

no time in trying either to prove or disprove the supernatural elements in Jonah's book. Life lessons from Jonah seem to be his priority, and he wrestles with the timeless value of this biblical book throughout.

Finally, the conclusion of the book is followed by four excurses, a bibliography, and three indices.

Perry's book is well written and an easy read for a general audience. Its pages are replete with quotations from comparative literature, especially from the wealth of Jewish religious writing. The book combines traditional views with a number of fresh insights. Perry notes that "Our attention [on the book of Jonah] should be focused less on originality than on organic relevance to the context of our present text" (15).

While general readers will profit from reading *The Honeymoon Is Over*, those who will benefit the most are the readers who value a comparative literary approach to the books of the Bible.

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Polok, Władysław. *Geneza I wczesny rozwój adwentyzmu europejskiego* (The genesis and early development of European Adventism). Podkowa Lesna: Signa Temporis, 2008. 221 pp. Paper, 20,00 zł.

Most Polish Adventists would consider their knowledge of Adventist history, in the United States and Europe, to be relatively complete and organized. This work radically opposes this common view. It is evident that the pioneers of this radical Protestant movement never received an extensive and satisfying monograph in Polish. There are at least a few reasons why this is: a lack of primary information which has been lost throughout the years; a lack of historical knowledge (yes!); and finally, as the author states, an incorrect approach to the tough and objective moments in the history of the work of the church.

The main advantage of this scholarly work is that the author states clearly the methodology and consequently follows it. The scholar writes: "I used the following research methods: beginning-progressive, which looks at certain activities of the Adventist pioneers in Europe in the beginning and historical development; and also comparative, which is based on the comparison of the pioneers' input in Adventist development. I also used the analytic-synthetic method as my main investigative instrument of archival and historic material. This became the source of my main synthesis in the text. The point was to approach the subject broadly, especially during the early stages of development and function of the organization. I believe the paper is based on sufficient archival material, coming from inside the church, but also from national archives, not restricting myself only to certain issues of the magazines, letters and published accounts" (15-16).

The first chapter of the dissertation reviews certain historical events in a sociopolitical and religious context, including differences in the Roman Catholic Church and also widely understood evangelical perspectives. The

period between 1815 (Congress of Versailles) and 1914 (beginning of World War I) has become a special subject of scholarly research. At this time in Europe there was something called *radical order*, which was initiated by the French Revolution (1789), and it resulted in a series of revolutions and uprisings across Europe, called the Springs of Nations (1848). Additionally during this period was the November Uprising (1830), and January Uprising (1863), in the formerly, nonexistent Poland.

No wonder, then, that this continent comes to the forefront in the way of civilizational, economical, and social supremacy. As a result of this period comes tremendous cultural, scientific, and educational development. A few extreme views came into view. The first being liberal, which speaks about freedom of an individual, national independence, literature, and expressing identity of a society. Against the liberal view arose anticapitalistic views putting the working class into the forefront (e.g., Marxism). Romanticism was influencing the artistic sphere (Germany, France, England, Russia), which, in Poland, strongly emphasized a Messianistic view of a suffering nation awaiting its salvation.

If we consider the religious situation at that time we should notice important changes that were especially evident in the Roman Catholic Church. Pope Pius IX, elected in 1846, introduced a few important reforms, such as the Doctrine of Immaculate Conception of Mary (1854); the condemnation of rationalistic philosophy, liberal theology, religious tolerance, secular weddings, and Bible societies; and the summoning of the Vatican Council I (1869-1870). At this Council, Pope Pius IX pronounced another dogma, this time about infallibility of the pope in matters of faith and morality.

A revival was also visible among Protestant churches. Perhaps we could say that the reformational movement was heading toward two different directions (as a matter of fact, all the time, we have what we can call “reforming of the reformation”): deism, which is also called the naturalistic religion, emphasizes the superior role of the mind in religious understanding (e.g., Unitarianism or contemporary liberal theology); and pietism. Later on, the movement moved into a messianistic-eschatological direction. The precursors of these directions were Roman Catholic priests: a Jesuit, Manuel Lacunza, and a Dominican, Bernard Lambert. The Adventist awakening in the United States happened because of William Miller. His prediction about the real second coming of Christ (Second Advent) proved to be wrong. The result of it was that new Adventist groups started to emerge in the 1860s. In fact, these new groups never identified with the teachings of the previously mentioned reformer. We can say that a new, denominational organism emerged in clearly defined stages. In their teachings, special attention was directed toward a proper understanding of the numbering of days in the book of Daniel, especially in light of the letter to the Hebrews (chaps. 8–9). The movement also spoke against social pathology. Then came missionary work. Although, in the beginning (1844-1851), missionary work had a very limited range, it became quite extensive and opened on a larger scale between 1851 and 1864.

Today, the Seventh-day Adventist Church operates in 208 countries, publishing literature in 206 countries, and distributing it in 713 languages. In geographical terms, this makes it the second-most widely distributed Christian denomination. In addition, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has experienced a rapid growth of baptized members, with numbers estimated at around 14 million people.

The author describes all of this in his book. The main strength of this form of transmitting the information is its simplicity and suggestivity. The reader will notice excellent knowledge of the subject, which is not surprising since Polok is an educated historian and theologian. His many years of work as a scholar and teacher are another benefit in helping to reach the reader. There is no doubt that this work can be, and should be, read, not only by Adventists, but by everyone who would be interested.

The second chapter concerns the precursory role of Michal Belina-Czechowski and his accomplishments. In the early period of his activity, the church couldn't understand his extensive vision and critically judged the zeal of this converted Roman Catholic priest. The author correctly points out that he "planned to include people from all different languages and nations, they were closely tied to a special cosmo-political situation in New York. Those activities haven't been accepted by the church which was not ready for it at that time. The biggest input of Michal Belina-Czechowski was understanding the fact that the mission of the church concerns the whole world. One way to accomplish this mission was to reach the cities and establish churches in centers of commerce, industry, art and science, as well as reaching to people with high cultural, social, and political influence" (184).

Chapter 3 introduces a person next in line after Michael Belina-Czechowski—John N. Andrews, missionary who reached Europe (1874). He was a person totally committed to his church, and had extraordinary intellectual qualifications. However, it was soon obvious that even with these qualifications he did not produce the expected results. Regretfully, his American methods of influencing members thoroughly failed. Looking at how he tried to expand Adventism: "J. N. Andrews put a special emphasis on publishing literature and distributing it as newspaper ads and finding similar groups of Christians who observed the Sabbath" (186).

If we compare Michal Belina-Czechowski with J. N. Andrews, the latter missionary was much less effective. We are not talking about his zeal or his sacrifice for expanding the new faith, but about his methods of evangelism. The major cause of Andrews's lack of success was his lack of knowledge of European reality. Polok understands that this was the outcome of improper presuppositions, which were at the center of his missionary endeavors.

The most tragic figure in this esteemed circle was Ludwig R. Conradi (chap. 4). He was well prepared for his European presence, was a good organizer, and efficient at making Adventism popular. What is even more important, however, he had support from the church. His evangelistic methods were similar to those of the Baptists, but he could use them to expand his movement. After a while, there was a need for educated ministers

(theological seminary and missionary school in Friedensau) who could organize the courses and conferences, which had charitable dimensions, and were concerned in health, diet, and hygiene. Regretfully, disappointed ambitions and too much self confidence led this valuable church worker to leave the Seventh-day Adventist Church and join the Seventh Day Baptists.

The author is not criticizing or condemning the decision of this important Adventist. He lets the facts speak for themselves and make important hypotheses. Without doubt, this is one of the major advantages of the dissertation. Finally, a conclusion is drawn from previous data which Polok summarizes: "With all assurance, it is worth pointing out that European Adventism was established by Europeans, such as Michael Belina-Czechowski and Ludwig Richard Conradi. They also inspired and established the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Even the trauma of World War I and the abandonment of the faith by Ludwig R. Conradi could not threaten the well-built and powerful fundamentals of the Church, and prevent its further expansion" (191, my translation). Scholarly research on the beginning of Adventism—its conditions and development—is good but is also a difficult subject to put into scholarly papers. Some obstacles may be the depth of the literature, numerous visits to archives, and the necessity and extensiveness of the bibliography. That is why we should welcome these kinds of publications, one of which is the book *Geneza*. The author himself tells us: "I believe that this paper will not end the topic, but will add to its enrichment; and research should continue and become the subject of further publications" (15, my translation). On the basis of this statement we can, with all assurance, say that the author of the book fulfilled his goals, and his conclusions will establish borders for future research.

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Rowe, David L. *God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. 244 pp. + v. Paper, \$24.00.

Every once in a while I pick up a book that is so well written that I just cannot put it down. This was the case for me as I read Rowe's new biography of William Miller. What is amazing to me is that with the recent series of biographies edited by George R. Knight and the resurgence of interest in Adventist studies over the past two decades that no one until Rowe has tackled a biographical treatment of the founder of Adventism since 1910! In many ways, David L. Rowe, who is not an adherent of any of the Adventist traditions, has done Miller and the story of Adventism a great service by demythologizing apologetics and hagiography and presenting Miller within his historical, cultural, and religious milieu.

God's Strange Work is neatly organized into eight chapters with a foreword (by Mark Noll) and an epilogue. In chapter 1 Rowe sets the stage for the biography by telling the story of Miller's family. Service in the military and instability in Massachusetts created an opportunity for his family to move