

## HUGH NIBLEY: A SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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The name Hugh Nibley has become common coin of the Mormon realm. The household quality of the name in part depends upon the frequency with which his work appears in the *Improvement Era*. Since 1948 he is exceeded in regularity in the *Era* only by Beneficial Life. With the passing of B. H. Roberts, Nibley more than anyone else has assumed the role of defender of the Faith and the Saints. In some ways his many appearances in the pages of the *Era* have actually harmed his reputation in certain circles within the Church. Sometimes his work is rejected because he has become known as "Church writer" or he is discounted as merely an "apologist" for Mormonism. However, those who hold such opinions are not always aware of the extent of his contribution, most especially to scholarly journals, but even in the *Era* and other Church magazines, as well as those various other forms that reach primarily the Mormon audience. (Why is it, incidentally, that Deseret Book Company and Bookcraft do not list their titles in *Books in Print*?)

Nibley has surprisingly wide interests and remarkable capacities for originality; he is an indefatigable researcher, an adroit and witty writer (*The Mythmakers* is the only book I know with a funny table of contents). His craftsmanship and style as a writer, coupled with his knowledge and industry, have made him a powerful and sometimes biting social critic and defender of the Gospel. He really believes that the Gospel is true and has dedicated himself to its defense. He is singularly well equipped for his role in Mormon intellectual life. He regularly employs Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, German, French, Russian, Babylonian, Egyptian, Coptic and even English in his research.

He has published five books and two pamphlets. The pamphlet, *No Ma'am, That's Not History* (1946), marks his entrance on the scene as an apologist. This pamphlet is a short, witty reply to Fawn Brodie. The second pamphlet, Nibley's lecture entitled *Writing and Publication in Graduate School* (Mimeographed, 1966, by the Brigham Young University Graduate School) contains his reflections on the scholarly enterprise and the state of scholarship in Mormon circles. The books are more substantial: *Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites* (1952), which in a somewhat different form appeared as two series in the *Era* between 1950 and 1952; *The World of the Prophets* (1st ed., 1954; 2nd ed., 1962), a series of radio talks given over KSL; *An Approach to the Book of Mormon* (1st ed., 1957; 2nd ed., 1964), which was originally a priesthood lesson manual; *The Mythmakers* (1961), a very amusing and significant effort to show the confusion in the ranks of the early critics of Joseph Smith; *Sounding Brass* (1963), a satirical reply to Irving Wallace's popular "story" of Brigham Young and Ann Elisa (wife number whatever-it-was). In the near future Nibley will publish his long-awaited study of the historicity of the Pearl of Great Price. This promises to be his best scriptural study.

However, Nibley's most significant and impressive publications are not those generally known by Mormons but essays and articles published in scholarly journals and most readily known and available to specialists (and this means, for the most part, people outside the Church).

*Journal Articles:*

- 1942 "New Light on Scaliger," *Classical Journal*, XXXVII (1942), 291-295.
- 1945 "Sparsiones," *Classical Journal*, XL (1945), 515-543.
- 1949 "The Arrow, the Hunter, and the State," *Western Political Quarterly*, II (1949), 328-344. A study of the role of the marked arrow in ancient statecraft; his first essay on the origin of the state.
- 1951 "The Hierocentric State," *Western Political Quarterly*, IV (1951), 226-253. His second important study of the origin of the state.
- 1953 "The Unsolved Loyalty Problem: Our Western Heritage," *Western Political Quarterly*, VI (1953), 631-657. An examination of the problem of loyalty in the 4th century, with obvious significance for our own time.
- 1955 "Do History and Religion Conflict?" in *Great Issues Forum*, Series 2 (Religion), No. 5 (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1955), 22-39.
- 1956 "Victoriosa Loquacitas: The Rise of Rhetoric and the Decline of Everything Else," *Western Speech*, XX (1956), 57-82.
- 1959-60 "Christian Envy of the Temple," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, L (1959-60), 97-123, 229-240. A long study showing the various reactions of Christian theologians to the destruction of the Temple.
- 1961 "The Passing of the Church: Forty Variations on an Unpopular Theme," *Church History*, XXX (June 1961), 131-154. He presents forty different arguments for the apostasy in the lead article of the journal of the American Association of Church Historians. The readers will be interested in two letters commenting on Nibley's argument. See Hans J. Hillerbrand, "The Passing of the Church: Two Comments on a Strange Theme," *Church History*, XXX (1961), 481-482; and a defense of Nibley by R. M. Grant, "The Passing of the Church: Comments on Two Comments on a Strange Theme," *Church History*, XXX (1961), 482-483.
- 1965 "Qumran and the Companions of the Cave," *Revue de Qumran*, V (1951), 177-198.
- 1965 "The Expanding Gospel," *Brigham Young University Studies*, VII (1966), 3-27. An examination of Gospel themes in the literature of the ancient world.
- 1966 "Evangelium Quadraginta Dierum," *Vigiliae Christianae*, XX (1966), 1-24. A study of the tradition of the secret teaching of Jesus in the forty days after his resurrection.
- 1966 "Tenting, Toll, and Taxing," *Western Political Quarterly*, XXIX (1966), 599-630. A third important study of the state in history and pre-history.
- "Jerusalem and the Christian Church," to appear in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*.

*Articles in the Improvement Era:*

- 1948 "The Book of Mormon as a Mirror of the East," Vol. 51 (April 1948)
- 1948-49 "Baptism for the Dead in Ancient Time," IE, Vol. 51-52 (Dec. 1948-April 1949)
- 1950 "Lehi in the Desert," IE, Vol. 53 (Jan.-Oct. 1950).

- 1951-52 "The World of the Jaredites," IE, Vol. 54-55 (Sept. 1951-July 1952).  
1953 "The Stick of Judah and the Stick of Joseph," IE, Vol. 56 (Jan.-May 1953)  
1953-54 "New Approaches to Book of Mormon Study," IE, Vol. 56-57 (Nov. 1953-July 1954)  
1955 "The Way of the Church," IE, Vol. 58 (Jan. 1956-Dec. 1957)  
1956-57 "There Were Jaredites," IE, Vol. 59-60 (Jan. 1956-Feb. 1957)  
1959 "Mixed Voices," IE, Vol. 62 (Mar.-Nov. 1959)  
1961 "The Liahona's Cousins," IE, Vol. 64 (Feb. 1961)  
1961 "Censoring the Joseph Smith Story," IE, Vol. 64 (July-Nov. 1961)  
1964 "Since Cumorah," IE, Vol. 67-68 (Oct. 1964-Dec. 1966)

*Articles in the Instructor:*

- 1953 "Columbus and Revelation," Vol. 88 (Oct. 1953), 319f.  
1956 "More Voices from the Dust," Vol. 91 (March 1956), pp. 71ff.  
1963 "The Dead Sea Scrolls, Some Questions and Answers," Vol. 98 (July 1963), pp. 233ff.  
1965 "Early Accounts of Jesus' Childhood," Vol. 100 (Jan. 1965), pp. 35ff.

