

rent and historic significance to all Saints of various varieties, including those whose attitudes about priesthood allowed them to pursue African converts long before the Cannons and the Mabeys. Presently underway all across the country, Windsor Press's community history projects have already covered most major American towns, including Salt Lake City (by John McCormick) and now Sherry Lamb Schirmer and Richard D. McKinzie, *At the River's Bend: An Illustrated History of Kansas City, Independence, and Jackson County* (Woodland Hills, California: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1982, 362 pp., biblio., index, \$24.95). Beautifully packaged, well-written,

and lavishly illustrated, the Kansas City history is a centerpiece of publishing and writing quality. Its brief though complete treatment of the Mormon part of the community's story is typical of the overall quality of the production. Pleasantly understanding though perhaps overly sympathetic, the authors trace concisely the arrival, the trials, and the expulsion of the Saints in the 1830s and then the return of the RLDS. This is a book that exemplifies the best in local history, a delightful contrast to what this column usually addresses itself. So, you see, you critics of "Brief Notices," I am not such a hardened curmudgeon after all.

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 produc-

ive; 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.

An Unfocused Vision of Zion

Chesterfield: Mormon Outpost in Idaho, edited by Lavina Fielding Anderson (Bancroft, Idaho: Chesterfield Foundation, Inc., 1982), 91 pp., price unknown.

Reviewed by Phillip Neuberger, Architectural Conservator, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

"I felt the beginnings of a gnawing wish that somewhere we could find a little village to preserve" (p. 1).

AFTER A CENTURY OF fledgling survival, Chesterfield, a quiet, remote hamlet in southeastern Idaho, has suddenly become the subject of unprecedented attention.

This hamlet is curiously without any of the trappings of the contemporary landscape — fast food restaurants, gasoline stations or residential subdivisions. The Chesterfield Foundation, established in 1979, aims to preserve Chesterfield's largely unaltered nineteenth-century image. This book of essays is a valuable resource from the first phase of the foundation's preservation plan, and received a special citation from the Mormon History Association in 1983. Reading between the lines from essay to essay, one gleans that Chesterfield is not a typical nineteenth-century Mormon village either. This interesting discovery could have made an excellent theme with which