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Gary P. Gillum

Book of Mormon Reviews through 1987

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BOOK OF MORMON BOOK REVIEWS (to Spring, 1988)

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Investigating the Investigation

Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses, by Richard Lloyd Anderson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1981, xv+206 pp. illus.

Reviewed by William D. Russell, chairperson, Division of Social Sciences at Graceland College, Lamoni, Iowa.

WITH OVER-GENEROUS PORTIONS of direct quotations, Richard Lloyd Anderson presents the reader with statements made by the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, and statements made by others affirming their good character and the sincerity of their testimony regarding the gold plates. It is thus encyclopedic in its documentation but there is so much repetition in the book that the public might have been better served by a journal article.

Despite his doctorates in history and law, Anderson writes not as a detached historian but as a man of faith, with deep reverence for the eleven witnesses. His argument is essentially this: the Three Witnesses and some of the Eight Witnesses became disaffected in the late 1830s and spent most or all of the remainder of their lives outside the Church, yet they reaffirmed their testimony regarding the Book of Mormon as long as they lived. Their credibility as witnesses is affirmed by evidence showing that they were well respected in their communities, even though those communities were anti-Mormon and their former Mormon connections were known. Anderson suggests it would have been in their self-interest to renounce their original testimony. Since they did not, he concludes that the miraculous events they attested to literally happened.

However, all he really demonstrates is that the witnesses were known by their non-Mormon neighbors as honest men and that they reaffirmed their original position to the end. But it requires a "leap of faith" to reach the conclusion Anderson seems to

desire: that the plates actually existed and were the ancient record which the Book of Mormon claims to be. Alternative explanations — such as various psychological possibilities — are occasionally mentioned briefly but never seriously examined. For example, he fails to probe possible psychological implications of the fact that Cowdery, Whitmer, and Harris had an "overwhelming desire" (p. 52) to be among the three witnesses anticipated to meet the requirements of Deuteronomy 19:15. The hypnosis hypothesis is brushed aside because persons hypnotized "are normally aware of entering such a process" (p. 188). But he does not deal with the possibility that they were not aware they were hypnotized.

All of the departing witnesses had nearly a decade of active membership before leaving the Church. This gave them plenty of time to retell their story on so many occasions to so many people that the testimony would have been embedded in their minds and they would not likely change their story later. Anderson makes much of their reputation for honesty, but the witnesses could hardly fail to realize that to renounce their testimony would damage their credibility. Hiram Page recognized it would be foolish not to stick by his story: "As to the Book of Mormon, it would be doing injustice to myself, and to the work of God of the last days, to say that I could know a thing to be true in 1830, and know the same thing to be false in 1847" (p. 129). Thus I cannot agree with Anderson that it was contrary to their self-interest — once outside the Church — for them to stick by their story (p. 83). From the evidence Anderson gives us it appears they acted in their best interests when outside the Church: they were not inclined to create opportunities to affirm their testimony, but when asked by others they reaffirmed the position they had been publically committed to for many years.

With regard to Cowdery, Anderson dismisses the possibility of fraud because such an explanation is supposedly inconsistent with his reputation as a "responsible attorney and public servant" (p. 53). But many men of honest reputation have committed fraud. The witnesses' reputation for honesty is supposed to convince us of the truth of their testimony, but a local lawyer who was a politician involved in a scandal is a source Anderson uses to support Cowdery's trustworthiness (p. 42). Another evidence of Cowdery's public good reputation is his narrow loss in a political campaign in which he was attacked for his Mormon background (p. 44). The conclusion is that he must have been well respected to have run so close to the winner. But we are not given the information we need to know whether Cowdery really ran well. What was his party's strength in the district? Was it an office a Democrat should be expected to win? Did Oliver run ahead of or behind his colleagues on the Democratic ticket? And how did Cowdery respond to those who criticized his Mormon past? Anderson says Cowdery maintained his testimony throughout his life, but he gives us no evidence that he affirmed his testimony during the years he spent as a lawyer-politician outside the fellowship of the Church.

As is characteristic of the "faithful historian," sources that support Anderson's thesis are given great weight while those that don't are explained away. For instance, he too easily brushes aside three troublesome sources without footnoting them or giving the reader sufficient information on the circumstances of each to make a judgment (pp. 57–61). Without footnotes the curious reader will find it difficult to pursue the matter.

The sources Anderson gives greatest credence to are the sources that support the faith. Regrettably, he does not analyze possible bias in these sources. Statements by family members are relied upon a great deal and are deemed excellent sources because family members knew the participants well. But is there no problem of bias? Anderson relies on George Q. Cannon, who "had a remarkable intellect and a great capacity for accurate detail in his personal writing" (p. 60). This is the author who,

in his biography of Joseph Smith in 1888, admitted the "paltry things" were left out of his account of "men of God . . . pure and holy." (See Marvin S. Hill, "The Historiography of Mormonism," *Church History*, Dec. 1959, p. 420).

In his zeal for what he regards as the truth, Anderson makes such questionable statements as: "All scriptures promise the Spirit's seal to those who sincerely hear, reflect, and pray" (p. 186). "Prophets independently substantiate other prophets" (pp. 2–3). "The blunt condemnation of current religions reported by Joseph Smith is a profound mark of credibility when read by the light of past prophets" (p. 2). "The average Latter-day Saint who asked Martin Harris about his testimony was not a naive believer who openly or subtly asked for mere confirmation" (p. 117). "If this vision was real to [Cowdery], there is a burden upon every informed person to face the great probability that the Latter-day Saints have indeed received modern revelation" (p. 53). (But we have no way of knowing whether the vision was real; and even if we did, Cowdery's vision doesn't prove that revelation occurred.) We are told that "early Christians were 'of one heart and of one soul' (Acts 4:32)" despite Paul's fiery rebuttals of Peter's position in Galatians. And finally, it is difficult to understand how Anderson can know that Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer had the emotional and intellectual capacity to know whether they had been deceived (pp. 53, 90).

Overstatements abound, such as: "Martin Harris was not surpassed in doubt by Thomas nor in absolute assurance by any apostle' (p. 107). Harris's attitude toward church leaders at the time of his disaffection was "obviously immature" (p. 111). "Through the miracle of modern communication, [David Whitmer's] testimony now transcends a community and confronts a world" (p. 90). Cowdery's first missionary journey is "as spectacular as any of the apostle Paul" (p. 54). Regarding the testimony of the Three Witnesses: "nothing short of biblical Christianity furnishes such a concrete statement of supernatural reality" (p. 53) and "no testimony of direct revelation in the world's history is better documented than the testimony of the Book of Mormon witnesses" (p. 79).

Some statements are simply irrelevant pieties: "The Bible defender can be the offender, for in jealously guarding his limited collection of prophets, he often opposes more revelation with a few stock quotes" (p. 187). Regarding the witnesses who left the Church: "This is not to justify their very real rebellion against priesthood authority" (p. 128). Cowdery, absent from the church for a decade, would probably not have known some "important things revealed in his absence" (p. 185). Similarly, David Whitmer's rejection of later Mormon doctrinal developments is described as "not advancing beyond the first revelations" (p. 167). Orthodox Mormons regard the later doctrinal developments as improvements. Whitmer, certainly, did not.

We learn that Martin Harris changed his religious position eight times during his disaffection from the Church, but every affiliation was with some Mormon group (p. 111). Then in the same paragraph Anderson contradicts himself by saying that Harris was bound by no Mormon ties during this period.

Perhaps one should not expect that a book about the witnesses to the Book of Mormon published by Deseret Book Company would be anything other than an attempt to strengthen the reader's faith in the Book of Mormon. This book will be convincing to those already certain that the gold plates actually existed and that the eleven witnesses saw them. And even the detached reader will probably be convinced by Anderson's research that the witnesses were honest men who sincerely believed their signed testimony and probably stuck by their story as long as they lived. But Anderson is really trying to have us conclude more than this. He would have the reader be convinced that because these men were honest and reaffirmed their testimony when asked, they actually saw and handled plates which contained the records of an ancient people. I believe that Anderson — like the eleven witnesses — is an honest and sincere man when he writes: "After years of working with their lives and their words, I am deeply convinced that their printed testimonies must be taken at face value" (p. xii). But I don't believe that his research *by itself* requires this conclusion. As he admits, "spiritual truths must be spiritually verified" (p. 82). Believers must make a "leap of faith," apprehending with their "spiritual eyes" rather than their "natural eyes."

Book Reviews

INSTANT EXPERTISE ON BOOK OF MORMON ARCHAEOLOGY

A review article by John L. Sorenson, professor of anthropology and sociology at Brigham Young University.

One of the cultural tragedies of these times is the looting of the sites and monuments of the past. A prime force behind this piracy is the desire of foolish people of wealth to possess tangible emblems of taste and refinement. They rarely invest their own efforts in order to understand history or to sense meaning in the art of past civilizations. They are satisfied with the mere externals—with instant evidence of being cultured. And the gluttony of these ignorant rich is at least as condemnable as the looting itself.

The LDS book market shows similar swashbuckling. Many Mormons are willing to spend money for instant evidence of knowledge rather than to labor for the knowledge themselves. The result is consumer demand for intellectual loot. This is especially true about scholarly study of Book of Mormon archaeology. At least from the time of George Reynolds the Saints have avidly bought books which claim to offer them inside information on this scripture, particularly on its geography or what are termed "external evidences." Some of these sources have actually been helpful to the serious reader. Many more, and these are the concern here, have harmed more than helped.

In terms of sales, these works have been dominated by the books by Dewey Farnsworth and his wife Edith, whose *The Americas before Columbus* has recently been reissued ("Fourth Printing," Sacramento, California: Rich Publishing Co., 1975, $4.95, 176 pp.), nearly thirty years after its first appearance, but unchanged except for muddier-looking plates and a soft cover. Long ago I wrote a detailed review of Farnsworth's *Book of Mormon Evidences in Ancient America,* which differed little from the one now on sale. The naive use of sources, logical inconsistencies, cut-and-paste quotations, and harmful effects on the Church are pointed

out there (*University Archaeological Society Newsletter* No. 18 [25 February 1954]:2-5; and in the UAS anthology *Progress in Archaeology,* 1963) in excruciating detail which I have not the heart to repeat.

Another perennial favorite in the same class has also reappeared: Jack West's *Trial of the Stick of Joseph* (Sacramento: Rich Publishing Co., 1975, $2.90, 92 pp.). An expanded, cartoon-illustrated version appeared in 1971 as *The Book of Mormon on Trial* (Compiled by John W. Rich, Sacramento: Rich Publishing Co., 1971, $4.95, 245 pp.). The evidence and argument in either version are, if anything, more distressing than those in the Farnsworth book. At least the latter only reprints snippets from outdated sources to construct a picture which is thoroughly confused but not hostile to anyone. The West books use a "trial" format to misrepresent scholarship and show scholars as at best bumbling fools and at worst as willing enemies of truth. The assertions put into the mouths of the experts cannot be checked for accuracy because of inadequate documentation, but many of the statements are implausible and some are absurd. The overall impression given is that if Latter-day Saints use a few rhetorical tricks and imaginative selection of "evidence" in the worst tradition of the trial lawyer, those so-called experts who refuse to believe the Book of Mormon can easily be put in their places and we'll live happily ever after.

Paul Cheesman's books are bidding to take the place of Farnsworth's in current LDS publishing. His *These Early Americans: External Evidences of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974, $5.95, 298 pp.) was heavily promoted last year in the wake of an earlier book of pictures. *These Early Americans* is based directly on a thesis he completed at BYU. More a catalog or compilation than an exposition, the writing is disjointed, and a consistent argument is hard to discern. If there is a central idea, it is that certain cultural features mentioned in the Book of Mormon are indeed attested by non-LDS scholars. Quotations from or paraphrases of those scholars constitute a very large part of the text (one quote is three pages long). In some instances the intent of the scholar is turned on its head. For example, Robert Wauchope of Tulane University, who wrote a chapter in his *Lost Tribes and Sunken Continents* (1962) which pokes fun at the Book of Mormon, is made by Cheesman (page 24) to appear to support an Old World origin for New World civilization, which he absolutely does not. In others the "evidences" are of doubtful significance,

although in some cases information of value is conveyed, as concerning wheeled "toys," for example. The sources cited, though somewhat more frequently sound than Farnsworth's, still indiscriminately mix oddballs with reliable scholars. Too often the latters' statements are torn from context.

An inquiry about whether permissions had been solicited for the extensive quotations drew the response that it was not felt necessary. This loose procedure should be challenged on ethical grounds.

I do not presume to judge the motives of Farnsworth, West, Cheesman and others who publish in this vein. They seem to be zealous believers in the Book of Mormon. But zeal does not improve poor scholarship.

Then what is the harm from such publications? First, they train the reader that serious, critical thought is unnecessary and maybe even undesirable, that any source of information will serve no matter how unreliable, and that logical absurdity is as good as sound analysis. Second, the reader gets the false impression that all is well in Zion, that the outside world is being forced to the LDS point of view, and that the only role LDS scholars need play in Book of Mormon-related studies is to use scissors and paste effectively. Third, the underlying complexity and subtlety of the Book of Mormon are masked by a pseudo-scholarship to which everything is simple. This third effect encourages critics—e.g. John Price in *The Indian Historian* (1975) or Michael Coe in *Dialogue* (1973)—to set up a straw-man Book of Mormon to attack based on what Mormons have said about it instead of what it says itself. Coe, for example, knows little about the book, but he wrote from Mormon sources, after all. If we are willing to settle for surface reading and shallow study, why should a non-Mormon scholar expend energy to dig seriously into the Book of Mormon?

The Book and the Map. New Insights into Book of Mormon Geography, by Venice Priddis (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1975, $3.95, 169 pp.), differs in focus from the volumes discussed above, but the quality of scholarship is similar. Ignoring all past serious study on Book of Mormon geography, Priddis picks one "key" statement and builds a fanciful picture of the Book of Mormon lands to accord with it alone—a picture, incidentally, that requires the Amazon and the Plate River basins to lie entirely under water. The evidence adduced is trivial, and the arguments are fatally flawed at point after point. Anyone willing to be this selective in what is to be noted and what ignored could construct at least two dozen other geographical correlations for the Nephite scripture which could be equally (im)plausible.

As with ancient art for the ignorant rich, the "demand" from large numbers of Saints for easy explanations of difficult subjects which they are unwilling to pay the price to understand lies behind the exploitation represented by these volumes. Ancient Israel insisted Samuel give them a king, and with equal impatience, LDS readers today bring down on their heads the kind of books that serve them right.

But all this criticism may be too narrow. There is plenty of evidence that we Latter-day Saints are gullible on many subjects, not just this one. President Harold B. Lee expressed impatience with the rumor-mongering which is endemic among Mormons. Our folklore is rich from similar impulses. The too-generous standing ovations at BYU are becoming legendary. Salt Lake City has earned a nationwide reputation as a center for stock fraud, and Douglas Stringfellow beguiled Utahns for years. Now, if these tendencies are necessary accompaniments of the naivete of the meek, it is a small price to pay: far better to associate with a people having enough faith left that they *can* be gulled than to endure the company of the permanently cynical who fill so much of the world. But couldn't we find a compromise position in which the wisdom of the serpent protected us more often from the consequences of dove-like innocence? Hyrum Smith observed in 1844, "It is better not to have so much faith as to have so much as to believe all the lies." The burden of repentence, I suggest, rests upon us all: on the reader who must be more critical and demanding of the writer whose work he buys, and on the writer who must be more critical and demanding of himself.

Book of Mormon Evidences in Ancient America, by Dewey Farnsworth.* Reviewed by John L. Sorenson.

(U.A.S. Newsletter 18.1)

This book is a revised version of past Farnsworth picture-books which have enjoyed success on the L.D.S. book market. It purports to be a comparison of the Book of Mormon "with Archaeological Evidence from the Scientific World" (respectful capitalization is the author's). Such a project has two prerequisites: a thorough, systematic knowledge of the Book of Mormon, and an equally thorough, systematic knowledge of American archaeology. Unfortunately, Farnsworth displays serious deficiencies in both fields.

A surprising lack of understanding of the claims of the Book of Mormon is displayed. On matters of geography, appeal is made to unofficial statements of Church authorities (the Church maintains no official position) instead of turning to the Book itself with its wealth of geographical and cultural detail. Solely on the basis of modern Church tradition the author claims that "the combined races known to us as Indians—be they Inca, Maya, Aztec, Iroquois, Navajo, etc."—all are descendants of Book of Mormon peoples. The Book of Mormon nowhere states, implies, or requires any such thing. Lehi's people are said to be described in the Book of Mormon as "wandering in [Egypt] prior to their ocean voyage"; various extravagant details of the "Three Nephites" stories are compared with tradition and art representations; and other similar claims made, none of which can be documented from the Book of Mormon itself.

Turning to the author's preparation in archaeology for this work we note the staggering statement that he "has read all the

[4]Note especially the correspondences, in area, period, and general cultist-urban character, of the first "preclassic" civilization of the archaeological record, the "Early Cultist" or "Olmec," to the first civilization of the Book of Mormon record, the Jaredite; and of the second "preclassic" civilization of the archaeological record, the "Protoclassic," to the second civilization of the Book of Mormon record, the Lehite-Mulekite, in its "Florescent" or main period. (For some specific characteristics of the Book of Mormon civilizations, as data for further comparisons, see earlier in this section, pp. 85-88. Ed.)

*Deseret Book Co., Salt Lake City, 1953; 176 pp.

literature and books of both Spanish and English available" on the materials he treats. No competent archaeologist, had he read for 75 years, would make such an impossible claim. Had the author's claims been more humble some of his archaeological sins might be forgiven more readily. A basic point emphasized a number of times in the book is Farnsworth's view that "writer" equals researcher equals expert archaeologist who holds a qualified opinion. We are frequently told that "some of our best writers" believe such and such, yet "best" in this usage turns out to have no sensible meaning. A look at the bibliography (which, incidentally, omits a number of references cited in the text) is enlightening. Of some 95 works cited (from about 65 authors) only 15—a very liberal figure—approach being what could be called primary sources, that is, reports of actual *original* investigation by the writer of the work. Every one of these has long since been supplemented or superseded by other, uncited sources. Many of these citations are torn from context, left to give an incorrect impression of the author's views or otherwise misused (for example the citations from Vaillant's *Aztecs of Mexico*, pp. 76-77). Sixty-seven works in the bibliography are what could be termed non-scientific popularizations. A few of these have some merit but cannot be depended upon. Others are representative of the crackpot fringe of American archaeology, such as the writings of Enock, Lee, Poindexter, and Churchward. Major reliance is placed on DeRoo because he is said to be "the only person on record who had access to the letters and reports from the early priests and missionaries of the Catholic faith." This is false. Actually one could spend years reading the *relaciones* and letters of the early priests which are now in print and accessible in the original language. One report to Farnsworth is said to have come from the "custodian of Copan!" In another case the eccentric J. Fitzgerald Lee (who derives Egyptian civilization from the Maya!) is cited quoting Montesinos, perhaps the most unreliable of the Peruvian chroniclers. This is something of a depth in "authority." *Menarquis Indians*, apparently a Mexican source (intended for *Monarquía Indiana* of Torquemada?) is cited as the authority for a tradition from the "South Seas." A quote from Ixtlilxochitl is credited only to Bancroft, a secondary source. As a matter of fact, a general rule can be formulated to express Farnsworth's use of authorities: if an original source exists, ignore it and find one that is second or third hand. And if no citation can be produced, the author apparently feels free to make categorical statements himself, as when he makes the undocumented, and I believe undocumentable, statement that "Traders from the early people of California place this war and confusion at 387 A.D." Once in a while Farnsworth gets carried away and forgets to delete contradictory material. Thus

we read (p. 66) in a quote from Blom's *The Conquest of Yucatán* that Maya hieroglyphic writing has no direct connection with Old World scripts, a statement every qualified expert would agree to, but which contradicts what that portion of the book has been claiming.

Perhaps the statement of the author that "it has been a little confusing to me at times to follow the writings of some of our modern archaeologists" is a result of the increasing accuracy and complexity of modern archaeological writing, for we note that less than one-fourth of the works cited date within the last 25 years. This is as important an omission as would be the case of a physician who is ignorant of antibiotics, or of the bacteriologist who doesn't believe immunization will work.

A small pamphlet would be necessary to point out the errors of fact or inference in the text and captions. The most basic is in the chronology. Farnsworth arbitrarily chooses the Spinden over the Goodman-Martinez-Thompson correlation of the Maya calendar (a 260-year difference) despite the abandonment of the former by virtually all Maya calendar experts. Farnsworth does this because Spinden is "found . . . to be more to my purpose" (p. 5). The "Archaic" (Pre-Classic or Pre-Maya) period of Mesoamerican archaeological history would be dated by almost any up-to-date archaeologist at about 2000 B.C. to A.D. 300. The succeeding Classic (or Florescent, Classic Maya, etc.) period is almost certainly between A.D. 300 and A.D. 1000, and the final Militaristic (Toltec-Aztec, Imperialistic, etc.) period is historically fixed from around A.D. 1000 to the Spanish conquest. By calling the Classic the Archaic and the Classic and having *pre*-Maya come later than the Maya(!), Farnsworth is able to quote enough authorities, without correcting his chaotic terminology, to attribute any feature to any time. Thus we learn that Jaredites were at Chichén Itzá (actually the ruins date after A.D. 600); while Tikal, a Classic Maya site (A.D. 300-950), is termed the oldest city in Central America; and Tula (A.D. 900-1200 according to excavations) is said to be "in harmony with Central America's Golden Age of the Mayas." These are a sample of the many statements which no responsible American archaeologist could support. The errors of dating in Peru, the eastern United States, and the Southwest are equally incredible.

At least passing reference must be made to a few examples of illogicality. Carrying out a migration of three or four thousand miles is for Farnsworth only the matter of a glide of the pencil. Geography, human nature, and the Book of Mormon itself are as nothing in the way of obstacles. The La Brea tarpit animals of 25,000-50,000 years ago (2000 B.C. says Farnsworth, without documentation) are used to explain the presence of the horse among the Jaredites, yet a discussion of the Flood of Noah kills off all those animals before the Jaredites arrive in America. We also are repeatedly shown scenes, said to be of Lehi's group, from "Guatemalan petroglyphs" (petroglyph—writing symbol on stone) which are in reality from an Aztec codex on bark paper, from Mexico, dated historically by its text no earlier than A.D. 1200 (the codex is never identified). What is supposedly a Tree of Life scene shows the tree cut off, apparently subject to death (actually this is a well-known Aztec glyph representing a place name).

Poor taste is exhibited in several attempts by the author to imply some official connection of his work with Church authorities and by his fervent claim of orthodoxy and popular support. Contrast the restraint and satisfactory documentation of most of Franklin S. Harris, Jr's., *Book of Mormon Message and Evidences*, which recently appeared.

A summary of the book appears on the flap of the dust cover. Of the sixteen points listed there which are said to be supported by archaeological findings, not over four or five, and those so general in nature as to be of little importance, are acceptable to archaeologists. All others are unproved or in error. Instead of feeling challenged by the yet-to-be-proved, the L.D.S. reader of this book is led to a complacent, All-is-well-in-Zion attitude that implies that nothing remains for the Book of Mormon student except becoming a tourist. We are of the opinion that Latter-day Saints ought to be satisfied with the truth and not try to improve upon it by gratuitous "proofs" which are themselves based on untruth.

Credit should be given for the handsome appearance of the book. The photographs are often superb, many of them being Farnsworth's own. One is also led to admire the perception, contrary to popular belief, which led the author to decide that some Jaredite survivors lived after the Ramah battle (although none of the available supporting evidence in the Book of Mormon itself is used for substantiation). If there still exist people to whom "Indian" means no more than savage, the book could have a salutary effect on such by awakening them to the level of culture the ruins demonstrate. There is a distinct need for some book of the kind this one claims to be, but when such appears it should be based on acceptable sources, sound reasoning, and above all, a thorough knowledge of the Book of Mormon itself as well as of American archaeology.

SURVEY

The Historiography of Mormonism

Marvin S. Hill

Perhaps no American denomination stirred greater enmity during the century following 1830 than the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints —the Mormons. An hostility promoted by recurrent conflict between Saint and Gentile has generally divided historians into two distinct groups, forging a cleavage in sentiment which is evident in the debates over the origin of the Book of Mormon, the treatment given Joseph Smith and the Utah church, and in the surveys of the total Mormon movement and the place of the Saints in American secular and religious life.

I

An issue of primary importance is the nature of that unique American scripture, the Book of Mormon. Acclaimed by the faithful as a sacred history of a Christian people in ancient America, the book has been labelled a fraud by non-believers. Bernard DeVoto recognized the fundamental character of this controversy when he said "it is inseparable from one's explanation of Joseph Smith." Both sides have shown some intransigence on the subject by refusing to consider the claims of the opposition.[1] This dual rigidity seems a consequence of differing faiths, the Mormon conviction resting on the notion that God arbitrarily changed the course of events to bring the book into being, that of the non-Mormon on the assumption that human history must be interpreted as a result of more predictable forces.

The case for the Latter-day Saints has been stated often,[2] but with no greater sophistication than that exhibited by Hugh Nibley of Brigham Young University in his *Approach to the Book of Mormon* (1957). He reviews the culture of the ancient Near East to find that in theme, the details of its narrative, and its use of place and proper names the Book of Mormon is authentic. He states that the marks of genuine antiquity in the record could not have been imitated by anyone in 1830. However intimate his knowledge of ancient history may be, certain difficulties exist in his argument. He cites many phenomena which seem as much American as they do ancient,[3] and exaggerates the significance of details which are hazy or all but lacking.[4] Invariably he handles his topic in an authoritarian fashion, never indicating that some points may be open to question.

1. See Bernard DeVoto, *Forays and Rebuttals* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1936), p. 91, and Hugh Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake: Deseret News Press, 1957), p. 25.
2. I counted forty-five books and articles written between 1940 and 1953 to defend the Book of Mormon.
3. Nibley, pp. 140, 202-16, 339, 348.
4. He concludes that Lehi was a merchant and bases much of the first part of his argument on this assumption. But there is little concrete evidence to support it. See pp. 38-39 and compare the appropriate citations. He matches the society described in Alma 23 with Qumran (p. 157), but the Book of Mormon lacks sufficient detail for such a comparison.
5. "Delusions," *The Millennial Harbinger*, II (1831), p. 93.
6. Walter Franklin Prince, "Psychological Tests for the Authorship of the Book of Mormon," *The American Jour-*

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Published approximately every six weeks by THE UNIVERSITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. The purpose of the Newsletter is to disseminate knowledge of recent archaeological discoveries bearing on the Latter-day Saint scriptures; also, of the Society and its members. Subscription by membership in the Society: three dollars per year; or Life Membership, fifty dollars. (Membership also includes subscription to other publications of the Society and the Department of Archaeology of BYU.)

40.0 Review of Hugh Nibley, An Approach to the Book of Mormon. By M. Wells Jakeman. Another book by Dr. Hugh Nibley, one of the more prolific writers in the LDS Church, has recently come off the press, entitled An Approach to the Book of Mormon (published as a course of study for the Melchizedek Priesthood quorums of the Church for the year 1957).

This work for the most part is a reprinting, in condensed form, of previous studies by the author dealing with the Book of Mormon in the light of the ancient East (principally Lehi in the Desert, Salt Lake City, 1952; and "New Approaches to Book of Mormon Study," The Improvement Era, November, 1953-July, 1954). As such, it presents again the important contribution of these studies: a demonstration that the Book of Mormon, in its account of a group of ancient Israelites who migrated from Palestine to the New World in the sixth century B. C., accurately reflects the languages and cultures of ancient Israelite Palestine and the Near East, even though many of the correct linguistic forms, customs, and concepts appearing therein were not known to be ancient Near Eastern at the time of the coming forth of the Record, thus tending to establish its authenticity. The only fault requiring mention, and one which does not seriously detract from this contribution, is that in a number of his conclusions the author seems much too positive, in view of the slight evidence adduced (as in his identification, on pp. 72-77, of Lehi as a wealthy merchant engaged in Egyptian trade through the Phoenician port of Sidon).

In Chapters 14-17 is a valuable discussion—some of it published here for the first time—of several important confirmations of the Book of Mormon found in the recently discovered "Dead Sea Scrolls" and in the Apocrypha.

In Chapter 25 the author also briefly introduces some of the points previously argued in his work entitled The World of the Jaredites (published with Lehi in the Desert, Salt Lake City, 1952) and in a series of articles entitled "There Were Jaredites" (The Improvement Era, January, 1956-February, 1957). (For a critical review of the former work see June 1, 1955, Newsletter, 27.0.)

Of special concern to UAS members and other readers of this Newsletter is an appendix to the book entitled "The Archaeological Problem," presenting the author's views as to the value of archaeology for the Book of Mormon; also various assertions, mainly in the last two chapters, on points of Book of Mormon geography.

Unfortunately, the author's discussion of the archaeological approach to the Book of Mormon is vitiated by an apparent attempt to

implant an emotional judgment in the mind of his reader against this approach or the way it is being developed. Thus he refers disparagingly to those investigating this field as "people calling themselves archaeologists" (p. 366) and "these self-appointed archaeologists" (p. 363). He then--although not an archaeologist himself--proceeds to instruct the reader as to what archaeology is, and as to its true value for the Book of Mormon. In other words, he himself becomes a self-appointed critic of "these self-appointed archaeologists"! Apparently it is not generally realized as yet that archaeology is a full-time business. To qualify either as a writer or as an adviser on archaeological problems, one must be a full-time specialist in this field, not a part-time reader of the subject or a full-time specialist in some other field, such as philology, as in the present case.

The misrepresentations and misconceptions comprising the "instructions" on archaeology given in this appendix are too numerous to deal with completely here. Only the more serious can be discussed. For example, in defining archaeology for his reader (pp. 366-367), the author selects only those statements of archaeologists which support his view, which is clearly that of reducing archaeology to a strictly subordinate role to philology in the study of ancient civilizations and the Scriptures. These carefully selected statements favor the view that archaeology is not a single discipline or unified field of study, and therefore cannot be taught in a university as a distinct division of instruction, but consists only of widely separated areas of specialization without a common purpose or methodology; and that the chief function of each area specialization is that of assisting the philologists and documentary historians of that area by unearthing new inscriptions or manuscripts. To bolster this definition, the author asserts that "the world's great universities are still without archaeology departments," the reason being that "archaeology cannot be studied as a single discipline."

But what are the facts? Although area (or period or field) specialization must always be the aim of students of archaeology--as also, indeed, of students of most other disciplines, including philology and documentary history!--archaeology still has a common general purpose (best defined as the discovery and illustration of the early history of man by means of his actual material remains), and a common basic methodology (namely, definition of the problem of early history to be investigated by this means, and the collection--usually by excavation involving standard techniques--classification, and interpretation of archaeological data for its solution). Consequently, archaeology must surely be considered as much a single discipline as documentary history. It is, in fact, a "special historical discipline" (as stated by Benzinger in Hebräische Archäologie, 1927, p. 1)--a companion to documentary history. This concept of archaeology is especially accepted in the Old World; in fact, a number of British and other European as well as Near Eastern universities have separate divisions of archaeological instruction leading to a degree (some called "departments" of archaeology--directly contrary to the author's claim--e.g. at the Queen's University, Belfast; and others, "institutes" of archaeology, as at the University of London; see e.g., Kathleen M. Kenyon, Beginning in Archaeology, London, rev. ed., 1953, Appendix II, "Archaeological Training in Universities"). The distinct purpose and methodology of archaeology is also generally recognized by archaeologists of the United States, Canada, and Latin America (as recently in a featured address by Dr. Fay-Cooper Cole of the University of Chicago at the Great Basin Archaeological Conference held the past year at the University of Utah); in American universities, however,

archaeological instruction is usually offered only in departments of "anthropology" (or of "archaeology and anthropology"). This recognition of archaeology as a single discipline, despite the wide differences among the area specializations, is further evidenced by the number of introductory textbooks in archaeology which have lately appeared, authored by competent professional archaeologists for use especially in university departments or institutes of archaeology, or departments of anthropology having sections of archaeology as usually in the Americas; e.g., Introducción a la Arqueología, by Ignacio Bernal (a leading Mexican archaeologist), Mexico, 1952; Beginning in Archaeology, already cited, by Kathleen M. Kenyon (Lecturer, Institute of Archaeology of the University of London, and director of the joint British-American expedition to Jericho), London, rev. ed., 1953 (see also Part I of the latter work, which brings out more fully the common purpose and methodology of archaeology as a single discipline). Finally, the author's contention that the chief function of archaeologists is to aid the work of the philologists and documentary historians of the particular area of specialization, reflects a hopelessly narrow concept of the scope of archaeology. Actually the areas with ancient written records comprise only a small part of the total world range of modern archaeological research. Many areas of the world, in which important developments of early culture-history are known from archaeology to have taken place, lack such records (e.g. Peru, the North American Southwest, eastern United States), or have only a brief or fragmentary written history (e.g. southeastern Asia, Siberia). Of course, archaeologists working in areas having an extended written history—e.g. the Near East, the Mediterranean, Middle America—must be able to read the ancient records, i.e. if decipherable.

Turning to the author's "instructions" with respect to the special field of Book of Mormon archaeology ("Advice to Book of Mormon Archaeologists"), we find that his main "teaching" here is that Book of Mormon archaeologists "have consistently looked for the wrong things"; i.e., they have been looking for the cities of the Nephites as marked by the ruins of great stone buildings (pp. 366, 370-375). But few such ruins will ever be found, if at all; in fact, "we should not be surprised at the lack of ruins in America in general" (p. 366). The reason given for this scarcity or "lack" of ruins is that nearly all the buildings of the Book of Mormon peoples were of timber or wood, and consequently have long since disappeared. In fact, people "do not realize that the ancients [i.e. those of the Old World as well as the Book of Mormon peoples of America] almost never built of stone" (p. 366).

Unfortunately, in these "instructions" the author, instead of providing advice of real value to Book of Mormon archaeologists, merely reveals his own complete unawareness of the actual situation in this field. It is true that many LDS have been guilty of "looking for the wrong things" with respect to the claims of the Book of Mormon—i.e. the ruins of great stone buildings (see e.g. the Farnsworth books on the Middle American and Andean ruins). But those who may truly be termed Book of Mormon archaeologists, or people with training in this field—i.e. those against whom this criticism is leveled—have already known for a long time, without the author's instructing them, that the Nephite people of the Book of Mormon usually built their dwellings, temples, and palaces of timber or wood, and their fortifications of earth, rather than of stone (although stone appears to have been used occasionally, as also cement and probably brick). Consequently, apparently unbeknown to the author, these students of the Book of Mormon have not been looking for the ruins of large stone buildings as alleged, but instead the remains or traces

of Book of Mormon-period constructions of the kinds indicated—in the case of timber or wooden buildings, the foundations, floors, and post-holes and plaster-fragments of the timber or pole-and-daub walls of such buildings which have otherwise disappeared. They have, in fact, for some time been actually finding and studying many such remains! (Again apparently unbeknown to the author; for on p. 377 he asks, "Why are there so few 'Book of Mormon' ruins?" Indeed, as many as two hundred or more settlement-sites have so far been discovered in the Book of Mormon area, dating from the actual period of the Book of Mormon civilizations, with building remains which are therefore to be identified—if the Book of Mormon record is true—as Book of Mormon ruins! Also being sought in the way of material evidence of the Book of Mormon civilizations—and being found in increasing quantity—are such things as implements, pottery, and other common culture remains, as well as sculptures. These antiquities, in fact, have generally survived from the Book of Mormon period more completely than buildings, and are also more revealing as to the Book of Mormon identity of the peoples who left them behind. See, e.g., Bulletin of the University Archaeological Society, No. 3, August, 1952, and previous issues of this Newsletter.) Apparently the author did little reading in the actual field of Book of Mormon archaeology before penning his "Advice to Book of Mormon Archaeologists."

The assertion, incidentally, that "the ancients almost never built of stone" must surely be an intentional exaggeration. Although this statement probably holds true, as we have seen, for the Book of Mormon peoples (at least for the Nephites throughout most of their history), it certainly does not for the ancient peoples of the Old World, or the ancient post-Book of Mormon peoples of the New. The author admits in another place that considerable stone construction occurred "in a few brief periods such as the late Middle Ages or the early Roman Empire" (p. 371); but he overlooks the very long periods of considerable stone construction in Egypt and the Aegean region—in Egypt, over two thousand years of almost continuous construction of great stone tombs and temples by the Pharaohs, and in the Aegean, a similar period of almost continuous construction of stone palaces and fortifications by the prehistoric Minoans, Trojans, and Mycenaeans, and of stone temples and other public buildings by the ancient historic Greeks; also the considerable period—over a thousand years--of continuous construction of stone temples and palaces by the post-Book of Mormon Maya people of Central America. Also ignored by, but surely not unknown to, the author is the fact that the early Near Easterners and other ancients—probably including the Book of Mormon peoples, in view of their Near Eastern origin—also built extensively in brick, and that many ruins of buildings and other constructions of brick have survived from ancient times in both the Old and New Worlds.

Finally, we cannot pass by the author's reference to "the lack of ruins in America in general." This is truly an astonishing statement from one presuming to give instructions involving American archaeology! Actually, as indicated in the preceding, and as anyone knows who has had a course in or read a book on American archaeology, or has traveled in or seen pictures of Mexico, Central America, Peru, or the Pueblo area of the United States, America is far from lacking in ruins, including the ruins of ancient stone buildings—not to mention innumerable constructions of brick or earth. However, the author seems uncertain on this point, for on p. 370 he contradicts himself by admitting that "there is certainly no shortage of ruins on this continent."

The author next emphasizes his conviction that "the scarcity of ruins in North America"—reversing himself again on this point!—will not "disprove the Book of Mormon" (p. 377). For the Book of Mormon peoples,

especially the Jaredites and the Lamanites, "had a type of culture that leaves little if anything behind it" (p. 370), being almost entirely nomadic ("almost all" these people "are eligible for the title of 'migrating and nomadic' peoples"—p. 371; even the Nephites were a "mobile population" who "were always wanderers in a strange land"—pp. 370, 371, also 118-120; in fact, a "picture. . . of great fortified communal structures built in large numbers at one time only to be soon deserted in a land that reverts to nomadism, devoid of cultural remains. . ., is typically Nephite"—p. 374). That the Book of Mormon civilizations, thus being mainly nomadic, could have flourished in the New World and yet not left behind any archaeological or material evidence of their existence, is supported, according to the author, by the fact that "many a great civilization which has left a notable mark in [Old World] history and literature has left behind not a single recognizable [archaeological] trace of itself" (p. 366; "that they existed there is not the slightest doubt, yet some of the greatest have left not so much as a bead or a button that can be definitely identified"—p. 371).

Two serious misconceptions are apparent in the above argument. First of all, the idea that the Book of Mormon peoples were mainly nomadic simply ignores the numerous indications in the Record to the contrary. Although these peoples engaged in herding and some hunting (stressed by the author to establish his view that they were nomadic), their basic economic activity was unquestionably agriculture. The first thing their original colonies did on reaching the New World was to plant the seeds they had brought with them from the Old World, and to "till the earth." Throughout their history, references to their "tilling" or cultivating the earth, to their "grain" and grain "fields" and to their "crops," far outnumber those to their keeping of "flocks and herds" and to their hunting or to game animals. The Nephite standard of value in trade was a measure of barley (Al. 11:7, 15), an agricultural product—not cattle or hides, as we should expect of a nomadic herding people. But such agricultural peoples are tied to the soil; they necessarily favor a sedentary or settled life as opposed to the nomadic or wandering life of peoples who are mainly herders or hunters. Consistently with this, the Book of Mormon refers time and time again to permanent settlements of its peoples—"cities," "towns," or "villages," with grain fields round about—and only rarely to temporary settlements (tent encampments). This is true even of the more important portion of the Lamanites (the most restless and warlike of the Book of Mormon peoples), who lived in cities, towns, and villages just like the Nephites and the Jaredites, in contrast to the less important group (not necessarily and probably not "most of the nation" as claimed by the author, p. 120) who lived in tents as nomads in the "wilderness" or unsettled regions. That these many settlements were truly permanent and not—as claimed by the author—merely temporary clusters of "communal structures built in large numbers at one time only to be soon deserted in a land that reverts to nomadism," is established by the fact that at least some of the more important of them are indicated to have been occupied continuously for hundreds of years (e.g. the cities of Nephi and Zarahemla), and at least in one case for some two thousand years! (namely Moron, main settlement of the Jaredites)--durations which compare well with those of permanent settlements of the Old World and modern times. Consequently, we find that the Book of Mormon peoples, instead of having a "type of culture [namely nomadic] that leaves little if anything behind it," as claimed by the author, in reality had cultures of mainly sedentary type, which—as proved by the results of

archaeological excavation throughout the world—invariably leave behind extensive material remains!

The other serious misconception of the author rendering invalid his argument that the Book of Mormon peoples may not have left behind any archaeological traces is his belief that nomadic hunting or herding cultures, such as those of the Book of Mormon, in his view, leave "little if anything" behind them—indeed, that "a land that reverts to nomadism" (as regularly occurred in the history of the Book of Mormon peoples in his view) is "devoid of cultural remains" (see above). Now all students of archaeology will know that this claim is directly opposite to the fact. Even though ruins, or the remains of buildings, are not ordinarily left behind by nomadic cultures, the literature of archaeology is full of excavation reports and other descriptions of material remains marking the camp or cave sites of such cultures--in fact, remains often of kinds that last almost indefinitely, and therefore may easily survive from the time of the Book of Mormon cultures: stone and bone implements, food-refuse heaps of mollusk shells and animal bones, earthen burial mounds, and even (though much less frequently than at the sites of permanent farming or urban settlements) skeletal remains of the ancient hunters or herders themselves. Consequently, even if the Book of Mormon peoples had been mainly nomadic--which we have seen they were not--a great deal in the way of material remains or archaeological traces of their existence would have had to be expected. The author's attempt to bolster his argument with the flat statement that "many a great civilization" of the Old World (presumably nomadic like those--in his claim--of the Book of Mormon) "has left behind not a single recognizable [archaeological] trace of itself," must be pronounced yet another unsupportable assertion. In light of the world-wide experience of archaeology above noted with respect to remains of nomadic cultures (which are necessarily even more extensive in the case of a "great" nomadic civilization), we are justified in replying to this assertion that if not a single archaeological trace of such great civilizations has been found despite extensive excavation in their supposed regions of development, it is evident that those civilizations simply never existed!--in other words, they must be regarded as merely figments of the imagination of the ancient writers--usually poets--who speak of them. (As will be more fully noted later, ancient writings are not always entirely reliable as sources of historical information, and must be checked by the independent material evidence of archaeology.)

But the author continues his argument against the value of archaeology for the Book of Mormon, in comparison with his own philological approach as developed in the present and preceding studies: Even if Book of Mormon archaeologists do find remains of the Book of Mormon area and period (he seems totally unaware, as previously noted, that such remains have already been found), these findings will not have any really decisive result as to the claims of the Book of Mormon, i.e. will neither prove nor disprove these claims. For "the most we can hope for [from archaeology] are general indications of a Book of Mormon type of civilization—anything more specific than that we have no right to expect" (p. 373). It is unlikely, for instance, that any particular known Book of Mormon city will ever be identified from archaeological evidence, the reason given being the lack of sufficient description in the Record itself—just as "from reliable Egyptian lists we know scores of cities in Palestine whose very existence the archaeologist would never suspect" (loc. cit.). Nor do we have a right to expect the identification of any particular monument or artifact as of Jaredite, Nephite, or ancient Lamanite origin; but this need not surprise us, for "actually the scarcity of identifiable remains in the Old World is even more impressive" (p. 366).

These pronouncements, however, cannot be accepted. The fact is that there is sufficient description in the Book of Mormon of some of its cities for their definite archaeological identification. At any rate the Prophet Joseph Smith appears to have thought so (see Times and Seasons, Oct. 1, 1842, in which he proposes the identification of the ruins of Quirigua in Central America as those of the Book of Mormon city of Zarahemla). Indeed, it is very probable that one such city—despite the dictum of the author—has already been archaeologically identified! (see August 23, 1954, Newsletter, 22.02, "The City of Bountiful Found?"). The case of the Egyptian lists of cities in Palestine cited by the author really does not support his claim: in contrast to the Book of Mormon, there is no information given in these lists as to even the approximate location of their cities, the first requirement for their archaeological identification.

Moreover, in his denial of the possibility of ever identifying any particular monument or artifact as Jaredite, Nephite, or ancient Lamanite, the author is evidently unaware of the recent identification of an ancient sculpture unearthed at the ruined city of Izapa in Central America as definitely a monument of the Nephite civilization! (see the reviewer's article, "An Unusual Tree-of-Life Sculpture from Ancient Central America" [the Lehi Tree-of-Life Stone], Bulletin of the University Archaeological Society, No. 4, March, 1953, pp. 26-49). In asserting, to support this part of his argument, that "the scarcity of identifiable remains in the Old World is even more impressive," the author becomes wholly irresponsible. The fact is that the archaeological objects from sites of the Old World, as well as the New, which have been definitely identified—i. e. which are definitely known as to culture represented, place and time of origin, and purpose or use—are beyond count, both those on display in museums and those described and identified only in archaeological field reports.

Since the author is thus mistaken in his view that specific archaeological identification of the Book of Mormon cities or antiquities will never be possible, we must further conclude that, contrary to his assertion, archaeology definitely can prove the Book of Mormon, since such identifications will constitute this proof. In fact, in his general contention that "the archaeologist can never have the final word" in questions of ancient history such as raised by the Book of Mormon (p. 377), he is completely in error. It is true that "the archaeologist can never have the final word" with respect to the absence of a particular trait in an ancient culture or region (nor, in fact, can the documentary historian or philologist!). But on the other hand, the archaeologist can and very often does have the final word with respect to the presence of such a trait, i. e. by his finding and identification of actual material relics thereof; also with respect to the occurrence of a major event or development in the history of an ancient culture or region, and questions of geography and dating (as inconsistently admitted by the author himself on pp. 144-145, where he notes the fact that archaeological evidence has definitely established the general date of the Dead Sea Scrolls). Archaeology also most surely has the final word with respect to the existence of an entire ancient culture itself. At least this is so in the case of an urban culture of many-centuries' duration, featured by numerous permanent settlements, such as the civilizations of the Book of Mormon; it is inconceivable—and contrary to world-wide archaeological experience—that such civilizations could ever have existed without leaving behind some identifiable remains.

Indeed, a serious misrepresentation of the value of archaeological materials as sources of historical information must be charged to the author. He quotes the admissions of various archaeologists (pp. 368-369) that (1) much archaeological material is of questionable value, and that

(2) even material adequately recorded is often difficult to interpret; and thereupon unwarrantedly concludes for his reader that "half the material [of archaeology] is useless and the other half can't be used"! Actually, although it is true that much archaeological material is of questionable value (because of poor recording as to place of finding and stratigraphic and other context), a very great quantity still remains, in all areas, the historical value of which can hardly be questioned; and although this adequately-recorded material is often difficult to interpret, much of it has or can be successfully used: witness the imposing culture-histories which have been firmly established by archaeological research in many parts of the world without the help of ancient written records, ~~e.~~ eg. in the preclassical Aegean region, in pre-Roman Italy, in Bronze Age and Celtic central and northern Europe, and in pre-European Peru and the Southwest and Eastern Mound Area of the United States. The author's contention that "material remains unaccompanied by written texts are necessarily in themselves 'highly ambiguous material'" (p. 369) does not hold when they occur in stratigraphic order or other distributional patterns or associations meaningful for culture-history, as in all the above areas as well as all others where archaeological research is going on, including those having ancient written records.

As a matter of fact ancient written records, in which the author has such great faith, have often been proved to be quite unreliable (though others have often been proved reliable) by archaeological checks; the likelihood of at least some human error must always be kept in mind in using such records: they are usually more or less biased accounts of events, and sometimes were consciously falsified. They should, therefore, be checked by material archaeological evidence whenever possible. On the other hand, the reliability of archaeolgical materials as historical evidence can hardly be denied, since they constitute actual physical survivals of the events or developments to which they owe their origin.

Consequently, the author's contention at the beginning of his work and throughout, that documentary sources are more important than archaeological for testing and confirming the historical claims of the Book of Mormon and other scriptures (pp. 3, 4-6, 13), or that the "Old World" or philological approach is more decisive than the "New World" or archaeological (pp. 13-14, 377), cannot be accepted. A more accurate appraisal would be that they are equally valuable. The documentary are certainly more important and decisive, when available and decipherable or usable. But it should be kept in mind that nearly all the more recently discovered of these sources have been themselves archaeologically discovered (as the author himself often acknowledges), and therefore archaeologically authenticated, also that their interpretation depends in large measure upon an understanding of the cultural background of their authors as revealed in part by archaeology; moreover, since nearly all the history of its peoples is placed by the Book of Mormon in the New World, the "New World" or archaeological test of this history is bound to be at least as decisive as the "Old World" or philological.

Limitations of space allow only a few remarks here with respect to the author's assertions on points of Book of Mormon geography.

These assertions are positive statements for which the author gives little or doubtful evidence, or no evidence at all. On p. 242, for instance, he denounced "the authority on... Book of Mormon geography," for "unbridled license of speculation and airy weakness of evidence." But he gives no example of such speculation, which would justify this harsh judgment. On

the other hand, in this assertion (along with others) he merely manages to reveal his own unawareness of the actual status of the subject of Book of Mormon geography. For this judgment can be applied only to some of the published studies on the problem. The greater and more recent part of the work on Book of Mormon geography consists of unpublished but well-substantiated conclusions, apparently unknown to the author but known to all persons with training and experience in the field of Book of Mormon archaeology (the geography of the Book of Mormon, it should be noted, is mainly a problem of Book of Mormon archaeology, since its final solution must come from the results of excavation). Nevertheless, this quick dismissal of the work of others on the geographic problem clears the board for the author's own views, the implication being that these views are the opposite of speculation and have the support of strong evidence.

Unfortunately, however, we find that this is not the case. Thus on p. 113 the author declares that "certainly there is no doubt at all that the Book of Mormon is speaking of desert most of the time it talks about wilderness." But what is the evidence given for this very positive conclusion?--merely the fact that (1) according to the Oxford Dictionary only one of the four meanings of "wilderness" is that of a region overgrown with vegetation or covered with forest or jungle; and that (2) in the Bible "wilderness" almost always means desert. This is not evidence that points beyond doubt to the conclusion that in the Book of Mormon "wilderness" usually means desert. The Oxford Dictionary certainly does not rule out the possibility that the "wildernesses" of the Book of Mormon in the New World were regions of forest or jungle, since it does give this as one of the meanings of the term; and even though in the Bible "wilderness" almost always means desert, this of course is because the Near Eastern lands dealt with in the Bible happen to have been almost always in or near the desert, while the New World lands dealt with in the Book of Mormon could have been generally in or near quite different—i. e. forested—regions (surely the Book of Mormon peoples in the New World, in the face of a possibly different physical environment, did not necessarily continue to use geographic terms such as "wilderness" with the same meaning—other than that of an unsettled region—as in their Biblical homeland).

As a matter of fact, the evidence of the Book of Mormon itself makes it quite clear that its "wildernesses" in the New World were generally not deserts as in the Near East but forest regions: references, for example, to "the forest" which covered the northern part of the land southward (general land of Zarahemla including the land Bountiful) and apparently much also of the southern highland part (general land of Nephi; Eth. 10:19) and to "the forests" in the region of the city of Nephi (e. g. Enos 3), also other indications of a wet climate. Moreover, contrary to the author's argument (pp. 340-344, 348-349), the rather open country of the region of the city of Nephi—"forests" (note the plural) were characteristic of this region—does not necessarily mean that the rest of the Book of Mormon area was similarly "for the most part" open or unforested; this would conflict with many indications in the Record to the contrary—one of which is inconsistently quoted by the author himself (p. 294: "'the land southward . . . was covered with animals of the forest,'" Eth. 10:19, previously cited here), on the basis of which he refers, again inconsistently, to "the forested land to the south" (same page). Nor can we conclude with him that the Record indicates that the region of the city of Nephi was "a very dry" or "arid country," with desert wildernesses (pp. 342-344): the admitted presence of forests, as well as lakes (waters of Mormon, waters of Sebus) and

abundance of wild animals, all point instead to a climate of at least moderate rainfall. (His main argument here is that the flight of the people of Limhi from the city of Nephi into "the wilderness," with their flocks and herds" [Mos. 22], surely would have left behind a well-marked trail, if through jungle or forest; consequently, the statement that the Lamanite army which pursued them for two days "could no longer follow their tracks" and were therefore "lost in the wilderness" can be understood only if we assume that the region was not one of jungle or forest but of desert: "How could their tracks have become lost to the swift and clever Lamanite trackers right behind them? Very easily in arid country, by winds laden with sand and dust, which have rendered many an army invisable and effaced its tracks. But never in a jungle." This conclusion, however, reveals a lack of first-hand acquaintance on the part of the author with wet forest or jungle country. The reviewer, on the other hand, can testify from such first-hand acquaintance [having traveled by foot and horseback in the tropical rain forest of northern Central America] that the trail of a company of people with animals, even that of an army, traveling through a jungle can very quickly be effaced or rendered indistinguishable by one of the frequent heavy rain storms characteristic of such a country—all foot and hoof tracks are soon obliterated in a sea of mud, and branches and twigs are broken everywhere, leaving such signs valueless to pursuers for distinguishing the trail. The editor of this Newsletter, who lived in Panama for a time, has similar testimony on this point: that on one occasion a wide pathway was cut through the jungle of that region for the passage of heavy army equipment, but could not be found again the very next day!) In view of this, the author's further conclusion that the rest of the Book of Mormon area was also "rather dry," with desert wildernesses, is likewise unwarranted.

Again, the author's flat rejection of Central America as the area of the Book of Mormon (or at least as the land southward, the region of the early Nephite settlements: p. 343) must also be considered hardly more than speculation: none of the reasons he gives to support this rejection can be held to carry any weight as evidence. Thus one of them is his view, above discussed, that the Book of Mormon area, contrary to Central America, was "for the most part" open or unforested country and "rather dry," conclusions we have seen to be based upon weak evidence and even opposite the probable facts. It may further be noted in this connection that Central America, although generally forested as actually required by the Book of Mormon for the land southward, is comparatively open and dry, like the region of Nephi, in the very region where we must locate Nephi if Central America is a part of the Book of Mormon area (northern Central America=the land southward in the "Limited Tehuantepec" identification), namely the highland region of northwestern Honduras and southeastern Guatemala!

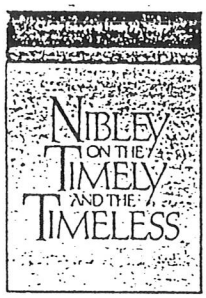
A second reason he gives for his rejection of Central America as the land southward of the Book of Mormon is that the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, at the north end of Central America, is too wide to be the "small neck" or "narrow passage" of land which connected the land-southward division of the Book of Mormon area with the land northward: "To call the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, one hundred and thirty miles wide, a 'narrow passage' is of course out of the question" (p. 360). But this is not out of the question at all. Although the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, in its present width of 130 miles, may be considered too wide to be described as a "small neck of land" or "narrow passage" in the absolute sense, in the relative sense — i. e. in comparison with the land areas on either side—it does fit these terms (and probably did even more in ancient Book of Mormon times, as there is evidence of a considerable regression of the sea on each side since those times)—else why do

geographers designate it as an isthmus?

A third and final reason given by the author for his rejection of Central America is the—according to him—"immense length" of and "enormous distance involved" in a recorded journey from the city of Nephi to Zarahemla, both of which were settlements in the land southward; i.e., a distance between these points exceeding the extent of Central America (pp. 342-343). But this journey turns out to have been that of a large company of men, women, and children (the people of Limhi)—evidently on foot through forest at least a large part of the way, with their provisions and "flocks and herds"—of only some 21 days (since the similar journey of the people of Alma is explicitly indicated to have required this period of time); which means that Nephi and Zarahemla could not have been much over 300 miles apart (if this journey was accomplished at a travel-rate of some 15 miles a day, a rather liberal estimate for such a company, especially with "flocks and herds," journeying on foot through forest), and probably not much over 250 (since a more likely estimate of the travel-rate in this case would be around ten miles a day), by the undoubtedly somewhat meandering route of this journey, or probably not much over 200 miles by direct air-line! Consequently these cities, contrary to the author, could both very easily have been located in Central America, which has an extent of over 1,300 miles—and even in northern Central America (i.e. the land southward according to the now widely accepted Limited Tehuantepec or Mesoamerican identification of the Book of Mormon area), which has an extent of over 650 miles.

Thus all three reasons advanced by the author for his rejection of Central America as the land southward of the Book of Mormon have been found to be invalid. We may add that in this claim he is also in disagreement with the Prophet Joseph Smith, who concluded that Zarahemla, which was in the land southward, was in Central America (loc. cit.). Indeed, at the end of his study the author even appears to disagree with himself on this point. Whereas he asserts, in his argument against Central America, that "it is plain. . .that our [Book of Mormon] story does not take place in the jungles of Central America" (p. 343), he now writes inconsistently (p. 376): "But what of the mighty ruins of Central America?. . .It is our conviction that proof of the Book of Mormon does lie in Central America."

In conclusion, we may state that the major part of the work under review, that dealing with the Book of Mormon in the light of Near Eastern philology (the author's field of specialization), is of very considerable worth to the student of the Book of Mormon. But the author has seriously reduced the over-all value of his work, by including unacceptable discussions of Book of Mormon archaeology and geography. These are subjects which, for proper treatment, require specialization in a different field, namely, of course, that of archaeology, particularly American archaeology.



Hugh Nibley: Right about Time

Review by Ken Shelton
BYU Today Editor

Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless, *essays and introductions by Hugh W. Nibley, foreword by Truman G. Madsen, Religious Studies Monograph Series, Vol. 1, Bookcraft, Inc., 1978, 323 pp., $8.95 hardback.*

"Like butterflies caught in amber" is one author's description of "the revolutionary insights that have come to modern eyes through the 'document explosion' of recent decades." Hugh W. Nibley, alone, has supplied a keg or two of dynamite. To be sure, he has contributed his share of documents, and he has purused countless more, ancient and modern, written in several languages.

His comprehensive works constitute an impressive outpouring. In this nicely crafted volume, Nibley is condensed to 13 essays—nine on timeless and four on timely issues—selected by a panel of colleagues. The "Foreword" by Truman Madsen and Nibley's own "Intellectual Autobiography" are worth the modest admission price. But that's mostly milk. The meatier matters are addressed in what follows.

—Moses Chapter 1: "The first chapter of the Book of Moses commands the most boundless wonder and esteem. It was brought forth in the very month that the Book of Mormon came from the press and no one less inspired than the man who produced the one could have produced the other."

—The Expanding Gospel: "The proper business of theology and philosophy is to expand men's *knowledge* of the gospel . . . no man may add to the scriptures [but] that imposes no restriction on God."

—Treasures in the Heavens: "One has here below the opportunity of enhancing one's treasure in heaven by meritorious actions, and also the risk of losing it entirely by neglecting it in his search for earthly treasure."

—Subduing the Earth: "Man's dominion is a call to service, not a license to exterminate. . . . he is not a predator, a manipulator or an exploiter of other creatures, but one who cooperates with nature as a diligent husbandman."

—Genesis of the Written Word: "As members of the human race we are bound to approach the scriptures with new feelings of reverence and respect. They are the nearest approach and the best clue thus far discovered to the genesis of the written word."

—The Sacrifice of Isaac: "The close resemblance between the sacrifice of Abraham and Isaac, far from impugning the authenticity of either story, may well be viewed as a confirmation of both."

—The Book of Mormon: A Minimal Statement: "The Book of Mormon is addressed explicitly to our own age, faced by the same [historical] predicament and the same impending threat of destruction.

—Churches in the Wilderness: "The Dead Sea Scrolls bind the Old Testament and the New Testament together as nothing else, and almost all the Scrolls so far published show remarkable affinity to the Book of Mormon, as well as the restored Church."

—Their Portrait of a Prophet: "But why should his critics not see in Joseph Smith only what they choose to see, since the Mormons themselves do the same?"

—Educating the Saints: "As the strong man loveth to run a race, so Brigham loved to exercise his brains . . . [his] sanguine discourses on education were meant to stir his people up and shame them out of their intellectual lethargy. Whether we like it or not, we are going to have to return to Brigham Young's ideals of education."

—Zeal Without Knowledge: "Zeal is the engine that drives the whole vehicle, without it we would get nowhere. But without clutch, throttle, brakes and steering wheel, our mighty engine becomes an instrument of destruction, and the more powerful the motor, the more disastrous the inevitable crack-up if the proper knowledge is lacking."

—Beyond Politics: "Politics, as practiced on earth, belongs to the ways of men; it is the essential activity of the city—the city of man, not the city of God."

This volume is the first (of now 10) in the Religious Studies series, and in my opinion, it's still the best. Because it's one man's bold declaration, not a syndicated study or anthologized symposium.

BOOKS

ZEAL IN QUEST OF KNOWLEDGE

OLD TESTAMENT AND RELATED STUDIES
by Hugh Nibley
edited by John W. Welch, Gary P. Gilliam and Don E. Norton
Deseret Book Company, 1986, $15.95, 290 pp.

Reviewed by Keith E. Norman

THIS BOOK IS the first of a projected eight-volume series of the collected works of Mormondom's scholar extraordinaire and defender of the faith emeritus, under the sponsorship of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies. Volume One consists of eleven essays and articles written between the years 1956 and 1982. The subjects of these articles range from speculation about pre-Adamite pseudo-human inhabitants of the planet to Christian doctrinal developments in the fourth century. Although only a few of the entries relate substantively to the Old Testament, and most of them have been published previously, I doubt that Nibley's devoted fans will quibble over titles or duplications.

Certainly the hallmarks of Nibley's work are here in abundance—the iconoclastic criticism of the scholarly establishment, the brilliant and creative insights into ancient texts, the seemingly limitless acquaintance with source material, both primary and secondary, and the assured vindication of the Mormon position. It is these features which guarantee that Nibley will be entertaining and engrossing, no matter how far over your head he is. For some forty years he has been doing combat with the most knowledgeable detractors of the faith, and this retrospective series fittingly honors his heroic stance and contributions to Mormon scholarship.

It is somewhat unfortunate, however, that the intellectual salvos in Nibley's writings tend to overshadow the ethical and moral content, since it is the latter which is, I suspect, his more important contribution. In fact, Nibley is pre-eminently qualified to write on the Old Testament not so much because of his scholarly achievements, but because he has appropriated the Old Testament prophetic spirit. The Hebrew prophet was usually something of an eccentric, someone who stood outside the political and ecclesiastical power structure and called society to task for its moral and spiritual failings. They often turned their sharpest invective on just those achievements of which the culture boasted, the values it had institutionalized. Nibley uncannily fits this mold. He has never sought or acquired any personal power base in Mormon society, but the enormous respect he commands has allowed him to become one of its sharpest critics, and one whose barbs appear to be exempt from the usual self- or Church-imposed PR constraints. In recent years he has targeted such icons of respectability as litigation, real estate development and even the business management style appropriated by the Church.

Characteristic of the scope of entries in this volume is a talk delivered at the 1980 BYU Women's Conference entitled "Patriarchy and Matriarchy." Here Nibley takes some irreverent shots at the sacred bull of patriarchal rule. Both patriarchy and matriarchy are prone to corruption and must always be at odds, he points out, because the basis of either system is the struggle for power, to be Number One. Nibley's comments on the Adam and Eve situation, attempting to show that in the beginning it w not so, are perhaps more entertaining th edifying, but he has more incisive things to say. After a discourse on Macbeth as a prime example of "the perennial feud between matriarchy and patriarchy," Nibley cites our prime-time soaps as the epitome of our culture's ideals: glamorous careers, cut-throat competition, easy money and exploitive sex. Success and even survival in one's career seem inseparable from a paralyzing fear and anxiety at the expense of idealism, compassion and courage. Nibley defines careerism as "the determination to reign in hell rather than serve in heaven." Was anyone ever so persuasive in getting Mormon women to stay at home with the kids?

At his best, Nibley, assuming the mantle of an Old Testament prophet, decries our ambition, cruelty, indifference and self-righteous materialism. His acerbic moral insight convicts us and calls us to remembrance of an eternal perspective and the need for repentance. Nibley measures our modern, progressive and scientific values against Biblical standards and finds us and them wanting. Paraphrasing Isaiah 1:11 in "Great Are The Words of Isaiah," he says, "You are not going to appease God by trying to buy him off, by going through th pious motions of religious observances, yc meetings and temple sessions." Neither will Nibley let us off with restricting the application of the prophet's words to animal sacrifices, as the context would indicate. With similar prophetic license, Nibley equates Isaiah's denunciation of oppression by the successful class in his day with the drive to maximize profit in our own competitive and predatory society. Nibley's Isaiah takes on the beautiful people, the party set, the fashion conscious, the law courts, business high rollers, national patriots who put their faith in military might, and the exploiters and polluters of nature. Such a prophet, we suspect, would be less than enthusiastic about the material successes of the Church today. "God is not impressed by the magnificent temples people build for him," Nibley reminds us, but by a contrite yet generous spirit towards those around us who are suffering.

Unfortunately, the number of us who read Nibley for his preaching is roughly similar to the proportion of *Playboy* fans who read it mainly for the articles. Nibley's intellectual point-making is what really catches our attention. And ironically, it is this very brilliance, which so dazzles his avid readers, that is the source of his weakness as a scholar. This side of Nibley's output is also evident in *Old Testament and Related Studies*, typified by his

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notorious selective proof-texting and tendentious disregard of the evidence, or his sarcastic dismissal of arguments which do not support his position. Missionaries and seminary students are trained to proof-text, gathering only those scriptural verses that appear to support a particular doctrine, without regard to the context of the quotes. But although he possesses more than enough sophistication and analytical ability to rise above such techniques, it seems that Nibley's standard methodology with virtually all his sources, scriptural or not, is proof-texting. His glib freedom in wrenching hitherto unimagined insights and novel connections from ancient documents makes more methodical scholars cringe, including many who are equally devoted to Mormonism. But the show is so much fun, and makes us feel so good about our own convictions, that we don't bother to notice or analyze the sometimes faulty apparatus. When Nibley slays a dragon, never mind that it's made of papier-mache or straw, that beast is dead!

Much of Nibley's work in this collection is also marred by recurring lapses into scriptural literalism. In "Historicity of the Bible," his claim that "the LDS people have always stood between [the] two extremes" of Biblical fundamentalists on the one hand and liberalism on the other seems promising. However, a later statement that "all Latter-day Saints" have been familiar with the fact of "individuality, contradiction and differentness" in the Biblical literature leads us to wonder if he has been attending the same priesthood and Sunday School classes we have, the ones filled with masses of stubborn LDS harmonizers. But Nibley then proceeds to cite a number of minority-view scholars, often unidentified, to the effect that studies of recently discovered documents have supported the Book of Mormon in vindicating Biblical accounts, including the Tower of Babel as the origin of linguistic diversity, the single authorship of Genesis, and the Biblical timescale since Adam. But Nibley asks too much of these documents: they may be capable of refining or even revising our understanding of the historical setting of the Bible, but they can hardly validate the details of the narratives, especially when they involve metaphysical assertions. That Jesus existed is no longer in doubt (it never *was*, seriously), but the nature of his being is still a matter of faith, and no unearthing or analysis of ancient documents can alter that limitation on mortal knowledge.

Nibley also betrays his literalist bias in "Before Adam," perhaps his most intriguing essay. Despite his assurance that "Latter-day Saints are the only Bible-oriented people who have always been taught that things were happening long, long before Adam appeared on the scene," he dismisses biological evolution as well as *ex nihilo* creationism by a technique of overstatement and caricature of these positions. The implications that all scientists and anthropologists are atheists is unworthy of such an eminent representative of Mormon scholarship. However, after rehashing the creationist argument that evolutionists are still disputing the mechanisms of evolution and the place of pre-historic hominids (if they can't agree among themselves, why should we take them seriously?), Nibley takes a surprisingly liberal position with respect to Biblical mythology. He recognizes that stories such as the Garden of Eden and the Flood are visualized in nursery tale fashion, and decries the presumption that the scriptures are somehow written directly by God and therefore the last word. From Noah's perspective, "the whole earth" *was* inundated by the Deluge, but Noah's viewpoint was very limited. Nibley prefers Abraham's account of creation (as revealed by Joseph Smith) that the Gods *prepared* the earth; they created the potential, but it developed (yes, even evolved) to its current state over millions of years.

But although Nibley makes allowance for geologic time and the fossil record, he also insists on the historicity of the scriptural Adam as the first man on earth, who had participated in planning his future home in an earlier state. Nibley knows from this scenario that the earth was a very different sort of planet prior to the Fall, and concludes that its inhabitants before Adam were basically irrelevant to him. The idea that pre-Adamic hominids are not ancestral to us at all is hardly new, but it leaves those creatures, not to mention those aeons of time, in something of a state of limbo. What is their point? Where do they fit into the plan of salvation? If evolution doesn't culminate in human beings, is it meaningless? As a means of preparing the earth for humanity, it is certainly inefficient. Later in the article (p. 82), Nibley hints that some of the human race may in fact not be descendants of Adam. Perhaps recognizing the extreme racist implications of such speculation, Nibley wisely decides to "keep [his] opinions in a low profile" on this point.

A number of articles deal with the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi manuscripts, which Nibley invariably manages to read as proto-Mormon documents. It is here that his scholarly gifts are most in evidence, but it is also here that the selective distortions and creative paraphrases run rampant. Unfortunately, even sophisticated Mormon readers seldom go beyond Nibley for enlightenment on these texts and what they mean to the study of early Christianity. When the *Gospel of Truth*

speaks of the Pleroma, the Gnostic ultra-being out of which the hierarchy of lesser entities emanate, Nibley interprets this as referring to the plurality of gods in the oneness of the godhead. Similarly, he relates the "return to the heavenly home" motif common in Gnostic sources to Mormon doctrine, but fails to mention its association with the anti-material bias prevalent in Gnosticism, a feature quite antithetical to Mormon theology.

A certain amount of the blame for the misuse of source material in *The Old Testament and Related Studies* must rest with the laxity of the editors. This may be understandable in those articles, usually transcripts of speeches, which lack footnotes altogether. For instance, in "Unrolling the Scrolls," Nibley's liberal expansion of a passage from Ignatius mentions only his letter to the Trallians. The actual text, (*Trallians*, V 1-2) refers to the early second century Bishop of Antioch's knowledge of "the places of the angels and the gatherings of principalities," a phrase which is probably based on Jewish mystical cosmology. Nibley's "quote" of this text grows to something that sounds remarkably like the Mormon concept of heavenly degrees of glory. Since his expansion is within the quotation marks attributed to Ignatius, it cannot be excused even as a paraphrase. "Treasures in the Heavens," by way of contrast, is heavily footnoted, but not much better documented. Note 19, for example, includes a reference to Colossians 2:26-27, but the chapter ends with verse 23. This is a common enough slip, but where were his editors? To cite a more representative instance from the same article, Nibley supports his argument that the Dead Sea Scrolls teach the Mormon doctrine of pre-existence by a reference to the *Zadokite Document* 2:7. This passage, however, quite clearly refers not to creaturely pre-existence but to God's foreknowledge, and in a manner which smacks of pre-destination: "He knew their deeds before ever they were created." And even were he more circumspect in citing his sources, Nibley's eclectic proof-texting would not be countenanced in any self-respecting graduate seminar. But with 26 pages of footnotes following an 18-page text, perhaps the quantity of documentation is meant to compensate for deficiencies in quality.

I do not mean to belabor the faults of this volume or my objections to Nibley's methodology. There are indeed many intriguing affinities between Mormon teachings and isolated portions of the ancient documents Nibley studies. It is fun to read this book for those tidbits, and the spice of his comments adds an undeniable zest. But the compulsion to demonstrate thereby the antiquity and legitimacy of our doctrines leads to abuse and, in light of our professed belief in progressive revelation, such a chip-on-the-shoulder attitude is quite unnecessary. However, as the Church's unofficial apologist, Nibley operates on his own agenda and is apparently quite indifferent to any pretense of conventional scholarly objectivity. Certainly he has been a beacon of inspiration and a powerful stimulus to several generations of would-be scholars among the Saints, myself included. Hopefully some of his protèges will be able to carry on his quest for knowledge without compromising either their commitment to Gospel truth or to scholarly integrity. In spite of my cavils, I cannot resist the intellectual and spiritual romp provided by almost anything Hugh Nibley writes. Still, we need to listen more attentively to his call to renounce the comfortable values of the world, rather than turning to him just to stroke our religious prejudices.

Reviews

THE SECULAR RELEVANCE OF THE GOSPEL

Louis C. Midgley

Since Cumorah. By Hugh W. Nibley. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co. xx + 451 pp., $4.95.
Louis C. Midgley is Associate Professor of Political Science at Brigham Young University.

What message has the Book of Mormon for our world? Does it speak to those who sense their own involvement in the greatness and the misery of secular existence? Hugh Nibley, in a portion of *Since Cumorah*, strives to provide an answer to these questions. We are badly in need of a serious discussion of the issues he raises. Usually, however, an abashed silence has followed his scholarly contributions. In order to see what he is up to in the closing portion of *Since Cumorah*, which is my intent in this essay, it is useful to understand something of his role in Mormon intellectual life. Nibley has been a source of dismay in certain circles, but why should he cause consternation? The answer is simple, though consequential.

Hugh Nibley has long been waging a major two-front war: his best-known campaign is against what might be called "Cultural Mormonism"; but an equally significant campaign is now under way against a form of "Sectarian Mormonism" now having some popularity, especially in certain academic circles. Both the Cultural and Sectarian types are eager to effect an accommodation of the gospel with features of the prevailing culture. That Nibley has defended the integrity of the gospel against the Cultural Mormons is rather well known; what is not nearly as well known is that he has evoked the Book of Mormon against the efforts of Sectarian Mormons to align certain American middle-class values with the gospel, as well as the recent attempts of some Mormons to sanctify a radical political ideology by attributing it to God.

In *Since Cumorah* we see Nibley in a somewhat new role; one, however, that is remarkably open and free of rancor. He has often appeared to his Mormon audience as a warrior with a verbal rapier who busies himself in the defense of the faith by impaling the enemies of Joseph Smith and the Mormon scriptures. Both *Sounding Brass* and *The Myth Makers* reveal Nibley in this role.[1] He has both a taste and a talent for irony, and is tempted to sarcasm and mockery. I like his style. All the blundering, pompous, self-assured folly of this world, and especially that manifest in the opposition to the gospel, deserves what it gets. Such verbal fireworks do not always accomplish their mission; however, the style and tone of *Since Cumorah* is different, and those readers who know Nibley only in one role might do well to examine the book carefully.

Since Cumorah is a massive effort to test the Book of Mormon. Such an endeavor is an affront to those Cultural Mormons who feel that the book has already flunked, while some Sectarians reject the scholarly enterprise as wholly irrelevant to the truth of the gospel. However, the material I wish to examine constitutes a special kind of test. Mormons who are genuinely concerned about (and perhaps even those engaged in) the current struggle over political ideologies which threatens to polarize and split the Church should give some serious attention to Nibley's argument, even though it is not presented in the familiar form of an "ism."

He begins with the recognition that among Mormons generally there is an astonishing degree of indifference toward the doctrinal content of the Book of Mormon, as well as a rather profound awareness of its prophetic message. For the Saints, the Book of Mormon is often a sign of God's revelatory activity, and, as such, they may feel a deep commitment to it. However, as Nibley points out, the book itself "claims to contain an enormously important message for whoever is to receive it, and yet until now those few who have been willing to receive it as the authentic word of God have not shown particular interest in that message." He insists, and I think correctly, that everything about the book is "of very minor significance in comparison with what the book actually has to say. As we see it, if an angel took the trouble to deliver the book to Joseph Smith and to instruct him night after night as to just how he was to go about giving it to the world . . . , that book should obviously have something important to convey. The question that all are now asking of the Bible — 'What does it have to say that is of relevance to the modern world?' applies with double force to the Book of Mormon, which is a special message to the modern world." His feeling is that "the ultimate test of the Book of Mormon's validity is whether or not it really has something to say" to our age.

Nibley's effort to show the secular relevance of the Book of Mormon will

[1]Nibley entered the Mormon academic scene in 1946 with *No Ma'am, That's Not History* — a criticism of Fawn Brodie's famous "biography" of Joseph Smith. This earned him the undying hostility of numerous Cultural Mormons. For some reason they could not get over the impertinence of the "upstart" Nibley criticizing the likes of Brodie, although his early impressions have now been mostly vindicated.

come as a shock to some Mormons. Thus far he has avoided being caught in the narrow, partisan controversy between the party-men whose world is either "liberal" or "conservative." But this does not mean that he has neglected to say things of relevance about problems like, for example, the current polarization of political opinion within the Church — he has, but his contributions, until recently, have been either "hidden" in essays in academic journals,[2] or couched in the words and hence the authority of Brigham Young. In *Since Cumorah*, and especially in the part entitled "The Prophetic Book of Mormon," there is an extended discussion of the secular relevance of the prophetic message of the Book of Mormon wherein Nibley addresses himself to issues that genuinely and deeply concern, as well as divide, the people of God.

The Nibley that surfaces at the end of *Since Cumorah* is quite likely to trouble some of his former allies. He has long been known as a critic of the efforts of those within the Church who wish to see the gospel reconciled to prevailing currents within the culture. Efforts to harmonize the gospel and the culture have taken a number of forms. Some of the most energetic efforts have come from some Mormon intellectuals who, under the influence of the Protestant liberalism of the pre-World War II period, wished to see Mormonism become fully consistent with a brand of secular humanism. Their strategy was to capitulate wherever there seemed to be a serious tension. Hugh Nibley has provided the most significant intellectual obstacle for those who strove to avoid embarrassment over the gospel by retreating into a secularized Cultural Mormonism or by transforming the gospel into a variety of Protestant liberalism or humanism.

Almost alone, Nibley has stood in the way of Mormons who have given up on the Book of Mormon as a source of doctrine (for example, because they have accepted liberal Protestant notions about man's predicament) or those who have more or less rejected the possibility that the book is genuinely the word of God. He has also become the rallying-point for opposition to the development of something like the *Kulturprotestantismus* (Cultural Protestantism) of German theological liberalism after Schleiermacher — a kind of *Kulturmormonismus* that would no longer be threatened and embarrassed by assaults from prevailing science and philosophy because the Mormon religion was to be defined simply as the highest flowering of culture and therefore fully consistent with the science and philosophy of the day.

Some Cultural Mormons have thus come to see in Nibley an ironic, biting, sarcastic, clever, erudite defender of what they understand to be an irrelevant, authoritarian theological conservatism. Further, since many have come to live and die by slogans, it has been assumed by friend and foe alike that, since Nibley is critical of those who would capitulate to the culture by

[2]Nibley's "The Unsolved Loyalty Problem: Our Western Heritage," *Western Political Quarterly* 6(1953):631–57, can for example, be read both as (1) a straight examination of an issue that plagued the 4th century and which happens to have parallels with the politics of our own time, and, in addition, as (2) a subtle effort at reading a sermon to the Saints about their proclivities.

making Mormonism into a brand of Protestant liberalism or humanism, he must also be an arch political conservative. After all, these people reason, "is it not perfectly obvious that a theological liberal and a political liberal are the same thing?" Nothing could be further from the truth. *Since Cumorah* shows that his critics (and perhaps some of his Sectarian supporters) have misunderstood his position.

The argument of "The Prophetic Book of Mormon" provides a powerful and convincing antidote to counteract the poison of the narrow, partisan, extremist political ideology now being advanced by certain Mormon intellectuals. Nibley has done what no other Mormon could do (and some would not have even thought it possible): he has removed the Book of Mormon from the arsenal of weapons available to the conservatively oriented right wing. The current effort to align the gospel with a worldly political ideology and the Church with a political mass movement is a yeasty fermentation that is entirely inconsistent with the prophetic message of the Book of Mormon. Though his arguments and the conclusions are obvious, Nibley has not made a special effort to call attention to them (why buy trouble?), and it is with some reluctance that I do so. The mood among some Mormons is such that the mere hint that one does not share their social and political opinions is likely to generate a spasm of hostility, indignation, and revulsion, as well as charges of apostasy and heresy. The ideology of the Sectarians tends to include the following: (1) rejection of civil rights legislation that is intended to protect the freedom of conscience and speech and to prevent persecution and discrimination; (2) the abolition of public welfare programs; (3) opposition to taxation; (4) indifference, and even hostility, to the poor, indigent and otherwise unfortunate; (5) the encouragement of military aggression against the evil of other nations; (6) class, national and racial hatreds and conceits. Nibley argues that these cherished social and political nostrums cannot find support in the Book of Mormon and are inconsistent with the gospel.

Most Sectarians will not readily admit that I have described the content of their ideology correctly. They would, instead, want to speak in terms of fundamental principles such as individual initiative, self-reliance, freedom, or of evils such as government regulation and interference, and the welfare dole. With a peculiar kind of honesty, Nibley has torn away the silken veil which piety still draws over our own worldly ambitions and motives. What is really wrong with individual initiative, self-reliance, and so forth? Nothing if they are taken in their proper setting, but as moral absolutes they no longer conform to the law of love; they represent, instead, a crude, worldly ethic, a kind of morally blind Social Darwinism which stresses the survival of the fittest. The Book of Mormon actually describes in horror such a point of view: "every man fared in this life according to the management of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and . . . every man conquered according to his strength . . ." (Alma 30:17). Now we often hear talk of a universal, immutable, irrevocable Law of the Harvest which determines that men get paid for whatever they do. But not according

to the gospel, which speaks for love and mercy. Nibley points out that

> for charity [i.e., *agape*, love] there is no bookkeeping, no *quid pro quo*, no deals, interest, bargaining, or ulterior motives; *charity gives to those who do not deserve and expects nothing in return*; it is the love God has for us, and the love we have for little children, of whom we expect nothing but for whom we would give everything. By the Law of the Harvest, none of us can expect salvation for "all men that are in a state of nature . . . a carnal state . . . have gone contrary to the nature of God," and if they were to be restored to what they deserve would receive "evil for evil, or carnal for carnal, or devilish for devilish." (Alma 41:11, 13.) "Therefore, my son," says Alma in a surprising conclusion, "see that you are merciful unto your brethren." (Alma 41:14.) That is our only chance, for if God did not have mercy none of us would ever return to his presence, for we are all "in the grasp of justice" from which only "the plan of mercy" can save us. (Alma 42:14f.) But God does have mercy, and has declared that we can have a claim on it to that exact degree to which we have shown charity towards our fellow man. (Italics supplied.)

Then Nibley points out that "charity to be charity must be 'to all men,' especially to those evil people who hate us, 'For if ye love them which love you what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans do the same?' Nor should we demand or expect charity in return. . . . Still, we might say that the Law of the Harvest wins after all, since we must have and give charity to receive it." How does this relate to concrete political and social issues? In this way: our ambition, pride, self-confidence, and love of status, power, and wealth negate our love of God, a love which must be expressed in our love for our fellow-man. Our actions and our rationalizing social and political ideologies do not alway express love, but often a carefully disguised and moralistically rationalized loathing, hatred, or indifference.

Though we seldom worship icons, our chief problem is still idolatry. We are constantly tempted to set our hearts upon our worldly treasures, and, when we do, these objects become our gods. Our worshipping (i.e., counting as divine) human ideas, philosophies, or value-systems must also be counted equally to fall under that which God forbids when he forbids us to manufacture gods from the things of this earth. Nibley argues that the Nephite practice of making gods out of their gold and silver was simply worshipping the stuff as if it were divine. When our hearts are set on power, prestige, influence, status, our luxurious homes, then our political and social views will surely reflect these concerns. Our ideologies often merely rationalize our commitments to the values of this world. Hence it is all too easy to see what really stands behind the pious slogans, rubrics, and clichés advanced by the Sectarian supporters of radical ideologies.

Earlier I mentioned six elements which are commonly found in the Sectarian political ideology. Nibley indicates that the prophetic message of the Book of Mormon speaks to each of these issues.

1. Nibley feels that the Book of Mormon fully supports efforts both to protect civil rights and to prevent persecution and discrimination.

> Some have felt that the attempt of the state to implement the ideas of liberty and equality by passing and enforcing laws repugnant to a majority, *i.e.*, laws restraining persecution, discrimination, slavery, and all violence whatever, is an infringement of free agency. But plainly the Nephites did not think so. As we have seen, they believed that no one was ever without his free agency: one can sin or do unrighteously under any form of government whatever; indeed, the *worse* the government the better the test: after all, we are all being tried and tested on this earth 'under the rule of Belial' himself, "the prince of this world"; but since no one can ever make us sin or do right, our free agency is never in the slightest danger. *But free institutions and civil liberties are, as history shows, in constant danger. They are even attacked by those who would justify their actions as a defense of free agency, and insist that artificial barriers erected by law to protect the rights of unpopular and weak minorities are an attempt to limit that agency.* (Italics supplied.)

In addition, Nibley shows how the Book of Mormon stresses what we would call the freedom of conscience and religion, i.e., freedom to believe or not believe. The point was made by Joseph Smith in the King Follett Discourse: "Every man has a natural, and in our country, a constitutional right to be a false prophet, as well as a true prophet." Joseph Smith claimed that God suffered the establishment of the United States Constitution to provide first and foremost such freedom of conscience (Doctrine and Covenants 101) and the statement on government in the Doctrine and Covenants (Section 134) makes freedom of conscience the key to the legitimacy of human government. (Nibley has treated these themes at some length in the essay entitled "The Ancient Law of Liberty," found in *The World of the Prophets.*)

2. Nibley finds that the Book of Mormon does not necessarily oppose what we now call public welfare programs. King Benjamin's insistance on the necessity of equality resulted in his authorization of such programs. "He insisted that anyone who withheld his substance from the needy, no matter how improvident and deserving of their fate they might be, 'hath great cause to repent' (Mosiah 4:16-18). . . ." Nibley denies that these were merely private welfare activities.

3. Welfare programs need to be financed, and one method is through public taxation. Benjamin's son Mosiah

> wrote equality into the constitution, "that every man should have an equal chance throughout all the land. . . ." (Mosiah 29:38.) "I desire," said the king, "that this inequality should be no more in this land . . . ; but I desire that this be a land of liberty, and every man may enjoy his rights and privileges alike. . . ." (Mosiah 29:32.) This does not mean that some should support others in idleness, "but that the burden should come upon all the people, that every man might bear his part." (Mosiah 29:34.) This was in conformance with Benjamin's policy of taxation: "I would that ye should [this is a royal imperative] impart of your substance to the poor, every man *according to that which he hath* . . . administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants." (Mosiah 4:26) (Italics are Nibley's.)

After giving another example of a royal order (Mosiah 21:17), Nibley adds: "Here taxation appears as a means of implementing the principle of equality. Whenever taxation is denounced in the Book of Mormon, it is always because the taxer uses the funds not to help others but for his own aggrandizement." Moroni saved the constitution of Mosiah from the king-men by enforcing equality. "This drastic enforcement of equality was justified by an extreme national emergency; but both Alma and Moroni had pointed out to the people on occasion that the worst danger their society had to face was inequality." (Cf. Doctrine and Covenants 78:5-6).

4. The last seventy pages of *Since Cumorah* are brimming with references to our neglect of the poor. Nibley sees Mormon 8:36-39 as a prophetic warning to the saints in our own time.

> "And I know that ye do [present tense] walk in the pride of your hearts; and there are none save a few only who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envyings and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities. . . ." (Mormon 8:36.) Here is our own fashionable, well-dressed, status-conscious and highly competitive society. The "iniquities" with which it is charged are interesting, for instead of crime, immorality, and atheism we are told of the vices of vanity, of the intolerant and uncharitable state of mind: pride, envy, strife, malice and persecution. These are the crimes of meanness; whereas libertines, bandits and unbelievers have been known to be generous and humane, the people whom Mormon is addressing betray no such weakness. They are dedicated people: "For behold, ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, *more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and afflicted.*" (Mormon 8:37). These people do not persecute the poor (they are too single-minded for that), but simply ignore their existence: ". . . ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy . . . to pass by you, and notice them not." (Mormon 8:39.)

5. The entire chapter on "Military History" (chapter 11) and much of the remaining seventy pages of *Since Cumorah* is devoted to warning the saints against wishing to see political power and especially military force used to punish the wickedness of other parties and nations, *no matter how wicked they may actually be.* The proper theme, Nibley maintains, should be co-existence, a word he uses over and over, and not the venerable old though utterly insane and unrighteous notion of "kill or be killed," "it is either you or me." The saints should always practice forbearance toward their enemies and strive for peace, even sometimes at the price of other values (e.g., Mosiah 20:22 and cf. several important statements by the First Presidency); they should only fight defensively and for limited objectives. War and the threat of war is God's way of showing us that both sides are bad. "Of one thing we can be sure, however — the good people never fight the bad people: they never fight anybody: '. . . it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished; for it is the wicked that stir up the hearts of the children of men unto bloodshed.'" (Mormon 4:5.)"

6. Being righteous has nothing whatever to do with our being a member of a particular family, party, class, nation or race. Likewise, according to Nibley, wickedness should not be attributed to those who do not belong to some fashionable group. It is not our business to judge other men's sins. "If they have not charity it mattereth not unto thee," the Lord told one Nephite prophet who was inordinately concerned about the sins of others. (Ether 12:37.) Instead, we must come to realize that before God we are all beggars. If we show our faith through love, God will see and respond with mercy toward us. However, when our hearts are set upon some worldly object or value, when we "seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness" (Doctrine and Covenants 1:16), we actually worship some worldly likeness instead of God. Then we lust after the riches of this world, upon which our hearts are set; then we begin to seek power and gain that we "might be lifted up one above another." The cycle is familiar: with wealth or other prosperity comes a feeling of pride and superiority, from which comes intense status-consciousness and an insatiable need for those things which assure our status (especially power and wealth). Why are we unhappy? "We seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness." Instead we set our hearts on the vain things of this world; we are anxious about the wrong things. "Please note," writes Nibley, ". . . wickedness does not consist in being on the *wrong side* — in the Book of Mormon it never does." Party, class, nation are all equally irrelevant to the question of righteousness of one and the wickedness of another group and turn us from the actual human predicament and its authentic solution.

But what about race? For the second time, Nibley has examined what he calls "The Race Question." The very title is enough to excite some anxiety, which only shows that the subject needs to be dealt with. What he examines, of course, are the ethnological teachings found in the Book of Mormon and the use of group labels (e.g., Nephite, Lamanite). The relevant issue is the problem of dark skin — "black" and "white." The terms "black" and "white" are used, Nibley argues, as *marks* of a general way of life; that is, they are cultural designations. They are marks, they are also intended by God, and they are put upon the holder by his own actions, but there is no miracle of skin color changing from light to dark ("white" to "black"?), except as one adopted a certain cultural pattern.

Nibley finds that the Book of Mormon is busy warning us about our temptation to be concerned about wealth, status, prestige, power, and influence. (After all, sin is anxiety about the things of this world. The real source of our wickedness is our desire to live something that is not genuinely worthy of our love, our urge to worship a mere likeness, our tendency to be concerned about some trivial thing. The one thing we fear in this world and resent above all other things is being edged out of our (rightful?) place at the table when Mother Technology's pie is being cut. Things seem to merit status and we are *all* tempted by such ephemeral things. The trouble with the conservatively oriented political ideology with which some of the saints are now flirting and which is now being taught as God-given by some

Sectarian teachers is that it represents a setting of the heart upon the wrong things. Its motive is not charity; its much vaunted principles are merely *of this world* in spite of its many pious pretensions. The chief weakness of the Sectarian political ideology is that it is a clumsy attempt to accommodate the gospel to certain features of the prevailing culture. We are often quite anxious lest our wealth, our hard earned wealth, for example, be taxed by an evil and profligate government and given to Blacks, the poor, or someone else who did not earn it. We forget that we are all beggars before the Lord and we miss the point of the Great Commandment (Cf. Mosiah 4:16-27). We worry about our status, our influence and power, our place in this world. A vain, worldly political ideology which happens to express our fears and reflect our anxieties is seized upon as an expression of a profound truth and eagerly made a corollary of the gospel. What irony! The gospel is *not* just another ideology. The good news about Jesus Christ is an affront to all ideologies; it challenges all the presumptions we label as "isms." Our worldly wisdom is foolishness to God. We take ourselves and our world entirely too seriously when we try to insist that we can have it both ways, that our own "isms" — whatever they may be — and the gospel are both equally true. Of course, this strikes at both the Sectarian and Cultural brands of Mormonism, for they both strive to accommodate the gospel to something they prize in the secular culture.

Further, we misunderstand the gospel when we assume that we can deduce something from it (something always suspiciously like what Herbert Spencer, Frederick Bastiat, Robert Welch, John Dewey, et al. have already said) that will serve as a true political ideology.

As soon as we yield to the enticement to associate the gospel with a worldly ideology, we begin to ready the thought police. However, the Book of Mormon stands directly in the way of any such nonsense, as Nibley has often pointed out. It is not the job of the saints to go around forcing anyone, in any way, to do or not to do or believe or not to believe anything. "The Book of Mormon," according to him, "offers striking illustrations of the psychological principle that impatience with the wickedness of others (even when it is real wickedness and not merely imagined) is a sure measure of one's own wickedness. The Book of Mormon presents what has been called the 'conspiratorial interpretation of history.' People who accept such an interpretation are prone to set up their own counter-conspiracies to check the evil ones. But that is exactly what the Book of Mormon forbids above all things, since, it constantly reminds us, God alone knows the hearts of men and God alone will repay." Our commission is only to preach the gospel and not to enforce righteousness or judge anyone.

In fact, the wicked of this world are not our concern at all. Our problem is, instead, what Nibley aptly calls the "Nephite Disease," i.e., the temptation to set our hearts on the riches of this world, and our own ambition, self-righteousness and pride. This disease may not appear nearly as dreadful as those diseases which infect others. To the saints, however, it is fatal, if unchecked, while those infected by the far more ugly diseases may yet

be healed by the gospel. Nibley's thesis is that the Book of Mormon was made available to our world to warn *us* about the Nephite Disease. Our problem, then, is not the wickedness of others — we have no room to gloat — but our own worldliness. One should not use the Book of Mormon to blast the Russians, the Chinese, the Communists, the Blacks *or anyone else* whom we currently are being taught to hate and fear; its message of warning is primarily for the saints, i.e., for those who freely choose to heed the gospel message.

It is to be hoped that Nibley's book will be read and seriously considered — even more that the Book of Mormon will itself receive our attention. My experience with students at B.Y.U. convinces me that vast numbers of young Mormons, and often the most able and faithful young saints, are eager for the message of the Book of Mormon and deeply appreciate having it pointed out. It is a shame that so many students go through a long course of study on the Book of Mormon with, of all things, Bastiat's *The Law* as a guide. (This little book is an old criticism of the evils of socialism that has recently been promoted by the John Birch Society. In a number of "religion classes" at Brigham Young University it has actually been a requirement that one read Bastiat's book in order to receive an A in the study of the Book of Mormon.) Perhaps those teachers who see things more the way Nibley does — they are clearly in the majority — could arrange to have Part V of *Since Cumorah* reprinted in an inexpensive edition and made available to students as a commentary on the Book of Mormon, if such a thing seems to be needed. This would certainly seem to make more sense than the continual use of old (or new) tracts on socialism, communism or the welfare state, written by those wholly or partially ignorant of the gospel. Teaching the Book of Mormon in ways that fill the student's mind with irrelevancies, worldly nonsense, partisan political opinions (e.g., public education is an activity of the devil, or *all* public attempts to assist the poor and indigent are demonic) only makes the gospel message seem absurd and totally irrelevant to our world, and drives many young saints into fanaticism or eventual apostasy.

Some Mormons indeed are losing their faith altogether, simply because the expressions which they are expected to assimilate are quite divorced from the realities of man's actual existence. Thus instead of the gospel message appearing to have any deep relevance to life, it is now sometimes made to appear as something mostly, or even totally, irrelevant to the predicament of the secular world. However, as Nibley ably shows, the gospel is more than merely something that serves to give the unreflective a comfortable feeling: it has meaning for one caught up in the current sweep of tragic events. In fact, its message only really takes on meaning when man begins to sense that he is teetering on the rim of an abyss. For without God's mercy, our best efforts are only an heroic but still laughable gesture.

Since Cumorah: The Book of Mormon in the Modern World. *By Hugh Nibley. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1967, 451 pp., $4.95.)*

It is evident from the work demonstrated in *Since Cumorah* that Hugh Nibley not only did a great deal of research but that he is probably a very competent scholar in the field of ancient documents and their languages. It is equally evident that this knowledge has not made him at all objective or critical in the sphere of his own religion. Typical of such works, *Since Cumorah* displays both confident scholarship and the tritest of religious defenses.

The preface is perhaps the best part of the book, for here the scholar is most active. His objective is to impress us with the truth of the *Book of Mormon* on the basis of ancient documents found since Cumorah. He shows clearly the potential to be a good religious thinker while dealing with the problem of proof:

> When, indeed, is a thing proven? Only when an individual has accumulated in his own consciousness enough observations, impressions, reasonings and feelings to satisfy him personally that it is so. . . . The impressions that build up to definite proof are themselves non-transferrable (p. viii).

But the potential is never developed. Whereas in the preface he acknowledges that science is of necessity a process of developing, refining, and discarding theories, in the text itself he frequently falls back on the two standard (and contradictory) attacks conservative religion always makes on scientists: they think they know all the answers, and they themselves admit their complete ignorance. He exhibits a similar distrust of doctors of scriptural and secular law familiar to readers of the *Book of Mormon.*

The great mass of data he draws together would be impressive if he did not try so hard to impress us with it. His technique is like that often used in student term papers. When the student senses a weakness in his argument, he puts quotation marks around a few words in every sentence and footnotes them to demonstrate the weight of authority his argument carries. The result is a long list of footnotes to phrases which contribute little to the question at hand.

The value of his data is further suspect because of the way he develops many of his arguments. A prime example worth examining in depth is his section on "The Isaiah Question." He begins by attempting to disparage Isaiah scholars by emphasizing their most farfetched speculations. He then uses Otto Eissfeldt, the eminent Old Testament scholar, as authority for saying that no part of Isaiah can be definitely dated and thus that its disunity is mere speculation. Actually, he tells us, Eissfeldt sees the resemblance between chapters 1-39 and 40-55 as being just as close as that between 56-66 and 40-55. The dissimilarities may be easily accounted for. The implication obviously is that Eissfeldt sees Isaiah as a basic unity.

Nibley offers his own theory that Isaiah is, indeed, a basic unity which has merely been elaborated by his disciples but with no major divisions:

> It is further significant that the only passages from Isaiah quoted in the *Book of Mormon* are chapters 2-14 and 48-54. This corresponds surprisingly to the major divisions of Isaiah on which the scholars have most widely agreed, i.e., chapters 1-13 as the original Isaiah collection and 49-55 as the authentic Deutero-Isaiah [no footnote]. Only these two sections are quoted in the *Book of Mormon.* Why does Nephi, the passionate devotee, as he proclaims himself, of the writings of Isaiah, quote only from these two blocks of those writings? Can it be that they represent what pretty well *was* the writing of Isaiah in Lehi's time? (pp. 142-143).

If we are willing to stretch a point far

enough, his logic is at least allowable, but not his use of Eissfeldt, as is clear in the following comparisons.

Nibley says:

> Thus, Eissfeldt can now tell us that references to Cyrus or Babylon do not necessarily date the chapters or even the verses in which they appear, the passages being so typically "Isaian" that the names may well be later substitutions (p. 140).

Eissfeldt says:

> . . . that xl-lxvi . . . could not derive from the prophet Isaiah who was active in the eighth century, but must be attributed to a prophet who appeared in the sixth century.
>
> The grounds for this dating of xl-lxvi, or more precisely, actually only of xl-lv are indeed decisive: the mention of Cyrus . . .; Babylon (not Assyria) threatened with downfall . . .; the peculiarities of linguistic usage and of thought (Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction*. 1965, p. 304).

Nibley:

> As Eissfeldt sums it up, in spite of all differences there are "very strong stylistic and historical resemblances between 40-55 and 56-66," and yet "the relationship between chapters 1-39 and 40-55 is just as close . . . and the resemblances include even peculiarities" (pp. 143-4).

Eissfeldt:

> We have already seen (p. 304) that the chapters Isa. xl-lxvi cannot derive from the Isaiah who was active in the second half of the eighth century, but must be two centuries later (p. 332).
>
> It is thus completely clear that Isa. lvi-lxvi does not derive from the Isaiah of the eighth century whose preaching is contained in i-xxxix of his book, any more than does xl-lv (p. 345).

The misleading effect of the entire section is evidenced in the conclusions drawn from it by Chris Hartshorn, as is discussed by Bruce Lindgren in his letter in *Courage*, June 1971, pp. 264-5.

Nibley's religious scholarship is also questionable in his approach to scripture. He asserts, for example, that ". . . we are now told that canonization may have relegated to the Apocrypha a good deal of genuine scripture" (p. 37). The assertion is impossible since writings only properly become scripture when a community has accepted them as sacred through some process of canonization. It is as though scripture falls out of heaven (a common error).

Similarly, he apparently has no understanding of how the Gospels developed:

> The very "multiplicity of the Gospels," is adequate evidence that someone has been manipulating the records.
>
> Today the experts think they have a pretty good idea of the sort of people responsible. They were people who had received the gospel from the apostles, but immediately after the passing of the apostles proceeded to make basic alterations, deliberately disregarding some of the most important teachings (pp. 29-30).

This completely misconstrues the entire modern approach to the synoptic problem by its apparent assumption that the development, passing on, and recording of oral tradition is equivalent to intentional distortion. Similar problems appear in his attempt to justify the Mormon bent toward secrecy by depicting primitive Christianity as gnostic and secretive.

The only section of the book which could really be said to have value is Chapter 12, which has no footnotes. Here Nibley tries to convey what he sees to be the message of the *Book of Mormon* to mankind. He is occasionally trite and naïve; but there is no doubt that he feels deeply what he is trying to say and out of this comes an occasional insight worth noting, such as the following one on love:

> . . . for charity there is no bookkeeping . . . no deals, interests, bargaining, or ulterior motives; charity gives to those who do not deserve and expects nothing in return; it is the love God has for us, and the love we have for little children, of whom we expect nothing but for whom we would give everything (p. 383).

Who can argue with that?

Robert Mesle

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HUGH NIBLEY. *Since Cumorah.* Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1967. 444 pp. $4.95.

(Reviewed by Alexander T. Stecker who teaches in the Department of Theology at College of The Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass. Mr. Stecker is a doctoral candidate in Old Testament at Brandeis University.)

Writing a review of a book by Hugh Nibley is a difficult task; it would be much simpler to do a review of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica.* Following the pattern of past works, Nibley's newest book is vast in its scope and depth of many disciplines. *Since Cumorah* can and should command a large reading audience, as it has interest for the lay reader as well as for the scholar. It challenges the world of scholars to recognize that the Book of Mormon is not only a book of sacred scripture but also a book of history and should be recognized as such—that as a book of genuine history it can stand any test when compared with the historic facts that are known.

Since Cumorah begins with the working hypothesis that in leaving Jerusalem, Lehi's colony took more with them than their material items. They also took their culture, their language, and their accomplishments with them. Thus it is only to be expected that when they arrived in the new land they would transplant their culture in the new land. If this hypothesis is correct, then the Book of Mormon is a record of a transplanted culture, and this should be evident in its pages.

Since the publication of the Book of Mormon, scholars of the world have attempted to prove that it was the work of the modern mind of Joseph Smith. Looking, not with great care, for loopholes in the Book of Mormon, they have emphasized the Isaiah passages. With some ridicule they have assumed that these passages were lifted en masse from the King James Version of the Bible. They support their claims by their own speculation on the biblical text. Showing that some of the Book of Mormon Isaiah passages are from the Deutero-Isaiah portions of the Bible, which according to their own hypothesis did not exist at the time that Lehi left Jerusalem, they conclude that the Book of Mormon is false. Yet I think, as Nibley points out, that in order to understand the Isaiah passages of the Book of Mormon we should start with the Bible. The criteria that are used to substantiate the claim that there is a Deutero-Isaiah impress me as false to begin with. Our focus of attention then should not be the Book of Mormon, but the Bible and whether there is such a thing as a Deutero-Isaiah. If there was only one Isaiah and no Deutero-Isaiah, the problem ceases to exist. The answer that Nibley gives deserves to be looked into for perhaps he has found *the* answer.

Nibley spends some time on the problem of "Higher Criticism," and I cannot but agree with his remarks. There is no doubt in my mind as I read the Hebrew or Greek texts of the Bible that there are many problems in the text. Yet I cannot believe that anything is solved by subdividing books and multiplying authors. For as I read the text, I come to the same conclusion as Nibley, that there is a deep unity of the text, a unity that could not be accomplished had there been many authors for each book. W. F. Albright has pointed out that "our Hebrew

text has suffered much more from losses than from glosses" (p. 26). Nibley goes on to show that the "misunderstanding of the scripture is not due to corruptions of the text but rather to serious omissions and deletions" (p. 26). It is not difficult to prove that the Isaiah passages in the Book of Mormon are not lifted en masse from the Bible, and that they do indeed correct many of the mistakes that are found in our present-day Bible. Nibley so well points out, "We have discovered that the Book of Mormon is actually way out in front in proclaiming the unity and explaining the diversity of scripture in general and Isaiah in particular" (p. 152).

I found of particular interest that section of *Since Cumorah* which deals with "Proper Names" (p. 192). The Book of Mormon is a philologist's gold mine due to the number of proper names that are found in the work. Nibley pointed out long ago that the proper names in the Book of Mormon have West Semitic and Egyptian counterparts. In this newest work, Nibley adds to his already long list of names. It is a shame that none of the scholars have approached the Book of Mormon from this point of view, for the evidence that is compiled in *Since Cumorah* is most convincing, and I look for a continuance of this work.

One of the more fascinating sections of the book is a comparison of the religious concepts that are to be found in the Apocrypha with those of the Book of Mormon (p. 174). Such ideas as, "These Arrayed in White," "Thanksgiving Hymns," and "Desert Imagery" are handled. There are many points of reference between the two works, and it seems strange that we had to wait so long for Nibley to bring them forth. His points are generally well given and deserve to be looked into. However, some of his points in this section appear to be overdrawn and grasping at straws in the wind. It is pointed out that "the Book of Mormon reflects the culture of the whole Near East of its day" (p. 55). For this reason it is imperative that we study the Apocrypha and the Dead Sea Scrolls. This point, I think, is the great contribution of *Since Cumorah*.

In yet another section Nibley handles a subject that has been for too long neglected—temple building in the Book of Mormon. This has been an insurmountable problem to many members of the Church as well as the world of scholars, for there has been a widespread conviction that "no real Jew would ever

dream of having a temple anywhere but in Jerusalem" (p. 59). But this we see is not the case, for there were temples built by Jews outside of Jerusalem. Nibley points to the famous Elephantine Papyri to show that there was a Jewish temple in Egypt. There is no longer a need to reject the temple building of the Book of Mormon as being out of place for it appears that the "Covenant People" have always been a temple-building people.

I have found the book to be an excellent introduction to many problems that until now never have been discussed. The introduction to each section is excellent and is handled in the usual excellent style of the author. But I feel that many of the sections that start out well fail to maintain this momentum because many of the points are overdrawn; the reader is often overburdened with irrelevant facts. It is also unacceptable in any scholarly work to omit a bibliography and scriptural index. This in no way detracts from the intrinsic value of the book, but it does make it a less valuable scholarly tool.

It should be stated that *Since Cumorah* is not a problem-answer book. This is not Nibley's method; for he states his hypothesis and then gives supporting evidence, leaving the reader to draw his own conclusions from the evidence. In this manner the questions are left open-ended and the author invites further discussion.

In conclusion I must say that I found the book to be generally excellent, stimulating, and very worthwhile. I can only agree with Nibley that the Book of Mormon "enjoys no immunity to the severest tests and asks for none" (p. 44). Truths need no immunity. My only hope is that the scholars who have been so critical in the past will take up the challenge given them by the author to prove or disprove his original hypothesis.

Responsible Apologetics

Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins, Noel B. Reynolds, ed., BYU Religious Studies Monograph Series (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft/BYU Religious Studies Center, 1982), 244 pp., $9.95.

Reviewed by Blake T. Ostler, graduate student in law and philosophy at the University of Utah.

AS THE TITLE INDICATES, *Book of Mormon Authorship* addresses the heart of LDS faith claims — the historicity of the Book of Mormon. Noel Reynolds has assembled studies ranging from computer wordprint analysis to source criticism of ancient documents, all concluding that the Book of Mormon is a verifiable, religious revelation. *Book of Mormon Authorship* is intended as evidence for the faithful, as a challenge to the skeptic, and as a thorn in the side of the detractor. Though the book achieves this purpose, it fails to deal adequately with the very issues it raises in a critical, objective manner.

Book of Mormon Authorship is comprised of essays which confront divergent theories that have emerged to explain the origin of the Book of Mormon. Richard L. Anderson tacitly addresses the theory popular among detractors that Joseph Smith *knowingly* produced a pious fraud (pp. 213–37). Anderson provides evidence and insightful analysis demonstrating that Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery sincerely believed the Book of Mormon was genuine. Indeed, the dominant impression gleaned from Joseph Smith's earliest holographs and now from Lucy Mack Smith's 1829 letter is that he was religiously committed to what he perceived as a divine calling. Fawn Brodie's theory that Joseph assumed his prophetic role only after the translation of the Book of Mormon thus appears to be erroneous.

However, Joseph's sincerity may not be the whole story. The possibility that Joseph was *un*knowingly self-deceived has received support from records surrounding an 1826 trial showing that Joseph had a sincere belief in his powers of divination through "stone gazing" and later of translation of the Book of Mormon by the same means. (See Marvin Hill, "Joseph Smith and the 1826 Trial: New Evidence and New Difficulties" *BYU Studies* (Winter 1972): 222–32; Richard Van Wagoner and Steve Walker, "Joseph Smith: The Gift of Seeing" DIALOGUE (Summer 1982): 49–68). This is one aspect of Joseph Smith's credibility that Anderson does not analyze or account for. Admittedly, the physical nature of the gold plates and numerous witnesses to their existence create problems with the theory that Joseph was unknowingly self-deceived; however, Joseph's belief and trust in quasi-magical means of translation are relevant to a study of his credibility because such beliefs are suspect in light of widely accepted naturalistic assumptions of modern science.

Richard L. Bushman contests the theory dominant among non-LDS and some LDS and RLDS scholars that Joseph Smith drew from his nineteenth-century environment to produce the Book of Mormon (pp. 190–211). Critics have pointed to a long list of Christian doctrines, King James Bible quotations, American political ideas, and anti-Masonic attitudes found in the Book of Mormon to support their view.

Bushman demonstrates persuasively that these critics have assumed too much. What they assume to be typical, early American, political rhetoric turns out on closer inspection to be not so typical and not so American. Bushman suggests that recondite Israelite practices such as refusal of kingship, authority vested in judges, and "divine deliverance" patterns may better explain the very practices critics uncritically Americanized. Yet Bushman may also assume too much because Joseph Smith's political views may not have been typical and because exodus typology was a favorite mode of Biblical exegesis among New England Puritans and early American preachers such as Jonathan Edwards. Bushman definitely demonstrates, however, the superficial treatment critics have given the Book of Mormon.

The wordprint analysis by Wayne Larson and Alvin Rencher questions once again the theory that Sidney Rigdon or Solomon Spaulding authored the Book of Mormon (pp. 158–88). This theory continues to surface, though thoroughly discredited, because of the suspicion that the prodigious narrative, theological insight, and biblical knowledge manifest in the Book of Mormon were beyond Joseph's limited education and mental abilities. In computer studies of noncontextual word frequencies to measure unconscious language patterns, word groupings from nineteenth-century authors were clearly distinguishable from Book of Mormon word groupings. Further, the individual Book of Mormon prophets had distinct and contrasting styles from one another. Such decisive findings may give pause to even the most vehement critics of the Book of Mormon and put to rest once and for all the theory that either Sidney Rigdon or Solomon Spaulding authored it.

David D. Croft, a University of Utah statistician, has questioned the validity of Larsen and Rencher's major premise that an author-specific wordprint exists ("Book of Mormon Wordprint Examined" *Sunstone* [March–April 1981]: 15–21). Notwithstanding well over a dozen studies cited by Rencher and Larsen supporting this premise, Croft's skepticism is supported by studies on the works of the Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard. According to Howard Hong, an expert on Kierkegaard's writings, computer studies demonstrate that the Danish philosopher could adjust his wordprint in relation to various pseudonyms he assumed in his works, though perhaps not as frequently or distinctively as those in the Book of Mormon.

Croft criticized the first version of the wordprint study printed in *BYU Studies* by asserting that a wordprint could not survive translation. This criticism is answered in the *Book of Mormon Authorship* version. Wordprints of twelve German novellas translated by a single translator demonstrated a statistically significant difference that was not altered by the translation (p. 177).

However, the issue of translation raises a problem of internal consistency in *Book of Mormon Authorship*. In order to make sense of applying a wordprint analysis, one must assume that the "translation process

was both direct and literal, and that each individual author's style was preserved" (p. 179). However, for B. H. Roberts to explain nineteenth-century anachronisms and King James Bible quotations he had to assume that "Joseph's vocabulary and grammar are as clearly imposed on the book as a fingerprint on a coin" (p. 13). If the expressions and ideas in the Book of Mormon are partly the result of Joseph's attempt to communicate the translation, then the nineteenth-century theological ideas and biblical quotations can be explained as a result inherent in the translation process. If these expansions are indeed Joseph's, however, then they should reflect his wordprint. To assume that Nephi had access to a King James Bible or that he was acquainted with nineteenth-century Arminian theology in the sixth century B.C. is beyond the bounds of competent scholarship. Yet this is precisely what must be assumed if the wordprint is to be taken seriously. Even given this criticism, however, the results of the wordprint study must be explained. Perhaps the wordprint analysis tells us more about computers than about the Book of Mormon.

While contesting rival theories, *Book of Mormon Authorship* seeks to establish the ancient origins of the Book of Mormon. An honest evaluation of the claims of the Book of Mormon must consider ancient literary devices such as *chiasmus* (inverted parallelism) and *parallelismus membrorum* (synonomic, antithetic, and synthetic parallelism), discovered by John Welch (pp. 34–52); the sophisticated narrative structure elucidated by Noel Reynolds (pp. 54–74); the accurate description of geographical details of Arabia shown by Eugene England (pp. 144–56); the Semitic nomenclature mirroring ancient Near Eastern usage; and the accurate description of religious, social, and political aspects of sixth-century Israel demonstrated by Hugh Nibley through the peephole provided in the Lachish letters (pp. 104–21).

Nibley also demonstrates the relationship between Christ's visit in 3 Nephi and the Gospel of the XII Apostles. The Gospel of the XII Apostles is one of a number of early Christian texts like the Gospel of Thomas, the Apocryphon of James, the Acts of Thomas, the Epistle of the Apostles, the Odes of Solomon and other gnostic and patristic sources which describe Christ's post-resurrection activities. Although many of the parallels drawn by Nibley appear weak or may be explained by dependence on a common biblical motif, the wider religious significance can be appreciated in the historical context of the Gospel of the XII Apostles. The relation of these early documents to one another is unclear, but their organic unity suggests a common oral or ritual tradition. A synthesis of Christ's instructions in these sources would include a discourse on the "two ways" (evil and good, light and dark) constructed from ethical admonitions from the Sermon on the Mount, instructions on baptism and prayer, a communal meal sanctified by sacramental prayers, organization of ecclesiastical and communal orders, sealing and initiatory ordinances, and an eschatological discourse. The Didaché, a very early and authoritative Christian work, was actually such a synthesis of instructions of initiation into the Christian community and was dependent in part on the Serekh Scroll found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. 3 Nephi masterfully captures the teachings that the earliest Christians deemed to be the essence of Christ's post-resurrection message.

Book of Mormon Authorship has made a *prima facie* case for the ancient origins of the Book of Mormon. It fails, however, to respond to scholarly criticism in some crucial areas. For example, since Welch first published his study on chiasmus in 1969, it has been discovered that chiasmus also appears in the Doctrine and Covenants (see, for example, 88:34–38; 93:18–38; 132:19–26, 29–36), the Pearl of Great Price (Book of Abraham 3:16–19; 22–28), and other isolated nineteenth-century works. Thus, Welch's major premise that chiasmus is exclusively an ancient literary device is false. Indeed, the presence of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon may be evidence of Joseph Smith's own literary style and genius. Perhaps Welch could have strengthened his premise by demonstrating that the parallel members in the Book of Mormon consist of Semitic word pairs, the basis of ancient Hebrew poetry. Without such a demonstration, both Welch's and Reynold's arguments from chiasmus are weak.

Wilfred Griggs's paper, "The Book of Mormon as an Ancient Book," is inconclusive (pp. 76–94). Griggs correctly observes that "the assumption that any parallels from the world of Joseph Smith, real or imagined, are sufficient to discredit the authenticity of the work is naive" (p. 76). However, he makes an equally naive assumption that any parallels from the ancient world are sufficient to prove the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. Even if the Book of Mormon were a well-established ancient document, the relationship between the Orphic plates Griggs studies and the Tree of Life motif in 1 Nephi would be questionable, given the distance between the two sources and universality of the motif. Pointing to such parallels is unpersuasive because accounts at least as close to those studied by Griggs from Greece and Egypt were available to Joseph Smith. On the other hand, the attempt of critics to prove the Book of Mormon is entirely a product of Joseph Smith's nineteenth-century environment by comparing Lehi's dream with Joseph Smith, Sr.'s, dream are also inconclusive precisely because the dream is archetypal and has ancient parallels. Despite its weaknesses, Griggs's study is a fine example of the historico-critical method and source criticism.

Perhaps B. H. Robert's confrontation with the Book of Mormon recounted by Truman Madsen is the most valuable insight provided by *Book of Mormon Authorship* (pp. 7–32). Roberts was honest enough to realize that one must account for the presence of Semitic names as well as nineteenth-century Arminian theology, for ancient literary and social patterns as well as modern anachronisms, and for powerful religious doctrines as well as quasi-magical origins of the Book of Mormon. Given Robert's view of the role of Joseph Smith as the explicator, refiner, translater, and expander of the Book of Mormon, he expected the book to have a split personality reflecting both the ancient and modern worlds. Roberts's approach to the Book of Mormon as an historical text was ingenious, foreshadowing modern developments in redaction criticism or study of editorial tendencies in the formation and transmission of ancient texts.

Indeed, many recent arguments denying the authenticity of the Book of Mormon based on nineteenth-century parallels or use of biblical texts presupposing developments of second Isaiah or the Sermon on the Mount can be answered once it is recognized that the book is an instance of pseudepigraphic expansion and targumization. Pseudeigraphic expansion is the expansion of a text in the name of an earlier prophet, to answer the nagging problems of the day by providing unrestricted and authoritative commentary based on insights from the text, thereby imposing a modern worldview and theological understanding on that text. Targumization is the interpretive activity of transmitting scripture through scriptural commentary, thus imposing modern theological assumptions on that scripture. Perhaps this is what Joseph Smith had in mind when "translating," as evidenced by his inspired version of the Bible. Moreover, such tendencies to expand and interpret are evident throughout the Bible, Dead Sea Scrolls, and Pseudepigrapha. Though such expansion may compromise the historicity of the Book of Mormon, it does not abrogate its authenticity. In fact, the rabbis and early sectaries of Qumran felt that prophetic expansion of scripture enhanced its religious value. Of the theories proposed to explain the Book of Mormon, only this theory of pseudepigraphic expansion has the ability to explain both its modern and ancient aspects.

In an unfortunate attempt to discredit the Book of Mormon, detractors stooped to dishonesty by removing Roberts's cover letter to his "Book of Mormon Study," which explained that this work represented possible objections to the historicity of the Book of Mormon but not his own views. There is a general consensus, even among the most vitriolic detractors, that Roberts wrote the most effective challenge to date of the Book of Mormon's historicity in search of answers to his own objections and questions. Unfortunately, the same care with justified objections has not been taken in *Book of Mormon Authorship*. Perhaps a more critical approach was avoided because the claims of the Book of Mormon are infrequently taken seriously by scholars and the authors wanted to state their case before it was diluted by criticism. Their case may ultimately be much weaker, however, precisely because they failed to confront criticism.

Nonetheless, *Book of Mormon Authorship* includes well-conceived studies by competent scholars that a serious student must deal with in confronting the Book of Mormon. Almost without exception, critics of the Book of Mormon know very little about nineteenth-century America, even less about the ancient world in general and virtually nothing about sixth-century Israel. The authors of *Book of Mormon Authorship* represent a refreshing departure from unqualified conclusions by unqualified crusaders both pro and con. With the exception of Eugene England, the authors have applied the tools of their specialized fields of study and expertise. However, the tone of *Book of Mormon Authorship* is apologetic and not objective. Such responsible apologetics serve the valuable function of legitimizing religious claims and making such faith claims more responsive to reason, criticism, and historical fact. At the very least, *Book of Mormon Authorship* establishes that nothing short of genius must be imputed to Joseph Smith if he is to be considered the book's author and nothing short of inspiration if not.

B. H. Roberts and the Book of Mormon

Studies of the Book of Mormon by B. H. Roberts, edited and with an introduction by Brigham D. Madsen, with biographical essay by Sterling M. McMurrin (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 375 pp., $21.95.

Reviewed by Thomas G. Alexander, professor of history and director of the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies at Brigham Young University. He thanks Brigham Madsen, Sterling McMurrin, John Welch, and Truman Madsen for their comments.

THE THREE MANUSCRIPTS by B. H. Roberts which form the core of this book first came to my attention in 1980 while I was at work on *Mormonism in Transition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986). At that time, George D. Smith, a San Francisco businessman, was kind enough to supply me with copies of the manuscripts. Then, he indicated that he and Everett L. Cooley, director of the Marriott Library's Special Collections who had accessioned the B. H. Roberts papers, were interested in having the manuscripts edited and published.

Cooley arranged for the editorial work and an introductory essay on Roberts's life for the volume. Brigham D. Madsen, emeritus professor of history at the University of Utah and best known for his work on native American and Mountain-west history, served as editor. Sterling M. McMurrin, E. E. Erickson Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, wrote a biographical essay on Roberts. Neither he nor Cooley, as has been alleged, edited the volume.

In addition to the three manuscripts Roberts wrote during the 1920s, Madsen included a series of documents selected to put the essays into context. Roberts prepared the first of the essays entitled "Book of Mormon Difficulties: A Study," during November and December 1921 in answer to five questions raised by a Mr. Couch of Washington, D. C., on the relationship between the culture of the pre-Columbian Americans as described in the Book of Mormon and in scientific investigations. These included: languages, animals, use of steel by pre-exilic Israelites, types of weapons, and presence of silk.

Roberts divided "Difficulties" into three parts: (1) linguistics, (2) physical culture, and (3) racial origins. In each section, he reviewed the work of authorities known to him, argued the case, concluded that the evidence from non-Mormon sources was against the Book of Mormon account, then raised a number of questions about the course of action to take (pp. 91–94, 114–15, 142–43).

Roberts presented "Difficulties" to the Church leadership in January 1922. Though no one in the First Presidency or Twelve could answer the questions he raised, a number reaffirmed their testimonies of the Book of Mormon; and Elder Richard R. Lyman suggested that they drop the matter. Instead, President Heber J. Grant appointed a committee consisting of President Anthony W. Ivins and Elders James E. Talmage, John A. Widtsoe, and Roberts to investigate questions relating to the Book of Mormon.

With that mandate, Roberts took two courses of action. He met with the members of the committee on several occasions during the late winter and spring of 1922, and he undertook research on both the source of the Book of Mormon text and its context. The result, "A Book of Mormon Study," was a report discussing problems Roberts saw on the basis of currently available research into American antiquities.

The "Study" addressed essentially three questions. First, Roberts asked, was literature available in early nineteenth-century America which might have served as a "ground plan" which Joseph Smith could have used for the Book of Mormon? Second, he queried, did the Prophet have a sufficiently creative imagination to have accomplished such a work? Third, were cultural traits revealed in the Book of Mormon also present in early nineteenth-century America?

His analysis and synthesis suggested affirmative answers to all three questions. There was, Roberts summarized, sufficient "'common knowledge' of accepted American antiquities of the times, supplemented by such a work as Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews*, . . . [to have made] it possible for him [Joseph Smith] to create a book such as the Book of Mormon." Furthermore, "there can be no doubt as to the possession of vividly strong, creative imagination by Joseph Smith the Prophet" (p. 250). It is possible that the section on nineteenth-century religious culture was not completed since, unlike the other sections, there is no concluding statement (p. 316).

The final manuscript reproduced in the book — entitled "A Parallel" — accompanied a letter sent to Richard R. Lyman in October 1927 after Roberts had returned from his mission in New York. It consists of the juxtaposition of statements and quotations drawn from the Book of Mormon and *View of the Hebrews* showing similar information in both books.

The publication of this book evoked a decided controversy in some circles within the LDS scholarly community. John W. Welch, professor of law at Brigham Young University, reviewed the book negatively for the *Church News* (15 Dec. 1985); he published "B. H. Roberts: Seeker after Truth," in the March 1986 *Ensign*; and he and Truman G. Madsen, Richard L. Evans Professor of Christian Understanding at Brigham Young University, published preliminary reports under the general title: "Did B. H. Roberts Lose Faith in the Book of Mormon?" (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies [FARMS], 1985); and Welch wrote: "Finding Answers to B. H. Roberts Questions and 'An Unparallel' " (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1985).

"Finding Answers to B. H. Roberts Questions and 'An Unparallel' " is a fairly straightforward attempt to deal with Roberts's questions by citing recent scholarship which supports the traditional LDS position and by reanalyzing the parallels between the Book of Mormon and *View of the Hebrews*. Welch concluded that both a different reading of the Ethan Smith book and recent evidence for the Book of Mormon as an ancient text would have let Roberts answer many of his questions differently. He pointed out particularly that most of *View of the Hebrews* is quite unlike the Book of Mormon.

Much of the controversy surrounding the book has been quite unfortunate. The tone of the first part of "Did B. H. Roberts Lose Faith in the Book of Mormon?", though decidedly negative, nevertheless raised some valid questions about the editorial method, the assumed chronology of Roberts's work, and the inclusion or exclusion of data and editorial comments. Less happily, parts 2 and 3 degenerated into an attack on McMurrin and Brigham Madsen.

The B. H. Roberts Society tried to get the four principals to discuss their differences. When that failed, Brigham Madsen and McMurrin counterattacked at the Algie Ballif Forum in Provo in March 1986 (Brigham D. Madsen and Sterling M. McMurrin, "Reply to John W. Welch and Truman G. Madsen," typescript, March 1986). In it, they vigorously took on the objections that the two BYU professors had

raised. Following the Ballif Forum presentation, Welch wrote evenhanded letters to Madsen and McMurrin to clarify his views and reduce the level of tension while spelling out his differences with them.

While Roberts's manuscripts are extremely interesting since they provide insights into his thought and assessment of the status of scholarship on the Book of Mormon during the early 1920s, from a historian's point of view they present some methodological problems. Since "Difficulties" is a survey of the literature on the questions asked, its conclusions for Roberts's time could simply be no better than the available scholarship. Roberts seems to have recognized this, but the Church leadership had no way to address the scholarly conclusions at the time. The Ivins committee might have helped, but Roberts was apparently dissatisfied with their initial efforts.

The major problem with the "Study" is that, if one takes it as anything more than an analysis of possibilities, it must be viewed as an example of the genetic fallacy (that something can be explained solely by its cultural context). Roberts tried to address that difficulty by assuming "that it is more than likely that the Smith family possessed a copy" of *View of the Hebrews* and by pointing out that the idea that the Indians were of Hebraic descent was popularly current in Western New York and New England during the early nineteenth century (pp. 151–61; quotation from p. 155). As Fawn Brodie has said, "It may never be proved that Joseph saw *View of the Hebrews* before writing the Book of Mormon." She, however, lapses into the genetic fallacy by continuing, "but the striking parallelisms between the two books hardly leave a case for mere coincidence," apparently on the assumption that the parallels were so strong that the case for coincidence collapsed (p. 29; Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith*, 2d ed. [New York: Alfred Knopf, 1977], p. 47).

"A Parallel," unless it too is taken as a statement of possibilities, can be viewed as an example of the fallacy of composition (reasoning from some features of the parts to generalize about the whole). As Welch has shown, there are sufficient differences in the context and evidence Ethan Smith included in *View of the Hebrews* to lead reasonable persons to disagree with the proposition that it could have served as the "ground plan" for the Book of Mormon.

At least two other questions of interest were raised in the controversy over the book. The first has to do with whether B. H. Roberts retained his testimony of the Book of Mormon after completing these studies. Brigham Madsen argued that "the record is mixed" (p. 29). Pointing to some questions raised in private conversations, he nevertheless indicated that in Roberts's "public statements he was still the defender of the faith." He then provided a number of quotations supporting this position (pp. 29–30). Sterling McMurrin also concluded that Roberts "continued to profess his faith in the authenticity of the book" (p. xviii).

Roberts's private statements raise some questions about his views. Brigham Madsen cited a long quotation from the diary of Wesley P. Lloyd, former dean of the Graduate School at BYU, reporting a conversation with Roberts late in his life which indicates that Roberts may have entertained the possibility of a psychological interpretation of the Book of Mormon. Welch cited discrepancies in Lloyd's diary entry and conflicting statements Roberts is reported to have made to others. However, historians have long come to expect inconsistencies and mistakes in details, even from those written close to events. Such discrepancies do not invalidate general impressions conveyed by such a diary. Nevertheless, the diary may warrant some additional study, since research by Welch has shown that the extant version of the diary was apparently in Lloyd's wife's hand rather than in his. Thus, it is not clear when the entry was made.

On balance, the question of whether Roberts expressed views in private conversation with friends that the Book of Mormon might be theologically true yet not historically true may never be conclusively answered. All four disputants conclude that until his death he actively witnessed for the authenticity of Joseph Smith's mission and for the Book of Mormon. His views did not impair his functioning as a General Authority nor his witnessing for the gospel.

A second question has to do with the editorial method used in the book. The method used, that of treating the three studies as finished manuscripts and publishing them in that form, is a valid one. It was thus properly used by Brigham Madsen in this book.

In view of some problems in the manuscripts, however, and the fact that others worked on revisions of the manuscripts, my own preference would have been to have seen the manuscript reproduced using the method of the various letterpress editions of papers of presidents of the United States. Since I served for a year as assistant editor for the *Papers of Ulysses S. Grant* the method is quite familiar to me.

Such works use various conventions to allow the reader to understand the manuscript both as it originally stood and as the author and others edited it. For instance, editors reproduce crossed-out passages as words with dashes through them. This would have helped particularly in clearing up the matter of the use of the second edition of *View of the Hebrews*. Welch's research indicated that when Roberts had the study typed in 1922, he did not know the date of the first edition, and he made certain changes after his work in New York revealed that information. To place the "Parallel" in context, more evidence should have been cited on the amount of work Roberts did on the topic in the period between 1922 when the "Study" was typed and 1927 when he gave Lyman the "Parallel." Welch's research suggests that it was, in fact, very little. Brigham Madsen's reply cites evidence that it was a great deal more. The reader has a right to the evidence on this question.

It is the role of the editor to place the documents in context, to identify persons, places, and events mentioned in the text, and to help the reader understand the state of mind of the author of the manuscript. Welch argues that Brigham Madsen should have supplied information on the current best answers to such problems. I disagree. It would be unnecessarily pedantic to present everything relevant to the topics under consideration published after Roberts completed his work unless they helped clarify the context in which Roberts wrote.

Thus, while the editorial work exhibits minor problems, it is generally well done. The introduction places the manuscripts in context. The other documents reproduced, with few exceptions like the letter to Richard Lyman and the long quotation from the Lloyd diary, are drawn from 1921 and 1922 when the first two manuscripts were written. People and places are sufficiently well identified as are the works Roberts used in his studies.

On the whole, the publication of this book is a valuable addition to the literature of Mormonism in the 1920s. Brigham D. Madsen is to be congratulated for the time and effort he put into the volume. The University of Illinois Press should be praised for its willingness to publish the volume. Everett Cooley and George Smith deserve credit for their support. In addition, Jack Welch should also receive credit for clarifying important points on the text of the manuscript and for raising questions on Roberts's state of mind. Scholars in the field of Mormon studies will benefit immeasurably from having this volume, the assessments of the editor, and the letters connected with manuscripts in a readily available form.

Studies of the Book of Mormon. By B.H. ROBERTS. Edited by Brigham D. Madsen. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1985. 375 pp. $21.95.

The significance of this work lies more in what it tells us of the thought of a major Mormon scholastic rather than in the apparent anachronisms in the Book of Mormon, which have been examined recently by scholars more qualified than Roberts.

Since very early in the Mormon religious tradition, there have been two schools of thinking on how to determine the truth of the Book of Mormon. Not always mutually exclusive, one stresses the importance of personal spiritual witness, an approach favored at the end of the scripture itself; the other stresses historical and scientific evidence to support the book's historicity, an approach which Joseph Smith himself employed in the 1840s. Recently, new church president Ezra Taft Benson reemphasized his personal

testimony of the scripture, saying that Mormons do not need to prove its truth. Meanwhile, a former academic vice president of Brigham Young University wrote recently, "there are any number of straight-forward scientific tests which could help determine whether this book is of ancient origin."

One of the most ardent students in the latter school was former Assistant Church Historian, Brigham H. Roberts, who is portrayed by his recent biographer as the "Defender of the Faith." Yet *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, edited by Brigham D. Madsen, professor of history at the University of Utah, presents substantial evidence that Roberts himself had considerable doubts about the book's historicity toward the end of his life. Roberts, who in 1909 wrote a ringing defense of its historicity, by 1922 composed a two-part manuscript of some length, intended for church authorities only, which presented evidence from a linguistic, archaeological, and literary viewpoint to argue that there are very serious difficulties with the idea that the Mormon scripture is an ancient text. Roberts said it showed strong signs of having been written by Joseph Smith, and was influenced by Eathan Smith's *View of the Hebrews* in its perception of life in ancient America and in its composition. Roberts maintained that the Book of Mormon's claims that the Indians were derived solely from three migrations of Hebrews to the new world over a span of three thousand years was entirely untenable. Roberts pointed out that there were sixty-five separate linguistic stocks among the various tribes which seemingly had no old world connections and which could not have derived from a single language base in so short a time. Roberts also expressed doubt as to old world animals such as the horse, ass, sheep, goats, oxen, and cows existing in the new world before the coming of the Spaniards. Neither did the native Americans have steel, brass, copper, and the cimeter, as the scripture asserted.

Roberts also argued that the Book of Mormon shows signs of being the work of a young, immature, but creative mind. He said that the stories of the Nephite civilization at the beginning of the book and those of the much earlier Jeredites at the end are nearly identical, with very similar beginnings and endings, and that certain themes and episodes are repeated again and again. Roberts said that the literary style is uniform and similar to Joseph Smith's other works. The major characters are stereotyped and idealized, and the tone of religiosity throughout the book owed much to the early nineteenth-century revivals.

The publication of Roberts's manuscript, containing his frank admission to church leaders that he had no answer to these questions and his fervent pleading to authorities to find solutions based on their greater spiritual insight, has caused much protest in some circles in Utah. Strangely, perhaps, the controversy has focused not upon the historical issues which Roberts raised but rather on whether or not he lost his testimony of the book and the

church. One writer in response has quoted copiously from Roberts's conference talks to insist that his faith in Mormon scriptures was retained. Others have said that he merely sought to create interest and discussion, but this contention seems strained considering his pleadings at the end of each section that church leaders must offer inspired help.

Roberts was in no position as a church leader publicly to question the validity of the book, especially to church audiences; that would have brought only condemnation and no reconsideration by church leaders. He expressed his doubts privately to a few close associates, including some of his missionaries in the Eastern States Mission, where he served as president. It would seem that current controversy in Utah over Roberts's church loyalty reflects a characteristic of the prevailing Mormon mind. The historical issues Roberts wanted considered are slighted, and the issue of loyalty is accentuated. He would have wanted it otherwise. He maintained early in his career as church defender that if the Book of Mormon is true it must stand up to critical study and meet every challenge. When he learned through subsequent study that this defense was very, very difficult, he was in his way still true to his principles. The search for truth through scholarly inquiry remained his most fundamental scholarly concern.

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CHURCH HISTORY

B. H. ROBERTS'S VOICE FROM THE DUST

STUDIES ON THE BOOK OF MORMON

by B.H. Roberts. Ed., Brigham D. Madsen
University of Illinois Press, 1985
Hardback, 375pp., $21.95

Reviewed by Richard Sherlock

BY NOW THE essential content of this book will be known to many SUNSTONE readers. It was a bestseller in the Mormon market and stirred up a firestorm of controversy in the Church's more conservative circles. Essentially, these works represent previously unpublished and little known studies of the Book of Mormon that Roberts undertook in the early 1920s, partly at the behest of the First Presidency.

The first study, "Book of Mormon Difficulties," was Roberts's attempt to answer questions of a linguistic and archeological nature that investigators put to the First Presidency. As the "in house" intellectual who had earlier discussed some of these issues in his *New Witness for Christ in the Americas*, Roberts was given the task of preparing a response.

At about the same time, Roberts also undertook a longer and more potentially explosive study of the possible origins of the Book of Mormon. Entitled "A Study of the Book of Mormon," this study involved a detailed comparison between the Book of Mormon and Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews*. Roberts argued two points in extensive detail. First, he claimed that Ethan Smith's book was probably known to Joseph prior to the production of the Book of Mormon and that if it was not, the general theory of the Hebrew origins of the American Indians was so well known in the area where Joseph came of age that he was almost certainly familiar with the basic storyline. Second, Roberts showed that there are extensive similarities between Ethan Smith's work and Joseph's in the general stories and even in specific events. From these observations, Roberts concluded that the Book of Mormon could have been produced by a religiously fertile, biblically saturated mind (such as Joseph's) working on the basic storyline provided by Ethan Smith.

For Mormon orthodoxy this is dynamite. Roberts was not an outsider like Thomas O'Dea or an apostate like Frank Cannon or the Tanners. By this time, he had been a General Authority for nearly forty years, and a decade later he died in the firm embrace of the Church and gospel. But the conclusion which he reached was simply not the orthodoxy of his church or its people. It is little wonder these studies have remained unpublished until recently nor that he was troubled by their contents.

Despite the claims of some critics, these studies are well edited by Brigham Madsen with a trenchant introductory essay by Sterling McMurrin. For the most part, Madsen's introduction was as good as it could be under the circumstances, since he was denied access to the extensive Roberts papers held in the Church Archives. He did not need to report on everything that Roberts said about the Book of Mormon. He did what a responsible editor should do and let Roberts speak for himself through his work. Furthermore, it would have been irresponsible to try to argue with Roberts's conclusions in this work, even if he thought Roberts was wrong. The reader should be allowed to confront Roberts directly and form his or her own conclusions.

The real problem in *Studies of the Book of Mormon* is not with the editorial work but with Roberts's argument and conclusions. He does not argue that the Book of Mormon *must* be a nineteenth-century product, or that Joseph copied Ethan Smith. Rather, he concludes that there is a paucity of serious evidence to support the Book of Mormon and that a fertile religious imagination like Joseph's *could* have used Ethan Smith's story line to create a different book, i.e., the Book of Mormon. Essentially, Roberts believed that, on the basis of the best evidence available, one could not be certain that the Book of Mormon was what the Church claimed it to be. The archeological and linguistic evidence did not support it; the story could have been adapted from other sources; and the theology was heavily reminiscent of Christianity in early nineteenth century America.

These possibilities that so troubled Roberts cannot be answered by the sorts of research that Mormon scholars have traditionally done. At best, the studies sponsored by the Foundation for Ancient Research in Mormon Studies (FARMS) demonstrate one possible scenario that would place the Book of Mormon in an ancient American setting. But no hypothetical reconstruction such as this can lead to any degree of certainty about the origins of the Book of Mormon. More significantly, once Roberts admits that Joseph could have written the Book of Mormon by himself, he has broken in a fundamental way with the traditional view of the text. However, Roberts never lost his testimony of the gospel or his commitment to the Church. He tried to get some of his brethren to confront squarely the issues he raised, but when he failed he simply continued to instruct the Saints and preach the gospel in every way he could.

What he seems to have been searching for was a way to remain committed to the Book of Mormon as a definitive religious text while not knowing for sure whether it has any ties to the history of ancient America. Roberts never resolved this tension between historical evidence and religious commitment, but out of all the work of the new Mormon historians, the questions Roberts asked are clearly the most seminal of all. By asking the questions that few have even contemplated, he pointed the direction in which an intellectually committed and faithful Mormonism must go. For this reason his work here will be read in a hundred years when much of the history we have written today is ignored.

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Brigham D. Madsen, ed., *B.H. Roberts: Studies of the Book of Mormon* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1985), xxxi + 375 pp., index, bibliography, with a biographical essay by Sterling M. McMurrin, $21.95.

In 1921 and 1923, LDS general authority Brigham H. Roberts challenged the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. This came as something of a surprise from Roberts, who since the late nineteenth century had been Mormonism's chief "defender of the faith," and whose three-volume *New Witnesses for God* (1909) was for generations of Mormons the principal scholarly reference work on the Book of Mormon.

The private manuscripts by which Roberts challenged President Heber J. Grant and fellow general authorities to defend the Book of Mormon, are now, for the first time, publicly available in the recently published *B.H. Roberts: Studies of the Book of Mormon*. In 1979 and 1981 the Roberts families donated his manuscripts to the University of Utah, requesting that they be published. In his preface to the current volume, Everett L. Cooley, former director of the Marriott Library's Special Collections Department at the University of Utah, indicates that although Roberts did not prepare these documents for publication, their presentation in this scholarly edition allows readers to glimpse yet another dimension of his work.

In 1921, when a letter raising archeological difficulties came to Apostle James E. Talmage, he predictably referred it to Roberts. This time, however, Roberts did more than just explain away the issues. After a major investigation of the contradictions between archeological evidence and Book of Mormon descriptions of Indian origins and lifestyles, "more serious than I had thought," Roberts presented a 141-page study, titled "Book of Mormon Difficulties," before the collective leadership of the LDS Church. But his questions failed to evoke any thoughtful discussion. The Council of the Twelve "merely one by one stood up and bore their testimonies to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon"; however, "no answer was available" to Roberts' "difficulties." For example, responding to the notable absence of any archeological evidence of various animals described in the Book of Mormon, Apostle Talmage wrote at the time: "I know the Book of Mormon to be a true record. ...[It] states [that Lehi] and his colony found horses upon this continent when they arrived; and therefore horses were here at that time."

Dissatisfied with such "utterly irrelevant" responses, Roberts continued his investigations. In an even longer "A Book of Mormon Study," dated 1923, he inquired whether Joseph Smith could have based the Book of Mormon on legends that were "common knowledge" in the nineteenth century. The book's similarity to so many contemporary beliefs, Roberts wrote, was "a menace to Joseph Smith's story of the Book of Mormon's origin."

By the end of his life, the erstwhile defender had turned critic. In 1933, in the month before he died, his good friend, Wesley P. Lloyd, former dean of the Graduate School at Brigham Young University, visited with Roberts for three and one-half hours and recorded in his journal that Roberts "swings to a psychological explanation of the Book of Mormon and shows that the plates were not objective but subjective with Joseph Smith."

In addition to the 1921 and 1923 studies, the current volume contains eleven letters that describe how Roberts pursued his inquiry. Included in a 1927 letter to Apostle Richard R. Lyman, Roberts' eighteen-page "A Parallel" summarized his "A Book of Mormon Study." During a half-century of silence regarding Roberts' critical analyses, this "parallel" was the only available remnant of "A Book of Mormon Study."

Editor Brigham D. Madsen, professor emeritus of history at the University of Utah and a recognized scholar in American history, annotated the manuscripts, prepared a bibliography with an essay that places in context the sources available to Roberts in producing his studies, and wrote an introduction which examines the development of Roberts' thinking concerning the origins of the Book of Mormon. In comparing Roberts' apologetic arguments assembled in his *New Witnesses for God* with his critical studies of the 1920s, Madsen avoids the conclusion that Roberts either retained or lost his personal belief in the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

Sterling M. McMurrin, E.E. Eriksen Distinguished Professor at the University of Utah and renowned author of scholarly works on philosophy, religion, and education, contributed a biographical essay on Roberts, whom he has described as "the most celebrated intellectual figure in the development of Mormonism." McMurrin, who knew Roberts personally, observes that despite his strong arguments against Book of Mormon authenticity, Roberts continued publicly to affirm his belief in such authenticity.

Although carefully avoided by both Madsen and McMurrin, the question, What did Roberts personally believe in his final years? comes naturally to a reader of this volume. In a 1979 article published in *BYU Studies*, Truman G. Madsen (no relation to Brigham Madsen), professor of philosophy at BYU, did not mention Roberts' arguments and conclusions, but argued that Roberts, in his "A Book of Mormon Study," merely played the role of "devil's advocate." In his authorized biography of Roberts (1980), Truman Madsen did not even mention Roberts' critical studies. Truman Madsen's colleague at BYU, John W. Welch, president of FARMS (Foundation for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies), reportedly tried to dissuade the University of Illinois from publishing the Roberts studies (McMurrin, "A Reply to Truman G. Madsen and John W. Welch," privately published, 3/5/86).

When we examine what Roberts said in his Book of Mormon studies, we begin to understand why Madsen and Welch might choose to ignore these writings. In "A Book of Mormon Study," Roberts asks: "Is all this sober history inspired written and true, representing things that actually happened: Or is it a wonder-tale of an immature mind, unconscious of what a test he is laying on human credulity when asking men to accept his narrative as solemn history?" (p. 283).

Concerning several stories of "Anti-Christs" in the Book of Mormon, Roberts observed, "They are all of one breed and brand; so nearly alike that one mind is the author of them. ...The evidence I sorrowfully submit, points to Joseph Smith as their creator. It is difficult to believe that they are the product of history" (p. 271).

In "Book of Mormon Difficulties," Roberts refers to archeological problems in the 1921 letter: "The difficulties to this position are very grave. Truly we may ask 'Who will believe our report?' ...What will the effect be upon our youth of such a confession of inability to give a more reasonable answer to the questions submitted. ...Is there any way to escape these difficulties?" (p. 115).

These are the serious concerns of a troubled person, not someone playing the role of "devil's advocate." Roberts, himself, draws the resulting implications: "If the Book of Mormon be regarded as of merely human origin, then, of course to those so regarding it, the rest of Joseph Smith's work falls to the same plane. His revelations also become merely human productions" (p. 247).

While Roberts may have voiced private doubts, publicly, Brigham Madsen records that as late as the General Conference in April 1933, Roberts referred to the Book of Mormon as "one of the most valuable books that has ever been preserved, even as holy scripture." If Roberts' private doubts had reached the public, they might have caused him and the church he represented too much trouble.

B.H. Roberts: Studies of the Book of Mormon affords today's reader an insight—denied to previous Mormon generations—into the private doubts and inquiries of one of Mormonism's most illustrious scholars.

George D. Smith
San Francisco, California

☆ ☆ ☆

Studies of the Book of Mormon. By Brigham H. Roberts. Edited by Brigham D. Madsen. Biographical essay by Sterling M. McMurrin. (Urbana & Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1985. xxxi + 375 pp. $21.95)

Joseph Smith and the Origins of the Book of Mormon. By David Persuitte. (Jefferson, N.C., McFarland & Co., 1985. viii + 295 pp. $19.95)

Trouble Enough: Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. By Ernest H. Taves. (Buffalo, N. Y., Prometheus Books, 1985. xi + 280 pp. $19.95)

These three books, along with John L. Sorenson's *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (1985), have yielded a bumper crop of Book of Mormon books for the year 1985. In the three books here reviewed, however, there is lots of chaff that will need to be sifted.

Brigham Madsen's volume prints three working papers written sixty years ago by the fiery LDS Church leader B. H. Roberts. These papers had remained in the hands of Roberts's descendants until recently, although the basic points of these papers are not new. The first paper, "Book of Mormon Difficulties," is a 145-page memorandum in which Roberts lists difficulties he encountered in the 1921 scientific literature as he was responding to five questions asked about the Book of Mormon by a skeptical inquirer. The questions deal with Indian origins, linguistics, and pre-Columbian fauna, flora, and technology. The second paper, "A Book of Mormon Study," was hurriedly written in the spring of 1922. Its twenty chapters discuss purported similarities between the Book of Mormon and a book published in Vermont in 1823 (2nd ed., 1825) entitled *View of the Hebrews;* they also consider the proposition that the Book of Mormon is of human rather than divine origin, due to its supposed absurdities and nineteenth-century themes. The third,

"A Parallel," is a brief summary of portions of the second. The volume also prints selected Roberts correspondence.

In these papers, Roberts the debater poses tough questions which he figures opponents of the Book of Mormon undoubtedly will raise. The documents are historically important and intriguing, deserving careful reading and explanation, both as to their content and as to what they meant to Roberts. Their presentation here, however, is not always quite as careful or helpful as it could have been. For example, the introductory materials speak often of Roberts's conclusions despite his express declaration that his conclusions remained undrawn, leaving the meaning of this research to Roberts unclear. An important 1932 letter from Roberts about this research is mentioned but not printed. Roberts's typescripts are printed here with no indication of where and how he added to them significant remarks and changes by hand. Several such notes date the writing of the study to 1922, a fact which invalidates much of Madsen's account of when, how, and why Roberts did this research (pp. 24–26). More effort could have been made to show how Roberts faithfully addressed similar Book of Mormon questions both before and after 1922, and how he made voluminous and unhesitating religious use of the Book of Mormon from 1922 to his death in 1933. It also would have been helpful to provide readers with an up-to-date analysis of Roberts's questions themselves.

David Persuitte's book takes Roberts's questions two steps further. First, he examines the activities of Joseph Smith up to 1830 to build a case for the claim that Joseph Smith relied upon *View of the Hebrews* in writing the Book of Mormon. His case, however, relies on several new documents whose authenticity has recently been drawn into serious doubt. Persuitte admirably presents the texts of many primary sources, then openly engages in speculative interpretation. For example, he infers that Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon to induce Emma to marry him (p. 63), and (against existing evidence) that Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith somehow collaborated before April 1829 (p. 57). Persuitte demonstrates the dearth of contemporaneously documented religious activities for Joseph Smith's youth, thereby concluding that the writing of the Book of Mormon was not originally conceived as a religious undertaking. In other cases his suggestions are reaching, for example, his argument that Smith's use of the word "author" on the copyright of the Book of Mormon—as was prescribed by federal copyright

law—precludes the claim that he translated the book (p. 19). Likewise, his claim that Smith's plea of the statute of limitations in 1830 proves that Smith had been found guilty at the 1826 trial (p. 101) misunderstands this statute, which—quite the contrary—limits unresolved disputes, not judgments. Other hypotheses are implausible, for example, the idea that Smith "translated" by reading crib notes he somehow stuck to the inside of the hat, which he pulled up against his face (p. 88).

Second, after assuming that Joseph Smith read all of *View of the Hebrews* along with its arcane sources, Persuitte displays about fifty places where the Book of Mormon appears to be similar to these writings. About a third of these parallels are discussed by B. H. Roberts. Many of the others are distant psychological relationships (e.g., the idea that the River Scioto mentioned in *View of the Hebrews* gave Joseph Smith the name for the Book of Mormon river named Sidon, or the suggestion that the name Jared found its way into the Book of Mormon because a settler in Manchester was named Stephen Jared). Others have logical problems (e.g., the idea that Smith had his characters come from the tribe of Manasseh in order to solve the problem of the Ten Tribes needing to return to Jerusalem forgets that some Book of Mormon peoples came from Judah as well). By including among his parallels many very general points, and by mixing with them parallels from outside *View of the Hebrews*, Persuitte weakens his "quite conclusive proof" (p. 3) that Joseph Smith's explicit source was *View of the Hebrews*. A few of the parallels deserve serious attention. Some in the Book of Mormon are shown to be in keeping with the common opinions and local idiom of Joseph Smith's day. Still, Persuitte overstates the matter when he claims that everything in the Book of Mormon was commonly knowable to Joseph Smith (p. 15).

More interested than Persuitte in presenting the complexity of this early Mormon history—although equally certain that he has it largely figured out—is Ernest Taves. Taves writes with an engaging but liberal journalistic style, acknowledging frequently the strong biases of the historical witnesses he quotes, yet invariably following those who fit best into his story line. Taves often juxtaposes the divergent testimonies which can be found for virtually every intriguing event in early Mormon history.

Taves unifies Joseph Smith's story through psychiatry, along the lines of Fawn Brodie's *No Man Knows My History* (1945), upon whom

he heavily depends. Most of Taves's book is a biography of Joseph Smith, in which the Book of Mormon figures as a small part of the psychological diagnosis: *Inter alia*, Smith had a fertile, inventive imagination, an inability to tell a story the same way twice, a poor sense of judgment, delusions of power and legal autonomy, a tendency to run away from problems, influential hypnotic powers, and a strong need for female companionship. For Taves, the Book of Mormon was written as a joke which got out of hand.

Taves's account, however, suffers from its eclecticism. For example, he uses Prince (p. 60) but ignores Theodore Schroeder's refutation of Prince in *American Journal of Psychology*, XXX (1919), 66–72. In his historical chapters, Taves variously depicts the Book of Mormon as being written by Joseph Smith, from an unknown Solomon Spaulding manuscript, "worked over" by Oliver Cowdery, influenced by Sidney Rigdon, and so forth (chaps. 4–5). Inconsistently, his stylometric work (chaps. 23–25) sets out to prove Joseph Smith the sole author. Stylometry is the statistical comparison of certain identifiable word-habit frequencies in two texts to determine the probability of their common authorship. Taves (perhaps not surprisingly) finds similarities between three sections of the Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham (another writing which Joseph Smith claims to have translated). While generously recognizing that his tests are not conclusive, Taves hopes that his work will be a "considerable advance on previous examinations" (p. 260).

Many problems and errors make it unlikely that this hope will be realized. For example, Taves excludes the Genesis material from the Book of Abraham but presumably does not exclude the Isaiah material from the book of Mosiah. He is very willing to inconsistently label divergent phenomena as "anomalous." Many of his conclusions depend on homogenizing the differences between his three Book of Mormon sections, and they ignore classificatory and purported differences of authorship within the texts. Arithmetic errors are apparent, and methodological questions remain unaddressed. One wonders how one goes about studying the frequency of words according to their preferred sentence positions based on sentence punctuation (p. 236) in a text that was unpunctuated by Joseph Smith and his scribes.

Undoubtedly Taves has had fun enough with his research. It has "pleased" him (p. xi), and his writing manifests this bemusement. But serious use of this kind of historical and statistical hotchpotch is severely limited, if not foreclosed.

623 The Book of Mormon is becoming increasingly significant to historians. These three books leave much ground still to be probed.

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Disciplined Geography

An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon by John L. Sorenson (Salt Lake City and Provo, Utah: Deseret Book Company and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1985), xxi, 415 pp., $14.95.

Reviewed by Lavina Fielding Anderson, an editor and writer in Salt Lake City.

42

MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH this information-packed, attractively printed, and modestly priced volume began in manuscript as a member of the *Ensign* editorial staff in 1975 when Sorenson, at the invitation of managing editor Jay M. Todd, spent an afternoon a week for two or three months presenting various aspects of his research tying the Book of Mormon to a Mesoamerican setting. It was a graduate seminar with a master teacher who, though sometimes brusque and bristly on paper, was invariably pleasant and undefensive in person.

In my early teens when my prime demand on literature was a strong plot, my favorite part of the Book of Mormon had been the account of the wars in the latter half of Alma. Of all those autumn afternoons on the twenty-second floor of the Church Office Building, the one that stands out in my mind was spent tracing, under Sorenson's guidance, the routes of armies "over," "down into," "around," and "up to" various mi[illegible] objectives that corresponded with [illegible]ain valleys and passes, lowland plains, and river courses in Mesoamerica. The Book of Mormon thereby acquired a solidity and reality by being tied to terrain that it has never lost for me.

Although the *Ensign*'s initial plans to publish Sorenson's manuscript as a series was eventually abandoned, I was delighted to know that the project continued on until this joint publication by Deseret Book/FARMS was possible.

My previous exposure to Book of Mormon geography had been from hobbyists whose esoteric efforts, to be quite frank, I had classified among those of most genealogists and vegetarians — of passionate and absorbing interest only to themselves and therefore, if published, usually self-financed. The breadth and eclecticism of Sorenson's disciplined and multi-disciplined approach remains one of its strongest appeals.

The book is carefully written for the lay reader. It contains no abstruse terminology and no assumptions that the reader is supposed to already have. He is careful to claim "plausibility" and "probability," not certainties, nor does he rely on appeals to authority or testimony. The logic of its organization intelligently deals with most of the associated questions by way of clearing the ground for a detailed examination of the text.

A preface jointly written by Leonard J. Arrington, Truman G. Madsen, and John W. Welch provides reassurance to an LDS audience that the book is worthy of serious consideration. Sorenson's important introduction spells out his own priorities and premises in a discussion that provides the foundations for the rest of the book.

> Until recently, after 150 years since the Nephite record was first published by Joseph Smith, we had neglected to pin down the location of a single [New World] city, to identify confidently even one route the people of the volume traversed, or to sketch a believable picture of any segment of the life they lived in their American promised land. In many respects, the Book of Mormon remains a sealed book to us because we have failed to do the work necessary to place it in its setting (p. xvii).

He does not disguise his love for the Book of Mormon nor his strong personal interest in the Mesoamerican thesis, to him the most plausible: "But strong feelings need not rob disciplined inquiry of merit" (p. xix).

The text is illuminated by thirteen fine maps including a topographical map of Mesoamerica on the endpapers. Five of these maps appear in the first chapter, "The Book of Mormon Mapped," where he deals with the potentially vexing questions of what view General Authorities since Joseph Smith have held of the Book of Mormon's location, carefully presents a case for the possible size of the land based on distances within the book itself and the probable speed with which various parties and individuals were able to cover terrain, the reasonableness of a "two-Cumorah" hypothesis, why the Nephites might have used conventional north-south terminology when Mesoamerican quite distinctly runs northeast-southwest, and why it is still useful to study geography despite drastic alterations at the time of Christ's crucifixion.

His answer to this last question is: "Mormon and Moroni both lived and wrote *after* the catastrophic changes. They had no trouble identifying locations they personally knew . . . with places referred to by Alma and Helaman before the catastrophe. Nothing about the pre-crucifixion geography seems to have puzzled them. . . . The narrow pass was still in its key position during the final battles as it had been more than four centuries before. The River Sidon ran the same course, and Ramah/Cumorah, the landmark hill, presided unchanged over the annihilation of its second people" (pp. 45–46).

The next chapter, entitled "Getting Some Things Clear," chews its way steadily through some vital topics: the nature of a lineage history, which Sorenson argues the Book of Mormon is, rather than a political or social history, Mesoamerican cosmology, what we learn from archaeology, anthropology, and accounts of early Spaniards, what dated Mayan monuments have to teach us, the usefulness of dendrochronology (the study of growth rings in trees) and carbon-14 dating combined, language history, the Nephite writing history, and biological characteristics we could expect from the Semites of Lehi's area in the Old World.

For example, on this last point, Sorenson notes from the evidence of skeletons, art, and living descendants, that men were approximately five feet six inches, women five feet, and relatively few weighed more than 130 pounds. "Their build was slender and gracile, unburdened by heavy muscles. (This information was not known to the artist who prepared the illustrations used in the Book of Mormon in recent years.)" (p. 82)

An important chapter on cultural history in the area follows — the history, religion, political structure, social patterns, and traditions of the Aztecs and Olmecs. The discussion examining the evidence for equating Olmec and Jaredite traditions is particularly interesting.

The heart of the book for me is chapters 4–8 which basically follow the chronology of the Book of Mormon from first landing through final destruction. I encourage the reader to work through this section of the book with Book of Mormon in hand, following the maps and reading beyond the quotations [illegible] contextual understanding.

After the careful preparation of the earlier chapters, it is illuminating to appraise the case Sorenson makes for locating some of the important cities of the Book of Mormon at identifiable Mesoamerican sites: Kaminaljuyu on the suburbs of Guatemala City with the city of Nephi, for instance, or Santa Rosa on the upper Grijalva with Zarahemla (pp. 141–52). Map 10 on p. 199 which uses both Book of Mormon and Central American place names was particularly helpful.

These chapters also include illuminating cultural discussions of, for example, the Maya calendar, dating the birth of Christ, the use of metals in the Book of Mormon, an analysis of the twelve animals mentioned in the Book of Mormon and their probable presence in Mesoamerica, the operation of secret societies, Quetzalcoatl as Christ (Sorenson argues for a much more limited identification than has been popular in seminary classes), and military strategies and remains.

An example of Sorenson's blending of Book of Mormon reports and Mesoamerican reconstructions is his discussion of the flourishing of the church in the generations immediately after Christ's visit. After acknowledging that "we would not expect a high degree of administrative and ritual uniformity" because of the "linguistic, cultural, and social differences . . . and also because of difficulties in routine communication, . . . still, we ought to be able to detect new religious practices in the Mesoamerican materials around the mid-first century A.D. And we can."

> Certain old incense burners went out of use or changed form, and the use of the little clay figurines, which probably had some sort of religious significance, was abandoned in many places. Both those features, the burners and the figurines, had parallels in Palestine, where they represented religious practices either of a folk nature or connected with Mosaic orthodoxy (pp. 330–31).

I found occasional drawbacks. Though charitable, Sorenson's custom of not identifying by author the theories he displaces makes it difficult for the beginning student to form a very clear idea of the dialogue on this subject that has been going on for much of the twentieth century.

Given the wealth of material in the book, not all of which can be logically predicted by reading the chapter headings, the index could have been much more helpful. It usually confines itself to the main discussion of a particular topic, rather than the three or four places in the text where it is discussed. (I recall at least two other discussions of the use of clay figurines as cultural/dating devices, for instance, but *figurine* does not appear as an index entry.)

Furthermore, one of the most impressive archaeological reinforcements of a Mesoamerican setting is Stela 3 at La Venta (p. 121). My memory of sketches of this stela shows a short, broad-faced and broad-nosed individual facing a taller, thinner man with a pronounced hooked nose. Sorenson hypothesizes that this stela, which dates to "about the sixth century B.C. seems to show the meeting of leaders of two ethnic groups," possibly the Mulekite landing. However, the photograph of this stela on page 121 is virtually unintelligible; and since Sorenson does not include a physical description in the text, a possibly telling point is lost.

Certainly an archaeologist, anthropologist, or cultural historian reviewing this book would find other problems and raise other questions. And certainly the dialogue of Book of Mormon geography will continue. Sorenson was neither the first nor the final word on this topic. But his volume is clearly the most persuasive landmark in that wreckage-strewn landscape.

OUR BOOK OF MORMON

(Dr. Sidney B. Sperry. Stevens & Wallis, Salt Lake City, Utah. 287 pages. $2.50.)

PROFESSOR SPERRY has written a forthright, methodical study of the Book of Mormon that hews to the line and never flinches. With refreshing directness the author raises and answers searching but simple questions one after another that surprise the reader by their obviousness and almost alarm him with the sense of his own ignorance. The strange story of the wandering Moroni, the fate of the Urim and Thummim, the nature of the Nephite Church, God's dealings with the world at large, to which he vouchsafes revelation of a sort—point after point of long-neglected lore is put on display, much of it for the first time, by the researches of Dr. Sperry. No one is better qualified to handle such material than he. The last man in the world to "go overboard" for any one theory, Professor Sperry never temporizes and never quibbles; the tricks and pitfalls of rhetoric he avoids like the plague. The result is a plain, almost blunt take-it-or-leave-it classroom discourse which for all its simple honesty exercises a strange fascination on the reader. Perhaps the principal reason for this is the way the book is interlined with quotations from the Book of Mormon itself: no mere hints and phrases but whole pages to remind the reader again and again of the weight and power of that great and compelling book—a mighty revelation which we neglect at our peril. Dr. Sperry's persistent campaign in its behalf deserves nothing but praise. The value of *Our Book of Mormon* is enhanced by the welcome addition of a scripture index, a substantial aid to the student that is all too rarely met within our Church writings.—*Dr. Hugh Nibley, Assistant Professor of History and Religion, Brigham Young University.*

Mormons and Modernism *by Bryce Christensen*

"So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight,
So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light."
—John Dryden

Leonard Arrington: *Brigham Young: American Moses*; Alfred A. Knopf; New York.

Richard L. Bushman: *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism*; University of Illinois Press; Urbana, IL.

Jan Shipps: *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition*; University of Illinois Press; Urbana, IL.

Ernest H. Taves: *Trouble Enough: Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon*; Prometheus Books; Buffalo, NY.

Leo Tolstoy called Mormonism "the American religion" and ascribed to it the potential of becoming a world power. But the "Mormon" Church—properly, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—is today still not a major world religion, and its status in America has been problematic from the beginning. Early on, persecution persuaded the Mormons to leave the United States for Mexican territory. But even before they reached their Rocky Mountain retreat, the Mexican War changed the boundaries and brought the Latter-day Saints back under the red, white, and blue. The subsequent conflict with Federal authorities over polygamy and the political power of Church leaders was intense. Federal officials actually seized all Church property in the late 1800's. But after Church leaders ended the practice of polygamy in 1890 and withdrew from politics, persecution finally ceased, and Mormons began to take their place in modern America.

Specifying just where that "place" now is, though, is not easy. Geographically, the popular perception of Mormonism as a "Utah Church" is no longer accurate: only about a fifth of the Church's five million members now live in Utah, and almost half live outside of the U.S. and Canada. Identifying the Church's position within the contemporary American religious spectrum is even more difficult. On social issues, Mormons seem to have found a spot within the "religious right": a Mormon senator and bishop, Orrin Hatch, has been a leader in the antiabortion fight; Gloria Steinem has called the President of the LDS Church the single most important man in the defeat of the ERA; and Jerry Falwell identifies Mormons as one of five groups whose views make them natural members of his Moral Majority. Given the Church's history of polygamy, there is considerable irony in Southern fundamentalists' asking Mormons to help in defending traditional morality. There is irony, too, when descendants of secessionists ask the great-grandchildren of would-be emigrants to join in the cause of patriotism.

> *"Has the day of miracles ceased? Or have angels ceased to appear unto the children of men? Or has he withheld the power of the Holy Ghost from them? Or will he, so long as time shall last, or the earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved? Behold I say unto you, Nay."*
> —The Book of Mormon

Besides these ironies, there is considerable tension within these tactical alliances. For religious conservatives usually take doctrine—not just morality—seriously, and LDS doctrine diverges sharply from that of mainstream Christianity. Many Christians consider Mormons heretics, while some even call them non-Christian. Jan Shipps, a non-Mormon professor of religious studies at Indiana University, concludes her insightful analysis of the faith with the judgment that because Mormons accept the Bible and worship Jesus Christ as the only Savior of mankind, their Church must be regarded as "a form of *corporate* Christianity." Yet she observes that Mormonism does not fit in any of the "standard categories" used for classifying other Christian groups. Mormonism is decidedly a "new religious tradition," one that "differs from traditional Christianity in much the same way that traditional Christianity . . . came to differ from Judaism."

To clarify just what Shipps means, it is necessary to enter the little-known world of Mormon doctrine and history. Both begin with Joseph Smith, a raw farm boy born in Vermont in 1805 but raised in upstate New York. Beginning at the age of 14, the young Joseph was to claim spiritual experiences of an extraordinary sort. Confused about which church to join, he claimed to have learned in a vision of the Father and Son that all existing churches were apostate and that he would be the Lord's instrument for restoring Christ's church to the earth. Three years later he claimed to have been visited by an angel named Moroni, who told him of buried gold plates upon which was inscribed a history of God's dealings with ancient inhabitants of the New World. Published in 1830 as a miraculous translation of that record, *The Book of Mormon* told of a group of Israelites who were led to the Americas by the prophet Lehi shortly before the fall of Jerusalem in 600 B.C. Once in the Western hemisphere, this group split into a barbarous, infidel nation, the Lamanites, and a civilized, religious people, the Nephites. Visited by the resurrected Jesus Christ after His ascension from Palestine, the Nephites eventually desert the faith, however, and are destroyed by the Lamanites, leaving behind only their sacred record.

But *The Book of Mormon* marked

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only the beginning of Smith's ministry. Claiming ordination by angelic visitation—first by John the Baptist and then by Peter, James, and John—Smith organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1830 in Fayette, New York, with six members. As the prophetic leader of this Church, Smith ordained new apostles of Christ and wrote additional scripture in the *Doctrine and Covenants* and *Pearl of Great Price*. Added to by his successors, these new revelations identify the family as an eternal unit, enjoin vicarious baptism for the dead, define a premortal existence for men as spirits, and (what is most offensive to some Christians) announce that as offspring of God men may hereafter become like their Father.

Because of the sweeping nature of his claims, it is difficult to halt between two opinions of Joseph Smith. It is no help that his status—prophet or fraud—depends upon the authenticity of several events in which very few shared directly: three others testified that they had seen Moroni and the plates; eight men swore they had seen the plates. In this regard, Shipps observes, Mormonism parallels early Christianity, which began with "the story of the resurrection of Jesus without supporting it with objective evidence obtained from persons outside the incipient Christian community." The consequence is that "despite the availability of an enormous body of primary source material, early Mormonism has proved to be almost impervious to objective study."

Just how unattainable objectivity is in viewing Mormonism may be seen by contrasting the two recent books on Joseph Smith by Richard Bushman and Ernest Taves. Bushman, a Mormon, has written the history of a man of God. Taves, a rationalist, has written an exposé of a charismatic liar. As a Latter-day Saint myself, I am naturally more sympathetic to Bushman's book, but I think most readers would agree that Bushman's volume benefits from the comparison. A professor of history at the University of Delaware and a recipient of the Bancroft and Phi Alpha Theta Prizes, Bushman works from a broad bibliography and effectively anticipates many of Taves's arguments. A psychiatrist and contributor to *Playboy* and *Galaxy*, Taves has obviously written his journalistic work quickly, drawing heavily upon a few avowedly anti-Mormon sources and simply ignoring most Mormon scholarship. Mormons will be amused that Taves takes the apostate Oliver Cowdery as a reliable witness against the Church, apparently unaware that Cowdery later repented and rejoined the faith. As a skeptical biography of Joseph Smith, Taves's work is clearly no improvement over Fawn Brodie's *No Man Knows My History* (1945).

The most serious deficiency of Taves's book, though, lies in its conclusion, which argues that the Church would be little affected if Church leaders were to redefine *The Book of Mormon* as "a work of imaginative fiction" and repudiate Joseph Smith's claims to supernatural revelation. "Surely the vitality of the church is sufficient to ensure its continued existence and growth under this different formulation." Perhaps the editors at Prometheus Books (a steady supplier of antireligious "humanist" works) believe this. Probably many liberal Protestant theologians do, too. But most readers will find Taves's conclusion harder to believe than an angel and gold plates.

Most people know very well what has happened to denominations that have redefined the Resurrection as an imaginative or political allegory. The pews are empty. Intelligent readers may not accept Bushman's faith, but it is hard to reject the conclusion he appends to his account of the boy prophet and Moroni: "The strength of the church, the vigor of the Mormon missionary movement, and the staying power of the Latter-day Saints from 1830 to the present rest on belief in the reality of those events."

In the face of persecution that continued even after the murder of Joseph Smith in 1844 by a hostile mob, those without a sincere faith in *The Book of Mormon* found other creeds. The beleaguered faithful followed the Church's senior apostle, Brigham Young, across the frozen Mississippi River in February of 1846 and then on to the mountains of Utah. During the next 40 years 150,000 Saints traveled the Mormon Trail, thousands with nothing but handcarts.

The man who directed this exodus was a 28-year-old cabinetmaker and a dissatisfied Methodist when his sister first gave him a copy of *The Book of Mormon* left by a traveling missionary. He began his investigation of Mormonism supposing that its precepts would leave undisturbed his conviction that "Jesus Christ had no true Church upon the earth." He later related: "I found it impossible to take hold of either end of [Mormonism]; I found it was from eternity, passed through time, and into eternity." Baptized and ordained an elder in 1832, Young never thereafter wavered in his defense of the Church and became one of Joseph Smith's most trusted advisers.

As he appears in Leonard Arrington's definitive biography (written from within the faith), Young is a "powerful personality" but not an important revelator. Since his work added little to the canon reopened by Joseph Smith but resulted instead in several hundred Latter-day Saint communities in the Great Basin, Young might perhaps be better viewed as an American Joshua than an American Moses. But as with Joshua, Young could perform his work of colonizing only because a previous prophet had given him and his people new scripture. While still living in dugouts, the Saints named their towns for *Book of Mormon* people and places and began building granite temples.

Even in the 20th century, few Mormons have accepted Taves's invitation to "join the rest of the world" in world view. As Shipps observes, Mormonism refuses to fit into the "post-Enlightenment setting" defined by science and the Protestant Reformation. Mormonism may indeed be one of America's least "modern" faiths. In a time of specialized professionalism, the LDS Church operates with a lay clergy and no professional theologians. Fathers baptize and confirm their own children and ordain their sons, while farmers, businessmen, and physicians serve as bishops. In an era of feminism and youth rebellion, Mormons insist that "the patriarchal order" is divinely ordained and ask their young men to sacrifice two years in missionary service. As progressive denominations respond to sin and doctrinal deviation with "understanding" and "tolerance," Mormons excommunicate. While yuppies perfect the art of private con-

sumption, Mormons build large families—and search their genealogy.

But the most anachronistic feature of Mormonism may be its continuing openness to the miraculous. Bushman makes the point that since the 18th century most Christian denominations have rejected the possibility of supernatural events not recorded in the Bible. Mormons offend fundamentalists and agnostics alike by violating this Enlightenment-Christian synthesis with their talk of angels, healings, prophecy, and revelation in our time. Caring little for the contemporary "authenticity" of existential doubt, Mormons individually affirm that their faith has been miraculously confirmed by a witness from the Holy Ghost received in answer to prayer. Even professional Mormon scholars such as Bushman and Arrington would explain that such revelatory experiences are as essential to their faith as documentary research, empirical evidence, or hermeneutical logic.

The ways of explaining Mormonism's anomalies remain irreconcilable. Skeptics continue to see adherents as the dupes of both first-century *and* 19th-century impostures; many traditional Christians suspect heresy and worse; while Latter-day Saints testify that they follow prophets of God and the Holy Spirit. Short of the Judgment, public agreement seems possible only on the undeniable proposition that Mormons are set against the spirit of the age. cc

Not Enough Trouble

Trouble Enough: Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon by Ernest H. Taves (New York: Prometheus Books, 1984), $19.95, 280 pp. and *Joseph Smith and the Origins of the Book of Mormon* by David Persuitte (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Co., 1985), 295 pp., $19.95.

Reviewed by Kenneth H. Godfrey, Church Education System Area Director.

AT LEAST ONCE a decade, it seems, someone publishes a book about the Latter-day Saints without taking the necessary "trouble" to adequately research the subject. Stanley Hirshon was judged guilty of this offense in 1969 and received from the Mormon History Association its "Worst Book" award for his volume on Brigham Young. Ernest H. Taves, a Massachusetts-based psychiatrist with both Mormon and Mennonite roots, would be a strong candidate for the same award this year. David Persuitte, a retired Air Force computer expert, would follow, though at a considerable distance. His book, though seriously flawed in approach and evidence and uninformed in key areas, is at least neither trivial nor silly.

The title for Taves's book comes from the pen of Ebenezer Robinson who in his newspaper *The Return* (vol. 2, p. 315), published years after the event supposedly occurred, tells us that when Joseph Smith placed the handwritten manuscript of the Book of Mormon in the cornerstone of the Nauvoo House, he exclaimed, "I have had trouble enough with this thing" (Taves, p. 160).

In *Trouble Enough*, Taves attempts to write a biography of Joseph Smith, relying almost wholly upon Lucy Mack Smith's *History of Joseph Smith and His Progenitors* (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853), the *History of the Church*, B. H. Roberts, ed., 7 vols., 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957), Fawn Brodie's *No Man Knows My History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), Donna Hill's *Joseph Smith, The First Mormon* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1977), Gerald and Sandra Tanner's *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm Co., 1972), and E. D. Howe's 1834 *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: Published by the author, 1834).

His bibliography totals only seventy books, articles, and monographs, while Richard L. Bushman's book, *Joseph Smith and Mormon Beginnings* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), which, incidently, ends with the Prophet's move to Kirtland in 1832, has a bibliography which cites more than 700 documents. I use Bushman for comparison because he, too, lives on the east coast, far from the LDS Church Archives.

Trouble Enough begins with a chapter on the Prophet's ancestry, drawn mainly from Lucy Mack Smith's biographical sketches (which he describes incorrectly as a rare book) and the Solomon Mack narrative found in Richard L. Anderson's *Joseph Smith's New England Heritage* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1971). In Chapter 2, he moves the Smith family from Vermont to Palmyra in five pages. The narrative recounts money digging, the

First Vision, the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon, the Kirtland years, the troubles in Missouri, the founding of Nauvoo, and the Prophet's martyrdom, with hardly an innovative interpretation or thought to break the chronology.

Part 2 of this volume attempts to identify authorship of the Book of Mormon using stylometry. Stylometry, described as a "scientific recognition system for written or spoken utterances," began with Augustus De Morgan, the English mathematician and logician, in 1851. After delineating how it works, Taves then informs his readers that by using stylometry, he has discovered that the Book of Mormon was authored by only one person.

I would have been more impressed with this section had Taves provided an analysis of the weaknesses of stylometry as well as its strengths. Stylometry, contrary to what Taves writes, is not an exact science, and its use on the writings of Paul and Shakespeare have generated heated controversy. One argument has revolved around what constitutes a sentence in the New Testament Greek of the Apostle Paul. Stylometric studies are based, in part at least, on determining the average length of a writer's sentences. In old Greek manuscripts there is no punctuation. It is therefore difficult to determine just where Paul's sentences begin and end. Such judgments are subjective and not hazard free. Some of the same arguments used against those who have concluded that Paul did not author some of the New Testament books attributed to him could be made against the stylistic study of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon, which had, according to the printer, little, if any, punctuation (Stocks 1979, 10; Jessee 1970; Larson 1977).

One study using stylometry concluded that Thomas Jefferson did not write the Declaration of Independence, while another study, using the same methods demonstrated that the writings of the person who did the Jefferson study, were not penned by the same person (Ellison 1965). Several Latter-day Saint scholars, including Robert K. Thomas (1972), have found stylistic differences among Book of Mormon writers and have pointed out, for example, that Enos certainly wrote differently than did his son, Jarom. I did a character study of more than twenty Book of Mormon personalities and found them as diverse as many of those found in the world's other scriptures. The Book of Mormon is a very complex canon of scripture that ought not be dismissed as the product of one man's mind on the basis of statistical studies that are hardly foolproof.

Trouble Enough, moreover, has other weaknesses. Historians generally agree that for something to become history, facts have to be put together into a pattern that is understandable and credible. Only then will the resulting portrait of the past be usable and useful in making decisions and taking action. Mere "facts" listed and unlinked do not a history make, but rather a catalogue. Taves provides us with a cursory glimpse of some "facts" in the life of Joseph Smith but fails to provide the reader with the necessary linkage to make a strong historical chain. The reader gains no new insights into the Prophet nor into the Mormon movement. The book seems to have no telechy, or reason for being.

Taves, a psychiatrist, might have produced a significant book had he psychoanalyzed Joseph Smith and his family as did Dr. Jess Grosbeck, who reported his findings in a paper he read at the 1985 Sunstone Symposium. However, when Taves attempts a very brief (three-page) analysis of one of Joseph, Sr.'s, dreams, I find Grosbeck's (1985) conclusions regarding the same dream far more convincing than those of Taves. Grosbeck plows new ground by hypothesizing that the dream points to the destitute circumstances of the Smith family, both economically and socially, as well as the depression of the senior Smith. Taves seems to dig furrows in fields that have already been plowed, planted, cultivated, and harvested by merely stating that it is a dream about the

family expressing hope and promise. Taves then concludes: "Well, here is the stuff of myth, enough to keep a convention of amateur (or professional) analysts busy for a week" (pp. 7–8). Yet he fails to deliver the analysis called for by such a stimulating assertion. His book would be better had he, at that point, provided us with his own interpretation of the significance of this dream; but instead he chose to write two paragraphs, mostly containing questions accompanied with no more insight than an amateur could have provided.

Unlike Bushman, Taves did not do his homework regarding the Smith family's financial difficulties, nor did he compare their experiences with that of other Americans. He characterizes the Prophet's parents as being uniquely inept in their personal affairs, while Bushman was able to convincingly demonstrate that they were far more typical than unusual. Taves has some interesting census data relating to the size of the town of Palmyra that refutes both Brodie and Hill and convincingly argues that Palmyra during the Smith era was not a frontier but rather an established sizeable community. He also tells us that Palmyra had a black population of forty-six but fails to comment on the significance of this information.

Other areas which should have been fleshed out are Taves's account of Joseph's leg operation. It is unfortunate that he did not read LeRoy Worthlin's research (1981) on Joseph's illness, the operating physician Dr. Nathan Smith, and the surgery itself. His treatment of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Charles Anthon experience would have been enhanced had he studied Joseph Knight's journal (Jessee 1976) and Stanley Kimball's essay (1970) on Martin Harris's visit to New York's professors. As an added detail, I am confident the people in Clarkston, Utah, would be surprised to find that the amphitheater they constructed for the Martin Harris Pageant overlooks, according to Taves, Utah's Cub River, which, in reality, runs more than ten miles east of the site.

Taves's treatment of the Solomon Spaulding manuscript and the Book of Mormon would have profited by a thorough reading of Lester Bush's fine article (1977) on that subject. Taves, furthermore, cites and draws conclusions from Oliver Cowdery's "Defense in a Rehearsal of My Grounds of Separating Myself from the Latter-day Saints," even though Gerald and Sandra Tanner proved long ago that it was a forgery.

Taves's writing of the Kirtland experience is equally lacking in sound scholarship. He shows no evidence that he has read the prize-winning monograph Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer wrote on the Kirtland economy, nor Milton C. Backman, Jr.'s, *The Heavens Resound* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983), or even Max Parkin's twenty-year-old master's thesis "Conflict at Kirtland" (M.S. Thesis, BYU 1966). *Zion's Camp*, by Roger D. Launius (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1984) would have been a helpful resource, but Taves seems unaware of its publication as well. His chapter on the Book of Abraham is dated and displays his ignorance of Donl Peterson's research establishing the mummies' discovery, their arrival in the United States, and additional facts about both Lebolo and Chandler reported at Mormon History Association meetings (in Millet and Jackson, 1985). Stanley B. Kimball's fine article (1981) regarding the Kinderhook plates would also have impacted his treatment of that subject.

Taves's short chapters on the Missouri period show the same neglect. He seems unaware of Leland Gentry on the Danites (1974), and Gentry's thousand-page dissertation (1962) on the Mormons in northern Missouri. His failure to consult William Russell's *Zion Is Fled* (Ph.D., University of Florida, 1962) and Max Parkin's dissertation is an additional flaw in this volume.

So much has been written on Nauvoo, John C. Bennett, plural marriage, the Council of Fifty, and the martyrdom — all of which Taves failed to research — that I wonder just why this book was published. It has very few insights, no innovative interpretations, and no evidence of new documents on the Prophet and the Latter-day Saint movement. It is unfortunate that, at a time when so many really fine studies of Mormonism are appearing, Taves wrote and Prometheus Press published such an inferior study.

Even before the Book of Mormon was published there were rumors and innuendos regarding its origin. For many years it was the consensus of non-Mormon writers that Joseph Smith was too unlearned, too mentally dull, to have written the book. The Reverend Solomon Spaulding has been, perhaps, the most popular candidate for such honors. However, Ethan Smith, the Vermont minister who entered Dartmouth College the year after Spaulding graduated, has been at least first runner-up in the balloting. Now, after a two-decade lull, David Persuitte, who has spent a decade researching and writing *Joseph Smith and the Origins of the Book of Mormon*, has revitalized the thesis that Joseph Smith's primary source was Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews*.

Here is Persuitte's reconstruction of the history of the Book of Mormon: Oliver Cowdery, a relative of the Prophet who lived in Poultney, Vermont, met that community's most illustrious leader, Ethan Smith, author of a manuscript entitled "View of the Hebrews." Fearing that the book's publication would detract from his scholarly reputation, he gave a copy to Oliver Cowdery who, some time in 1825, gave it to Joseph Smith. Joseph studied the manuscript, taking notes from it. At the same time, he did extensive research (again taking notes) from such newspapers as the *Wayne Sentinel*, the *Ontario Phoenix*, the *Palmyra Freeman*, and the *Palmyra Herald*. He also read the scholarly journal *Archaeologia Americana* and such books as Francisco Clavigero's *History of Mexico*, C. E. F. Volney's *View of the Soil and Climate of the United States*, *The Six Books of Proclus, The Platonic Successor, on the Theology of Plato* (the latter titles were translated into English by Thomas Taylor), and Thomas Dick's *Philosophy of a Future State*.

Blessed with a fertile imagination and natural story-telling ability, Joseph Smith understood well the psychology of religion, having picked it up from revivals. Arming himself with Ethan Smith's outline, Joseph concealed himself behind a blanket and placed the outline in a hat, sliced to let light in. He then slowly dictated the Book of Mormon, one page per day, to a series of scribes including Oliver Cowdery, whom he pretended to have first met in 1829.

Again according to Persuitte, the first 116 pages were lost; and to persuade Martin Harris to finance the publication of the book, Joseph Smith turned what had been a secular story into a religious history, made a set of dummy plates for people to handle through a cloth covering, and finalized the hoax by publishing it in 1830.

Persuitte's book is more than a superficial comparison of *View of the Hebrews* with the Book of Mormon. He has put together the early history of the Smiths gleaned from non-Mormon sources. He has, moreover, given additional, valuable information regarding the controversial 1826 trial and has provided biographical information on Ethan Smith, Solomon Spaulding, and the juggler, (con man) Walters, whom he identifies as Winchell, a counterfeiter and money digging friend of Joseph Smith's, that has not previously been published. His appendices, in four parts, have additional insights regarding the rodsmen of Vermont, the Book of Mormon and modern archaeology, the Spaulding theory, and the book of Abraham controversy. This is a serious work, moderate in tone and thoughtfully written.

Unfortunately the author spent too much time consulting with the Reverend Wesley P. Walters and Michael Marquardt, both of whom have spent a great deal of their energy attempting to discredit both Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon

origins. Thus, the book is seriously flawed, presenting a slanted picture of Joseph Smith and Mormon origins. The publication would be far better if the writer had spent the same time and effort studying Mormon sources, thereby avoiding questions that have already been answered.

The very first sentence in the volume rehashes the issue of Joseph Smith's signing the title page of the Book of Mormon as "Author and Proprietor." Persuitte says this means Joseph was admitting he was the writer, not the translator of the book as the Latter-day Saints claim. The fact is, Joseph Smith was complying with federal law (see 1 *Statutes* 124, 1790, as amended by 2 *Stat.* 171, 1802), which dictated the words the district clerk had to write when a person was taking out a copyright on a book. It can be demonstrated historically that many translators, including those who produced the 1824 edition of the King James Version of the Bible, were listed as "Author" to conform to this law ("Joseph Smith: Author and Proprietor," *FARMS Update*, Aug. 1985).

John L. Sorenson in *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985) answers many of the questions raised by Persuitte regarding language, culture, food, weapons, animals, location of Nephite and Lamanite lands, pre-Spanish horses, wheels, methods of warfare, and Quetzalcoatl. (See also Joseph Allen, "A Comparative Study of Quetzalcoatl, the Feathered Serpent God of Meso-America, with Jesus Christ, the God of the Nephites," Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1970). While his book was published about the same time as Persuitte's, many of Sorenson's scholarly articles have been available for more than two decades.

Eugene England answers the objections raised regarding the route Lehi and his family took from Jerusalem to the sea ("Through the Arabian Desert to a Bountiful Land: Could Joseph Smith Have Known the [illegible]" *FARMS* pamphlet, 1982, pp. 1-[illegible] Literally hundreds of scholarly articles have appeared showing that the Book of Mormon is a very complex document. Some illustrate Near Eastern culture, Jewish law, and ancient patterns of treaty making. Others illustrate a writing style known as chiasmus, and another even shows throne theophany in the book. It is regrettable that Persuitte refers to none of these documents.

Such deficiencies, glaring as they are, are not the most serious weakness of this book, however. Barbara Tuchman tells us that good historians do not go beyond their evidence (*Practicing History*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981, p. 18). Persuitte's book is fatally flawed because he constantly goes beyond available documents, even those that can be classified as anti-Mormon. He fails to produce any evidence that Joseph Smith met Oliver Cowdery before 1829, or that Joseph Smith ever read *View of the Hebrews*. Also, proof is lacking that Joseph Smith ever knew about Solomon Spaulding or Elias Boudinot, who wrote the book *Star of the West*, espousing also a Hebrew origin for the American Indian. Furthermore, he consistently uses such sentences as "Contemporary newspaper accounts of the digging activities would, of course, verify the later reports. Unfortunately, there are none that are known" (p. 38). Also, "At this point, Joseph's active imagination would have taken over and begun to consider the possibilities" (p. 118). On still another page the writer in a single paragraph uses the following phrases, "by assuming," "we can only speculate," "we can perhaps perceive" (p. 128). Yet no evidence is cited as to why we must assume, speculate, or perceive. These sentences appear with no supporting evidence or footnotes. They are strictly conjecture.

Unfortunately most of these leaps beyond the documents occur where Persuitte is attempting to verify his thesis that Joseph Smith got his ideas for the Book of Mormon from *View of the Hebrews*. Perhaps it is Persuitte who is the born storyteller with the fertile imagination and not Joseph Smith.

Thus, while the book has an interesting theoretical construct, it fails to substantiate its major thesis and must be classified as only the latest in a long line of anti-Mormon books that fail to provide a more plausible story than that traditionally accepted by Latter-day Saints.

Persuitte's book does, however, point up the need for competent historians to explore the New England of Joseph Smith's day and the possible environmental impact it might have had upon the Prophet and the early Saints. Richard Bushman suggests the need to explore Mormon origins. We also need a historical treatment of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, as well as a study of Joseph Smith's library, the Palmyra library, and the intellectual ideas among New England's common folk. There is much new ground to be plowed regarding Joseph Smith. Moreover, some of this plowing is already beginning. For example, FARMS researchers have recently completed a study of *View of the Hebrews* documenting many instances of radical differences from Ethan Smith's book ("*View of the Hebrews*: An Unparallel," *FARMS Update*, Oct. 1985). Other studies will be forthcoming as this interest continues.

Both William of Occam and David Hume wrote that one credits a miraculous explanation only if alternatives are more miraculous (Daniel McDonald, "Occam's Razor," *The Language of Argument*, New York: Harper and Row, 1983, p. 29). In the case of Persuitte's book, one comes to the conclusion that it is a greater tax on human credulity to believe his thesis than to believe the story the way Joseph Smith told it.

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REVIEW OF ERNEST TAVES' BOOK OF MORMON STYLOMETRY

by John L. Hilton

Trouble Enough: Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. By ERNEST H. TAVES. (Buffalo, New York, Prometheus Books, 1985. xi + 280 pp. $19.95).

[Editor's Introductory Note: The following letter and accompanying critique of the stylometric studies of Ernest Taves have been sent to F.A.R.M.S. by John L. Hilton. Hilton and his colleagues, who have been actively involved in stylometric analyses of the Book of Mormon for several years, plan in the near future to complete their own extensive and thorough stylometric study of Book of Mormon texts. The following general review of Taves' book serves to introduce John Hilton's more detailed remarks.

Most of Ernest Taves' Trouble Enough is not concerned directly with the Book of Mormon, but with the biography of Joseph Smith. Taves writes with an engaging but liberal journalistic style, acknowledging frequently the strong biases of the historical witnesses he quotes, yet invariably following those that fit best into his story line--one which attempts to unify Joseph Smith's story through psychiatry, along the lines of Fawn Brodie's No Man Knows My History (1945), upon which he heavily depends. In Taves' biography, the Book of Mormon figures as a small part of the psychological diagnosis: inter alia, Joseph had a fertile, inventive imagination, an inability to tell a story the same way twice, a poor sense of judgment, delusions of power and legal autonomy, a tendency to run away from problems, influential hypnotic powers, and a strong need for female companionship. For Taves, the writing of the Book of Mormon was a joke that got out of hand.

Taves' account is eclectic. For example, he uses Prince (p. 60) but ignores Theodore Schroeder's refutation of Prince in American Journal of Psychology 30 (1919), 66-72. In his historical chapters, Taves variously depicts the Book of Mormon as being written by Joseph Smith, from an unknown Spaulding manuscript, "worked over" by Oliver Cowdery, influenced by Sidney Rigdon, etc. (chs. 4-5). Inconsistently, his stylometric work (chs. 23-25) sets out to prove Joseph Smith the sole author.

Stylometry is the statistical comparison of certain identifiable word-habit frequencies in two texts to determine the probability of their common authorship. This science is still open to skepticism, for several reasons, e.g., writing behaviors may change substantially over time and from subject to subject. Significant results appear obtainable in many cases, but only when the tests are run very carefully. Many interesting projects are now underway.

Using his understanding of stylometry, Taves claims to find similarities between three sections of the Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham. To the extent these similarities exist, this is perhaps not surprising, since both are works which Joseph Smith claims to have translated. While generously recognizing that his tests are not conclusive, Taves hopes that his stylometric work will be a "considerable advance on previous examinations" (p. 260).

Many problems and errors make it unlikely that this hope will be realized. For example, (1) he excludes the Genesis material from the Book of Abraham but apparently does not exclude the Isaiah material from the book of Mosiah (this can only be presumed, since Taves has not specified which texts from the middle of the book of Mosiah he selected). (2) He seems very willing to inconsistently label divergent phenomena as "anomalous." For example, places where the phrase "the wilderness" occurs at the end of sentences are deleted from the text sample (p. 248), since this happens to be a characteristic of 1 Nephi but not Mosiah. This seems arbitrary; of course, 1 Nephi talks about "the wilderness" (actually the phrase occurs about 171 times in varying frequencies in many parts of the Book of Mormon); and this deletion must to an extent skew the remaining data. (3) Many of his conclusions depend on averaging or homogenizing the differences between his three Book of Mormon sections. Similarities between the Book of Abraham and the average results for Taves' three Book of Mormon sections are noted, but differences among the three Book of Mormon sections are not. (4) Taves has ignored classificatory and purported differences of authorship within the texts. He treats all three sections as if they were all written in one style by one person. (5) Arithmetic errors are apparent, for example in Table 24.8 on p. 240. (6) One is disquieted by the high frequency of tests for which Taves finds that "the occurrences are too few for testing." (7) Many methodological questions remain unaddressed. One wonders, for instance, how one confidently goes about studying the frequency of words according to their preferred sentence positions based on sentence punctuation (p. 236) in a text that was unpunctuated by Joseph Smith and his scribes.

Aspects of these and other problems are discussed below by John Hilton. In addition, a bibliography of source materials on stylometric studies is available; interested readers may request a copy from F.A.R.M.S.

Undoubtedly Taves has had fun enough with his research. It has "pleased" him (p. xi), and his writing manifests this bemusement. But serious use of this kind of historical and statistical hotchpotch is severely limited, if not foreclosed.]

I. Letter of 30 April 1985.
To Dr. Ernest H. Taves, 12 Hubbard Park, Cambridge, MA 02138
From John L. Hilton, 40 Overlook Ct., Walnut Creek, CA 94596
Re Continuing study on stylometry from "Trouble Enough"

Dear Dr. Taves,

I am one of the principals of the "Berkeley Group," a loosely organized inter-disciplinary inter-religious group of scientists who for the last four and a half years have been actively studying computer assisted literary stylometry, finding it a fascinating avocation. Our interest was piqued by the publication of the provocative article published by Larson, Rencher and Layton, "Who Wrote the Book of Mormon," Brigham Young University Studies, vol. 20, no. 3, (Spring 1980). Their purportedly objective finds seemed to stretch our scientific credulity. Once into the study we became fascinated with the whole field and have since used most of our free time studying information theory and statistics, performing literature searches, researching and entering "original" texts, writing computer programs and taking measurements.

We have developed our own set of computer codes and proof texts to study independently and compare alternate stylometric techniques. We see convincing evidence to support at least the possibility of objective stylometry for the works of many writers. As of yet we believe the limits of reliability have not been objectively demonstrated, nor has a generally accepted technique been identified, notwithstanding the claims of the several groups who have been publishing.

It is from this background that I have been asked to review relevant chapters from your book Trouble Enough. I am a serious Mormon, although several of my colleagues in our group are not Mormons. I therefore assume that I am about as biased as you are but in the other direction. Fortunately, in objective stylometry we should both be competent in the use of the scientific method to identify the true analyzable propositions. Questions on stylometry, as Morton reminds us, are resolved by objective

measurement, not by the preconceived opinion of the student. Therefore, those of us who attempt to use objective measurements have a scientific obligation to see that all measurements are honestly calculated and reported, and corrected as needed.

I was surprised to read the conclusion of your statistical work supposedly obtained through the use of the "new Morton" series of tests. Our measurements are in strong disagreement with those you present, even though our samples are drawn from the same material and are evaluated with what should be the same technique. Furthermore, I have observed from additional extensive analysis that the statistical distributions found in the texts of the Book of Mormon are significantly different from the noncontroversial writings of Joseph Smith (or Solomon Spaulding, or Sidney Rigdon, or Oliver Cowdery, etc.) Some of our measurements even suggest that multi-authored patterns still exist in the original English manuscript of the Book of Mormon despite the purported much abridging and translating.

As is almost universally true with pioneering scientific studies, later students take exception to at least part of the initial work. We also take exception to the work of Larson, Rencher and Layton (though not for the reason that your book specifies). Our years of evaluation, verification, and correction have identified many pitfalls that must be avoided before reliable statistical inferences can be drawn. Since the field is so new, it is not surprising that continuing cooperative communication between scholars is needed for the development of correct and generally accepted techniques.

Find enclosed my preliminary critique of your work as seen in the context of our studies. As you will read, at least for now, I believe your work to be completely invalid. I assume that you are interested in scientific accuracy, and we await your response to this critique, so we may as needed both correct our techniques toward objective consensus.

Thank you, sincerely yours,

John L. Hilton

II. Critique of Trouble Enough, chs. 23-25.

A. INTRODUCTION

For the popular audience, Taves' chapters 23-25 give a brief but clear explanation of the nature and development of computer-assisted literary stylometry. To write with such an interesting style and clarity as does Dr. Taves does is most admirable. However, there appears to be little information that is not copied consecutively from the work of the University of Edinburgh Group (see, e.g., A. Q. Morton "Literary Detection: How to Prove Authorship and Fraud in Literature and Documents"). And notwithstanding his admirable literary ability, Taves apparently does not correctly use Morton's author identification stylometric (wordprint) tests. Taves' attempted stylometric analysis of the Book of Mormon is at best superficial, which in this kind of work leads the nonspecialist reader to come to incorrect conclusions. Additionally, the calculations of his fundamentally important test statistic appear to be based on an incomplete (and thus invalid) formula.

I am surprised that anyone would attempt to use stylometry to defend the position of the nonbeliever in the Book of Mormon, since he has everything to lose and almost nothing to gain by such objective testing. To the "believer," even if a conclusive answer had been possible, it would be irrelevant to his faith. Whether the "believer's" multi-authored, much-abridged, much-translated English book should or should not show single- or multi-stylometric patterns is at present unknown. However, to the "nonbeliever" who thinks that he has some theory that "explains" the Book of Mormon as having been written by Joseph Smith (or Solomon Spaulding, Sidney Rigdon, or Oliver Cowdery), this testing, when done correctly, could objectively show that the book was not written by Smith or others (see, e.g., "Wordprint Examples Using the Mann-Whitney and Chi-Square Test Statistics" below). I would imagine that such objective answers to this type of "nonbeliever" would be disquieting. It is a credit to Taves' courage that he tries stylometry testing anyway.

Using three small text samples from the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon and his variation of stylometry, Dr. Taves tries to measure Joseph Smith's own word-patterns and single authorship. I understand Dr. Taves' conclusion to be that (after he performed desensitized tests) he sees no evidence of multi-authorship above his level of sensitivity. This he contends is consistent with what would be expected if Joseph Smith had written the whole book. He does, however, view his own study as introductory; it is "not brought forward as conclusive" (p. 260).

Dr. Taves is wise in trying to follow closely Morton's stylometry technique, since Morton has probably written more than any researcher on stylometry tests. Morton is generous in sharing his developments with others and has demonstrated that within a carefully defined set of word-pattern tests and text selection rules, valid statistical inferences can be drawn from the writing of many authors.

It appears that as a service, Morton's group prepared the computer-tabulated "concordances" from the text samples chosen by Taves. A spot-comparison of his Nephi word pattern counting against our fully computer-tabulated files for this section of the Book of Mormon manuscript shows only the expected differences of a few counts for both word patterns and important sentence structure. Therefore, Morton's counting for Taves is apparently correct.

Without belaboring this critique, I will analyze what appears to me to be the two most glaring faults in Taves' attempt. I will then present results obtained with these errors removed.

B. PROBLEM 1: SELECTION OF TEXT SAMPLES FOR TESTING

A statistical test for author identification is meaningless unless the text samples that are studied at least claim to be the free-flow word patterns of their purported authors. Taves' text samples do not satisfy this requirement.

Taves selected his three Book of Mormon text samples of "approximately 5200 words in length; . . . the text from 1 Nephi

was taken from the beginning, of Mosiah from the middle, and of Alma from the end" (p. 242). Taves thus did not select his samples from the writings of purported single authors, but from multi-authored sections of the overall volume. (See Table 1, below.) While he may study sections of the book if he chooses, it will only further desensitize his ability to identify individual authors who, if they exist, are then haphazardly averaged together within the sections of the volume he selected for study. This will increase the statistical uncertainty, thus lowering overall sensitivity.

Taves further selected the Book of Abraham from the Pearl of Great Price as a fourth text for comparison to the Book of Mormon samples on the assumption "that Abraham is the work of Joseph Smith" (p. 241). It is an enigma to me why, if he wished to measure Joseph Smith's personal stylometric writing habits, he did not choose to test any of the noncontroversial samples of Joseph Smith's writing or dictation, or other writings available. For the most recent scholarly compilation of Smith's works, including photostats of the original manuscripts, see Dean Jessee, The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, Deseret Book, 1984.

Taves further acknowledges an indisputable point, that the last third of the Book of Abraham closely follows the wording of the King James Book of Genesis. But this further means that the Book of Abraham cannot be viewed as a single free-flow word pattern of any unique author, but rather a compilation of word patterns. Although Morton cautions against the use of text samples that "contain passages which may be a rewriting of another source" (Morton, p. 38), Taves attempts stylometric comparison there anyway!!

To test different texts for authorship, the ideal would be to have a battery of word pattern tests that uniquely measure changes in authorship and are completely insensitive to other influences. Morton has selected tests very carefully toward this ideal. He has chosen a battery of about 50 (statistically non-correlated) word pattern tests. Within each text sample of 5000

words, typically there can be tabulated more than the needed minimum of five occurrences for each of 30 to 45 of the patterns from Morton's battery of tests. This then permits "valid" null-hypothesis testing using the chi-square (or other test statistic) of this "valid" portion of Morton's full battery of word pattern tests. Notwithstanding the care taken in choosing his test battery, Morton was perhaps the first to show that some authors at times exhibit improper rejections of certain literary forms. He shows improper null-hypothesis rejections for some cases of dialogue and travelog descriptions. (Noncontroversial 5000-word text from Samuel Johnson's travelog and didactic writings discussed below also show an example where changing literary form [and possibly time] appears to show an incorrect number of null-hypothesis rejections.) This problem can be largely side stepped by limiting comparisons to texts of similar literary form or genre.

Dr. Taves seems to ignore these cautions and selects his Book of Mormon samples as if he were not adequately familiar with the book's composite structure. Each of his samples contains mixtures of various purported authors and literary forms. Table 1 shows the approximate text sample percentages of purported authors and literary forms for the sections of the Book of Mormon used in Taves' samples.

Table 1

Approximate Book of Mormon Samples selected by Dr. Taves, showing percentages of purported author and literary form of each 5200 word sample.

FIRST SAMPLE, Book of 1st Nephi [Heading - 7:15]		
author=Nephi	narrative 1st person	80.8%
author=Nephi	didactic	6.2%
author=Lord	didactic	5.0%
author=Lehi	didactic	6.5%
author=Lehi	dialogue	1.5%
SECOND SAMPLE, Book of Mosiah [chapters not reported by Taves]		
author=Isaiah	didactic (close to KJV)	unknown%
author=Abinadi	didactic	unknown%
author=Mormon	narrative 3rd person	unknown%

Table 1 (Continued)

THIRD SAMPLE, Book of Alma 58:28-63:16		
author=Mormon	narrative 3rd person	50.9%
author=Gen.Moroni	didactic	27.2%
author=Pahoran	didactic	13.2%
author=Helaman	narrative 1st person	8.7%

C. PROBLEM 2: CALCULATIONAL DIFFICULTIES

Dr. Taves tries to follow Morton, using exclusively the "chi-square" calculational technique to measure statistical significance. But he does not correctly follow Morton in calculating this important statistic. Taves correctly explains in his Table 23.1 how the binomial coin flip calculation should be made. He takes into account both the "heads" and "tails" of the hypothetical measurement. In his Table 24.4 he tries to apply the technique to the real null-hypothesis testing of different samples purportedly written by different authors. He apparently omits one-half of the required terms of the equation. It seems that he is accounting only for the number of the "heads" and ignoring the "tails" portion of the calculation. When the full equation is used, the value of the chi-square for his example in Table 24.4 should be 0.48, not the 0.37 he alleged. This fundamental mathematical error in his formula apparently was continued throughout his work. For the correct calculation using the chi-square method, see the step-by-step instructions of Morton (or any standard statistical text, e.g., Snedecor and Cochran, Statistical Methods, 7th ed., pp. 120-127). This calculational error makes Taves' chi-square values too small. This further improperly desensitized his answers.

D. RESULTS BASED ON MORE LEGITIMATE METHODOLOGY: WORDPRINT EXAMPLES USING THE MANN-WHITNEY AND CHI-SQUARE TEST STATISTIC

The following analyses are offered in contrast to Taves' studies.

Unlike taking "fingerprints," the present state of the art of taking correct "wordprints" (i.e., a measurement of the unique stylometric writing habits of an author) is not a trivial operation. The technique, if it can be made objective and accurate, as a minimum requires the investigator to complete each step and to justify independently that the assumptions used in the mathematical model adequately match his case under study. With proper assumptions, the objectivity of Morton's technique has been shown for specific cases. A general proof remains yet to be developed. Written English and many of its word patterns are at times neither random enough to assure word block averaged homogeneity (ergodicity), nor to assure an adequate normal distribution for the numbers of events often tabulated in stylometry measurements. The hoped-for identification of an ideal set of word pattern tests that are always completely insensitive to changes of literary form and subject matter has been statistically approached only for modest-sized samples and has not proven in the general case. The assumption of textual ergodicity and statistical normalcy required for standard chi-square testing has also been shown for at least some stylometry cases to be invalid (Morton, p. 140). Ad hoc or subjective spot corrections (as tried by Taves) at best can correct only the most obvious occurrences of the above mentioned problems. Any ad hoc or spot-correcting causes many statisticians to question the objectivity and therefore the value of the overall measurement.

To avoid at least a significant part of these problems, Taves should examine nonparametric statistical models, such as the Mann-Whitney Rank-Sum test. These models do not require any of the normality assumptions intrinsic in the simple chi-square method. Short of future developments of the science, it now appears necessary to verify each model with inter-and intra-control author measurements. The verification control or baseline must be matched to the texts under study in literary style, sample, size, etc.

As discussed above, for rigorous work one must verify the appropriateness of the match of the specific statistical model to

the text or author being studied. This is done by first measuring the author's noncontroversial works for the differences within themselves and to each other. One straightforward way to measure the "author stability" is simply to count the number of simultaneous null-hypothesis rejections (at a fixed probability, e.g. $p<.05$) that are obtained when applying Morton's standardized battery of tests to a set of known noncontroversial texts.

We demonstrate this technique by first examining two known authors who come from opposite ends of literary attainment. First is the highly literate Samuel Johnson, author of the first major English dictionary, who seems to write with a working vocabulary of five to eight times that of the second author, Joseph Smith, who was only marginally trained. We sample Samuel Johnson from his didactic newspaper serial, Rambler (1750-51), and his travelog, A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland (1775). Each work is sampled by ten consecutive 1000-word groups. This permits the dividing of each of his different literary works into two sample texts of 5000 words each for intra-work (and inter-literary form) testing. Selections were made from Joseph Smith's dictated texts in an effort to find noncontroversial samples (see Dean Jessee, op. cit.) This yielded ten consecutive 1000-word groups from Joseph Smith's first-person narrative dictated diary (1835-36), five groups from his published newspaper didactic essays (of the same time period), and five groups from Smith's "official history" (1838).

We test for statistical significance by using two different test statistics, the chi-square which Taves attempted to use at a probability of $p<.05$ and the more appropriate (statistically robust) Mann-Whitney, a rank-sum technique at the somewhat lower probability of $p<.0318$. All comparisons we show in this critique are made between texts of 5000 words each. Larger samples would likely show greater statistical separation between writings of truly different authors. For the Book of Mormon, where much larger samples are available, larger statistical separation for authors is obtained by using larger text samples.

Table 2 illustrates what might be expected for unknown authors by showing the number of significant null-hypothesis rejections from the comparisons between two noncontroversial samples from the control author's works.

Table 2

Tabulation of significant null-hypothesis rejections from comparisons between the works of a single known author.
Part A shows comparisons of the same literary form.
Part B shows comparisons of different literary forms.

Author	Text samples compared	Number of significant null-hypothesis rejections from battery of Morton's tests: Mann-Whitney ($p<.0318$)	& chi-sq ($p<.05$)
Part A			
Johnson	1st & 2nd parts of Rambler	4	(5)
Johnson	1st & 2nd parts of Travelog	3	(4)
Smith	1st & 2nd parts of Diary	2	(3)
Smith	1st part Diary and History	2	(6)
Smith	2nd part Diary and History	3	(5)
Part B			
Johnson	1st part Ram. & 1st Travelog	4	(9)
Johnson	1st part Ram. & 2nd Travelog	2	(4)
Johnson	2nd part Ram. & 1st Travelog	7	(8)
Johnson	2nd part Ram. & 2nd Travelog	4	(6)
Smith	1st part Diary & Essays	0	(2)
Smith	2nd part Diary & Essays	2	(3)
Smith	History and Essays	2	(4)

As seen in Table 2, Part A, where noncontroversial 5000-word text samples of similar literary forms are compared, the Mann-Whitney ($p<.0318$) calculation of Samuel Johnson works measures three or four rejections, while Joseph Smith shows two or three.[1] This intra-author variation is the summation of the standard predictable statistical uncertainty (which for the approximate 44 valid Morton tests predicts 44 x .0318--about an average of one and one-half rejections). This uncertainty level must be further modified to take into account errors introduced by the

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1 The chi-square measurements show a somewhat higher rejection rate, due at least in part to the lower probability of $p<.05$. For simplicity of explanation, the rest of he discussion will be restricted to the Mann-Whitney calculation only.

nontheoretically predictable nonergodicity of the language, plus any small (nontheoretically predictable) component in Morton's test questions that is yet sensitive to changes in vocabulary, subject matter, or author drift. As seen here from the measurements of the above Table 2, Part A, this nonstatistical "noise" component for our control authors is about two and one-half or less (4 - 1.5 = 2.5) for Samuel Johnson and about one and one-half or less (3 - 1.5 = 1.5) for Joseph Smith.

As mentioned, at times one observes anomalous extra rejections due to changes in literary genre or form. One possible example of such a case appears in Table 2, Part B, where one of the Mann-Whitney calculations shows seven rejections from an inter-literary form comparison of Johnson. If Johnson's different literary forms had no measurable effect, we would have expected but three or four rejections, not seven. At present, one cannot predict when these anomalies will occur. Thus, without complete testing to prove otherwise, it appears unwise to make inferences across literary forms for unknown authors.

Table 3, therefore, compares two known different authors, where all comparisons are made with text samples from similar literary forms.

Table 3

Tabulation of significant null-hypothesis rejections from comparison of known different authors, each writing with the same literary form.

Text samples compared	Number of significant null-hypothesis rejections from Morton's battery of tests: Mann-Whitney & Chi-sq ($p<.0318$)	($p<.05$)
Johnson's 2nd Trav. & Smith's 1st Diary	5	(9)
Johnson's 2nd Trav. & Smith's 2nd Diary	5	(7)
Johnson's 1st Trav. & Smith's 1st Diary	10	(11)
Johnson's 1st Trav. & Smith's 2nd Diary	7	(13)
Johnson's 1st Rambler and Smith's Essays	7	(3)
Johnson's 2nd Rambler and Smith's Essays	7	(5)

The comparison tests tabulated in Table 3 show that two of the total six Mann-Whitney test comparisons measure five

rejections each. Here one-third of the comparisons show a rejection count that is too close to the single author expected rejection count of three or four to identify the works of our two known control authors as clearly different (theoretical odds being a modest thirty-to-one favoring the separation). The other four of the six comparisons in Table 3, however, show three test comparisons with seven rejections each and one with ten. These correctly predict overwhelming theoretical odds against the two authors' works having come from a single source [.0318exp(7-4) = about one in 30,000 or more against a single source for the two works, and .0318exp(10-4) = about one in a billion or more against a single source].

In this control author study we have large files. Thus we are able to establish correctly and unambiguously that our two control authors' works, each taken as a whole, statistically do not come from the same source. But if we did not have available such large files and we had been forced to compare two authors that had stylometric patterns as different as Samuel Johnson and Joseph Smith with but a single text sample of 5000 words each by this same technique, we might expect that in perhaps a large portion (i.e., perhaps one-third) of such attempts we may not measure an overwhelming statistical difference even when the compared works are known to come from different authors. Therefore, if on limited data one does not see statistically significant separation, one may not correctly infer that the compared samples are necessarily the work of the same author. On the other hand, however, a single demonstration of a large statistical rejection rate is sufficient to identify the authors' works as statistically different.

With this background information in mind, now turn to the two attached computer printouts labeled "Figures 5 and 6." They show the Mann-Whitney and Chi-square calculations for the first five consecutive 1000-word groups of the Book of Mormon manuscript's didactic writings purportedly first written by Nephi. Nephi's first 5000 words are tested against several other 5000-word

didactic text samples both of himself and of other authors. The results are summarized in Table 4.[2]

Table 4

Tabulation of significant null-hypothesis rejections between purported Nephi (part 1), and two of his additional consecutive sample texts (parts 2 and 3), and three different consecutive sample texts purportedly from Alma (parts 1, 2 and 3), and two control authors Joseph Smith and Samuel Johnson. All are written in didactic literary form.

Column from Fig. Six	Test samples compared	Number of significant null-hypothesis rejections from Morton's battery of tests Mann-Whitney's ($p<.0318$)	& chi-sq ($p<.05$)
1	Nephi part 1 & Nephi part 2	3	(9)
2	Nephi part 1 & Nephi part 3	3	(6)
3	Nephi part 1 & Alma part 1	8	(12)
4	Nephi part 1 & Alma part 2	6	(13)
5	Nephi part 1 & Alma part 3	8	(10)
6	Nephi part 1 & J.Smith essays	10	(14)
7	Nephi part 1 & Johnson Ramb. 1	13	(19)

Table 4 shows that the number of rejections for tests of Nephi's first 5000 didactic words against his two other 5000-word samples (columns 1 and 2 from Figure 6) continue to measure the same intra-author Mann-Whitney value of 3 that was previously measured for the control authors. This consistency leads to an accurate statistical error of <.0318 for these "p<.0318" calculations. This confirms that the calibration of the "unknown" author Nephi can in this case safely be extrapolated from the intra-author measurements of the "known" control authors.

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2 For those who wish to verify the correctness of the calculational coding, the back side of Figure 5 and 6 Computer printouts shows the raw count tabulation for each of the five 1000-word blocks making up the 5000 test words for the didactic passages of Nephi and Alma with respect to each of the word pattern tests from Morton's battery. Of course the phrase "(and) it came to pass (that)" is rarely used in didactic writing, so no special tabulation is made for it.

The conclusion then to be drawn from the foregoing tests is that the probability that either Joseph Smith or Samuel Johnson wrote the first 5000 of Nephi's didactic words is shown to be insignificantly small. While it is not always to be expected, in this case the 1 Nephi sample tested against Alma (columns 3-5 from Figure 6) also shows a clear separation, with theoretical odds against the compared samples having been written by the same person thus being more than 70 million to one, 30,000 to one, and 70 million to one, respectively.

D. SUMMARY

The textual structure of the Book of Mormon is complex. Wordprint testable questions call for definitive answers, but they will not be answered by simplistic and faulty calculations, as seen in Taves' attempt. For present purposes, we have assumed (as has Taves) that Morton's theories and methods offer valid measurements and techniques. But by applying them in ways we believe to be more accurate and legitimate, as explained above, we have shown with a few preliminary measurements (even at the 5000-word test sample size) that the probability of Joseph Smith having written the first 5000 didactic words of Nephi is unsupportably low. This directly contradicts Taves' results. Furthermore, the samples of didactic Alma are clearly different from this sample of Nephi's comparable writings. Taves did not get these results, for they were below his level of measurement sensitivity, due to improper text sampling, invalid calculation of his test statistic and other causes. I therefore cannot recommend reading Taves' chapters on stylometry, unless one is interested in seeing an example of how it cannot and should not be done.

John L. Hilton

FIGURE FIVE

UNIV[illegible]E TESTS, MANN-WHITNEY (Rank-Sum) 'T' Statistic (Mort[illegible] New Wrd Ratios)
FOR S[illegible]ISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT REJECTIONS OF THE NULL-HYPOTHESIS [illegible]o:u1=u2 PROB <.0318)
TODAYS DATE (AND TIME) IS 04-14-1985 23:55:23
All compared text samples are didatic literary form and 5000 wrds each.

Nephi 1st compared to:	Nephi 2nd		Nephi 3rd		Alma 1st		Alma 2nd		Alma 3rd		Joseph Smith 1st		Samuel Johnson 1st	
Valid Morton tests*	M-W(T)	prob.	M-W(T)	prob.	M-W(T)	prob.	M-W(T)	prob.	M-W(T)	prob.	M-W(T)	prob.	M-W(T)	prob.
AND(fws)/#	19	-	16	p<.02	16	p<.02	17	p<.05	15	p<.01	16	p<.02	15	p<.01
IN(fws)/#	27	small	27	small	25	small	25	small	25	small	27	small	18	-
IT(fws)/#	25	small	27.5	small	27.5	small	22.5	small	27.5	small	25	small	15	p<.01
IT(lws)/#	20	-	26	small	27	small	26	small	27	small	25	small	23	small
OF(2nd lws)/#	25	-	26	-	24	-	19	-	22	-	18	-	24	-
THE(fws)/#	25	small	27	small	25	small	25	small	25	small	27	small	15	p<.01
THE(2nd lws)/#	23	-	25	-	20	-	19	-	22	-	24	-	18	-
A(fb adj)/A	27	-	25.5	-	25.5	-	25.5	-	25	-	28.5	-	27	-
A(fb x AND)/A	20.5	-	20	-	16.5	p<.05	18	-	16.5	p<.05	18.5	-	15.5	p<.02
A(fb x OF)/A	28.5	-	25	-	21.5	-	25	-	25	-	27.5	-	23.5	-
AND(fb ADJ)/AND	25	-	25	-	23	-	22	-	23	-	27	-	25	-
AND(fb THE)/AND	27	-	26	-	23	-	20	-	20	-	24	-	19	-
AND(fb x OF)/AND	24	-	24	-	20	-	27	-	22.5	-	24	-	27	-
BE(pb TO)/BE	18.5	-	25	small	25	-	20.5	-	20.5	-	15	p<.01	15	p<.01
BY(fb THE)/BY	16.5	p<.05	29	-	21.5	-	15.5	p<.02	20	-	16	p<.02	15	p<.01
I(fb HAVE)/I	24	-	16	p<.02	22.5	-	25.5	-	17	p<.05	19.5	-	26	-
IN(fb A)/IN	24.5	-	18	-	18.5	-	27	-	17.5	-	22.5	-	18.5	-
IN(fb THE)/IN	19.5	-	26	-	24.5	-	24	-	25	-	23	-	20.5	-
OF(fb A)/OF	26	small	27	small	24	small	27	small	24	small	24	small	20	-
OF(fb THE)/OF	15	p<.01	21	-	16	p<.02	15	p<.01	15	p<.01	18	-	15	p<.01
OF(fb x and)/OF	26	-	24	-	23	-	23	-	25	-	21	-	18	-
THE(pb AND)/THE	26	-	27	-	24	-	21	-	23	-	25	-	19	-
THE(pb OF)/THE	15	p<.01	19	-	18	-	20	-	16	p<.02	19	-	15	p<.01
THE(pb IN)THE	20	-	27	-	18	-	25	-	23	-	17	p<.05	24	-
THE(pb TO)/THE	24	-	26	-	15	p<.01	15	p<.01	17	p<.05	15.5	p<.02	22	-
THE(fb x AND)/THE	26	-	25	-	19	-	24	-	22	-	24.5	-	19	-
THE(fb x x THE)/THE	20	-	24	-	17	p<.05	17	p<.05	15	p<.01	17	p<.05	15	p<.01
TO(fb BE)/TO	18.5	-	26	small	25	-	22.5	-	20.5	-	16	p<.02	15	p<.01
TO(fb THE)/TO	26	-	27.5	-	25.5	-	25	-	27	-	25	-	22	-
(to-be Verbs)/Verbs	26	-	21	-	27	-	20	-	23	-	24	-	18	-
AN/AN+A	26	-	17.5	-	27	-	23	-	22	-	24	-	26	-
ANY/ANY+ALL	22.5	small	20	-	25	small	22.5	small	20	small	15	p<.01	15	p<.01
NO/NO+NOT	20	-	22	-	22	small	17	p<.05	19	-	16	p<.02	18	-
VERBs/VERBs+ADJs	25	-	17	p<.05	15	p<.01	23	-	20	-	24	-	23	-
A(r)/A(r+1)use only	27.5	small	25	-	27.5	-	25	small	25	-	25.5	-	22.5	-
AND(r)/AND(r+1)only	22.5	-	18	-	20	-	26.5	-	20	-	18	-	18	-
IN(r)/IN(r+1)only	22.5	-	24	-	26.5	-	26.5	-	22	-	22.5	-	27.5	-
IT(r)/IT(r+1)only	27.5	small	24	small	24.5	small	22	-	21.5	-	18	-	15	p<.01
I(r)/I(r+1)use only	26.5	-	27.5	-	15.5	p<.02	29	-	24	-	21	-	27	-
OF(r)/OF(r+1)only	19	-	24	-	15	p<.01	24.5	-	17	p<.05	15	p<.01	15	p<.01
THAT(r)/THAT(r+1)	24	-	20	-	24	-	23	-	29	-	25	-	23	-
THE(r)/THE(r+1)only	24	-	24.5	-	22.5	-	21	-	22.5	-	19	-	22	-
TO(r)/TO(r+1)only	24.5	-	23	-	23	-	20.5	-	22	-	25	-	22	-
Total number of M-W rej.	3		3		8		6		8		10		13	
Total valid Morton tests	36		35		35		36		36		38		42	
Gross Percent Rejections	8%		9%		23%		17%		22%		26%		31%	

* #=number "end of sentence" markers, (fws)=first wrd in sentence, (lws)=last wrd in sentence, (2nd lws)=2nd to last... (fb)=followed by, (pb)=preceded by, (...x...)=any wrd, (r+1)only=the wrd to the right and left are uniquely used

TODAY'S DATE IS 04-01-1985 THE TIME IS 16:29:35
THIS IS FILE 'WP0-5K1.NIS' WHICH IS THE FIRST 5000 DIDACTIC WRDS OF Nephi
WRDs ARE LISTED IN NUMBER OF WORDS. RATIOS ARE IN PER CENT(e.g. %=100*RATIO).

Wrds & wrd patterns (Wrd Groups)						Total COUNTS	Mean /1k	Sigm. /1k
A	6.000	9.000	6.000	5.000	5.000	31	6.20	1.64
AN	3.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	2.000	7	1.40	1.14
AND	46.000	60.000	105.000	100.000	58.000	369	73.80	26.80
ANY	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0	0.00	0.00
ALL	7.000	8.000	5.000	4.000	12.000	36	7.20	3.11
BUT	3.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000	5	1.00	1.41
BE	13.000	11.000	0.000	0.000	7.000	31	6.20	6.06
BY	2.000	5.000	3.000	3.000	4.000	17	3.40	1.14
I	6.000	30.000	53.000	41.000	29.000	159	31.80	17.40
IN	19.000	21.000	9.000	9.000	11.000	69	13.80	5.76
IT	11.000	12.000	17.000	28.000	12.000	80	16.00	7.11
NO	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1	0.20	0.45
NOT	4.000	3.000	3.000	1.000	12.000	23	4.60	4.28
OF	49.000	44.000	57.000	60.000	78.000	288	57.60	13.05
THAT	39.000	31.000	36.000	40.000	31.000	177	35.40	4.28
THE	75.000	85.000	91.000	98.000	115.000	464	92.80	15.01
TO	15.000	17.000	18.000	24.000	18.000	92	18.40	3.36
WITH	2.000	7.000	3.000	2.000	2.000	16	3.20	2.17
FORMS OF 'TO-BE'	22.000	17.000	29.000	20.000	30.000	118	23.60	5.68
HAVE	15.000	3.000	0.000	0.000	4.000	22	4.40	6.19
VERBs	223.000	218.000	216.000	180.000	193.000	1030	206.00	18.56
ADJs	145.000	164.000	133.000	165.000	192.000	799	159.80	22.47
End of SENTENCE	43.000	43.000	67.000	66.000	40.000	259	51.80	13.48
A(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 259	0.00	0.00
AN(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 259	0.00	0.00
AND(fws)/*	39.535	76.744	91.045	98.485	62.500	201/ 259	73.66	23.54
IN(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.500	1/ 259	0.50	1.12
IT(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 259	0.00	0.00
IT(lws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.030	0.000	2/ 259	0.61	1.36
OF(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 259	0.00	0.00
OF(2nd lws)/*	11.628	9.302	14.925	6.061	17.500	30/ 259	11.88	4.51
THE(fws)/*	2.326	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1/ 259	0.47	1.04
THE(2nd lws)/*	32.558	11.628	13.433	7.576	17.500	40/ 259	16.54	9.6
WITH(2nd lws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 259	0.00	0.00
A(fb adj)/A	16.667	11.111	16.667	60.000	60.000	9/ 31	32.89	24.85
A(fb x AND)/A	16.667	33.333	33.333	40.000	20.000	9/ 31	28.67	9.89
A(fb x OF)/A	16.667	0.000	50.000	0.000	20.000	5/ 31	17.33	20.47
AND(fb ADJ)/AND	10.870	23.333	22.857	22.000	12.069	72/ 369	18.23	6.20
AND(fb THE)/AND	2.174	13.333	14.286	14.000	5.172	41/ 369	9.79	5.70
AND(fb x OF)/AND	4.348	1.667	0.952	3.000	6.897	11/ 369	3.37	2.36
BE(fb A)/BE	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 31	0.00	0.00
BE(pb TO)/BE	7.692	0.000	0.000	0.000	14.286	2/ 31	4.40	6.45
BUT(fb A)/BUT	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	50.000	1/ 5	10.00	22.36
BY(fb THE)/BY	100.000	80.000	100.000	100.000	50.000	14/ 17	86.00	21.91
I(fb AN)/I	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 159	0.00	0.00
I(fb HAVE)/I	0.000	6.667	0.000	0.000	10.345	5/ 159	3.40	4.84
IN(fb A)/IN	10.526	9.524	11.111	0.000	9.091	6/ 69	8.05	4.57
IN(fb THE)/IN	26.316	33.333	55.556	22.222	27.273	22/ 69	32.94	13.25
OF(fb A)/OF	0.000	2.273	1.754	1.667	0.000	3/ 288	1.14	1.07
OF(fb THE)/OF	55.102	40.909	36.842	41.667	55.128	134/ 288	45.93	8.58
OF(fb x and)/OF	10.204	11.364	26.316	8.333	7.692	36/ 288	12.78	7.71
THE(pb AND)/THE	1.333	9.412	16.484	14.286	2.609	41/ 464	8.82	6.77
THE(pb OF)/THE	36.000	21.176	23.077	25.510	37.391	134/ 464	28.63	7.54
THE(pb IN)THE	6.667	8.235	5.495	2.041	2.609	22/ 464	5.01	2.64
THE(pb TO)/THE	5.333	1.176	3.297	2.041	5.217	16/ 464	3.41	1.86
THE(fb x AND)/THE	9.333	7.059	16.484	10.204	12.174	52/ 464	11.05	3.55
THE(fb x THE)/THE	0.000	1.176	0.000	1.020	0.000	2/ 464	0.44	0.60
THE(fb x x THE)/THE	20.000	20.000	20.879	26.531	23.478	104/ 464	22.18	2.82
TO(fb BE)/TO	6.667	0.000	0.000	0.000	5.556	2/ 92	2.44	3.37
TO(fb THE)/TO	26.667	5.882	16.667	8.333	33.333	16/ 92	18.18	11.75
(to-be Verbs)/Verbs	9.865	7.798	13.426	11.111	15.544	118/1030	11.55	3.02
AN/AN+A	33.333	10.000	14.286	0.000	28.571	7/ 38	17.24	13.65
ANY/ANY+ALL	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 36	0.00	0.00
NO/NO+NOT	0.000	25.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1/ 24	5.00	11.18
VERBs/VERBs+ADJs	60.598	57.068	61.891	52.174	50.130	1030/1829	56.37	5.13
A(r)/A(r+1)use only	0.000	0.000	33.333	33.333	33.333	4/ 21	20.00	18.26
AND(r)/AND(r+1)only	58.621	71.429	66.667	66.667	63.636	99/ 150	65.40	4.
IN(r)/IN(r+1)only	77.778	70.000	75.000	50.000	63.636	25/ 36	67.28	11.6
IT(r)/IT(r+1)only	0.000	0.000	50.000	0.000	50.000	2/ 5	20.00	27.39
I(r)/I(r+1)use only	0.000	42.857	33.333	0.000	50.000	7/ 21	25.24	23.79
OF(r)/OF(r+1)only	73.913	80.769	84.000	75.000	94.444	88/ 109	81.63	8.28
THAT(r)/THAT(r+1)	100.000	100.000	100.000	0.000	83.333	23/ 25	76.67	43.46
THE(r)/THE(r+1)only	23.077	11.765	10.345	25.000	35.000	25/ 130	21.04	10.19
TO(r)/TO(r+1)only	33.333	80.000	50.000	100.000	83.333	16/ 27	69.33	27.02

FIGURE A

UNIVE ; TESTS 2 x 2 CHI SQUARE Statistic, (Morton's New Wrd ios)
FOR STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT REJECTIONS OF THE NULL-HYPOTHESIS(no:u1=u2 PROB <.05)
TODAYS DATE (AND TIME) IS 04-14-1985 16:03:44
All compared text samples are didactic literary form and 5000 wrds each.

Nephi 1st compared to:	Nephi 2nd		Nephi 3rd		Alma 1st		Alma 2nd		Alma 3rd		Joseph Smith 1st		Samuel Johnson 1st	
Valid Morton tests*	X-sq	prob.	X-sq	prob.	X-sq	prob.	X-sq	prob.	X-sq	prob.	X-sq	prob.	X-sq	prob.
AND(fws)/#	55.8	p<.005	79.2	p<.005	98.9	p<.005	109.3	p<.005	103.9	p<.005	51.1	p<.005	174.4	p<.005
IN(fws)/#	(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)	
IT(fws)/#	(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		22.3	p<.005
IT(lws)/#	(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)	
OF(2nd lws)/#	.6	-	.0	-	1.4	-	3.4	-	1.3	-	(small)		1.3	-
THE(fws)/#	(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		20.8	p<.005
THE(2nd lws)/#	2.5	-	.4	-	2.5	-	8.8	p<.005	3.4	-	(small)		8.5	p<.005
A(fb adj)/A	.0	-	.0	-	.0	-	.2	-	.0	-	.2	-	.6	-
A(fb x AND)/A	.9	-	2.3	-	5.3	p<.025	(small)		2.6	-	2.8	-	(small)	
A(fb x OF)/A	(small)		.0	-	.8	-	(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)	
AND(fb ADJ)/AND	.1	-	.3	-	2.0	-	6.4	p<.025	2.2	-	.1	-	.0	-
AND(fb THE)/AND	.0	-	.0	-	3.5	-	11.9	p<.005	8.6	p<.005	1.7	-	9.5	p<.005
AND(fb x OF)/AND	.2	-	.4	-	1.2	-	.0	-	1.1	-	.5	-	.6	-
BE(pb TO)/BE	(small)		(small)		(small)		3.6	-	(small)		8.3	p<.005	8.0	p<.005
BY(fb THE)/BY	9.9	p<.005	.5	-	1.6	-	11.7	p<.005	6.5	p<.025	21.2	p<.005	(small)	
I(fb HAVE)/I	4.8	p<.050	(small)		6.9	p<.010	(small)		13.4	p<.005	(small)		(small)	
IN(fb A)/IN	(small)		(small)		(small)		.0	-	(small)		(small)		(small)	
IN(fb THE)/IN	2.5	-	.0	-	.1	-	.1	-	1.2	-	.9	-	1.6	-
OF(fb A)/OF	(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		5.9	p<.025
OF(fb THE)/OF	20.8	p<.005	5.2	p<.025	22.8	p<.005	14.7	p<.005	39.6	p<.005	9.4	p<.005	44.9	p<.005
OF(fb x and)/OF	.1	-	.1	-	1.0	-	3.1	-	.1	-	3.6	-	5.5	p<.025
THE(pb AND)/THE	.4	-	.0	-	2.9	-	8.4	p<.005	3.3	-	7.7	p<.010	16.9	p<.005
THE(pb OF)/THE	12.2	p<.005	8.6	p<.005	10.2	p<.005	5.8	p<.025	19.8	p<.005	9.7	p<.005	15.6	p<.005
THE(pb IN)THE	5.3	p<.025	.2	-	8.7	p<.005	1.9	-	2.4	-	9.9	p<.005	.9	-
THE(pb TO)/THE	2.9	-	.0	-	5.0	p<.025	6.9	p<.010	6.6	p<.010	4.2	p<.050	3.8	-
THE(fb x AND)/THE	.0	-	.4	-	4.8	p<.050	2.2	-	1.1	-	.6	-	4.8	p<.050
THE(fb x x THE)/THE	1.9	-	.8	-	6.0	p<.025	6.1	p<.025	10.8	p<.005	9.0	p<.005	20.6	p<.005
TO(fb BE)/TO	6.2	p<.025	(small)		(small)		(small)		3.4	-	6.7	p<.010	10.3	p<.005
TO(fb THE)/TO	.3	-	.0	-	.5	-	.5	-	.0	-	1.1	-	3.0	-
(to-be Verbs)/Verbs	.2	-	4.2	p<.050	.1	-	3.6	-	1.7	-	1.3	-	9.2	p<.005
AN/AN+A	.0	-	(small)		.2	-	.8	-	(small)		.4	-	.0	-
ANY/ANY+ALL	(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		12.5	p<.005	27.5	p<.005
NO/NO+NOT	(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		5.8	p<.025	(small)	
VERBs/VERBs+ADJs	3.3	-	14.4	p<.005	28.6	p<.005	16.5	p<.005	10.2	p<.005	1.9	-	4.3	p<.050
A(r)/A(r+1)use only	(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		.4	-	.3	-	.9	-
AND(r)/AND(r+1)only	.1	-	1.9	-	1.7	-	.1	-	.4	-	1.4	-	2.3	-
IN(r)/IN(r+1)only	.0	-	.0	-	.0	-	.0	-	.0	-	.4	-	.0	-
IT(r)/IT(r+1)only	(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)		(small)	
I(r)/I(r+1)use only	.0	-	(small)		4.4	p<.050	(small)		.0	-	1.7	-	(small)	
OF(r)/OF(r+1)only	5.0	p<.050	.4	-	6.2	p<.025	2.8	-	4.9	p<.050	7.2	p<.010	8.7	p<.005
THAT(r)/THAT(r+1)	4.1	p<.050	6.3	p<.025	1.8	-	4.6	p<.050	.5	-	1.1	-	4.9	p<.050
THE(r)/THE(r+1)only	1.4	-	1.6	-	1.1	-	4.2	p<.050	2.3	-	6.1	p<.025	3.0	-
TO(r)/TO(r+1)only	.0	-	.0	-	.5	-	2.0	-	.0	-	.0	-	.7	-
Total number of Chi-sq Rej	9		6		12		13		10		14		19	
Total valid Morton tests	31		28		31		29		31		32		33	
Gross Percent Rejections	29%		21%		39%		45%		32%		44%		58%	

* #=number "end of sentence" markers, (fws)=first wrd in sentence, (lws)=last wrd in sentence, (2nd lws)=2nd to last...
(fb)=followed by, (pb)=preceded by, (...x...)=any word, (r+1)only=the wrd to the right and left are uniquely used

TODAY'S DATE IS 03-31-1985 THE TIME IS 12:19:03
THIS IS FILE 'WP0-5K1.AAS' WHICH IS THE FIRST 5000 WRDS OF ALMA
WRDs ARE LISTED IN NUMBER OF WORDS. RATIOS ARE IN PER CENT(e.g. %=100*RATIO).

Wrds & wrd patterns (Wrd Groups)						Total COUNTS	Mean /1k	Sigm /1k
A	12.000	10.000	3.000	3.000	5.000	33	6.60	4.16
AN	3.000	7.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	11	2.20	2.95
AND	47.000	35.000	48.000	49.000	51.000	230	46.00	6.32
ANY	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1	0.20	0.45
ALL	4.000	7.000	6.000	7.000	8.000	32	6.40	1.52
BUT	1.000	3.000	2.000	3.000	4.000	13	2.60	1.14
BE	7.000	2.000	12.000	11.000	15.000	47	9.40	5.03
BY	12.000	6.000	6.000	3.000	6.000	33	6.60	3.29
I	21.000	29.000	33.000	28.000	7.000	118	23.60	10.24
IN	22.000	8.000	20.000	17.000	18.000	85	17.00	5.39
IT	3.000	2.000	5.000	3.000	7.000	20	4.00	2.00
NO	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	4	0.80	0.45
NOT	5.000	18.000	14.000	12.000	15.000	64	12.80	4.87
OF	47.000	45.000	36.000	31.000	50.000	209	41.80	7.98
THAT	17.000	29.000	41.000	40.000	29.000	156	31.20	9.81
THE	54.000	51.000	65.000	55.000	64.000	289	57.80	6.30
TO	22.000	15.000	18.000	23.000	16.000	94	18.80	3.56
WITH	4.000	4.000	1.000	3.000	3.000	15	3.00	1.22
FORMS OF 'TO-BE'	31.000	46.000	21.000	25.000	19.000	142	28.40	10.85
HAVE	12.000	16.000	9.000	16.000	9.000	62	12.40	3.51
VERBs	235.000	256.000	232.000	217.000	248.000	1188	237.60	15.08
ADJs	129.000	132.000	131.000	129.000	119.000	640	128.00	5.20
End of SENTENCE	50.000	52.000	41.000	46.000	42.000	231	46.20	4.82
A(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 231	0.00	0.00
AN(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 231	0.00	0.00
AND(fws)/*	32.000	23.077	48.780	32.609	30.952	76/ 231	33.48	9.38
IN(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 231	0.00	0.00
IT(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 231	0.00	0.00
IT(lws)/*	0.000	1.923	0.000	0.000	0.000	1/ 231	0.38	0.86
OF(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 231	0.00	0.00
OF(2nd lws)/*	18.000	25.000	4.878	13.043	14.286	36/ 231	15.04	7.34
THE(fws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 231	0.00	0.00
THE(2nd lws)/*	10.000	5.769	7.317	2.174	28.571	24/ 231	10.77	10.35
WITH(2nd lws)/*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 231	0.00	0.00
A(fb adj)/A	58.333	0.000	33.333	0.000	20.000	9/ 33	22.33	24.60
A(fb x AND)/A	0.000	10.000	0.000	0.000	20.000	2/ 33	6.00	8.94
A(fb x OF)/A	8.333	40.000	33.333	66.667	20.000	9/ 33	33.67	22.12
AND(fb ADJ)/AND	14.894	14.286	10.417	18.367	15.686	34/ 230	14.73	2.87
AND(fb THE)/AND	4.255	2.857	6.250	8.163	9.804	15/ 230	6.27	2.82
AND(fb x OF)/AND	2.128	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.922	3/ 230	1.21	1.77
BE(fb A)/BE	14.286	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1/ 47	2.86	6.39
BE(pb TO)/BE	42.857	0.000	0.000	9.091	6.667	5/ 47	11.72	17.87
BUT(fb A)/BUT	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 13	0.00	0.00
BY(fb THE)/BY	66.667	33.333	50.000	66.667	83.333	20/ 33	60.00	19.00
I(fb AN)/I	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 118	0.00	0.00
I(fb HAVE)/I	0.000	10.345	15.152	21.429	0.000	14/ 118	9.38	9.43
IN(fb A)/IN	0.000	0.000	5.000	0.000	5.556	2/ 85	2.11	2.90
IN(fb THE)/IN	40.909	50.000	40.000	29.412	22.222	30/ 85	36.51	10.82
OF(fb A)/OF	4.255	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2/ 209	0.85	1.90
OF(fb THE)/OF	17.021	22.222	30.556	16.129	38.000	53/ 209	24.79	9.35
OF(fb x and)/OF	14.894	6.667	5.556	6.452	12.000	20/ 209	9.11	4.11
THE(pb AND)/THE	3.704	1.961	4.615	7.273	7.813	15/ 289	5.07	2.46
THE(pb OF)/THE	14.815	19.608	16.923	9.091	29.688	53/ 289	18.02	7.58
THE(pb IN)THE	16.667	7.843	12.308	9.091	6.250	30/ 289	10.43	4.13
THE(pb TO)/THE	5.556	7.843	6.154	10.909	6.250	21/ 289	7.34	2.17
THE(fb x AND)/THE	7.407	1.961	9.231	1.818	9.375	18/ 289	5.96	3.79
THE(fb x THE)/THE	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0/ 289	0.00	0.00
THE(fb x x THE)/THE	12.963	13.725	16.923	9.091	20.313	43/ 289	14.60	4.24
TO(fb BE)/TO	13.636	0.000	0.000	4.348	6.250	5/ 94	4.85	5.62
TO(fb THE)/TO	13.636	26.667	22.222	26.087	25.000	21/ 94	22.72	5.36
(to-be Verbs)/Verbs	13.191	17.969	9.052	11.521	7.661	142/1188	11.88	4.02
AN/AN+A	20.000	41.176	0.000	25.000	0.000	11/ 44	17.24	17.57
ANY/ANY+ALL	0.000	12.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	1/ 33	2.50	5.59
NO/NO+NOT	16.667	5.263	6.667	7.692	0.000	4/ 68	7.26	6.04
VERBs/VERBs+ADJs	64.560	65.979	63.912	62.717	67.575	1188/1828	64.95	1.88
A(r)/A(r+1)use only	0.000	57.143	33.333	0.000	25.000	6/ 23	23.10	24.16
AND(r)/AND(r+1)only	47.368	53.846	60.714	53.333	67.742	80/ 138	56.60	7.87
IN(r)/IN(r+1)only	50.000	100.000	62.500	66.667	83.333	28/ 40	72.50	19.45
IT(r)/IT(r+1)only	100.000	0.000	0.000	100.000	100.000	4/ 6	60.00	54.77
I(r)/I(r+1)use only	50.000	85.714	57.143	66.667	100.000	16/ 23	71.90	20.65
OF(r)/OF(r+1)only	73.684	59.091	73.684	72.222	42.105	63/ 98	64.16	13.77
THAT(r)/THAT(r+1)	75.000	75.000	70.000	100.000	76.923	33/ 42	79.38	11.81
THE(r)/THE(r+1)only	30.769	25.000	10.714	27.586	40.000	29/ 115	26.81	10.64
TO(r)/TO(r+1)only	45.455	40.000	54.545	60.000	60.000	24/ 50	52.00	8.96

TROUBLE ENOUGH: JOSEPH SMITH AND THE BOOK OF MORMON. By Ernest H. Taves. Buffalo, N. Y.: Prometheus Books, 1984. vii + 280 pp. Acknowledgments, author's note, illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. $16.95.

Even before the publication of the *Book of Mormon* in March 1830 genteel society tried to explain its origination in some way that would discount its authenticity as a historical work. Little has changed between 1830 and the present day. *Trouble Enough* is the latest of a long series of attempts to explain the *Book of Mormon's* appearance in other than miraculous terms. Unfortunately, it is a singularly disappointing one, for the author has taken new material sufficient for a single article and expanded it into a 300-page tome. As a result, only about 30 percent of the book deals with the questions raised concerning the *Book of Mormon*, and of this portion only a small amount is what might be called insightful information. The rest of the work is a very general, and incredibly simplistic, recitation of the history of the Mormon church from 1830 through the death of Joseph Smith, Jr., at Carthage Jail in 1844, a story that has been told much more adequately in numerous other publications.

This is not to suggest that in itself, the study of the origins of the *Book of Mormon* is not a worthwhile endeavor. Numerous writers have delved into this issue with commendable results. What little Ernest H. Taves has to add to this ongoing study, however, is worthy of our consideration. Taves, listed on the book's flyleaf as a psychiatrist and consultant to the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, expends considerable energy explaining and advancing the importance of a computer analysis of the text of the *Book of Mormon*. He insists that such an analysis can yield valuable information concerning the authorship of the *Book of Mormon*.

Stylometry, the technical term for computer analysis of literary texts, has been developed during the last twenty years into a useful, if not fully convincing, research tool. Essentially, stylometry involves a statistical study of vocabulary, resemblances between texts by a given author, and types and positions of words and phrases within texts. Each author, practitioners of stylometry contend, leaves a unique word pattern, or wordprint, on his or her writings, even as a fingerprint is different from any other. If proper computer analysis is undertaken, if enough other texts are available for comparison, and if editorial work has not altered the author's wordprint, it might be possible to use this research tool as a means of determining authorship.

In a complex process the author compares three books of the *Book of Mormon*, presumably written by different authors as were the books of the *Bible*, with each other and with the *Book of Abraham*, another book translated by Joseph Smith, Jr., and accepted as scripture by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He contends that if the wordprints do not confirm multiple authorship, as Mormons believe, the authenticity of the *Book of Mormon* as a legitimate ancient record must be challenged. Not surprisingly, Taves concludes, "we may state that the tests here applied reveal no significant differences between the texts — which is to say that the texts provide no evidence of multiple authorship. The tests do not establish that the texts were written by a single author, but the results are entirely compatible with that hypothesis" (p. 260).

Although the author does not explicitly conclude that Joseph Smith, Jr. wrote the *Book of Mormon*, such is clearly his conception. This conclusion may be correct, but I doubt very seriously that *Trouble Enough* is the ultimate analysis of the subject. Taves' research methodology is questionable. For instance, one of the keys to stylometry is the placement of words other than nouns and verbs in sentences. If an individual has the habit of starting sentences with "And" or "But," this distinctive feature would be most important in any textual analysis. He admits that one of the so-called writers of the *Book of Mormon*, Nephi, began much of his work with the phrase "And it came to pass," and that this was a distinctly different style of sentence construction from that of the other sections in the test. Such a difference would tend to confirm multiple authorship of portions of the *Book of Mormon*. Yet Taves throws out this material as an anomaly without significance for his study.

Second, at least one other computer study of the *Book of Mormon* has been completed to date. Wayne A. Larsen, Alvin C. Rencher, and Tim Layton published an article discussing this subject in the Spring 1980 issue of *Brigham Young University Studies*. These individuals, using essentially the same process as described by Taves, came up with strikingly different results. They demonstrated, at least to their satisfaction, that there were at least 24 authors of the *Book of Mormon*. One can only suspect that with such a divergence of results from computer analysis of the *Book of Mormon* that this is one more instance of what some have observed as the fine art of jockeying figures to support certain theories. Perhaps the most famous instance of this phenomena within the historians' community came in 1974 with the publication of Robert W. Fogel's and Stanley L. Engerman's *Time on the Cross*, concerning slavery in the Old South.

It is indeed unfortunate that *Trouble Enough* is not a more satisfactory work. It raises some important questions about the coming forth of the *Book of Mormon*, but these are confined to only a few of its pages. Perhaps Taves will expand his computer study into a full-length treatment at some future date. As it is, however, few will find the book of great importance.

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CHIASMUS IN ANTIQUITY: STRUCTURES, ANALYSES, EXEGESIS. Edited by J. W. Welch, with a Preface by D. N. Freedman. Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981. Pp. 353. DM 98.00.

Welch has introduced, edited, and contributed to a collection of studies on chiasmus in Sumero-Akkadian, Ugaritic, biblical Hebrew narrative, biblical Hebrew poetry, Aramaic contracts and letters, Talmudic-Aggadic narrative, the Book of Mormon, the New Testament, and in ancient Greek and Latin literature. The book attempts neither to define and illustrate the proper methodology for studying chiasmus nor to assess the scholarly consensuses regarding this phenomenon. Welch and the other contributors—R. F. Smith, Y. T. Radday, W. G. E. Watson, B. Porten, and J. Fraenkel—illustrate the presence of chiasmus in ancient cultures and its importance in exegesis. Some portions of this work will seem tendentious to some biblical specialists, but on the whole it is a good collection of some important chiastic passages in the Bible and the ancient Near East.

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JOHN W. WELCH (ed.), *Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analysis, Exegesis*, Gerstenberg Verlag, Hildesheim 1981, pp. 353.

Probabilmente nessuno oggi direbbe che la retorica è la «regina delle materie» (Marrou), ma forse non ripeterebbe nemmeno il detto «prendi l'eloquenza e torcele il collo», anche se ciò che sa di retorico si guarda sempre con una certa ritrosia. È un fatto, però, che la retorica e gli studi retorici sono oggi di gran moda. Sono coltivati da politici, uomini d'affari, managers di vario tipo, dovunque le relazioni umane esigono l'uso appropriato della parola e del discorso. Con grande interesse si rispolverano le teorizzazioni degli antichi retori e grammatici (Sofisti, Aristotele, ecc...), matrici della nostra cultura cosiddetta occidentale (Lausberg, ecc...). Si riconosce che la retorica contende il posto a quelle moderne scienze, come la linguistica e la semiotica (Eco, ecc...), che intendono stabilire un principio riunificante del sapere nella sua totalità.

A queste sollecitazioni non è sfuggita e non sfugge la ricerca biblica[1].

Su questa linea si pone l'opera che stiamo presentando, scritta in collaborazione da studiosi di varia provenienza e diretta da J.W. Welch della Brigham Young University (Provo, Utah, U.S.A.). Essa tratta di un procedimento stilistico che, insieme al parallelismo, di cui in parte potrebbe es-

1. Si veda fra l'altro l'opera recentissima di R. Meynet, *Initiation à la rhétorique biblique...*, I-II, Ed. du Cerf, Paris 1982, 198, con un volume di schemi, che è basato proprio sul chiasmo.

sere considerato una forma, sembra interessare maggiormente i biblisti, specialmente oggi. In questo campo pare anzi che, come altre volte, gli studi biblici abbiano preceduto quelli letterari profani: non ci consta che per la letteratura in genere esistano studi di ampiezza simile a quello del Lund [2], o a quello più recente (1975/1980) di Di Marco [3].

Il presente lavoro non riguarda solo la Bibbia, ma (tutta) la letteratura dell'antichità, anche se l'interesse per la Bibbia vi è prevalente, forse perché gli studiosi interessati sembrano tutti o biblisti o cultori di discipline in qualche modo collaterali alla Bibbia.

Il libro è presentato (p. 7-8) dal Prof. D.N. Freedmann, noto ai biblisti tra l'altro per la direzione dei commenti biblici della Anchor Bible, oltre che per vari studi anche sul chiasmo.

Segue una «indispensabile» (Freedmann, p. 8) introduzione, nella quale il direttore dell'opera, J.W. Welch, dà innanzi tutto uno schizzo di storia dello studio e del chiasmo nella Bibbia, che egli fa iniziare con il Bengel (1742) [4], e ai giorni nostri sarebbe cresciuto «dramatically» (p. 89). Vi si danno (p. 9-10) i vari nomi con cui è denominato negli studi letterari [5], indicandone la funzione espressiva, la quale con «precisione, ampiezza ed eleganza», cerca di sottolineare gli elementi corrispondenti e specialmente il centro della figura (p. 10). È stato usato in prosa e in poesia, in brevi frasi, in sezioni più ampie e in interi libri: nel presente lavoro vengono presi in considerazione solo chiasmi di una certa ampiezza, mentre quelli brevi vengono riferiti nel catalogo alla fine dell'opera (p. 11). C'è la convinzione che nella struttura di un'opera ne emerga il contenuto e il messaggio (pp. 11-12). Il chiasmo sarebbe «la più tradizionale e più alta forma di insegnamento» (Gächter) degli antichi, che, anche con scopi pedagogici e mnemonici, amavano le ripetizioni e le ridondanze, in un tempo in cui non si usavano capitoli, paragrafi e simili, a differenza dei moderni che sarebbero più lineari [6].

2. N.W. Lund, *Chiasmus in the N.T.*, Chape Hill 1942.

3. A. Di Marco, *Il chiasmo nella Bibbia* (Collana «Ricerche e Proposte» 1), Torino 1980. Allo Welch e colleghi non era nota l'edizione italiana del libro di Di Marco, ma quella tedesca uscita in quattro parti nella rivista Linguistica Biblica dal 1975 (quando l'opera era già ultimata) al 1979. La presente opera del Welch, datata 1981, sembra che sia stata data alle stampe nel 1978, data dell'introduzione, o forse nel 1977, data del contributo di R.F. Smith, che sembra essere il paziente e attento curatore dell'opera.

4. Sarebbe però già stato notato dal Tindale (1534) e addirittura nella versione di Wyclif (1380).

5. Non vi troviamo il termine «Ringcomposition», pure spesso usato in ambiente specialmente anglosassone, particolarmente nelle analisi degli autori classici

6. Sui moderni sarebbe opportuno controllare meglio le loro composizioni. A un esame appena sommario, si veda per esempio quanto autori come il Ginsti e il Brecht non disdegnino le ripetizioni.

C'è una certa soggettività e fluidità nell'uso del chiasmo, che potrebbe essere segno della libertà dell'autore o della capacità di critica, la quale qui però finisce dove è iniziata, cioè nel testo (p. 14). Certo che «la validità del chiasmo è nella capacità di percepirlo» (p. 15).

Come mai tali strutture siano sfuggite alle analisi degli antichi, si potrebbe spiegare con la perdita generale di gran parte della cultura antica; del resto autori come Cicerone ed altri hanno notato più di una volta tale procedimento stilistico.

R.F. Smith (Independence, Missouri, U.S.A.), che ha curato in gran parte la redazione dell'opera, presenta *Il Chiasmo nel Sumero-accadico* (pp. 17-35), rilevando forme «semplici» (frasi e parole), «inclusioni» e strutture più ampie in quasi tutti i generi letterari (lessicale, matematico, testi economici) sin dal terzo millennio a.C., compresi testi famosi come l'Epopea di Gilgamesh, la Discesa di Inana agli inferi e il Codice di Hammurabi.

Del direttore J.W. Welch è *Il Chiasmo nell'Ugaritico* (pp. 36-49), dove è uno degli elementi stilistici più interessanti, sia in forme brevi che in ampie composizioni. Dall'Ugaritico tale struttura sarebbe passata all'ebraico e al greco.

Y.T. Radday (Università di Haifa) ha composto il contributo più ampio: *Il Chiasmo nelle narrazioni bibliche ebraiche* (pp. 50-118). Sua convinzione è che il chiasmo fosse «de rigeur» nelle opere bibliche più analitiche anche in prosa (Torah, Giosuè, Giudici, Samuele, Re, Rut, Giona, Ester, Dan.), dove è ampiamente documentato, e sarebbe stato invece dimenticato nelle opere più recenti specialmente dopo l'esilio (Esdra, Nehemia, Cronache). D'altra parte dalla presenza delle strutture chiastiche (che il Radday illustra con molti schemi) si conclude all'antichità e unitarietà dei libri; cosa che forse non tutti condivideranno.

Di W.G.E. Watson (del Trinity College di Dublino) è un denso contributo su «*Gli schemi chiastici nella poesia ebraica biblica*» (pp. 118-168). È un lavoro a carattere più teorico che descrittivo, interessato alla terminologia, alle forme di chiasmo (colon, strofe, stanze, ecc...), alle sue funzioni espressive e strutturali, ai rapporti con altri procedimenti (anacrusi, schema a terrazza, parole chiavi, break-up, schemi sonori, ecc...), e all'utilità del chiasmo per la critica testuale e la filologia.

Bezalel Porten (Università di Gerusalemme) studia «*La struttura e il chiasmo nei contratti e nelle lettere aramaiche*» (pp. 169-182), a cominciare dalle lettere di Elefantina, dove gli scribi hanno usato schemi accurati, di cui il più comune era il chiasmo.

Di Jonah Fraenkel (Università di Gerusalemme) è *Il Chiasmo nelle narrazioni haggadico-talmudiche* (pp. 183-197), dove è comune la struttura A - Apertura, B - Sviluppo, A' - Fine, con numerose variazioni. Dalle sei nar-

razioni qui esaminate, risulta che dovunque c'è chiasmo, ma diversificato: un'arte diversa dalla nostra.

Ancora di J.W. Welch è *Il Chiasmo nel libro dei Mormoni* (pp. 198-210), con preghiera al lettore di non sorprendersi, perché il chiasmo spiegherebbe oltre la struttura di un libro comunemente ritenuto confuso e senza significato, anche l'antichità del libro (dal VI al II sec. a.C.), perché, quando lo Smith lo ridusse in inglese nel 1830, non si conosceva il chiasmo.

Sempre di J.W. Welch è l'esame de *Il Chiasmo nel Nuovo Testamento* (pp. 211-249), che non vuole essere una presentazione dei chiasmi, del resto già fatta, ma una valutazione di essi, che rispecchiano il carattere fondamentale del N.T., dove il primo è l'ultimo, la morte è vita, il guadagno è perdita, e il perduto è ritrovato. Sono interessanti in *Giac.*, *1-2 Tess.*, *1-2 Cor.*, *Ebr.*, meno in *Rm.*, perfetto invece in *Col.* (un capolavoro del genere), *Ef.*, *1-2 Tm.*, meno in *Tit.*, *1 Pt.*, *1-3 Gv.*; meglio in *Giud.* e *2 Pt.*; interamente chiastica nell'insieme e nei particolari è l'*Apc.* Dei vangeli, *Mc.* ne ha diversi, ma non nell'insieme; poco in *Lc.*; molto interesse in *Mt.*; abbastanza in *Gv.* Tali giudizi riflettono evidentemente (anche se non completamente) i risultati della ricerca al tempo in cui fu scritto tale contributo.

Infine anche di J.W. Welch è *Il chiasmo nelle antiche letterature greche e latine* (pp. 250-268). È ampiamente noto in Omero, sia in forme brevi che in più larghe composizioni; in parte lo riconobbero anche gli antichi scoliasti, che lo chiamavano hysteron-proteron; forse derivato dai semiti, da cui i greci presero anche l'alfabeto, o forse un sistema familiare a molti ambienti: anche i bambini amano il chiasmo. Come ornamento del discorso è noto anche negli scrittori seguenti greci e latini, e sembra essere «la forza regolatrice della frase latina». Si trova in Eraclito, in Platone, nei tragici, in Erodoto e Plutarco. Se ne sono contati 1257 in Livio, 211 in Sallustio, 365 in Cesare, 1088 in Tacito, 307 in Giustino; è un abbellimento ingegnoso dello stile di Virgilio, più che in Lucrezio, e si trova anche in Catullo e Properzio. In confronto alla letteratura biblica, sembra essere però secondario.

Segue la bibliografia (pp. 269-286), e un utilissimo indice (pp. 287-352) di tutti i brani in chiasmo che gli autori conoscono, non solo di quelli citati nel libro, con questo ordine: Antico Egitto (pp. 287-291), Sumero-Accadico (291-293), Ugaritico (293-295), libro dei Mormoni (295-297), Canone ebraico dell'A.T. (297-338), letteratura intertestamentaria (apocrifi-pseudoepigrafi) (338-340), letteratura rabbinica (340-341), Giuseppe Flavio (341), N.T. (341-352), Padri Anteniceni (352). Mancano gli indici dei testi aramaici e di quelli greci e latini. Gran parte del materiale è riportato qui per la prima volta; altro si trovava già in opere e riviste varie, volta per volta me[illegible]aate[7].

Per i biblisti non dovrebbe essere una sorpresa tale massa di materiale e di osservazioni veramente enorme, e che potrebbe essere aumentata oltre che con l'aggiornamento, con l'aggiunta per es. di quel che si trova in Qumran, senza parlare delle letterature più recenti. Parecchi esegeti sono già interessati al chiasmo e molti avranno provato la soddisfazione di averne notato qualcuno, con la comprensibile compiacenza di aver scoperto qualcosa di nuovo.

Parecchie cose si potrebbero aggiungere a quanto i meritevoli studiosi presentano nel loro pazientissimo lavoro, sia nell'ambito estrabiblico che in quello biblico: è un campo in piena effervescenza.

Per qualcuno è proprio la gran mole di esempi che potrebbe creare problemi; perciò bisognerebbe essere più attenti alle critiche. Ci pare però certo che, a differenza di tanti altri indizi sui quali in esegesi si fondano ipotesi e teorie, qui ci troviamo in presenza di constatazioni più numerose, controllabili e quindi meno ipotetiche.

La domanda che più affiora quando si parla di tali procedimenti linguistici è poi quanto siano coscienti e intenzionali: e non è questione di poco conto, né sempre di facile risposta. Però, se si dimostrasse che spesso il chiasmo è inconscio e che quindi il pensiero e il linguaggio senza volerlo si atteggiano in queste strutture, e fossero perciò derivazione da strutture interiori (profonde), la cosa non sarebbe meno interessante. Chissà se un giorno non se ne potesse tentare una prova!

Si dovrebbe aggiungere che strutture simili sono osservabili, ed è stato fatto, anche in altre arti, come la musica e le arti plastiche.

Mentre c'è da ringraziare gli studiosi che si dedicano a ricerche così severe e pazienti, possiamo formulare l'augurio che esse servano a un contatto sempre più attento alla parola di Dio, diventata più autentica, varia ed espressiva.

ANGELICO SALVATORE DI MARCO

Ancient Chiasmus Studied

Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis by John W. Welch, ed. (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981), 353 pp.

Reviewed by John S. Kselman, Associate Professor of Semitic Languages at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., and book review editor for the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*.

FOR THE LAST TWO CENTURIES, the scientific study of the Bible has been dominated by historical concerns, as scholars have attempted, in different ways, first to write a history of the literature of ancient Israel and of the primitive church, and then, on the basis of these sources, to reconstruct the histories of both communities. The methods developed for such study over the last two centuries are varied. To mention two examples, there are source criticism (the attempt to discover and describe the several sources that make up a book like Genesis) and form criticism (the study of the recurring patterns of the small, presumably originally oral units of the literature, and the purposes for these units — preaching, catechesis, miracle stories or the like, as in the synoptic gospels).

The impact of such historical questions and concerns has been enormously productive; these methods have cast new light on many obscurities of the biblical text. However, the dominance of the historical-critical method in biblical studies and in the professional training of biblical scholars has had the unintended effect of deflecting interest from the literary-esthetic level of the text. There were, to be sure, scholars who studied the biblical text as literature, like the English scholar R. G. Moulton at the end of the nineteenth century and the American Nils Lund at the beginning of the twentieth; but they were a minority.

Happily, the situation has changed dramatically in recent years. While not ignoring or rejecting the continued importance of the historical-critical method, more and more scholars are turning their attention to the literary qualities of the Old and New Testaments. The volume under review is one of the most recent and most interesting of such studies. Its approach is both narrow and wide: narrow, in that it studies only one literary device, chiasmus; wide, in that it is concerned with this device not only in biblical literature, but in such related literature as that of ancient Mesopotamia, of the second millennium B.C. Syrian city of Ugarit, and of the fifth century B.C. Aramaic literature of Elephan-

tine. The volume also includes a study of chiasmus in classical Greek and Latin literature, in post-biblical Jewish literature, and in the Book of Mormon.

In the introduction (pp. 9–16), John Welch, to whom we owe double gratitude for editing the volume as well as for several contributions to it, describes chiasmus as "the appearance of a two-part structure or system in which the second half is a mirror image of the first, i.e. where the first term recurs last, and the last first" (p. 10). An example of this simplest form of chiasmus is found in Isaiah 22:22:

I will place the key of the House of David on his shoulder;
when he opens, no one shall shut,
when he shuts, no one shall open.

The balance and inversion that mark the last two lines above are chiastic and can be represented schematically as AB//BA. However, the volume's contributors are not concerned primarily with such simple and obvious inversions but with more elaborate and extended inverted structures discoverable in larger units of the text as described, for instance, in Michael Fishbane's fine study of the chiastic structure of the cycle of Jacob stories in Genesis 25–35, originally published in the *Journal of Jewish Studies* 26 (1975): 15–38 — a study that does not seem to have been noted by Y. T. Radday in his chapter on "Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative" (pp. 50–117).

It is virtually impossible to summarize or evaluate thoroughly a book like this, whose importance lies in the hundreds of examples that are included. Therefore, I will focus on those chapters that were of most interest to me. My professional interest in the Old Testament drew me first to the contributions of Radday and W. G. E. Watson, "Chiastic Patterns in Biblical Hebrew Poetry" (pp. 118–68). These two chapters, along with that of John Welch on "Chiasmus in the New Testament" (pp. 211–49), make up over a third of the book, some 160 pages. Watson's article was especially full and well documented. Also of high interest to me was the contribution of B. Porten, "Structure and Chiasm in Aramaic Contracts and Letters" (pp. 169–82). In this relatively brief piece, the presence of chiastic patterning in ordinary Aramaic business documents — material that in no sense could be described as "literature" — demonstrates the ubiquity of the device in the ancient Near East.

Another paper of particular interest to me and presumably to the readers of DIALOGUE, is the editors' contribution on "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon" (pp. 198–210). The instances of chiastic arrangements of material, particularly in the early parts of the Book of Mormon, are set out with clarity and with an admirably non-apologetic tone. As a non-Mormon, I would draw different inferences from the evidence, a possibility that Welch allows for, both at the beginning and at the end of this article. In evaluating this contribution, it seems to me that the point Welch makes (i.e., that the presence of chiastic structures in parts of the Book of Mormon indicates their status as ancient scripture) is weak, or at least is explainable in other ways. After all, if one wants to repeat a list of items not haphazardly, but in some sort of order, there are only two ways to do it: by mirroring the first instance (ABCD=ABCD), or by reversing it (ABCD=DCBA). I am also impressed by the work of several contemporary LDS scholars who are believers who approach the Book of Mormon as genuine revealed scripture but as equivalent to the pseudepigraphical literature of the Old Testament (the book of Daniel, written in the second century B.C. but purporting to be from the sixth century B.C.), or of the New Testament (the Pastoral Epistles — 1–2 Timothy and Titus — claiming to be written by the apostle Paul but actually written after his death, perhaps as late as the mid-second century A.D.). This approach would explain the apparent dependence of the Book of Mormon on the King James version of the Bible (a charge used regularly by opponents of Mormonism

in their critiques), while allowing for the genuine, if pseudepigraphical, character of the Book of Mormon as revealed scripture. Let me conclude by saying again that Welch presents the evidence irenically and fairly.

As I intimated above, the articles singled out for particular mention are those that fell within the area of my competence as a biblical scholar. For completeness, let me mention briefly the other contributions: "Chiasm in Sumero-Akkadian" (pp. 17–35), by Robert F. Smith, who also prepared the index for the volume; "Chiasmus in Ugaritic" (pp. 36–49), by John W. Welch; "Chiasmus in Talmud-Aggadic Narrative" (pp. 183–97), by Jonah Fraenkel; and "Chiasmus in Ancient Greek and Latin Literatures" (pp. 250–68), by John W. Welch. The book includes as well a brief preface by David Noel Freedman (pp. 7–8), a bibliography (pp. 269–86), and an index (pp. 287–352).

The great value of a book of this type is that it will focus the attention of scholars on literary devices like chiasmus; and such attention will bring new instances to light. For instance, in his article on chiasmus in the New Testament, Welch notes that 2 Corinthians is one of the Pauline epistles that "appear[s] to contain little chiastic structure" (p. 219). He might wish to consult an article by M. L. Barré ("Paul as 'Eschatologic Person': A New Look at 2 Cor 11:29," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 37 [1975]: 500–26) in which the author reveals the chiastic character of 2 Corinthians 11:21–29.

Of particular importance in an encyclopedic work like this are the full indexes. Without them, the book would have considerably less value as a reference work not only to be read, but to which the scholar will want to return frequently.

I conclude by noting that this is not a book for the general reader, although the material is presented clearly enough for comprehension; it is a book for the scholar of the literatures of antiquity. A book that demands and amply repays intensive study, it is highly recommended.

Copies of *Chiasmus in Antiquity* may be ordered either from the publisher, Gerstenberg Verlag, Postfach 390, 3200 Hildesheim, West Germany, for DM95, or from the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Box 7113, University Station, Provo, UT 84602, for $34. A few copies of the first edition are left. Depending on local inventories, delivery may be prompt or may take several months.

78

JOHN W. WELCH (ed.), *Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981). Pp. 353. Paper DM 98.

This reviewer gladly agrees with Professor Freedman's evaluation in his preface (p. 7-8): "*Chiasmus in Antiquity* is a much needed and very welcome volume of essays devoted to the study of a single linguistic and literary phenomenon, aptly if not always accurately described by one Greek word. . . ."

The editor of this volume, John W. Welch, Associate Professor of Law at Brigham Young University, contributed four articles besides the introduction (pp. 9-16) in which he gives the current definition of chiasmus as inverted parallelism in which both balance and inversion appear, and extends it to a word arrangement in which the elements are located symmetrically around a center (e.g., Ps 3:7-9). Welch admits that the evidence for chiasmus is not entirely objective and quantifiable.

"Chiasm in Sumero-Akkadian," by Robert F. Smith (pp. 17-35), considers both simple chiasmus within two cola and concentric symmetry of larger literary units. The same double approach is used by Welch in his chapter "Chiasmus in Ugaritic" (pp. 36-49). In his study of "Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative" (pp. 50-117), Yehuda T. Radday attempts to find chiastic structures in prose compositions and validate their reality by using statistical procedures (cf. pp. 116-17). His analyses of chiastic patterns are combined with other aspects, such as criticism of source theories and a rather conservative opinion on authorship of some books. W. G. E. Watson begins his presentation of "Chiastic Patterns in Biblical Hebrew Poetry" (pp. 118-68) with a definition of terms (pp. 119-23). Then he lists appearances of chiasmus, from bicola to combinations of more cola and then in longer compositions. He also tries to define the structural and expressive functions of chiasmus (pp. 145-49). The relationship of chiasmus to other poetic devices is discussed here, as well as its importance for the characteristics of poetry and for oral composition. In the short contribution on "Structure and Chiasm in Aramaic Contracts and Letters" (pp. 169-82), Bezalel Porten shows in texts from Elephantine and in biblical passages from Ezra and Esther the importance of the repetitive devices in documents written by professional scribes. Jonah Fraenkel describes the arrangement of elements around a center in selected talmudic-aggadic narratives (pp. 183-97). The section about chiasmus in the Book of Mormon by Welch (pp. 198-210) is placed here. In his treatment of chiasmus in the NT (pp. 211-49) Welch presents many instances of symmetric arrangements around a center. Observations of various kinds of chiasmus in ancient Greek and Latin literature as well as references to its ancient and modern study were also provided by the editor (pp. 250-68).

In the bibliography, periodicals (pp. 269-71) and books (pp. 272-86) are listed. Very useful is a detailed index (p. 287-352) in which the occurrences of chiasmus in the ancient Egyptian and Sumero-Akkadian texts, in the Hebrew Bible, in intertestamental and rabbinic literature, and in the NT are given, with references to the publications or the researchers who made these observations.

The reproduction is from a typewritten original with non-justified margins. But the price of this paperback book, even at the time of a favorable exchange rate, is too high in comparison with American publications of the same size and appearance.

The number of misprints and other errors seem to be above average. In the index of the chiastic phenomena (pp. 287-352) the name of C. Kroupa (p. 348) is not provided with other information. The page references on pp. 116-17 are not adapted to the actual numbering of pages; read p. 58 instead of p. 194, p. 63 instead of p. 158. Technical terms are used sometimes incorrectly; e.g., *hapax legomenon* means a unique occurrence, not recurrence (cf. p. 212).

It seems that the area in which the most considerable real progress has been achieved is the study of chiasmus in poetry. W. G. E. Watson has presented a classification of chiasmus types according to form (pp. 123-26): pure or mirror, complete, split-member, partial. He also defined chiastic structures based on different principles (pp. 132-35): skewed, assonantal, semantic-sonant, gender. This classification and terminology will serve well in further study and discussion. Watson gives a clearly defined terminology of poetic structures in his article (pp. 119-120). His use of most terms corresponds to the common terminology. While the term for combination of one, two, or three cola is commonly called "verse," Watson proposes the term "strophe" instead. This term has to be respectfully and firmly rejected, as both Greek and modern uses of the term "strophe" point to a unit combining lower units commonly called "verse."

Perhaps the most stimulating, and at the same time most controversial, contribution is that of Yehuda T. Radday. The introduction of quantitative approaches to the study of literary features is in principle welcome, as is his attempt to use statistical procedures to evaluate the probability of intentional symmetrical concentric structures against the incidental arrangement of elements. Even if concentric symmetry

could be proved without any doubt for a given passage of poetry or prose, it does not follow necessarily that the passage shows internal unity and homogeneity against a possibility of multiple authorship and editorial interventions, as Radday (p. 111) postulates. The same concentric symmetry can be observed even in the hypothetical sources; cf. Radday's analysis of the flood story in Genesis 6–9 (cf. p. 99) and that by G. von Rad, *Genesis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972) 125-26 and 116-21, according to sources P and J.

The question of narrower or wider definition of chiasmus was perceptively indicated by Freedman in his preface: while the basic figure of chiasm involves the reversal of the word order in balancing clauses, the more extended uses of chiasm involve longer passages. A further extension of this term and concept goes beyond words and patterns to matters of thought and theme. This variety of approaches expresses the present ferment in the study of these ancient literary techniques. The distinction between chiasmus in a narrower sense of the word, which indicates phenomena within units consisting of a few words only, and between concentric symmetrical compositions of larger size is practically upheld in several chapters of the book: cf. pp. 17-19 and 19-31; 37 and 38-48; 123-26, 127-29 and 126-27, 130, 140-41. Should not these two distinct phenomena be distinguished also by appropriately different terms? The purpose and function of the chiasmus proper appear as the closer connection of an element at the end of one unit with the first element of the immediately following unit: ABBA. Only such structures can be graphically represented by the X-shape of the Greek letter *chi*; cf. *chiasmos*, "placing crosswise, diagonal arrangement" (Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1951] 1991b).

The other phenomenon characterized by the presence and significance of one central element and also by its use in large units, from paragraphs to "books," should be described by a different term. Among those proposed (cf. p. 10), that of "concentric symmetry" appears most appropriate (cf. p. 21): the entire structure has a center around which the other members are arranged symmetrically: ABA, ABCBA.

There is one disturbing section in this useful and stimulating book; perhaps the reviewer should not direct attention to it. In the concluding remarks to his article, Radday writes that the chiasmus hypothesis "can be expected to meet with a certain amount of resistance" (p. 110). He even mentions a researcher complaining of encountering "limited hostility" (p. 110, n. 63; cf. p. 115), on the basis of a personal communication. Another implicitly negative reaction is mentioned there. It seems strange that such attitudes, whether real or alleged, can appear in discussions about a rather formal phenomenon which hardly affects the proper message of a text. The mention of the "adverse reaction on the part of professional scholarship" (p. 111) does not seem to help the study of composition of large literary units according to approaches used here, since it could be understood as an amateurish endeavor. An open, frank, and at the same time understanding and polite discussion will help both research and all who are involved in it.

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