Amenhotep IV (Ikhnaton), Hammurabi, Cyrus of Persia, Alexander the Great, Paul the apostle, several figures of the Reformation, and Max Planck. Prominent villains are Karl Barth and the pontiffs of the Roman Catholic church.

5 I wrote of this imperative in a *Review and Herald* article entitled We will pay the difference when we see the difference (January 14, 1971), pp. 14-15.

6 I proposed an alternative method in an article, Christian aspects of diplomacy: some conceptual guidelines, SPECTRUM (Summer 1970), pp. 29-42.

7 Edgar Bruce Wesley, Let's abolish history courses, *Phi Delta Kappan* 49:3-8 (September 1967).

8 Hans Meyerhoff, editor, *The Philosophy of History in Our Time: An Anthology* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company 1959), p. 22.

9 J. H. Plumb, *The Death of the Past* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company 1970), p. 15.

10 Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Crisis of Confidence* (New York: Bantam Books 1969), p. 151.

11 Plumb, p. 32.

12 This, of course, is a central argument of the "consensus" school of American history. See Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York: Harcourt 1955), p. 285. See also William Pfaff's article, Contempt for the past: it's nothing new for Americans, in the March 28, 1971, issue of the *Los Angeles Times*.

13 Marcia Henning, It's nostalgia time, *Press-Enterprise* (Riverside, California), March 28, 1971.

14 Meyerhoff, p. 23.

A good summation of neo-Augustinian work appears in Robert Paul Mohan, *Philosophy of History; An Introduction* (New York: Bruce Publishing Company 1970), pp. 34-50, 143-161. But one should also consult the three standard historiographical surveys: Harry Elmer Barnes, *A History of Historical Writing,* second edition (New York: Dover Publications 1962); James Thompson Shotwell, *The History of History* (New York: Columbia University Press 1939); and James Westfall Thompson, *A History of Historical Writing* (New York: Macmillan Company 1942).

15 This paper was prepared for delivery to the Association of Western Adventist Historians, third annual meeting, Sunday, April 4, 1971, Riverside, California.