

which provided a blueprint for subsequent imperial eschatologies, including the apocalyptic imperialism dominating Islam in the twelfth century.

Rubenstein's latest work is fascinating and commendable. As a historian, he has shown the tenacity of a first crusader; as hermeneut, the restraint of a Templar. His parting wish is that readers leave "with a deeper respect for the sophistication, the attractiveness, and the sheer staying power of apocalyptic ideas" (217). In this pilgrimage, Rubenstein has been resoundingly successful.

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Scholtus, Silvia C. *Women in Leadership in the Beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South America*. Libertador San Martín, Entre Ríos: Editorial UAP, 2019. 108 pp. eBook. USD 7.99.

The history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South America has been widely explored in books published in Spanish and Portuguese. It has been recounted by some works in English also, including Floyd Greenleaf's book *A Land of Hope: The Growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South America* (Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 2011) and Juan Carlos Viera's doctoral thesis: "Seventh-day Adventists in Latin America: Their Beginnings, Their Growth, Their Challenges" (PhD Dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1993). Nonetheless, the lives and work of female workers and leaders have been mostly overlooked. Silvia C. Scholtus, emeritus professor at the Universidad Adventista del Plata in Argentina, and former Director of the Centro Histórico Adventista (Adventist Heritage Center), has produced the first biographic account of female Seventh-day Adventist pioneers in South America. Scholtus fills a gap in Adventist historiography in documenting the lives and deeds of eight courageous women who were at the battlefield of missionary activity in the continent.

To explain the objective of the book, the first chapter is devoted to highlighting the importance of recounting stories and preserving them for the future. A general outline of the book is presented in the second chapter, which is titled "Introduction," while the next chapter provides a concise historical framework for the work of the pioneers in South America, describing the societal norms and traditions concerning women in that period. Chapters four to eleven are devoted each to the life of a woman pioneer. Every chapter is structured in four sections. First, the author provides a general background of the selected woman for that chapter, including family history. Later she describes the missionary activities accomplished by each pioneer. The last two sections of these chapters are usually called "Her last days," narrating their retirement years, and "Her legacy," which summarizes the achievements of each woman with an inspirational tone.

The first pioneer is Mary Thurston-Westphal (1860–1931), whose husband, Frank Westphal, was the first ordained minister to be sent by the Seventh-day Adventist church to South America. She served as a treasurer for the East Coast Mission, the administrative organization of the church then encompassing the countries of Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Brazil. Later she headed the Sabbath School and Home Missionary department for the entire field of South America. Those posts allowed her to pen several articles, recounting missionary stories and the progress of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the countries she served. Silvia uses them profusely along with other first-hand accounts published in denominational magazines and books. This constant dependence on primary sources not only makes the book historically reliable but colorful and vivid as well.

The fifth chapter focuses on Lucy Post (1845–1937), a successful Bible worker that planted the first church in Uruguay. Next comes Sadie R. Graham Town (1869–1966), who was instrumental in the development of the Colegio Adventista del Plata, now the Universidad Adventista del Plata (River Plate Adventist University), and also an effective missionary along with her husband, Nelson Town. The life of Luisa Post-Everist (1879–1957), niece of Lucy Post, is addressed in the seventh chapter. Among other achievements, she was the first director of the Adventist Youth department in Argentina, which led along with the Home Missionary and Sabbath-School departments. Previously she had been the secretary of the Sabbath School Department for the entire South-American continent. The next chapter covers the life of Lydia Green-Oppegard (1875–1960), who was one of the first editors of denominational magazines in South America and also headed the Sabbath School Department of the newly created South American Division since 1916, succeeding Luisa Post-Everist in that post. Chapters nine and ten deal with the lives of Elvira Deggeller (1885–1958) and her sister Cecilia Deggeller (1880–1973) respectively. The former's work as a literature evangelist was instrumental in the planting of numerous churches, while the latter traveled through South America as a Bible worker with equally fruitful results. The last biography, in the eleventh chapter, belongs to Meda Kerr (1879–1933), a brilliant nurse who pioneered health evangelism in Uruguay and Argentina.

In the concluding chapter, Silvia recapitulates the lives and deeds of women missionaries and recommends some lines of research for future works on the same topic. A book of this nature was certainly long due. This is the first attempt to provide a history of the women who played a fundamental role in the beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South America, and as such the author's endeavor must be highly commended. The author constructed the stories using a wide variety of primary sources and first-hand accounts, including articles in denominational magazines from that time, autobiographies, and interviews with living relatives. The

dependence on reliable sources makes the book historically trustworthy and reveals the careful historical research that produced it.

Since most of these stories have been overlooked by previous historical works, readers will be struck by the important and significant positions filled by women during the first years of the Adventist Church in South America. In many cases, current ecclesiastical policies prevent women from occupying these positions today, which signals a contemporary lack of understanding of the essential role that women play in the mission and leadership of the Adventist church. Despite the great significance of this book, a couple of points should be mentioned.

The current edition is a revised and expanded version of a book published in Spanish in 2012 by the same University Press. Chapters one, two, three, and twelve were not present in the first Spanish edition. The remaining chapters were slightly revised and updated. The decision to publish a new edition in English provides a wider international audience for these stories. Nonetheless, in some cases, the translation is guilty of awkwardness caused by an overly literal translation. Perhaps a more flexible translation could have rendered better results. Further details on the geographical or historical background of some places and institutions could have been beneficial for readers lacking knowledge of South American Adventist territory and history. Another point worth mentioning is the title of ch 2 (“Introduction”) which may be misleading for inattentive readers. Although the title matches the content of the chapter, which provides a general outline for the book, it is unusual for a second chapter. Perhaps would have been better to merge chapters one and two.

Despite the minor issues that were mentioned, I highly recommend this book. The author vividly describes the daily struggles and victories of these warriors for Christ in their tireless fight to spread the Adventist message in unreached lands. It is informative and inspiring at the same time. Concluding, I must say that this book is a must-read for anyone interested in a more profound and inclusive understanding of the beginnings of the Adventist movement in South America as reflected in the lives of some of its more outstanding female pioneers. Missiologists will also find valuable information in the study of female involvement in Christian missions.

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Thiessen, Matthew. *Jesus and the Forces of Death: The Gospels' Portrayal of Ritual Impurity within First-Century Judaism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020. xii + 241 pp. Hardcover. USD 27.99.

This review is an abridged form of an invited review paper presented in a Synoptic Gospels and Ritual in the Biblical World joint session of the Society of Biblical Literature on December 9, 2020.