



*the hunchback is everyman.
each of us carry our own "hump"
through life — some humps are
physical, some are emotional*

DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

foster responds

The joint review by Louis J. Kern of my book *Religion and Sexuality* and by me of his book *An Ordered Love* raises many of the broader issues that need to be addressed if one is to understand the significance of these two studies. Here I want to set the record straight regarding two minor factual misstatements that Kern makes in responding to my review of his book.

The first anti-Shaker polemic, or course, was Valentine Rathbun's *An Account of the Matter, Form, and Manner of a New and Strange Religion, etc.*, printed in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1781. In his book and in his response to my review, Kern cites later editions of this basic exposé. The basis for Kern's assertion that Ann Lee "underwent eight pregnancies, four of which ended in stillbirths" is more difficult to determine. All printed Shaker sources prior to 1860 and all secondary scholarly accounts with which I am familiar indicate only that Ann Lee had four children, one of whom lived to the age of six. Only the ex-Shaker Thomas Brown and apostate accounts clearly based on him assert that Ann Lee had eight children (not just pregnancies), all of whom died in infancy. Since Brown was in error on many other factual matters such as when Ann Lee was married and when she joined the Shakers, the accuracy of his assertions on the number of children she had is also questionable. To the best of my knowledge, there is no Shaker evidence that *any* of Ann Lee's pregnancies resulted in stillbirths.

These are utterly minor points, yet they are nevertheless distracting. Already two reviews of my own book have made erroneous reference to Ann Lee's alleged "stillbirths," and I confidently expect this error to be perpetuated in feminist writings on the Shakers for the next several decades. Whether such slips are due to typographical mistakes (*An Ordered Love*, for example, has the first Mormons entering Utah in 1848), or to questionable readings of evidence, the book would have been stronger if such statements had been corrected prior to publication. My review only alluded to such problems briefly in a single paragraph and then went on to

devote an additional seven paragraphs to the larger and more significant interpretive framework of *An Ordered Love*. It is on this broader analytical plane that discussion of our two works can most fruitfully be conducted in the future.

Lawrence Foster
Atlanta, Georgia

pharaohs' curse

When I read in the table of contents of the fall 1981 issue the title "The Fading of the Pharaohs' Curse," I shuddered to think of someone treading on such hazardous ground. Then I noted that the article was written by someone I've always admired, indeed, a friend from early *Dialogue* days at WSU, where we met at the LDS Institute as prodigals in a weekly seminar dedicated to exploring some unusual Mormon perspectives. I recall Brother Mauss as always being sensitive and loving as he examined and unraveled some of the sacred skeletons in our Mormon closet. So, with anxiety, and yet with faith in the writer, I ventured on and read the article. My reaction is one of deep gratitude. To realize that Elder Brown, Elder Tanner and others were anxious to change the priesthood policy was a very heartwarming revelation to me. To know there has been a struggle with the Lord and with the membership to bring about the extension of the priesthood rights only affirms my testimony. Indeed, "after much tribulation cometh the blessing." Thank you, Brother Mauss, for your insights. Now I look back on my own "acceptance" of the *status quo* not so much as obedience but as apathy. We should worry less about intellectual pitfalls and more about our hearts waxing cold toward our brethren.

Justin Wilks
Ferndale, Washington

The perceptive essay by Armand Mauss on the process whereby racial discrimination was gradually leached out of Mormon thought and practice was an excellent foray into a still little understood phenomenon—the Latter-day Saint meaning of revelation.

From what Mauss says, however, it seems obvious that the Mormon revelatory process has within it a large measure of what might be termed “grass roots revelation”—small changes initiated at local levels to meet particular pressing problems.

A similar process can be seen in the elimination of institutional racism in American education. For example, *Brown vs. Board of Education* of 1956 was not a sudden reversal of national policy; it was, rather, the culmination of a series of less publicized decisions over a twenty-year period which eroded the legal base of racial discrimination and led to the reversal of *Plessy vs. Ferguson*.

One small unpublicized step in the reversal of the Mormon stance on black males and the priesthood which Mauss does not mention occurred around 1970. A portion of the temple ceremony which referred to the “sectarian” view of Satan as having a “black sin” was eliminated without fanfare after having been a part of the “revealed” temple instructions for probably over a century.

The Chinese proverb that “a journey of ten thousand miles begins with a single step” apparently applies to revelation as well as to Supreme Court “landmark” decisions; both seem to be in the mainstream of social problem solving by gradual evolution rather than sudden revolution. May we always have the luxury of time and patient people on our side.

Frederick S. Buchanan
Salt Lake City, Utah

eyre’s ire

I value good literary criticism. I think we need more of it in the Church, partially because it might influence Mormon readers to read more discerningly and critically.

What worries me (whether it concerns my work or someone else’s) is when a critic becomes personal and cursory to the point that the overall statement sounds more like a gossip column than a legitimate critique.

The three most specific things you say in the spring issue of *Dialogue*, with reference to me and two of my books, are:

1. Eyre’s only qualifications to write about anything seem to be his associations with General Authorities and a three-year stint as the Church’s youngest mission president.
2. *What Manner of Man* tells the readers that they should read the scriptures regularly to discover Christ.
3. *Simplified Husbandship, Simplified Fatherhood* tells the readers that they should emulate Eyre’s example of full-blown patriarchy.

My only comment on the first point is that I wonder how much you know about my qualifications.

My concern on the second two points is that neither has much to do with the central thesis of the books. I’ve never talked to anyone who had read *What Manner of Man* who concluded that its central message was to read the scriptures to discover Christ (good message though that would be). The real point of the book, of course, is the Sacrament and how to make it meaningful by mentally approaching a different aspect of the Savior’s personality each week.

Nor have I encountered anyone who thought *Simplified Husbandship, Simplified Fatherhood* presented a form of patriarchy, full-blown or otherwise. The book is about self-programming and how a husband and father might attempt to condition himself to respond better to the needs of his wife and children.

My question has to be: Have you read the books? Have you really, as you state, “tried to discover anything timely and worthwhile in the books?”

If you have, and if you view your efforts as carrying the objectivity and non-personal tone that good literary criticism demands, then I apologize for my response and will go back to my important work of straining sow milk through my tennis racket.

Richard M. Eyre
Salt Lake City, Utah

all on fire

I’d like to thank you for your interview with Sonia Johnson. I must admit that my reaction was not the anger I had antici-

pated. My social conscience also makes me feel a little guilty that I—rather than my wife—am writing this letter (“the medium is the message” as McLuhan would have said), but this failure notwithstanding, I should like to offer my two cents worth on a subject about which you will surely be deluged by letters.

The Church is a live body and reacts like any of us individually would when hurt. The angry reactions of many church members to Sonia Johnson is surely sad, but I was surprised that she could not see this as an immature manifestation of reaction to injury on the part of individuals only. Sister Johnson’s unfortunate lack of understanding, in my view, mocks her appeal for love and empathy.

It’s so easy to label the Church as a “thing—out there,” consisting of hoary hierarchical male-corporate shadows; attacking a remote institutional object simplifies one’s internal conflicts into an outward-directed thrust. In reality, however, it is the intimate subject she has attacked—of which we are all a part. Anger on our part might be inappropriate, but pain certainly is not. Sister Johnson’s obsession with herself clouds her judgment. She called herself a free thinker. She may be free in the sense that an amputated finger is “free” from the body, but a “thinker”? A free thinker would never let such navel-gazing cloud her reason.

Marc A. Schindler
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

For years Mormon women have lamented the scarcity of realistic female role models within the Church. As you demonstrate ironically in your summer 1981 issue, the two most influential Mormon women of the twentieth century, models of courage and strength, have been disowned by the Church because they have spoken the truth. Sonia Johnson has become a national heroine, deeply loved and admired by American women. As did her pioneer foremothers and Fawn Brodie before her, Sonia has survived her trial by ordeal.

For myself the most disturbing issue raised within the last two years has been

the Church’s deliberate deception of its membership in regard to the nature and extent of its involvement in anti-ERA activities. The pros and cons of the ERA and the Church’s stand against it can be debated endlessly, but the suppression of truth by the church leadership is completely unacceptable to me. We may try to ignore it, but the truth is still out there. Our failure as members to face it results in the gnawing discomfort which accompanies the steady erosion of our integrity. Somewhere between the official denials of the extent of church involvement in anti-ERA activities, later proven false, and the arrogant pronouncement by church leaders that the Church has done more to elevate the status of women than any other entity, I have reached the limit of my capacity for insults to my intelligence and my womanhood.

When I was sixteen years old, I went to the branch library in Sugarhouse to check out a copy of *No Man Knows My History*. According to the card catalog, the book was kept in a locked case behind the librarian’s desk. I surmised that this particular history was too dangerous for such a young and tender mind as mine. Truth is too powerful a commodity to be entrusted to those who have been taught that it is an eternal principle. Sonia Johnson’s “sin” was not in refusing to follow the prophet; it was in the unmasking of the church leadership before its own followers, as Fawn Brodie had already done.

Perhaps the Church follows too closely the situational ethics of Nephi: It is better that the membership be deceived than that male supremacy should dwindle into the recognition that all of us, male and female, are equally God’s children.

Susan W. Howard
Santa Barbara, Calif.

Your issue which featured Sonia Johnson and the ERA battle was fascinating. I heard Sister Johnson on the Phil Donahue show three years ago, and she said something which struck me. Commenting on her post-excommunication feelings, she said, “The first few days were really terrible, really really terrible, and every once in a while there is a wave of just infinite sadness that comes over me.”

I think I know the feeling she referred to. A recounting of the particulars in my own experience is unnecessary. I will just say in retrospect that the feeling wasn't like an abrupt and unexpected weaning; it seems to have been for me like the withdrawal of God's spirit as chastisement. How tragic it is that Sister Johnson did not react appropriately to the signals she received. How sad that she seems to feel so comfortable now outside the Church, in a sense on thin ice.

The gospel of Jesus Christ in all its splendor is true, as anyone who has seriously tried to live it will attest. But the earthly Church, consisting as it does of five million imperfect people, may seem at times badly flawed. However, the eternal blessings of the gospel are available in no other place. Those who fancy themselves intellectuals through enduring to the end have the chance to learn priceless lessons of patience and humility and sensitivity to others' needs.

Frank Riggs
Montgomery, Alabama

Your excellent publication has been on my desk since it arrived in October. I refer to the summer 1981 issue.

I have waited this long to make a comment or two on the Sonia Johnson matter. I am not literate by Sonia Johnson standards, but even at that I feel I have a right to express my thoughts concerning her "difficulties" with her church.

It is tragic that she hasn't come to realize that there are millions of folks who oppose the ERA who are *not* Mormons. Unfortunate also that she isn't aware that for every dollar spent by the Church in opposition to the ERA, proponents are spending unbelievable sums. (If the Church is spending money for that cause.)

After reading that she had been "shocked" to find certain conditions in various parts of the world where she and her family lived, I decided that she is going to be in for many more. Her unaffected simplicity leads me to wonder how she was ever permitted to leave home.

A year ago before the election newspapers were crediting ERA proponents with saying they expected a landslide

where the ERA needed support the most, the contrary was the case. This woman, whether Mormon or not, has been duped by the same propagandists that flock around the fawning sycophants the likes of Ellen Goodman who feel socialism is the answer to all of our problems, while in fact it has two-thirds of the world in near chains or behind the closed doors of Eastern Europe.

Regardless of who becomes involved in the issue, it is still a political one, and political issues are fair game for Sonia Johnson, the Mormon Church, Madalyn Murray O'Hare and Gus Hall, and every American who wishes to express themselves on the matter.

Lastly, if she thinks the Mormon Church is or has been covert in its opposition to the ERA, then she has really exposed herself for what she is—naive. Perhaps she ought to study the extension for ratification of the ERA, and the subsequent move by some states to get it repealed. Couple that with the federal government granting funds for NOW and other organizations, and she will begin to see just what covert means.

Warren S. Pugh
Lynden, Washington

Sonia Johnson's quoted statement that my father, Alma Sonne, "scolded" her when she talked to him about leaving the bank to return to school frankly puzzles me. First of all, if my father ever scolded anybody for desiring a college education, it would be completely out of character for him. It would be inconsistent not only with his heritage but also his lifelong devotion to higher education and basic religious philosophy. For many years he was closely associated with Utah State University and served for more than a decade as chairman of its Board of Trustees, and his religious views on education are well-known.

Furthermore, he was proud of the fact that his father received an excellent education in Denmark through a government scholarship and had encouraged his children, particularly his daughter Nora and my father to attend college. My father in turn urged his own daughter and four sons to complete college and continue on

to graduate school if they so desired. I am also certain there are many women and men who will confirm that he not only encouraged them to gain a college degree but also arranged financing for them.

It is true my father believed the greatest calling for a woman is to be a successful wife and mother, but he never believed those roles were incompatible with a college education. It is also well to note that those of us who knew him well recognized that he was a man with a great sense of humor and an incurable tease. If he did say what Sonia reported—and it is hard for me to believe he did—I wonder if she failed to detect the twinkle in his eye or his habit of wrinkling his nose when amused.

Conway B. Sonne
Palo Alto, California

The summer issue of *Dialogue* is great. The day I received it I read the interviews of Fawn Brodie and Sonia Johnson. I appreciate your giving us these excellent interviews of two women I admire so much. I was pleased to learn that the two met sometime before Brodie's death.

William D. Russell
Lamoni, Iowa

Your interview was beautiful, and I think your decision was exactly right: *Dialogue* is a *forum*, not a *dais*. Not taking a position can also be called *objectivity*. Never, *never*, change *Dialogue* to *Monologue*. That's how it all started isn't it? *Many* voices instead of a *single* voice?

Ronald Wilcox
Dallas, Texas

Thanks for another great issue of *Dialogue*. The Sonia interview and background sketch particularly intrigued me, as did each letter to the editor. I look forward to reading the rest of the issue. It's such a valuable publication. Though some of the articles are hard to digest, floating over my head as they do, I always find plenty to absorb me from one issue to the next.

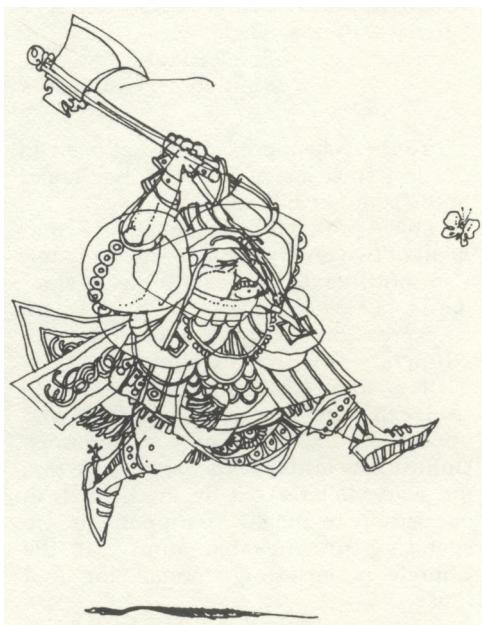
Cherie Pedersen
Mercersburg, Pennsylvania

a change of heart

I have been a *Dialogue* subscriber and devotee for many years. Its articles and comments have provided me with a source of perspective and even strength which I have truly appreciated. After reading your last issue on the Church and politics, however, my feelings toward *Dialogue* have, unfortunately, changed. Absent from that issue was any sense of proportion or balance. The tone of virtually every piece in the issue was condescending and belittling toward the Church.

Anti-Mormon literature and commentary is rife in the world. It galls me that the editors of *Dialogue* apparently now view the publication as a vehicle exclusively for the dissemination of materials bearing this perspective on the Church.

Douglas C. Boyack
Jamestown, California



I have one comment on your recent issues. It seems to me that the articles are a little heavily weighted with opinions by disaffected Mormons. Could you get more by satisfied Mormons? They don't have to stick right by the party line, per official Church publications (which have always avoided certain subjects), but they

could give insights into how those who are happy and “believing” Mormons feel about some of the controversial issues facing the Church and its members.

All in all, though, you are doing a good job.

John Hansen
Choctaw, Oklahoma

back issues

I cannot resist addressing the subject of evolution which Richard Sherlock discussed in his article on the Roberts/Smith/Talmage controversy. Not being a Mormon, I am not always sure that I will approach philosophical and theological questions of Mormonism with as thorough a knowledge as a Mormon would, but I would like to offer some thoughts from my own religious background which might prove fruitful for Mormons trying to come to terms with the overwhelming evidence for evolution, and the scriptural descriptions of creation. The discussion following is based upon philosophical ideas contained in the scriptures of the Baha’i religion, to which I belong, but they may be an inspiration to your own philosophers on the subject of human evolution.

In the womb, the human fetus undergoes transformation over a period of nine months from a single cell to a complex, intelligent organism prepared with all the limbs and organs necessary to function in the physical world. In the course of this fetal transformation, the fetus appears at times with a tail, at another period with gills, at another period with webbed hands and feet. This development or evolution of the fetus might be looked upon as a microcosmic “recapitulation” of the macrocosmic evolution of mankind from a single-celled organism millions of years ago, to a fully developed *Homo sapiens* of today.

That mankind has undergone evolution through a number of shapes or appearances does not *ipso facto* mean that man is descended from the animal. If we accept the scriptural declaration that God created man: that is, that man exists because God willed his creation, then we

can posit what one might call parallel evolution of man and animal. All creatures, man and animal, have undergone evolution, and may even have looked the same at various periods of that evolution. But by accepting the introduction of purpose and will from God, we must accept that at every turn of evolution, that which was to become man was already man, not animal; and that which branched off to become animal, was always animal and not man.

The details of the above philosophy, of course, are something which will require a great deal of space to elaborate. But I hope the outline is there. We now come to the question of Adam.

The acceptance of evolution requires that we accept pre-Adamic man. But we have to ask the question of ourselves: “What makes Adam different from men before him, so that we measure our dispensation, our religious history, from him?” The answer, it seems to me, lies in the very description of his creation given in Genesis: “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a *living soul*” (Gen. 2:7). Adam was the first true man, that is, the first to have self-consciousness, self-knowledge. How? By revelation from God; by being made a Prophet. He therefore was also the first man to truly know God, the first to become the instrument of God’s revelation to man. When Adam became “a living soul,” he received the descent of spiritual knowledge and revelation from God. It was this very nature which he received from God, as the first man with self-knowledge and God-knowledge that led him to make that fateful decision to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The “Fall” was necessary, for without the knowledge of good and evil, all men would have been deprived of the chance to become “living souls.” Because of this knowledge of good and evil, death was introduced into the world. But not physical death; that had been around for millions of years. Just as Adam became the first “living soul,” the first man capable of knowing himself and knowing God, so also the introduction of this spiritual knowledge made man capa-

ble of spiritual death, of choosing the wrong path.

I think that we all owe a great debt to Adam for taking the step into the higher law of knowledge. I hope one day the Mormon Church will do the same by publishing B. H. Roberts's manuscript on this subject.

Regarding the summer 1981 issue which focuses on Sonia Johnson, may I commend you on dealing so fairly with what must be a fiercely-charged issue for Mormons. The interview with Sonia Johnson shows her to be a frank, highly-principled and courageous woman, even though at times her views were overstated. (What's this about chaining herself to the Seattle Temple gates?) At the same time, I think Lester Bush's article on "Excommunication and Church Courts" should lay to rest any statements that Sonia Johnson's trial was irregular *from the point of view of Mormon practice and guidelines*.

William P. Collins
Haifa, Israel

kudos

Congratulations on your recent issues. They have been outstanding—three of the best in *Dialogue's* history in my estimation. Having had some experience with shoestring periodicals, I am amazed that you have succeeded so long so well.

Scott Kenney
Salt Lake City, Utah

I have greatly enjoyed *Dialogue* and want to thank you for the efforts you and the staff put forth. I suspect you ask yourself sometimes, why? But as you move away from the heat of the moment and reflect, you know there would be a great void if there were no *Dialogue*. Keep up the good work. We all need it.

Lloyd Pendleton
Mapleton, Utah

Here in the Italy Rome mission field there are a few of us who pass around your journal and also the Salt Lake City-based *Sunstone* magazine. As a latecomer to this special circle, I have missed out on some very thought-provoking articles that I have only been able to hear about

and discuss. After obtaining my first *Dialogue* I have not been satisfied with the *Ensign* and the *Church News*. While it is pleasing and reassuring to read about what the Church is doing, I would rather have the growth in doctrinal and historical understanding.

I look forward to returning home in December to initiate a library of well-written books covering the Church and its history and doctrine, in order to gain a better understanding of those things I have been compelled to tell people I *know* to be true. I feel a personal "testimony" is based on knowledge and understanding and not just on "spiritual experiences." I would rather be a Latter-day Saint who *knows* what he is talking about than just a "Mormon" who goes along in the mainstream.

During my mission, in the first few months even, I began to put together a theory that there are two types of members in the Church: those who obey or do because they have an understanding and those who obey or do because they are told or because "that's just the way it is." I feel confident that we are better rewarded for what we understand and do.

Some people might call me an idealist. I like to consider myself a realist. Your journal has helped me appreciate the Church for what it really is and for what it stands for in a more realistic way. I look forward to future issues.

Earl William Hansen
Italy Rome Mission

I have learned much from *Dialogue*. I like the probing, restrained voices of Armand Mauss and Lester Bush in the last issue. My best wishes to you.

Phil L. Snyder
Fullerton, California

run and not be weary . . .

Just fifty years ago (1931) I submitted a master's thesis at the University of Chicago (Divinity School) which was titled, "The Religious Environment in Which Mormonism Arose." My purpose in choosing that subject was to learn what, if anything, Joseph Smith and the early Mormons borrowed from the churches of the day.

One small section of the thesis dealt with the *Word of Wisdom*. I reached much the same conclusion you did—that there was not much, if anything, new in the Joseph Smith revelation. I put it this way, “The Word of Wisdom which was given as a revelation by the Prophet to his people, gave religious sanction to a movement already prominent in America. The use of liquor and tobacco was vigorously opposed by doctors and clergymen before the Mormon opposition to it occurred.”

When I returned to Zion, Dr. Joseph F. Merrill, who was Commissioner of Education at the time, asked me to submit an abstract of my thesis to be printed in the *Deseret News*. When this appeared, there was a small amount of flak as some of the faithful were sure that nothing was known of the harmful effects of liquor or tobacco until 1833 when the revelation was promulgated.

Hope you younger men will have a little more effect on the thinking of the Church than the men of my generation. I am one of the Chicago Three 1930-31—

if that rings a bell. There are quite a number of fine scholars—thousands I hope—who are doing some writing. Keep it up.

George S. Tanner
Salt Lake City, Utah

oops

Thank you for the bioline on my poems in your woman's issue—a stellar issue! and for allowing me one more foray into hyperbole. Working on five books? Five daughters maybe, but five books? Oh well, Why not? 2084 ought to be a great year.

Emma Lou Thayne
Salt Lake City, Utah

call for proposals

The Mormon History Association has issued a call for proposals for papers to be delivered at its 1983 meeting in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The deadline is August 20, 1982. Please send all proposals to Mary L. Bradford, 4012 N. 27th St. Arlington, Va. 22297

Announcing

The First Annual New Messenger & Advocate Writing Awards

To encourage Latter-day Saints to examine and write about contemporary issues, \$500 has been pledged by private contributors for several awards.

The New Messenger & Advocate Award of \$200 will be presented after February 15, 1983, for the best unpublished manuscript on any topic of current affairs.

The remaining \$300 will be awarded to writers to cover research expenses as appropriate proposals are submitted. If adequate proposals are not submitted, the judges may choose to award second place, third place, or honorable mention awards.

The manuscript competition and research grants are open to all Latter-day Saint writers. Proposals for research grants will be accepted or rejected within 30 days of submission until August 15, 1982, or until the funds are exhausted. Manuscripts submitted for the Award competition must be received by October 15, 1982.

The major donor for the awards has stipulated that the grants and prizes must support outward-looking evaluations of public policy or issues, so articles dealing exclusively with Mormons or Mormonism or of interest only to Latter-day Saints are discouraged.

All submissions should conform to accepted standards of newsfeature or magazine journalism. If you would like a copy of the contest rules, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to New Messenger & Advocate Awards, % Kevin G. Barnhurst, Editor, Benson Institute Quarterly, Building B-49, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.

SECOND GENERATION DIALOGUE

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO when *Dialogue* was conceived and brought forth at Stanford University by Eugene England, Wesley Johnson and a host of faithful members at the Stanford University Branch and excited volunteers from Utah and elsewhere, they were only part of the intellectual ferment of the sixties. "An idea whose time had come," this scholarly work of artistic expertise made the spring of 1966 come alive with the possibilities of *Dialogue*. England, in his introduction to the first issue describes his dialogue as a natural outgrowth of faith: "The very principles I accept as definitive of my life warn me to be continually open to the revelation of new possibilities for my life from both God and man. My faith encourages my curiosity and awe; it thrusts me into a relationship with all the creation."

But students grow up, and sometimes they lose their student excitement. When contemplating the complacent seventies, many products of the sixties wondered if the urgency of the intellectual quest would be repeated in the rising generation of Mormondom. There was little reassurance to be found in the findings of opinion surveys conducted at such barometers as BYU, findings that pointed to a stultifying homogeneity and desire for the status quo. *Dialogue* was accused of being a monologue; *Sunstone* attempted to create an entirely new student journal; student journals at universities, at BYU, fell upon hard times. Voices recommending open inquiry in the spirit of faith were growing weaker.

As the seventies drew to a close, however, thoughtful, well-researched, even award-winning essays began appearing with happy regularity in journals, magazines, even newspapers. *Dialogue*, *Sunstone*, *BYU Studies* gained new life, much of it from the energy of vibrant student voices. An independent, issue-oriented student newspaper, *The Seventh East Press*, heralded a new day.

To bring greater attention to these encouraging developments, we asked Gary Bergera, who as an undergraduate at BYU won a Mormon History Best Article Award for 1980, to develop an issue largely devoted to the work of young scholars. As will be seen, the results of his efforts are reassuring indeed. Not only are these scholars unafraid to face the most challenging theological issues of our time, but they are also willing to do the homework that leads to insightful and readable works.

Several of our authors have been represented in *The Seventh East Press*—Bergera, Buerger, Ostler, Keller. They are joined by Ann Edwards-Cannon, also of BYU, and Tony Hutchinson, a Mormon graduate student at Catholic University.

Two other contributions round out this issue: James Christensen, who embodies youth in his fantasy art, and Jan Shipps, the distinguished historian whose perceptive studies of Mormon history have led her to share her generous life with us.

—The Editors

ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

THE ADAM-GOD DOCTRINE

DAVID JOHN BUEGER

. . . when brother Pratt went back last fall, and published the Revelation concerning the plurality of wives; it was thought there was no other cat to let out. But allow me to tell you . . . you may expect an eternity of cats, that have not yet escaped from the bag

Brigham Young, 1853

ON APRIL 9, 1852, Brigham Young rose once again to address a session of general conference. He intended to preach several discourses, he said, and as the *Deseret News* observed the following week, “the Holy Ghost [rested] upon [him] in great power, while he revealed some of the precious things of the kingdom.”¹ One of his subjects was the “mysteries of the kingdom.” If mysteries were to be taught, Young advised, they should be discussed here, for this “is the place for you to teach great mysteries to your brethren, because here are those who can correct you.” After brief comments on amusements and tithing, Young proceeded to a dramatic announcement:

Now hear it, O inhabitants of the earth, Jew and Gentile, Saint and Sinner! When our Father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is MICHAEL, the Archangel, the ANCIENT OF DAYS! about whom holy men have written and spoken—He is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do. Every man upon the earth, professing Christians and non-professing must hear it, and will know it sooner or later.

Jesus Christ, he emphasized, was not begotten by the Holy Ghost; and “who is the Father?”

DAVID JOHN BUEGER, a recent graduate of Brigham Young University, is an avid student of Mormon history and a financial planner in the San Francisco Bay area. He wishes to thank Gary James Bergera, Richard A. Hunter, D. Michael Quinn and Lester E. Bush for help in the preparation of this paper.

He is the first of the human family; and when he took a tabernacle, it was begotten by his father in heaven, after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel, and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve; from the fruits of the earth, the first earthly tabernacles were originated by the Father, and so on in succession.

Brigham hinted that he was only telling part of the story: "I could tell you much more about this; but were I to tell you the whole truth, blasphemy would be nothing to it . . ." He then summarized his thoughts:

Jesus, our elder Brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and who is our Father in Heaven. Now, let all who may hear these doctrines, pause before they make light of them, or treat them with indifference, for they will prove their salvation or damnation.²

Whatever ambiguity twentieth-century commentators have found in this startling discourse, its significance and meaning were not missed by those who heard Brigham speak. Samuel H. Rogers, who thought this "the best Conference that I ever attended," wrote in his journal,

President Brigham Young said that our spirits were begotten before that Adam came to the Earth, and that Adam helped to make the Earth, that he had a Celestial body when he came to the Earth, and that he brought his wife or one of his wives with him, and that Eave was also a Celestial being, that they eat of the fruit of the ground untill they begat children from the Earth, he said that Adam was the only God that we would have, and that Christ was not begotten of the Holy Ghost, but of the Father Adam . . .³

Hosea Stout, also in attendance, wrote that "President B. Young taught that Adam was the father of Jesus and the only God to us. That he came to this world in a resurrected body &c more hereafter" [*sic*].⁴ Although George D. Watt was the official scribe reporting Young's discourse, Wilford Woodruff also made detailed notes of Brigham's remarks:

. . . When our Father came into the garden He came with his celestial body & brought one of his wives with him & eat of the fruit of the garden until He could beget a Tabernacle And Adam is Michael or God and all the God that we have anything to do with . . .⁵

While Young's remarks were not to be published for over two years, he did return to this theme just four months later, in a sermon on August 28. This time Adam was placed in a somewhat larger context. "After men have . . . become Gods," he said, "they have the power then of propagating their species in spirit . . . and then commence the organization of tabernacles. . .

How can they do it? Have they to go to that earth? Yes, an Adam will have to go there, and he cannot do without Eve; he must have Eve to commence the work of generation, and they will go into the garden,

and continue to eat and drink of the fruits of the corporal world, until this grosser matter is diffused sufficiently through their celestial bodies to enable them, according to the established laws, to produce mortal tabernacles for their spirit children.⁶

Brigham's cosmology thus seemingly held that each "god" was personally responsible for creating spiritual offspring, organizing an earth for their temporal existence, and decelestializing himself to a point where he with an "Eve" could procreate physical bodies for their spirit children. Each creator, or "Adam," would then be esteemed a "Heavenly Father" for the inhabitants of his created world—each being the only God whom these inhabitants would worship. Whatever his special mission, Christ was no different in patriarchal lineage than Cain or Abel—all being the literal spiritual *and* physical offspring of the same individual.

While some of the faithful accepted their prophet's new doctrine, others rejected what they perceived as a departure from previous inspiration on the subject. Recounting a discussion of the subject in his journal a few months later, William Clayton wrote that Orson Spencer "spoke of Adam coming to this earth in the morning of creation with a resurrected body" and "endeavor[ed] to substantiate the position taken by President Young: Viz, that Adam came to this earth with a resurrected body, and became mortal by eating the fruits of the earth, which was earthy." Apostle Orson Pratt, however, took "the literal reading of the scriptures for his guide" and maintained that Adam was created from the dust of the earth. From Clayton's perspective the issue was far from satisfactorily settled:

The subject was finally left in so much difficulty and obscurity as it has been from the beginning . . . Elder Pratt advised the Brethren to pray to God for knowledge of the true principles, and it appears evident that when ever the question is decided, it will have to be by revelation from God.⁷

Clayton provided further evidence of the controversy in a letter the next day to Brigham Young (by which time Clayton providentially had moved to a position of agreement with his president):

There is also another subject which has occupied much of the time, and in which the difference in opinion seems to be wider, and more firmly established than the baby resurrection; and that is in regard to Adam's coming on this earth; whether he came here with a resurrected body and became mortal by eating the fruits of the earth which are earthy, or he was created direct (that is his mortal tabernacle) from the dust of the earth, according to the popular opinion of the world. On this subject brother Pratt and myself, have rather locked horns, he holding to the latter opinion, and I firmly believing the former; but there can be no difficulty between us, as he is my superior and I shall not argue against him; but if it were an equal I should be apt to speak my feelings in full. There are difficulties on both sides, take it which way we will, and he is unwilling to express anything more than *his opinion* on the subject. [Emphasis in original.]⁸

Although we have no record of Brigham's reply to Clayton, President Young did respond to these points in another public discourse the following October 1853. "Supposing that Adam was formed actually out of clay," he reasoned with characteristic pragmatism, "out of the same kind of material from which bricks are formed; that with this matter God made the pattern of man, and breathed into it the breath of life, and left it there, in that state of supposed perfection, he would have been an adobie to this day" Then, turning in a more serious vein to those who opposed his new insights,

Some of you may doubt the truth of what I now say, and argue that the Lord could teach him. This is a mistake. The Lord could not have taught him in any other way than in the way in which He did teach him. You believe Adam was made of the dust of this earth. This I do not believe, though it is supposed that it is so written in the Bible; but it is not, to my understanding. You can write that information to the States, if you please—that I have publicly declared that I do not believe that portion of the Bible as the Christian world do. I never did, and I never want to. What is the reason I do not? Because I have come to understanding, and banished from my mind all the baby stories my mother taught me when I was a child.⁹

The visibility of President Young's teachings on Adam rose dramatically a month later. Several months before, in June 1853, the First Presidency had approved a plan to publish a *Journal of Discourses* in Liverpool, England, containing "Sermons, Discourses, Lectures, etc" delivered in Salt Lake City. Among those to be included in the first volume was Brigham's April 1852 sermon quoted above. Although this volume was not published until 1854, on November 26, 1853, the Church's official British publication, the *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* published a verbatim extract of this important sermon under the title, "Adam, Our Father and God."¹⁰ The following editorial was printed one week later:

Our Father Adam.—The extract from the *Journal of Discourses* may startle some of our readers, but we would wish them to recollect that in this last dispensation God will send forth, by His servants, things new as well as old, until man is perfected in the truth. And we would here take occasion to remark, that it would be well if all our readers would secure a copy of the *Journal of Discourses* as it is issued, and also of every standard work of the Church; and not only secure these works, but attentively read them, and thoroughly study the principles they contain.¹¹

The article, as expected, did startle, perhaps even unsettle, some of the British Saints. Two weeks later another editorial, probably authored by Samuel W. Richards (then President of the British Mission and Editor of the *Star*), was published in the *Star* which further encouraged support for the doctrine:

ADAM, THE FATHER AND GOD OF THE HUMAN FAMILY

The above sentiment appeared in *Star* No. 48, a little to the surprise of some of its readers; and while the sentiment may have appeared blas-

phemous to the ignorant, it has no doubt given rise to some serious reflections with the more candid and comprehensive mind. A few reasonable and scriptural ideas upon this subject may be profitable at the present time.

Then Adam is really God! And why not? If there are Lords many and Gods many, as the scriptures inform us, why should not our Father Adam be one of them?¹²

Not all the British Saints were convinced, so yet a third supportive editorial was published the next week, assuring readers that “[f]acts still remain facts, whether kept or revealed.” This time the editor closed with the counsel:

It should be borne in mind that these wonderful mysteries, as they are supposed to be, are only mysteries because of the ignorance of men; and when men and women are troubled in spirit over those things which come to light through the proper channel of intelligence, they only betray their weakness, ignorance, and folly.¹³

Less than two months later, in February 1854, President Young again expounded publicly on Adam-God. The message was the same. “Who did beget [Jesus Christ]?” Young asked,

. . . His Father, and his father is our God, and the Father of our spirits, and he is the framer of the body, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is he. He is Father Adam; Michael; the Ancient of days. Has he a Father? He has. Has he a mother? He has.

Returning again to “this erroneous doctrine” that Christ was begotten by the Holy Ghost, Young recalled addressing the issue the previous Fall “when a dispute arose among some of our best Elders, as to who was the Father of the Son of Man pertaining to the flesh. Some contended it was the H Ghost [sic], and some that it was Eloheim.” Brigham’s rejoinder to the debate had much the same flavor as his “adobie” sermon:

When I spoke upon it in this stand before a conference of Elders, I cautioned them when they laid their hands upon the people for the gift of the H Ghost, according to the instructions of the Savior, to be very careful how they laid hands upon young women for if it beget a child in the days of the virgin Mary it is just as liable to beget children in these last days.¹⁴

At the time Young did not state what relationship he believed “Elohim” bore either to Jesus Christ or to Adam-Michael. There was a hint in early 1852, in a sermon two months before the announcement on Adam-God. During a discussion of the Cain and Abel episode, Young had stated,

. . . After the deed was done, the Lord inquired for Abel, and made Cain own what he had done with him. Now, says the grandfather, I will not destroy the seed of Michael and his wife, and Cain I will not kill¹⁵

This grandfather figure, plausibly the father of Adam in the February 1854 discourse, also was mentioned in a sermon by Young a decade later, again without explicit reference to Elohim:

How has it transpired that theological truth is thus so widely disseminated. It is because God was once known on the earth among his children of mankind, as we know one another. Adam was as conversant with his Father who placed him upon this earth as we are conversant with our earthly parents. The Father frequently came to visit his son Adam, and talked and walked with him; and the children of Adam were more or less acquainted with their Grandfather, and their children were more or less acquainted with their Great-Grandfather . . .¹⁶

These last comments, taken alone, almost reflect an “orthodox” understanding, but viewed in the context of Brigham’s many other sermons they rather delineate a belief in a “hierarchy of gods” not unlike that first alluded to by Joseph Smith.¹⁷ Young explicitly separated the identities of Adam and his father—the latter being the god considered in twentieth-century Mormon theology as Elohim, the father of the spirits of mankind.¹⁸ According to Young’s teachings, however, this figure was in reality a true “Grandfather in Heaven” to the descendants of Adam—to both their bodies and spirits—with Adam assuming the position of “God the [immediate] Father” to both body and spirit. As ultimately, but privately elucidated by Young, Elohim was in fact *Adam’s* grandfather (and *not* the “Grandfather in Heaven” to Adam’s *descendants* referred to in the foregoing quotation). Speaking to the School of the Prophets, he explained that “Elohim, Yahova & Michael, were father, Son and grandson. They made this Earth & Michael became Adam.”¹⁹ Thus, in Brigham’s theology, the Lord or God with whom Adam dealt during his mortality on the earth was apparently the figure he termed Jehovah, the Grandfather in Heaven.²⁰

While President Young’s concepts were being preached and clarified in Utah, Mormon missionaries continued to carry his message to British proselytes. Several remarks concerning these activities were recounted at a special three-day missionary conference in London, June 26–28, 1854, in honor of the departing mission president, Samuel W. Richards. In reporting on his district to incoming president (and apostle) Franklin D. Richards, Elder Thomas Caffell noted that “some of the officers have not met in council for three years” because “they are lacking faith on one principle—the last ‘cat that was let out of the bag:’”

Polygamy has been got over pretty well, that cloud has vanished away, but they are troubled about Adam being our Father and God. There is a very intelligent person investigating our principles, and who has been a great help to the Saints; he has all the works and can get along very well with everything else but the last “cat,” and as soon as he can see that clearly, he will become a “Mormon.” I instructed him to write Liverpool upon it.²¹

Elder Joseph Hall, who followed, added,

Relative to the principles recently revealed, we have not the least difficulty. If Adam's being our Father and God cannot be proved by the Bible, it is alright.²²

Later yet another elder, James A. Little, felt the subject worthy of comment in his report, and bore his testimony that "I believe in the principle of obedience; and if I am told that Adam is our Father and our God, I just believe it."²³

Apostle Richards' response to this was unequivocal:

If, as Elder Caffall remarked, there are those who are waiting at the door of the Church for this objection to be removed, tell such, the prophet and Apostle Brigham has declared it, and that is the word of the Lord.²⁴

The elders were not to worry that the doctrine was not found in the scriptures: "I would like to know where you will find scriptures to prove things by, which have never before been revealed."

As noted, at least one apostle resisted Brigham Young. In September 1854, shortly after returning from a mission in Washington, D.C., Orson Pratt discussed his objections directly with the president and other leading brethren. According to Wilford Woodruff's account,

Brother Pratt . . . thought that Adam was made of the dust of the Earth . . . Could not believe that Adam was our God or the Father of Jesus Christ President Young said that He was . . . that he came from anoth[er] world & made this brought Eve with him partook of the fruits of the Earth . . . begat children & they ware Earthly & I had mortal bodies & if we ware Faithful we should become Gods as He was.²⁵

Shortly thereafter Young delivered a talk at the October 1854 general conference which is possibly his most forceful and detailed statement on Adam-God ever given. According to the *Deseret News*, Young's "highly interesting discourse . . . held the vast audience as it were spellbound."²⁶ Wilford Woodruff was especially moved, writing in his journal, "I believe that He preach[ed] the greatest sermon that was ever delivered to the Latter Day Saints since they have been a People."²⁷ Yet despite this, the speech was not published.

The text for the President's discourse,²⁸ delivered to an outdoor congregation of several thousand during the administration of the sacrament, was given as:

. . . This is [life] eternal, ~~He~~ that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jeus Christ whom thou hast sent." [sic] I will now put another text ~~that~~ with this and then after a few remarks, it is one of the sayings of the Apostle Paul. "For though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven, or in earth (as there be Gods many and Lords many) but to

to [sic] us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." This God is the father [of] our Lord Jesus Christ and the father of our spirits

Young emphasized the concept of the patriarchal hierarchy of gods, stating,

Now if you believe what you have heard me say you will believe [sic] there is Lords many, and Gods many; and you will believe [sic] that unto us, the inhabitants of this earth there is but one God with whom we have to do You and I have only one God to whom we are accountable, so we will let the rest alone, and search after the one we have to do with; let us seek diligently after him, the very being who commenced this creation

He further clarified his concept of Adam as a name-title by observing that

Every world has had an Adam, and an Eve: named so, simply because the first man is always called Adam, and the first woman Eve Every world that has been created, has been created upon the same principle

The President then addressed some thoughts to his attentive audience concerning Adam-God:

But let us turn our attention to the God with which we have to do. I tell you simply, he is our father; the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the father of our spirits. Can that be possible? Yes it is possible, he is the father of all the spirits of the human family

I tell you more, Adam ~~was~~ is the father of our spirits. He live upon an earth; he did abide his creation, and did honor to his calling and priesthood [sic], and obeyed his master or Lord, and probably many of his wives did ~~also~~ (the same) and they lived, and died upon an earth, and [then] were resurrected again to immortality and eternal life . . . I will tell you what I think about it [i.e., the identity of the Savior], ~~and what the revelations say~~ as the say I reckon, and as the Yankys say I guess; but I will tell you what I reckon. I reckon that father Adam was a resurrected being, with his wives and posterity, and in the Celestial kingdom they were crowned with glory and immortality and eternal lives, with throned principalities and powers: and it was said to him it is your right to organise the elements; and to your creations and posterity there shall be no end Adam then was a resurrected being; and I reckon,

Our spirits and the spirits of all the human family were begotten by Adam, and born of Eve.

"How are we going to know this?" Brigham queried. "I reckon it"

I reckon that Father Adam, and mother Eve had the children of the human family prepared to come here and take bodies; and when they come to take bodies, they enter into the bodies prepared for them; and

that body gets an exaltation with the spirit, when they are prepared to be crowned in fathers kingdom.

What, into Adams kingdom?

Yes

I tell you, when you see your father ~~Adam~~ in the heavens, you will see Adam; When you see your Mother that bear your spirit, you will see mother Eve

I commenced with father Adam in his resurrected state, noticed our spiritual state, then our temporal or mortal state, [and] traveled until I got back to father Adam again

As noted, this sermon had a major impact upon the listeners. Joseph Lee Robinson, for example, recorded in his journal that he

. . . attended a very interesting conference, for at this meeting President Brigham Young said thus, that Adam and Eve were the names of the first man and woman of every earth that was ever organized and that Adam and Eve were the natural father and mother of every spirit that comes to this planet, or that receives tabernacles on this planet, consequently we are brother and sisters, and that Adam was God, our Eternal Father. This as Brother Heber remarked, was letting the cat out of the bag, and it came to pass, I believed every word, for I remembered saying to the Brethren at a meeting of High Priests in Nauvoo, while I was speaking to them under the influence of the Spirit, I remarked thus, that our Father Adam had many wives, and that Eve was only one of them, and that she was our mother, and that she was the mother of the inhabitants of this earth, and I believe that also²⁹

Despite his conviction of the doctrine, Robinson recorded "there were some that did not believe these sayings of the Prophet Brigham, even our Beloved Brother Orson Pratt told me he did not believe it. He said he could prove by the scriptures it was not correct." For Robinson there was no question who held the erroneous position: "I felt very sorry to hear Professor Orson Pratt say that. I feared least he should apostitize, but I prayed for him that he might endure unto the end, for I knew verily it was possible that great men might fall."

The following March 1855, President Young delivered another talk affirming that Adam had come to the earth as a resurrected being,³⁰ and the same month the *Millennial Star* carried more favorable comments on Young's Adam-God doctrine.³¹ A month later, Brigham addressed a meeting of the Deseret Theological Institute. His subject was the identity of God and Jesus Christ, and his remarks were to serve as the "foundation of all theology." "[T]his is for you to believe or disbelieve as you please," Young told the Institute audience, "for if I were to say who he was I have no doubt but that there would be many that would say perhaps it is so and perhaps it is not" He spent a few minutes speaking on Adam, then asked, "Well now who is the father of our Spirits?" Unless Brigham's ordinarily precise clerk, Thomas Bullock, made an error in recording this speech, Young's answer to this question must have been confusing to those in attendance. At least one thing is clear, however: a new circumspection (if not circumlocution) in his comments on this sensitive subject:

I do not design to go into any mysteries or to take up worldly sciences to any great extent, but suppose I were to take up a few of them, I should be like the rest of you: tell what I know according to what I understand and believe. And then if I am wrong I should be glad if God or some man upon the earth would correct me and set me right and tell me what it is and how it is . . .

“If I were to set before you the principle directly to the truth and yet precisely understand pertaining to him with whom we have to do,” Brigham continued, “I have no question or doubt but what it would be opposed to your traditions and the feelings of many of you.” After seemingly identifying the Father as Adam, he continued,

I tell you this as my belief about that personage who is called the ancient of days, the prince and so on. But I do not tell it because that I wish it to be established in the minds of others, though to me it is as clear as the sun. It is as plain as my alphabet. I understand it as I do the path to go home. I did not understand so until my mind became enlightened with the spirit and by the revelations of God, neither will you understand until our father in heaven reveals all these things unto you. To my mind and to my feelings those matters are all plain and easy to understand.³²

It appears that Brigham intended to give his audience some latitude on these questions. Yet, while characterizing his own view as a “belief,” Young also stated that the clarity with which he comprehended this belief came only when his “mind became enlightened with the spirit and by the revelation of God.”

In February 1857, President Young again mentioned Adam-God in a public sermon, and as at the Deseret Theological Institute, the tenor of his remarks was somewhat circumspect:

. . . He [God] is a being of the same species as ourselves; He lives as we do, except the difference that we are earthly, and He is heavenly. He has been earthly, and is of precisely the same species of being that we are. Whether Adam is the personage that we should consider our heavenly Father, or not is considerable of a mystery to a good many. I do not care for one moment how that is; it is no matter whether we are to consider Him our God, or whether His Father, or His Grandfather, for in either case we are of one species—of one family—and Jesus Christ is also of our species.³³

Restraint was again in evidence in October of the same year when President Young once more spoke publicly on his doctrine. First, however, there was a mildly sarcastic reproach to his dissenters:

. . . Some have grumbled because I believe our God to be so near to us as Father Adam. There are many who know that doctrine to be true. Where was Michael in the creation of this earth? Did he have a mission to the earth? He did. Where was he? In the Grand Council, and performed the mission assigned him there. Now, if it should happen that

we have to pay tribute to Father Adam, what a humiliating circumstance it would be! Just wait till you pass Joseph Smith; and after Joseph lets you pass him, you will find Peter; and after you pass the Apostles and many of the Prophets, you will find Abraham, and he will say, "I have the keys, and except you do thus and so, you cannot pass;" and after a while you come to Jesus; and when you at length meet Father Adam, how strange it will appear to your present notions. If we can pass Joseph and have him say, "Here; you have been faithful, good boys; I hold the keys of this dispensation; I will let you pass;" then we shall be very glad to see the white locks of Father Adam.³⁴

Having made the point, Young closed more cautiously, "But those are ideas which do not concern us at present, although it is written in the Bible—"This is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.' "

In retrospect 1856–1857 was a pivotal time in Brigham's public stance on the Adam-God doctrine. It is apparent that this innovative doctrine was still quite controversial four or five years after its public announcement, even among many of the faithful. Thereafter, while in no way discarding this idea, Young advanced his doctrine distinctly less emphatically and less frequently than during the previous four years. A very circumspect tone, for example, is quite evident two years later when, after stating once again that "Mankind are here because they are the offspring of parents who were first brought here from another planet, and power was given to them to propagate their species, and they were commanded to multiply and replenish the earth . . .," Young concluded with a careful double negative: "Adam and Eve are the parents of all pertaining to the flesh and I would not say that they are not also the parents of our spirits."³⁵

Finally, in January 1860, the Twelve were specifically advised by President Young to avoid discussing the subject publicly. "Michael," Wilford Woodruff records Young as saying, "was a resurrected Being and he lef [*sic*] Eloheam and Came to this Earth & with an imtal [*sic*] Body & continued so till he partook of earthly food and begot Children who were mortal (keep this to yourselves) then they died A Carrington spoke upon the subject a short time & made some useful remarks."³⁶

Limiting the subject to private leadership circles did not end all controversy. A few weeks later, April 4, the persistent Orson Pratt presented grievances against Young before the Twelve: "I would like to ennumerate [those] items. first preached and publish[ed] that Adam is the fa[ther] of our spirits, & father of Spirit & father of our bodies. When I read the Rev given to Joseph I read directly the opposite. Lord spake to Adam, which Man eventually became Adam's[.]" (The "Rev" referred to here was probably Section 29:42 in today's D & C, although similar subject matter referred to by Pratt is also found in Moses 4:28 and 5:4–9.)³⁷ This time Brigham's response contained something new and noteworthy:

You came out tonight & place them as charges, & have as many against me as I have you. One thing I thought I might still have omitted It was Joseph's doctrine that Adam was God when in Luke Johnson's, at O Hyde the power came upon us, or such that alarmed the neighborhood. God comes to earth & eats & partakes of fruit.³⁸

This claim that Joseph Smith taught "that Adam was God" is the first of three known occasions on which Brigham Young attributed the origin of Adam-God to Smith.³⁹ While there is no reliable primary source documentation from Smith's era to support this assertion, much later testimony from other intimates of Joseph Smith such as Helen Mar Kimball (one of Joseph's plural wives) in 1882, and Benjamin F. Johnson in 1903, endorse Brigham's claim.⁴⁰ It is therefore appropriate to consider briefly the merits of this assertion.

Joseph Smith unquestionably viewed "Adam" as an individual whose importance extended well beyond the role of first parent to the human race. Five years after the organization of the Church, the Prophet published a revelation which identified "Michael, or Adam, [as] the father of all, the prince of all, the ancient of days[.]"⁴¹ Four years later, in a sermon in Nauvoo in 1839, he went much further. As recorded by Willard Richards, Smith announced that "*The Priesthood was . . .*

first given to Adam: he obtained the first Presidency & held the keys of it, from generation to Generation; he obtained it in the creation before the world was formed as in Gen. 1, 26:28,—he had dominion given him over every living Creature. He is Michael, the Archangel, spoken of in the Scriptures . . . he will call his children together, & hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. He, (Adam) is the Father of the human family & presides over the Spirits of all men, & all that have had the Keys must stand before him in this great Council . . . The Son of Man stands before him and there is given him glory & dominion. —Adam delivers up his Stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the Keys of the Universe, but retains his standing as head of the human family. [emphasis in original]⁴²

The centrality of Adam's role was reiterated by the Prophet in a major discourse on the priesthood the following year. He spoke of Adam being the "first and father of all, not only by progeny, but he was the first to hold the spiritual blessings, to whom was made known the plan of ordinances for the Salvation of his posterity unto the end, and to whom Christ was first revealed, and through whom Christ has been revealed from heaven and will continue to be revealed from henceforth." This has, in retrospect—and in isolation—the ring of Adam-God to it, but Smith then said,

Adam holds the Keys of the dispensation of the fulness of times, i.e. the dispensation of all the times have been and will be revealed through him from the beginning to Christ and from Christ to the end of all the dispensations that have [been and] are to be revealed . . . This then is the nature of the priesthood, every man holding the presidency of

his dispensation and one man holding the presidency of them all even Adam, and Adam receiving his presidency and authority from Christ, but cannot receive a fulness, untill [sic] Christ shall present the kingdom to the Father which shall be at the end of the last dispensation.⁴³

In both of these 1839 and 1840 sermons, Joseph clearly places Adam in a position subservient to Christ, a relationship seemingly incompatible with the Adam-God doctrine later articulated by Brigham. As Orson Pratt noted, there also were other important inconsistencies between the fully developed Adam-God doctrine and the scriptures revealed by Joseph Smith. A problem with our present D & C 29 and Book of Moses has already been alluded to; all three of these scriptures clearly place the speaker ("I, the Lord God") in authority above Adam. Moreover, Adam is commanded to repent and seek redemption "through faith on the name of mine Only Begotten Son."

Pratt's discomfort with Brigham's Adam-God doctrine was not limited to Young's insistence that Adam was not created from the dust of this earth. Other Latter-day Saint scriptures such as the Book of Mormon also pose some difficulties. The prophet Amulek, for example, is there reported as saying a resurrected "mortal body . . . can die no more," that in the resurrection, "spirits [are] united with their bodies, never to be divided" (Alma 11:45). As both the Book of Moses (6:12), and the Doctrine and Covenants (107:53) report the death of Adam, there is at least a theoretical problem with the notion that he had been resurrected *prior* to his earthly experience.

Additionally, Section 107, which was the third section in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, said in part,

And the Lord appeared unto them, and they rose up and blessed Adam, and called him Michael, the prince, the archangel. And the Lord administered comfort unto Adam, and said unto him: I have set thee to be at the head; a multitude of nations shall come of thee, and thou art a prince over them forever.⁴⁴

Another early revelation (March 1832), now D & C 78, also appeared in the 1835 edition, and made a very similar point. The "Lord God," the "Holy One of Zion," it reported, "hath appointed Michael your prince and established his feet, and set him upon high, and given him the keys of salvation under the council and direction of the Holy One."⁴⁵ As the "Lord," "Lord God," and "Holy One" in these passages are all understood in Mormon theology to refer to Jesus Christ,⁴⁶ these scriptures are as irreconcilable with Adam being the father of Christ as were Joseph's later sermons quoted above. Indeed, the sermons essentially restate the message of these scriptures.

These later sermons are all the more significant when one recalls that Brigham had asserted that "it was Joseph's doctrine that Adam was God when in Luke Johnson's." Johnson was ordained one of the original Apostles in mid-February 1835; briefly (six days) disfellowshipped and removed from the Council of the Twelve in September 1837; went again into apostasy in December 1837; and was excommunicated in April 1838. Although he was re-bap-

tized into the Church well after Smith's death (in 1846), it follows from his church career that any preaching on Adam-God by Smith "in Luke Johnson's" would have to have occurred in Kirtland well before the Nauvoo sermons.

On the other hand, the Nauvoo period also marked the first major synthesis of the Mormon perception of the nature of God, and all of Smith's later teachings are not necessarily known. The Prophet's sermons and writings in his last years more clearly identified God the Father as an actual being who possessed a physical, but "glorified" corporal body such as our own. Smith's important discourses on April 7, 1844 (the "King Follett Sermon") and June 16, 1844 (on the plurality of gods) crystallized ideas on the eternal evolution of mankind. God himself, the Prophet taught, was once a mortal man who had experienced a similar existence to our own. Indeed, both Joseph and Hyrum Smith preached an eternal patriarchal lineage of gods; as there never was a son without a father, so also the God of this earth has a father, as does his father ad infinitum.⁴⁷

While stopping well short of an "Adam-God doctrine," such ideas clearly were necessary precursors to the notions advanced by Brigham. The one fragment of evidence that Smith may have carried this at least a step further is found in a poem by apostate Mormon William Law, recently of the First Presidency, published in the *Warsaw Message* in February 1844. Entitled "Buckeye's Lamentation for Want of More Wives," this poem satirically spoke of the "greater" glory a man could have in the hereafter if he had plural wives; "Creating worlds so fair; At least a *world* for ever *wife* That you take with you there."⁴⁸ (Emphasis in original.) While this notion does presage yet another aspect of Brigham Young's teachings, it obviously still falls well short of a positive link between the Adam-God doctrine and Joseph Smith.

At least as relevant as the foregoing in evaluating Joseph's possible views, is the total absence in any of his known sermons or writings, or in that of any other Mormon leader before 1852, of anything like the fully developed Adam-God doctrine. Instead, statements such as that found in John Taylor's 1852 publication, *The Government of God*, actually suggest that the antithesis of Adam-God was then held to be true: ". . . when God made man, he made him of the dust of the earth . . .," and "Adam is the father of our bodies, and God is the father of our spirits." Orson Pratt's 1848 discussion of "The Kingdom of God" involved analysis of the nature of God; but nothing could be cited from it which would support Adam-God in any way. Another early Mormon favorite—*A Voice of Warning*—first published in 1837 by Parley P. Pratt, did cover the scriptural account of Adam's creation; yet he too did not deviate from Joseph Smith's expositions cited above.⁴⁹ Additionally, while Orson Pratt may have been alone in speaking out against the doctrine after 1852, it is notable that no other Mormon leader—aside from Young—seemed willing to ascribe it to Smith, even after 1852.⁵⁰ The one other apostle to volunteer a source, Heber C. Kimball, seems to ascribe it to himself. In April 1862, Kimball—long an advocate of the doctrine—testified, "[T]he Lord told me that Adam was my father and that he was the God and father of all the inhabitants of this earth." Orson Pratt, as noted below, also inferred that the

doctrine originated with Kimball, and T. B. H. Stenhouse, after leaving the Church, made this claim as well, in *Rocky Mountain Saints* (1873).⁵¹

The fact that Brigham Young claimed at least three times that Smith was the originator of Adam-God nonetheless strongly suggests that Brigham thought Smith taught something related to this doctrine. As illustrated above, this indeed is the case. Possibly Young misconstrued or misremembered what he heard (or heard something no one else did?). Whatever the explanation, it can safely be said that with our current understanding it is a very big step from what is known of Joseph Smith's teachings on Adam to those later articulated by Brigham Young.

Orson Pratt's difficulties during these years (to return to our chronology) have been detailed elsewhere.⁵² For present purposes it is important only that Brigham's Adam-God doctrine was one of several major points of disagreement. The day following the April 4 exchange noted above, Orson continued to voice his objections in a meeting with his fellow apostles. Orson Hyde had just remarked that "Brother Brigham may err in the price of a horse . . . but in the revelations from God, where is the man that has given thus saith the Lord when it was not so? I cannot find one instance." Pratt responded,

In regard to Adam being our Father and God . . . I frankly say, I have no confidence in it, altho advanced by Brother Kimball in the stand, and afterwards approved by Brigham . . . I have heard Brigham say that Adam is the Father of our spirits and he came here with a resurrected body, to fall for his own children, and I said to him it leads to an endless number of falls which leads to sorrow and death; that is revolting to my feelings, even if it were sustained by revelation.

One [revelation] says that Adam was formed out of the earth, and the Lord put in his spirit, and another that he came with his body, flesh and bones, there are two contradictory revelations. In the garden it is said that a voice said to Adam, in the meridian of time, I will send my only begotten son Jesus Christ, then how can that man and Adam both be the Father of Jesus Christ? . . . It was the Father of Jesus Christ that was talking to Adam in the garden. Young says that Adam was the Father of Jesus Christ both of his spirit and body in his teaching from the stand.⁵³

Brigham responded indirectly in a sermon several weeks later, acknowledging only that,

. . . if guilt before my God and my brethren rests upon me in the least, it is in this one thing, that I have revealed too much concerning God and his kingdom, and the designs of our Father in heaven. If my skirts are stained in the least with wrong, it is because I have been too free in telling what God is, how he lives, the nature of his providences and designs in creating the world, in bringing forth the human family on the earth, his designs concerning them, etc. If I had, like Paul, said—"But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant," perhaps it would have been better for the people.⁵⁴

These comments suggest the continued reluctance to accept Brigham's doctrine, an attitude which no doubt was responsible for the following outburst in a Young sermon later that year:

I will give you a few words of doctrine, upon which there has been much inquiry, and with regard to which considerable ignorance exists. Br. Watt will write it, but it is not my intention to have it published, therefore pay good attention, and store it up in your memories. Some years ago, I advanced a doctrine with regard to Adam being our father and God, that will be a cause [curse?] to many Elders of Israel because of their folly. With regard to it they yet grovel in darkness and will. It is one of the most glorious revealments of the economy of heaven, yet the world holds it [in] dirrision [*sic*]. Had I revealed the doctrine of baptism from the dead instead [of] Joseph Smith there are men around me who would have ridiculed the idea until dooms day. But they are ignorant and stupid like the dumb ass.⁵⁵

Despite this—perhaps because of it—Brigham appears to have followed his own counsel, and largely abandoned public efforts in support of the Adam-God doctrine after 1861.⁵⁶ Indeed, two years later Brigham addressed a group of California emigrants enroute through Salt Lake City on Mormon beliefs, and gave no hint of his unique theology on this subject:

. . . We believe in God the Father and in Jesus Christ our elder brother. We believe that God is a person of tabernacle, possessing in an infinitely higher degree all the perfections and qualifications of his mortal children. We believe that he made Adam after his own image and likeness. . . .⁵⁷

This statement has become popular with those who wish to deny that Young espoused the Adam-God doctrine, with which it cannot easily be reconciled. While one might reasonably dismiss this particular statement as designed specifically for his non-Mormon audience, there are other similarly difficult statements from Young. Just a few months after the emigrant speech, for example, he told his faithful audience in the Ogden Tabernacle that

. . . the Lord is our God and it is He whom we serve; and we say to the whole world that He is a tangible Being . . . and if He created Adam and Eve in His own image, the whole human family are like Him. This same truth is borne out by the Savior. . . .
. . . He sent his Angels, and at last sent His Son, who was in the express image of the Father—His Only Begotten Son, according to the flesh here on this earth. This is the God we serve and believe in.⁵⁸

Thus, Brigham seems to identify the same Supreme Being as the father both of Adam and Jesus Christ.

Seven years later, this time in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, he made the same point quite explicitly: "We are all the children of Adam and Eve, and they and we are the offspring of Him who dwells in the heavens"⁵⁹ These public statements raise several obvious questions, satisfactory answers to

which are not yet known. Was the wording carefully selected to allow an inapparent alternative understanding to the plain meaning of Brigham's remarks, or did he mean to assert as truth what these statements taken at face value would imply? Given the extensive testimony in support of Adam-God before, during and after the period of these contrary remarks, there seems little question as to Young's true beliefs. Nonetheless this is an area deserving further study.

As indicated, Brigham did continue to espouse the Adam-God doctrine after this time, but usually only within much more restricted circles. For example, according to Wilford Woodruff's account, Brigham discussed the subject in a meeting of the Salt Lake School of the Prophets in 1867, and stated that "Adam was Michael the Ark angel & he was the Father of Jesus Christ & was our God & that Joseph taught thoght [*sic*] this Principle."⁶⁰ That there were many among this more select group who were favorably disposed to—or at least accepting of—Young's views is evident from the minutes of a School of the Prophets meeting in Provo the following year. Abraham O. Smoot, according to this record, spoke of "[t]he doctrine preached by Pres. Young for a few years back wherein he says that Adam is our God—the God we worship—that most of the people believe this—some believe it because the Pres. says so—others because they can find testimony in the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants." After referring to Orson Pratt's rejection of the belief, Smoot said, "this is not the way to act—we are not accountable on points of doctrine if the President makes a statement it is not our perogative to dispute it—he is only accountable in points of doctrine, I have heard President avow the truth of Adam being our Father and God but have never heard him argue the question at all." Such acceptance of Brigham's beliefs is further evidenced by A. F. MacDonald's remarks to the School:

I thought I would speak briefly in relation to Adam being our God. Since the year 1852 when the President first spoke on this subject, I have frequently endeavored to reconcile what I have read with regard to this matter. I believe what the President says on the subject although it comes in contact with all our tradition. I have not any doubt in my mind but that Adam is our God. Who his God and Father may be, I have no knowledge. President Kimball spoke on this question recently and very plainly illustrated the character and relationship of our Father and God.

Elder George G. Bywater also felt it unwise to question Young's doctrine:

I am not disposed to question the discrepancies on this question of doctrine: if we live faithful, all will become clear to us. We cannot become united only as we get united in understanding; when I first heard the doctrine of Adam being our Father and God, I was favorably impressed—enjoyed, and hailed it as a new revelation—it appeared reasonable to me as the father of our spirits, that he should introduce us here—and what we do not see is only evidence that we have not the light necessary.⁶¹

Private endorsement of Young's teachings was even more emphatic in other meetings of the School of the Prophets. In an 1870 meeting, "Elder Geo[rge] Q. Cannon fully endorsed the doctrine that *Father Adam* was our God and Father" Indeed, "the above doctrine had been revealed to him, so that he knew it was true."⁶² In another meeting of the School three years later, Daniel Wells of the First Presidency asked his colleagues whether they endorsed the "doctrine pertaining to Adam being our Father & our God." He personally "bore a powerful testimony to the truth of the doctrine, remarking that if ever he had received a testimony of any doctrine in this church he had of the truth of this. The Endowments plainly teach it and the Bible & other revelations are full of it." Others who "approved or endorsed" the doctrine at the meeting were Henry Grow, D. B. Huntington, John Lyon, George B. Wallace, and Joseph F. Smith, the latter stating that "the enunciation of that doctrine gave him great joy."⁶³

The public de-emphasis on the Adam-God doctrine apparent in the 1860s continued through Brigham's death in 1877. In an 1870 meeting of the School of the Prophets, "Prest. Young" again had advised "the brethren to meditate on the subject, pray about it and keep it to yourselves."⁶⁴ Three years later, amidst the testimonials of the 1873 meeting noted above, he further counseled that he "was positive of the truth of this doctrine [Adam being our Father and our God], but thought we should be cautious about preaching on doctrines unless we fully understand them by the power of the Spirit, then they commend themselves to the hearts of the hearers."⁶⁵

Perhaps significantly, it was on the relatively rare occasions when President Young addressed this persistently unpopular subject during these years that he began to ascribe regularly the doctrine to Joseph Smith. Such claims made in 1861 and 1867 already have been noted; another was made in 1876. In 1873, however—a year in which T. B. H. Stenhouse wrote that "the mass of the Mormon people do not believe the doctrine of the Adam deity"⁶⁶—Brigham, for the only known time, carried his public case one step further. In a sermon in the New Tabernacle in June, which *was* published in the *Deseret News*, the prophet commented:

How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed to them, and which God revealed to me—namely that Adam is our father and God—I do not know, I do not inquire, I care nothing about it.

This, then, was *not* a personal belief. Nor was there any question about what was being said. After indicating that "Father Adam" held the keys of salvation for his children, Brigham went on: "I could not find any man on the earth who could tell me this, although it is one of the simplest things in the world, until I met and talked with Joseph Smith" "We say," he then continued,

. . . that Father Adam came here and helped to make the earth. Who is he? He is Michael, a great prince, and it was said to him by Eloheim,

"Go ye and make an earth." . . . Adam came here and got it up in a shape that would suit him to commence business Father Adam came here, and then they brought his wife. "Well," says one, "Why was Adam called Adam?" He was the first man on the earth, and its framer and maker. He with the help of his brethren, brought it into existence. Then he said, "I want my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here. I once dwelt upon an earth something like this, in a mortal state. I was faithful, I received my crown and exaltation. I have the privilege of extending my work, and to its increase there will be no end. I want my children that were born to me in the spirit world to come here and take tabernacles of flesh, that their spirits may have a house, a tabernacle or a dwelling place as mine has"⁶⁷

The following day Brigham elaborated somewhat on revelation at a meeting of the School of the Prophets. "Said there were many revelations given to him that he did not receive from the Prophet Joseph. He did not receive them through the Urim and Thummim as Joseph did but when he did receive them he knew of their truth as much as it was possible for him to do of any truth." It was also in this meeting that Daniel Wells called for, and received the ringing endorsements of Brigham's teachings quoted above. Given this context there can be no question about what was understood to be under discussion by those in attendance.⁶⁸

The concluding chapter in the Brigham Young phase of this story is in some ways as predictable as it is surprising. Driven in his last years to reform and standardize a number of administrative and other facets of the Kingdom, the President decided among other things that the temple endowment ceremony should be standardized in a written format. On February 7, 1877, just six months before his death, Brigham held a meeting in his home in St. George, and recounted some of the initial problems encountered when Joseph Smith first introduced the endowment in the upper room of his store in Nauvoo. Joseph reportedly charged Young with "setting the ordinances right." Now, over thirty years later, since everything was to be written down by scribes L. John Nuttall and J. D. T. McAllister, Brigham had prepared a text for a "lecture at the veil to be observed in the Temple"—a summarization of the major aspects of the endowment. Thus, whatever its public fate, Brigham's inspiration would be preserved in one of the most exalted and restrictive of Mormon ordinances.⁶⁹ According to Nuttall, the lecture informed initiates that:

Adam was an immortal being when he came. on this earth he had lived on an earth similiar [sic] to ours he had received his Priesthood and the Keys thereof. and had been faithful in all things and gained his resurrection and his exaltation and was crowned with glory immortality and eternal lives and was numbered with the Gods for such he became through his faithfulness. and had begotten all the spirit that was to come to this earth. and Eve our common Mother who is the mother of all living bore those spirits in the celestial world. and when this earth was organized by Elohim. Jehovah & Michael who is Adam our common Father.

In discussing the earthly phase of Adam's existence, the lecture revealed that,

Adam & Eve had the privilege to continue the work of Progression. consequently came to this earth and commenced the great work of forming tabernacles for those spirits to dwell in. and when Adam and those that assisted him had completed this Kingdom our earth he came toil. and slept and forgot all and became like an infant child Adam & Eve when they were placed on this earth were immortal beings with flesh. bones and sinues [sic]

With respect to the parentage of Jesus Christ,

Father Adam's oldest son (Jesus the Saviour) who is the heir of the family is Father Adams first begotten in the spirit World. who according to the flesh is the only begotten in the spirit World. who according to the flesh is the only begotten as it is written. (In his divinity he haveing [sic] gone back into the spirit world. and come in the spirit to Mary and she conceived for when Adam and Eve got through with their work in this earth. they did not lay their bodies down in the dust, but returned to the spirit World from whence they came.⁷⁰

Contrary to many later perceptions, Brigham Young's death in late August 1877 did not mark the end of the Adam-God doctrine. While available diaries from this period are relatively silent on the subject, and while there is a virtually complete public silence,⁷¹ many of the Church's leading authorities unquestionably retained a belief in Brigham's teachings (others apparently did not). In 1880, for example, Edward Stevenson of the First Council of Seventy "by request of one of the Presidency . . . [spoke] upon God as the father of our spirrits [sic]" at a Davis Stake conference. His message was clear: ". . . therefore Adam is the Father of my *Spirit* & also of my body . . ." ⁷² Two years later Stevenson and several others dealt with Thomas Howell, who opposed the Adam-God doctrine, in a general meeting of the Seventies. Howell was advised that if he "could not comprehend these things to lay them up untill he could, & if he indulged in that spirrit to correct or set President Young rite that he would be delt with & lose his faith & standing in the Church." After "meny remarks" Howell "said he was rong, sory for it & asked for forgiveness."⁷³

Abraham H. Cannon recorded an incident during 1888 in which his father, Apostle George Q. Cannon, endorsed some of the doctrine which earlier had been taught by Young:

He [George Q. Cannon] asked me what I understood concerning Mary conceiving the Savior, and as I found no answer he asked what was to prevent Father Adam from visiting and overshadowing the mother of Jesus. "Then," said I, "he must have been a resurrected Being". [sic] "Yes," said he, "and though Christ is said to have been the 'first fruits' of them that slept, yet the Savior said he did nothing but what he had seen His father do, for He had power to lay down his life and take it

up again. Adam, though made of the dust, was made, as President Young said, of the dust of another planet than this." I was very much instructed by the conversation and this day's service.⁷⁴

A few months later, Joseph E. Taylor (First Counselor in the Salt Lake Stake Presidency) delivered a speech in the Logan temple in which he claimed that Adam was a resurrected man and that Adam was the father of Jesus Christ,⁷⁵ based in part on Brigham's April 1852 sermon. This does not appear to have been the Lecture at the Veil prepared by Brigham in his last year. It is not clear, in fact, what did become of the lecture. The apparent ignorance of the subject matter implied by Abraham Cannon's account—despite his having been a General Authority for six years—suggest it was not routinely presented in the temple. Similar ignorance among some missionaries and their president—noted below—who also presumably had been through the temple prior to their missions supports this conclusion. Although exposés of the temple ceremonies published about this time do not include any reference to this lecture, "fundamentalist" authors have asserted without serious attempt at documentation that Brigham's lecture was an integral part of the temple ceremony until about 1902–1905. In support of this has been placed the testimony of one individual who in 1959 distinctly remembered hearing during his endowment in the temple in 1902 that "Adam was our God." On returning from his mission in 1904 he noted that these teachings had been removed.⁷⁶ While one would expect more extensive evidence than this were it true that the lecture was regularly given for twenty-five years, it is quite possible that something akin to the Joseph E. Taylor remarks is the basis for the recollection. It should also be recalled that other "discredited" notions were still being promulgated in some temples by a few individuals during the early years of the twentieth century—such as the continued legitimacy of plural marriage, also a cherished fundamentalist tradition.

Nonetheless it cannot safely be argued that Young's teachings on Adam were indeed discredited in the private circles of the church hierarchy. Beyond Authorities George Q. and Abraham H. Cannon and Edward Stevenson, in the 1890s one also finds brief but supportive references to the doctrine by Apostles Brigham Young, Jr., Franklin D. Richards and Lorenzo Snow. Amidst discussions treated below, for example, Snow is reported as leading "out on Adam being our father and God. How beautiful the thought it brot. God nearer to us." To this Richards added that "it made him thrill through his whole body it was new & it was inspiring."⁷⁷

By contrast, others among Brigham's erstwhile supporters did have a change of heart. George Q. Cannon, who for a time had been a counselor to Young in the First Presidency, later reflected,

Some of my brethren, as I have learned since the death of President Brigham Young, did have feelings concerning his course. They did not approve of it, and felt oppressed, and yet they dare not exhibit their feelings to him, he ruled with so strong and stiff a hand, and they felt that it would be of no use. In a few words, the feeling seems to be that he transcended the bounds of the authority which he legitimately held.

I have been greatly surprised to find so much dissatisfaction in such quarters [S]ome even feel that in the promulgation of doctrine he took liberties beyond those to which he was legitimately entitled.⁷⁸

While neither specific individuals or doctrines are mentioned, it is worth noting that we have no record of John Taylor explicitly advocating the Adam-God doctrine even during Young's administration. His *Government of God*, published the year the doctrine was first publicly advanced surely gave no hint of familiarity with these notions; and as Young's successor he published *The Mediation and Atonement of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* (1882) which contained no support whatever for Brigham's views, despite many references to Adam, Christ, and the Godhead. While there are no passages in this latter work which directly attack Adam-God, Taylor's approach is very similar to that of Orson Pratt and is implicitly incompatible with facets of Young's teachings. His overall aim—in the words of a recent observer—was clearly to “reChristianize” Mormonism.⁷⁹

Other late nineteenth-century publications by Mormon authorities are also notable for their discretion on (if not rejection of) the subject of Adam-God. Despite his apparent continuing support of Young's teachings, Franklin D. Richards' *Compendium* (1857) contained no hint of this belief. It is noteworthy that while he does cite passages from Brigham's April 9, 1852, sermon to support several characteristics of God and the Holy Ghost, he fails to quote the portions on Adam-God. His 1882 revision of this book, published in conjunction with James A. Little, totally eliminates any references to Young's sermon. Not only does this influential second edition contain no support of Adam-God, but the scriptures cited on man's creation and fall actually are aligned more with Orson Pratt and John Taylor's writings noted above; later editions through the last one in 1925 leave these items intact.⁸⁰

Although one might read Adam-God into the vague prose found in Parley P. Pratt's *Key to the Science of Theology* (1855), support for Young's doctrine is not directly stated. Orson Spencer's celebrated letters to Reverend William Crowel, written in 1847 and widely published for many years thereafter, offer no hint of Adam-God. The same is true for Charles W. Penrose's influential book, “Mormon” *Doctrine, Plain and Simple* (1882) and John Nicholson's *The Preceptor* (1883). In 1888, B. H. Roberts' *The Gospel, an Exposition of its First Principles* identified God the Father and Jesus Christ as having a “proprietaryship to this earth, and . . . are the Supreme Governing Power in it”; but no discussion of Adam's role is given. His 1893 supplement to this book, *Man's Relationship to Deity*, recites the standard scriptural account of Adam's creation; however, Roberts also expresses doubt in the “creation from the dust” story and postulates instead Brigham Young's belief in Adam's procreation on another planet and subsequent transplantation to this earth. Nevertheless, Adam-God is not mentioned.⁸¹

Despite Wilford Woodruff's copious notes on the subject during the Young administration, nothing really conclusive on his later views on Adam-God has been reported. It is notable that one year after Woodruff's death, the

Church published Dr. James E. Talmage's *The Articles of Faith* (1899) which included such quotations as "He [God] revealed himself to our first earthly parents . . . [who] heard His voice in the Garden, and . . . continued to call upon God, and to sacrifice to Him . . ."; and "[T]he Holy Ghost inspired [Adam] and bare record of the Father and the Son . . ." ⁸²

In sum it appears that Brigham's Adam-God doctrine never became thoroughly established in late nineteenth-century LDS theology. While it is evident that many of the leading authorities of the Church endorsed Young's teaching during these years, there was not a unanimous view even among the hierarchy. The published writings of church authorities in these years avoided any endorsement of the doctrine, and evidence suggests that it was not widely accepted among the general membership of the Church. ⁸³

II

The Council did not deem it wise to lay out any line of procedure in which to deal with the subject, but felt that it is best to avoid bringing it up, and to do the best we can and as the Spirit may suggest when it is thrust upon us.

Apostle Franklin D. Richards, 1897

As early as 1860 critics of the Mormons, notably the newly Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, had used Brigham's Adam-God doctrine as a focal point for attack. In the years following Young's death, polygamy was the principal cause célèbre, but with the Manifesto of 1890 "anti-Mormon" attention returned to other heretical doctrinal matters. ⁸⁴ In the face of this development, according to one report, official counsel from the Church was to downplay the Adam-God doctrine. In 1892 George Q. Cannon advised that "[I]t was not necessary that we should [teach] or endorse the doctrine that some men taught that Adam was the Father of Jesus Christ. Counsel was given for the Elders to teach that which they knew, not that which they did not." ⁸⁵ Three years later President Wilford Woodruff made essentially the same point:

How much longer I shall talk to this people I do not know; but I want to say this to all Israel: Cease troubling yourselves about who God is; who Adam is, who Christ is, who Jehovah is. For heaven's sake, let these things alone. Why trouble yourselves about these things? . . . God is God. Christ is Christ. The Holy Ghost is the Holy Ghost. That should be enough for you and me to know. If we want to know any more, wait till we get where God is in person. I say this because we are troubled every little while with inquiries from Elders anxious to know who God is, who Christ is, and who Adam is. I say to the Elders of Israel, stop this. ⁸⁶

This did not, of course, stop Protestant ministers from using the issue to discredit the Church. In October 1897, for example, Mormon elders began proselyting in Fresno, California. They authored a favorable introductory article on the Church which was published in the Fresno paper. A local

minister, C. A. Munn, proceeded to publish several articles of his own, in part quoting Brigham Young's April 1852 sermon. Although the elders tried to meet Munn's challenge, they failed, and mission president Ephraim H. Nye came to their aid in a rebuttal which stated that Munn had misrepresented Brigham Young's remarks by taking them out of context. Nye claimed that for Mormons, Adam "is not the God to whom we pray, nor did Brigham Young undertake to convey such an idea. We worship the being who placed Adam in the garden of Eden."⁸⁷ Pastor Munn responded that Nye's claim was not true; that the Mormon Church in fact did teach that Adam was God.

Nye appealed for assistance to Apostle Franklin D. Richards. Explaining that "this is a matter that we have got to meet continually," Nye asked Richards to indicate any errors in his reasoning. He candidly admitted that his elders were unable to handle the question, and "have to 'Dodge' it the best they can."⁸⁸ On December 16, 1897, Elder Richards met with the First Presidency and part of the Council of the Twelve and read the *Fresno Morning Republican* article along with President Nye's letter. Richards' diary records that Nye's letter "was read & highly approved but no action as to the dealing with Adam our F. & God subject."⁸⁹ Another apostle in attendance was Brigham Young, Jr., who, along with President Woodruff, had heard his father's remarks made in St. George on February 7, 1877. (The younger Young evidently believed his father's testimony, for he wrote in his journal the day of the Richard's discussion, "Adam is our father and God and no use to discuss it with Josephites or any one else."⁹⁰) The next day Richards drafted a letter to Nye, as recounted in the Apostle's diary: "Sent Prest E. H. Nye letter of Decision of Council about and approving his Article to the *Fresno-Republican* & a copy of Prest Youngs remarks about Adam our Father as contained in Vol. 1 of Journal of Discourses." Elder Richards' letter to Nye was itself quite revealing:

On receipt of your letter of the 4th inst., I conferred with Prest. Joseph F. Smith, and we concluded to present the matter to the Council of the First Presidency and Twelve Apostles. Both your letters to me, and the Article to the *Fresno Republican*, were read. Each of the Presidency and several of the Apostles expressed themselves well pleased with your article, that it evinced skill and valor for the Truth, and they did not see how it could be much improved. The Council did not deem it wise to lay out any line of procedure in which to deal with the subject, but felt that it is best to avoid bringing it up, and to do the best we can and as the Spirit may suggest when it is thrust upon us.

Your having got so many of the Josephites was received with marks of particular pleasure. This, like many other points of more advanced doctrine, is too precious a pearl to be cast before swine. But when the swine get hold of them, let us rescue them by the help of the Spirit as best we can. Thinking it may be convenient to you to have President Youngs sayings on that subject, I enclose a copy from his sermon in the first Volume of the Journal of Discourses.⁹¹

While one must be cautious in accepting all of Richards' remarks uncritically, in view of his strong previous commitment to the Adam-God doctrine, his

comments about “more advanced doctrine” suggest that Brigham’s ideas were not altogether abandoned. On the other hand, the impression is also conveyed that the missionaries in the field were not at all familiar with the notion.

President George Q. Cannon’s politic remarks in 1898 reflect well the attitude of the Church at the close of the century:

I was stopped yesterday afternoon by a young man, who wanted to know whether Adam was the Father of our Lord and Savior—whether he was the being we worshipped, etc. Now, we can get ourselves very easily puzzled, if we choose to do so, by speculating upon doctrines and principles of this character. The Lord has said through His Prophet that there are two personages in the Godhead. That ought to be sufficient for us at the present time Concerning the doctrine in regard to Adam and the Savior, the Prophet Brigham Young taught some things concerning that; but the First Presidency and the Twelve do not think it wise to advocate these matters. It is sufficient to know we have a Father—God the Eternal Father, who reveals Himself by His Holy Spirit unto those who seek him; and that Jesus Christ is His Son, our Redeemer, the Savior of the world.⁹²

The next few years brought the deaths of many key Church authorities who had worked with Brigham Young and supported his doctrine. Wilford Woodruff died in 1898, Franklin D. Richards in 1899, George Q. Cannon and Lorenzo Snow in 1901, and Brigham Young, Jr., in 1903. Only Joseph F. Smith remained of those who had been apostles during Brigham’s lifetime. It is perhaps significant that the major Church commentaries explicitly refuting the Adam-God doctrine—even to the point of denying that it was ever taught—did not come until after the deaths of these men.

III

Speculations as to the career of Adam before he came to the earth are of no real value Dogmatic assertions do not take the place of revelation, and we should be satisfied with that which is accepted as doctrine, and not discuss matters that, after all disputes, are merely matters of theory.

The First Presidency, 1912

The intense scrutiny to which Mormon beliefs were subjected during the first part of Joseph F. Smith’s administration, coupled with the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve’s reluctance to discuss Brigham Young’s Adam-God doctrine, eventually led to a significant reinterpretation of Young’s belief. While this change came about gradually, it ultimately achieved official status with a First Presidency statement issued on the matter in 1912.

The most prominent force in this development was Charles W. Penrose, editor of the *Deseret News*. During the late 1890s and early 1900s Penrose was the leading Mormon defender of the faith in a critical confrontation with the anti-Mormon *Salt Lake Tribune*. In response to frequent accusations that Mormons still professed a belief that Adam was God, Penrose undertook a

rebuttal which began in February 1900 with a personal letter to Quincy Anderson of Ozark, Missouri. In offering his explanation of Brigham Young's April 1852 sermon, Penrose denied that Young meant to say that Mormons worship Adam, or that Adam was the father of Jesus Christ. "As to Adam, he [Young] taught that he was God in the sense of being at the head of the human family . . . and in the Patriarchal order he will be the personage with whom they will have to do, and the only one in that capacity."⁹³

Penrose's letter was published without his permission in the Reorganized Church's *Saints' Herald*. Penrose thereupon reprinted the letter in the *Deseret News* with the following carefully worded explanation:

Anyone who has carefully read the discourse . . . will perceive that our brief statement of its purport is correct, that there is nothing in one that is in conflict with the other that we have neither "apologized for" nor disputed anything contained in that one sermon, which has been so much misunderstood and perverted by the enemies of our later venerable president. We are familiar with the doctrine he taught and which he did not attempt fully to explain in the discourse which has been published. And it should be understood that the views entertained by the great leader and inspired servant of the Lord, were not expressed as principles to be accepted by mankind as essential to salvation. Like the Prophet Joseph Smith, his mind was enlightened as to many things which were beyond a common understanding, and the declaration which would bring upon him the opposition of the ignorant.

Penrose indicated that "[t]here are men in the church who entertain ideas of a more advanced nature, some of which, although they may be expressed in public . . . are not put forth as binding upon any person . . ."

That which President Young put forth in the discourse referred to, is not preached either to the Latter-day Saints or to the world as a part of the creed of the Church. In answering the letter of our correspondent we simply explained in private that which was asked in private, so that he might understand the tenor of President Young's views, and not with any intention of advocating or denying his doctrine, or of controverting anything that may have been said upon the subject by opponents of his utterances.⁹⁴

One implication of these remarks—i.e., that Young's belief *could* have been valid—was not amplified. The heart of Penrose's statement to readers of the *Deseret News* was simply this: regardless of the meaning of Young's dogma, it did not represent binding or official Church doctrine.

In September 1902, Penrose published a lengthier article, entitled "Our Father Adam," in the *Improvement Era*, which in a sense marked the first major effort by the Church to "explain" Brigham's declaration that "Adam was our God and the only God with whom we have to do." The substance of his remarks followed closely what had been suggested in the *Deseret News* two and a half years earlier—principally, that Young was being misinterpreted, and that his comments were better understood when taken in con-

junction with the concept of patriarchal order. Wrote Penrose, "The views then expressed were uttered in a single sermon, which created so much comment that the speaker did not afterward enter into further details or explanation." "Opponents" of Mormonism were "very fond of quoting isolated passages" from Young's 1852 sermon, but ignored the "hundreds of illusions" to that "Supreme Being" which Young made throughout the course of his life. Moreover, Young's theory, he again explained with a certain inconsistency in logic, had never been "formulated or adopted" by the Church.⁹⁵

Although arguments such as these were to become the standard "Church" approach to the issue, some Church leaders were not willing to gloss over Brigham Young's beliefs. In February 1902 Bishop Edward Bunker, Jr., of Bunkerville, Nevada, wrote to Church President Joseph F. Smith explaining that a recently returned missionary had been "advicating the Doctorn [*sic*] that Adam is the very eternal Father in the Godhead and the Father of Jesus Christ and that Pres Kelch so taught the Elders in that mission I say the Doctorn [*sic*] is *Faulse* [*sic*] . . ." ⁹⁶ In response to Bunker's quest for clarification, President Smith appears also to have chosen his words carefully:

It is certainly unwise for the Elders or any other member of the Church to advocate doctrines that are not clearly set forth in the revealed word of God, and concerning which, in consequence, difference of opinion exist While it is far from my purpose to stifle thought and free speech among the brethren, or to brand as "false doctrine" any and every mistery [*sic*] of the kingdom, it is nevertheless [*sic*] my wish and my advice, in which Presidents Winder and Lund, my counselors, heartly join, that the Elders should not make a practise of preaching upon these abstruse themes, these partly revealed principles, respecting which there are such wide differences of belief.

What is called the Adam God doctrine may properly be classed among the mysteries. The full truth concerning it has not been revealed to us; and until it is revealed all wild speculations, sweeping assertions and dogmatic declarations relative thereto, are out of place and improper. We disapprove of them and especially the public expression of such views. . . .

President Smith then identified the accepted Church belief as being that Adam was Michael, the Ancient of Days, and that he held a patriarchal position as "head of the human family." He remarked that "Christ is not Adam, nor is Adam Christ, but both are eternal Gods, and it may even be said Fathers, since they are the parents of eternal or spiritual children." The President concluded by saying, "As to the personality and position of each God, and as to which all is the greater, these are matters immaterial at the present time, and are best but an unprofitable speculation. Let us be content with what is plainly revealed on the subject, namely; that though there be Lords many and Gods many as the Apostle Paul declares, yet to us there is but one God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."⁹⁷

A more forceful endorsement of Brigham Young's innovation apparently occurred when B. H. Roberts, a member of the First Council of Seventy since 1888, participated in a debate with Reverend C. Van Der Donckt in 1902. In a ringing, but ultimately ambiguous tribute, Roberts said:

Some of the sectarian ministers are saying that we "Mormons" are ashamed of the doctrine announced by President Brigham Young to the effect that Adam will thus be the God of this world. No, friends, it is not that we are ashamed of that doctrine. If you see any change come over our countenances, when this doctrine is named, it is surprise, astonishment, that any one at all capable of grasping the largeness and extent of the universe—the grandeur of existence and the possibilities in man for growth, for progress, should be so lean of intellect, should have such a paucity of understanding, as to call it in question at all. That is what our change of countenance means—not shame for the doctrine Brigham Young taught.⁹⁸

The First Presidency, as such, first became publicly involved in the issue in 1909 when they issued a statement on "The Origin of Man," directed principally at evolutionary questions. In this they explained that "Adam our great progenitor, 'The First Man,' was, like Christ, a pre-existent spirit, and like Christ he took upon him an appropriate body, the body of a man, and so became a 'living soul.'"⁹⁹ While this official declaration had not dealt with the Adam-God question, nor specified the method by which Adam "took upon him an appropriate body," it did generate sufficient discussion that President Joseph F. Smith, as the editor of the *Improvement Era*, published the following editorial:

Whether the mortal bodies of men evolved in natural processes to present perfection, through the direction and power of God; whether the first parents of our generation, Adam and Eve, were transplanted from another sphere, with immortal tabernacles, which became corrupted through sin and the partaking of natural foods, in the process of time; whether they were born here in mortality, as other mortals have been, are questions not fully answered in the revealed word of God.¹⁰⁰

Two years later, in March 1912, the First Presidency placed another statement, more explicitly on Adam-God, in the *Improvement Era*. The language reflects an apparent debt to the previous writings of editor Charles W. Penrose, who became an Apostle in 1904 and was now a member of the First Presidency. In part the statement read,

Speculations as to the career of Adam before he came to the earth are of no real value. We learn by revelation that he was Michael, the Archangel, and that he stands at the head of his posterity on earth (Doctrine and Covenants, Sect. 107:53–56). Dogmatic assertions do not take the place of revelation, and we should be satisfied with that which is accepted as doctrine, and not discuss matters that, after all disputes, are merely matters of theory.¹⁰¹

While it was not specified which “dogmatic assertions” were in question, the message was unmistakable.

A few weeks later at a special priesthood meeting held during the Church’s annual conference, President Penrose reportedly read a letter received by the First Presidency which stated that some patriarchs had been teaching the Adam-God doctrine to Church members. Penrose then read from D & C 19 and 107 in refutation of the belief and, according to Thomas Clawson’s journal, argued that “Brigham Young did not qualify his remark which were taken in longhand and there may have been somethings said which unless further explained might be misconstrewed [*sic*] . . .

Prest. Jos F. Smith then said that he was in full accord with what Prest Penrose had said and that Prest. Brigham Young when he delivered that sermon only expressed his own views and that they were not corobirated [*sic*] by the word of the Lord in the Standard works of the Church[.]

After describing how the Church’s scriptures were voted upon and sustained “as Standards of the Church,” President Smith stated: “Now all doctrine if it can’t be established by these standards is not to be taught or promulgated [*sic*] by members.”¹⁰²

Four years later the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve again addressed the issue, in a pamphlet entitled “The Father and the Son.” The purpose of this publication was to clarify title and role definitions of God the Father and Jesus Christ. The Presidency stated, unequivocally, “God the Eternal Father, whom we designate by the exalted name-title ‘Elohim,’ is the literal Parent of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and of the spirits of the human race.”¹⁰³ This, notwithstanding some definitional imprecision, seems a clear rejection of at least part of Brigham’s understanding, for Mormons had always distinguished “Elohim” from Adam (i.e., Michael).¹⁰⁴

Despite the seeming finality of this language, questions still persisted. President Penrose, who had continued to speak regularly on the subject, again responded, this time in General Conference, April 6, 1916:

There still remains, I can tell by the letters I have alluded to, [i.e., those sent to the First Presidency] an idea among some of the people that Adam was and is the Almighty and Eternal God [T]he notion has taken hold of some of our brethren that Adam is the being that we should worship I am sorry that has not been rectified long ago, because plain answers have been given to brethren and sisters who write and desire to know about it, and yet it still lingers, and contentions arise in regard to it, and there should be no contentions among Latter-day Saints

Who was the person Adam prayed to? Adam prayed to God So Adam was neither the Father, nor the Son, nor the Holy Ghost, was he? Then who was he? Why, we are told he was Michael in his first estate, and as Adam he will stand at the head of his race.¹⁰⁵

A few years later Penrose was even more explicit as he affirmed that “Jesus of Nazareth, born of the virgin Mary, was literally and truly the Son of the Father, the Eternal God, not of Adam.”¹⁰⁶

Thus it was Penrose more than any of his colleagues who articulated the new, “official” interpretation of or response to Brigham Young’s theological innovation. Indeed, his logic and interpretation became the pattern for virtually all twentieth-century Mormon responses to Adam-God.

IV

We warn you against the dissemination of doctrines which are not according to the scriptures and which are alleged to have been taught by some of the General Authorities of past generations. Such, for instance, is the Adam-God theory. We denounce that theory and hope that everyone will be cautioned against this and other kinds of false doctrine.

Spencer W. Kimball, 1976

As time passed, the repudiation of Young’s teachings on Adam-God became more pronounced. President Herber J. Grant wrote quite bluntly to an inquirer in 1931: “[To claim] that Adam had passed on to celestial glory through resurrection before he came here, and that afterwards he was appointed to this earth to die again, the second time becoming mortal . . . is not scriptural or according to the truth.”¹⁰⁷

John A. Widtsoe, in his celebrated series of apologetic articles for the *Improvement Era* later republished as *Evidences and Reconciliations*, was even less restrained. To Widtsoe, “[t]hose who peddle the well-worn Adam-God myth” relied on “[a] long series of absurd and false deductions” Referring to Brigham’s April 1852 sermon and following Penrose’s lead, Widtsoe continued,

Certain statements there are made confusing if read superficially, but very clear if read with their context. Enemies of President Brigham Young and of the Church have taken advantage of the opportunity and have used these statements repeatedly and widely to do injury to the reputation of President Young and the Mormon people. An honest reading of this sermon and of other reported discourses of President Brigham Young proves that the great second President of the Church held no such views as have been put into his mouth in the form of the Adam-God myth.¹⁰⁸

“Brigham Young,” continued Widtsoe, “held the accepted doctrine of the Church, that God, the Father, and not Adam, is the earthly Father of Jesus President Young merely followed the established doctrine of the Church.” Moreover, again with reference to the 1852 sermon, “nowhere can an intelligent reader confuse Adam with either member of the Godhead.”

It should be noted that Widtsoe—and most later commentators on this subject—appears to have the misconception that Brigham Young’s Adam-God theory alleged that Adam was Elohim. As has been previously discussed, Young, while placing Adam in the position most Latter-day Saints today

would reserve for Elohim, distinguished between “Father Adam” and one or two grandfather figures. One of the latter was Jehovah, Adam’s father (thus the grandfather to Adam’s descendants, including Christ); and the other was Elohim, Adam’s grandfather.¹⁰⁹

Although other Church authorities have spoken against the Adam-God doctrine in recent decades, the most conspicuous spokesmen on the subject have been Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., and Mark E. Petersen. Smith, who as early as 1939 had asserted that Brigham Young’s 1852 sermon was “in all probability . . . erroneously transcribed,”¹¹⁰ published an essay entitled, “Adam is Not the Father of Jesus Christ,” in partial refutation of this sermon. After citing several Young statements, Smith said, “It is very clear from these expressions that President Brigham Young did not believe and did not teach, that Jesus Christ was begotten by Adam. He taught that Adam *died* and that Jesus Christ redeemed him.”¹¹¹ [Emphasis in original.]

Mark E. Petersen is the author of the book presently accepted by the Church as the “official” response to the subject: *Adam, Who is He?* (1976).¹¹² His approach draws heavily on his predecessors, Penrose, Widtsoe and Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr. The preface states:

We accept the ancient and modern scriptures as the word of God. They are our unerring guides. But some teach doctrines contrary to the scripture. Under these circumstances it is well to remember President Joseph Fielding Smith, who said: “If I ever say anything contrary to the scriptures, the scriptures prevail.” It is so with everyone.

In commenting on this later in the text, he adds, “This applies to all, even to Brigham Young.” Elder Petersen’s main argument, however, centers on the alleged mistranscription of Brigham Young’s April 1852 sermon.¹¹³ He also asks, of a sermon by Young in which the President separated the identities of Elohim and Adam, “Then could Adam possibly be Elohim, as some say?” Expanding on this point later, he continues,

We do not know what part Michael played in the creation of this earth. President Young did not make it clear. But that he did take part, President Young declares with certainty. The very fact that he did, the very fact that Elohim and Jehovah did likewise, the three working in a “quorum capacity,” as President Young explains, again clears the air so far as Michael being Deity is concerned. He was not Deity. He was the Archangel working with Deity.¹¹⁴

Like Widtsoe, this author believes the pivotal question was whether Young equated Adam with Elohim.

The most significant recent comment on this subject by a Mormon leader—and the first public injunction by a Church President in decades—came during the October 1976 conference of the Church. President Spencer W. Kimball addressed the priesthood session, and, in the midst of his comments proclaimed the following:

We warn you against the dissemination of doctrines which are not according to the scriptures and which are alleged to have been taught by some of the General Authorities of past generations. Such, for instance, is the Adam-God theory. We denounce that theory and hope that everyone will be cautioned against this and other kinds of false doctrine.¹¹⁵

That the subject, despite all this, has remained an active one is evidenced by the continued denunciations of Adam-God by Church authorities right up to the present day. One of the most widely publicized of these was a speech by Apostle Bruce R. McConkie in June 1980 to students at Brigham Young University in which he stated:

There are those who believe, or say they believe, that Adam is our Father and our God, that he is the Father of our spirits and our bodies and that he is the one we worship. The devil keeps this heresy alive as a means of obtaining converts to cultism. It is contrary to the whole plan of salvation set forth in the scriptures. Anyone who has read the Book of Moses, and anyone who has received the temple endowment and who yet believes the Adam-God theory does not deserve to be saved.¹¹⁶

V

Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored.

Aldous Huxley

The Adam-God doctrine has been a sensitive subject for most Latter-day Saints from the very day it was introduced to the Church. It is apparent that a substantial—and ultimately a dominant—number of Mormons rejected what Brigham Young held to be one of the “precious things of the kingdom.” For Young clearly believed that Adam was the father of the spirits of mankind in addition to being the first procreator of mankind’s physical bodies; that Adam came to this earth as a resurrected and exalted being; that he “fell” to a mortal state of existence in order to procreate mortal bodies; and that Adam was the spiritual and physical father of Jesus Christ. Had these beliefs evolved in to an official doctrine of the church, one supposes there would be relatively little controversy to discuss—but, they did not. If one accepts at face value the sermons of President Young and his colleagues, and their successors, on Adam-God, it is apparent that official (or even quasi-official) teachings on the subject have undergone considerable change.

NOTES

¹*Deseret News*, vol. 2 (April 17, 1852), no. 12 (hereafter cited as *DN*). Scholarly literature dealing with the Adam-God doctrine has been limited to Rodney Turner’s Master of Arts thesis, “The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology,” (Department of Religion, Brigham Young University, August 1953); the discovery of many heretofore unknown primary documents has now rendered it incomplete. Other treatments of Adam-God are largely slanted either “for” or “against” the doctrine. The latter group includes Elder Mark E. Petersen’s *Adam, Who is He?* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976) and Elwood G. Norris’ *Be Not Deceived: A*

Scriptural Refutation of the Adam-God Theory (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers, 1978); both of these books ignore virtually every report—public or private—of Brigham Young’s teachings on the subject. A few fundamentalist or “anti-Mormon” treatments of Adam-God are Ogden Kraut’s *Michael/Adam* (n.p., n.d.; but published in 1972); Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality?* (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm Co., 1972), pp. 173–178; Melaine Layton’s “And this is Life Eternal that they might know Thee, the only True God? Adam?” (n.p., n.d.); Chris Alex Vlachos, “Adam is God,” *Journal of Pastoral Practice*, vol. III (1979), no. 2, pp. 93–119; as well as a large number of articles, tracts and pamphlets by authors such as Fred Collier, Robert R. Black, Francis M. Darter, W. Gordon Hackney and Joseph W. Musser, most of which are on file at the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as LDS Archives).

²*Journal of Discourses by Brigham Young, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, His Two Counsellors, the Twelve Apostles, and Others*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: LDS Book Depot, 1855–86), vol. 1, pp 50–51 (hereafter cited as *JD*).

³Samuel Rogers Journal, April 16, 1852, vol. 1, p. 179, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as Lee Library).

⁴Hosea Stout Diary, April 9, 1852, p. 36, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

⁵Wilford Woodruff Journal (hereafter *WWJ*), April 9, 1852, LDS Archives. It is presently unknown what President Young may have taught privately about Adam-God at this early time, but his beliefs were apparently being embraced by other general authorities. The next day, April 10, Elder Albert Carrington announced: “Some have said that I was very presumptuous to say this Brother Brigham was my God and Saviour, Bro. Joseph was his God and one that gave Joseph the keys of the kingdom was his God which was Peter. Jesus Christ was his God and [the] Father of Jesus Christ was Adam.” (*WWJ*, April 10, 1852) Carrington’s remarks closely parallel certain aspects of the patriarchal order doctrine discussed below.

⁶Discourse, August 28, 1852, reported in *JD* 6:274–75; also found in *DN*, September 18, 1852.

⁷William Clayton Journal, October 3, 1852, LDS Archives. Orson Pratt’s beliefs are further detailed in the Thomas Evans Jeremy Journal (LDS Archives), entry for September 30, 1852: “He also said that he believed that Jesus Christ and Adam are brothers in the Spirit, and that Adam is not the God that he is praying unto.”

⁸William Clayton to Brigham Young, October 4, 1852, LDS Archives.

⁹Discourse, October 23, 1853, reported in *JD* 2:6. This disbelief in the biblical story of Adam’s creation became clearer from some remarks made one year later when Young stated that he had “not read the Bible for many years,” partly due to a professed lack of time. After citing a passage from the Bible, Young said, “I feel inclined here to make a little scripture. . . . [W]ere I under the necessity of making scripture extensively I should get Bro. Heber C. Kimball to make it, and then I would quote it. I have seen him do this when any of the Elders have been pressed by their opponents, and were a little at a loss; he would make a scripture for them to suite the case, that never was in the bible, though none the less true, and make their opponents swallow it as the words of an apostle, or [one] of the prophets. The Elder would then say, ‘Please turn to that scripture, (gentlemen) and read it for yourselves.’ No, they could not turn to it but they recollected it like the devil for fear of being caught. I will venture to make a little.” (Discourse, October 8, 1854, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Archives)

It is noteworthy that this sermon constituted one of Young’s most forceful statements on Adam-God (discussed below). As Young explained, what mattered was that his words were inspired by the Holy Ghost. This was a frequent theme during his administration as president of the church.

¹⁰*Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star*, Liverpool (hereafter cited as *LDSMS*), vol. XV (November 26, 1853), no. 48, pp. 769–70. The caption under the title stated “(From the *Journal of Discourses*).” This same excerpt appeared in the Church’s Australian publication, *The Zion’s Watchman* (Sidney), vol. 1 (September 16, 1854), nos. 18–19, pp. 137–39, with a supportive discourse printed on pages 139–44 by Elder John Jones.

¹¹*LDSMS*, vol. XV (December 3, 1853), no. 49, p. 780.

¹²*LDSMS*, vol. XV (December 10, 1853), no. 50, pp. 801–04.

¹³LDSMS, vol. XV (December 17, 1853), no. 51, p. 825.

¹⁴Discourse, February 19, 1854, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Archives. Young claimed that he addressed this issue “a year ago last conference” which would have been October 1853. His recollection of the remarks given, however, are identical with those given during his April 9, 1852, discourse.

Wilford Woodruff attended Young’s February 9, 1854 sermon and recorded in his diary on the same date: “He [Brigham Young] said that our God was Father Adam He was the Father of the Savior Jesus Christ—Our God was no more or less than ADAM, Michael the Arkangel.”

¹⁵Discourse, February 5, 1852, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Archives.

¹⁶Discourse, January 12, 1862, reported in *JD* 9:148; also *cf.* Young’s remarks on February 8, 1857, reported in *JD* 4:215–19 (cited below). In their attempt to prove that Brigham taught exclusively what is presently accepted as orthodox doctrine, several church apologists have modified these key remarks by Young as found in *JD* 9:148; *cf.* this passage in John A. Widtsoe, comp., *Discourses of Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1925), p. 159 [or p. 104 of the 1973 ed.]. This error was further promulgated by Joseph Fielding Smith in *Answers to Gospel Questions* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1966), vol. 5, pp. 121–128, excerpted in the 1972–73 Melchizedek Priesthood manual bearing the same title (Salt Lake City: The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1972), pp. 20–22; and by Mark E. Petersen, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–16.

¹⁷Smith’s most direct sermons on this subject were given just before his death on April 7, 1844 (the “King Follett Discourse”) and June 16, 1844 (concerning the plurality of gods); see Notes 18 and 47 with supporting text, below.

¹⁸Some difficulty exists in specifying the precise identity of “Elohim” when discussed by early church authorities, given that Joseph Smith (and others) identified Elohim as a title denoting “many gods” (*cf.* Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Period I*, 7 vols., B. H. Roberts (ed.), (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1973), vol. VI, pp. 475–76 (hereafter cited as *HC*). Smith noted the propensity of biblical scholars to identify Elohim as one god—he who created this earth, an interpretation still maintained by scholars; *cf.* *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Chicago, 1977), *Micropaedia*, vol. III, p. 863. This source noted, “Though *elohim* is plural in form, it is understood in the singular sense.” [emphasis in original] However, Smith argued that “[i]n the very beginning the Bible shows there is a plurality of Gods beyond the power of refutation The word *Eloheim* ought to be in the plural all the way through—Gods. The heads of the Gods appointed one God for us” (*HC*, vol. VI, p. 47; emphasis in original) In this sermon, the Prophet also claimed to have gleaned this perception from “the papyrus which is now in my house.” This correlates well with Joseph’s Book of Abraham (chapters 4 and 5) which describes the creation process as having been performed by “the gods.”

A later interpretation by Brigham Young identified Adam as “the chief manager in that operation.” (Discourse, April 20, 1856, reported in *JD* 3:319; also *cf.* Heber C. Kimball’s discourse, June 12, 1860, reported in *JD* 8:243–44) This interpretation helped give credence to Young’s belief of Adam’s having been a god before his experiences upon this earth. If Young’s belief was also held by Joseph Smith, the possibility that Smith was referring to Adam when he used the term “Elohim” is a consideration.

The difficulty surrounding a precise definition for the term “Elohim” was addressed by the First Presidency in 1916 when they wrote, “‘Elohim,’ is the literal Parent of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and of the spirits of the human race.” (“The Father and the Son,” June 30, 1916; cited in James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971), vol. V, pp. 23–24 [hereafter cited as *MFP*]) When compared with Young’s sermons on Adam-God, it is apparent that Brigham would probably have replaced “Elohim” in the 1916 statement with “Adam”; however, he would *not* have equated Adam with Elohim, for the president clearly saw them as two *separate* personages. *Cf.* his remarks on April 9, 1852: “It is true that the earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely Eloheim, Yahovah, and Michael, these three forming a quorum . . . perfectly represented in the Deity as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” (reported in *JD* 1:51) Also *cf.* Note 46, below.

¹⁹Brigham Young, as reported in the Joseph F. Smith Journal, entry for June 17, 1871 (LDS Archives).

²⁰Young’s declaration of “Jehovah” being the “Father” over Adam during his mortality seems to imply that “Jehovah” was also the *creator* of Adam, a position directly contradicting

today's belief that Jehovah is Jesus Christ (cf. D & C 110:1–3; also 109:34, 42, 56, 68; 128:9; and James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ: A Study of the Messiah and His Mission according to Holy Scriptures both Ancient and Modern* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1971 ed.], pp. 36–38), and that both Jesus Christ and Adam were created by Elohim, their common Father in Heaven.

²¹Remarks given on June 26, 1854, reported in *LDSMS*, vol. XVI (August 5, 1854), no. 31, p. 482.

²²Remarks given on June 26, 1854, *ibid.*, p. 483.

²³Remarks given on June 28, 1854, *LDSMS*, vol. XVI (August 26, 1854), no. 34, p. 530.

²⁴Remarks given on June 28, 1854, *ibid.*, pp. 534–35.

²⁵WWJ, September 17, 1854. Young and Pratt had another discussion on October 1, 1854 where Young explained “about Adam begetting Christ after he had received his exaltation & that all have got to become Adams upon some Earth—or other.” (Historian's Office Journal, same date, vol. 17, p. 148, LDS Archives)

²⁶DN, October 12, 1854.

²⁷WWJ, October 8, 1854. Woodruff noted that J. D. Watt and himself recorded the conference minutes. Young's preliminary remarks suggest that this speech was given in response to Orson Pratt's dissensions regarding Adam-God.

²⁸Discourse, October 8, 1854, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives. Young followed his “text” (paraphrased from the Bible, I Corinthians viii, 5–6; cited below) with some remarks cited above in Note 9. The gist of Brigham's speech is also to be found in the John Pulsipher Papers, October 8, 1854, LDS Archives. Although not quoted above, Young claimed in this sermon that Adam physically died after his passage on this earth was completed (cf. D & C 107:53 and Moses 6:12); twenty-four years later he taught that Adam did *not* die, but that he was translated (cf. L. John Nuttall Journal, February 7, 1877, Lee Library [hereafter cited as Nuttall Journal]; also cf. discussion below on scriptural problems with the Adam-God doctrine). On the other hand, Joseph Smith reportedly taught that Adam was now a “just man made perfect”—i.e., a ministering servant to those previously sealed to eternal life, in spirit form (cf. Joseph Smith Diary, October 9, 1843 [recorded by Willard Richards], cited in Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, comps. and eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), p. 254; also cf. *HC*, vol. VI, pp. 51–52; and *Times & Seasons* (Nauvoo, Illinois: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1839–46), vol. IV (September 15, 1843), no. 21, pp. 331–32.

²⁹Joseph Lee Robinson Diary, entry dated “Oct. 6th.” [Young's sermon was on the 8th], p. 62, Lee Library (typescript); also cf. Journal of Thomas D. Brown, Southern Indian Mission, pp. 88–89, LDS Archives.

³⁰Samuel W. Richards Journal, March 25, 1855, pp. 7–8, Lee Library (typescript).

³¹*LDSMS*, vol. XVII (March 31, 1855), no. 13, pp. 194–95; also cf. vol. XVII (December 15, 1855), no. 50, p. 787. As noted, Franklin D. Richards supported Young's Adam-God doctrine. In 1856, the British LDS hymnal (*Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs, for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Europe* [11th edition, Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1856] contained a hymn (No. 306, p. 375) which defined the godhead as consisting of Adam, Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. This hymn did not appear in later editions of the hymnal, nor does any record exist of its publication in any American LDS hymnals.

³²Discourse, recorded by Thomas Bullock, April 25, 1855, LDS Archives.

³³Discourse, February 8, 1857, reported in *JD* 4:215–19; cf. Heber C. Kimball's approving remarks in *ibid.*, p. 222.

³⁴Discourse, October 7, 1857, reported in *JD* 5:331–32.

³⁵Discourse, October 9, 1859, reported in *JD* 7:285–86, 290. It is perhaps significant that during this same period, the First Presidency (Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball and Daniel H. Wells) issued a statement which specifically singled out Orson Pratt's teachings in *The Seer* (Washington, D.C.), that man was literally created out of the earth's dust (e.g., pp. 70, 275–79), stating: “With regard to the quotations and comments in the *Seer* as to Adam's having been

formed ‘out of the ground’ and ‘from the dust of the ground,’ &c, it is deemed wisest to let that subject remain without further explanation at present; for it is written that we are to receive ‘line upon line,’ according to our faith and capacities, and the circumstances attending our progress.” (January 29, 1860, cited in *MFP*, vol. II, p. 222)

This exact statement was reproduced in another First Presidency and Council of the Twelve censure of Pratt on August 23, 1865, cited in *ibid.*, pp. 233–34

³⁶WWJ, January 27, 1860.

³⁷Pratt’s remarks of April 4 and 5, 1860 (cited below) clearly have reference to D & C 29:42: “But, behold, I say unto you that I, the Lord God, gave unto Adam and unto his seed, that they should not die as to the temporal death, until I, the Lord God, should send forth angels to declare unto them repentance and redemption, through faith on the name of mine Only Begotten Son.” This revelation, announced by the Prophet Joseph in September 1830, was first published in the Book of Commandments (Zion: W. W. Phelps & Co., 1833), Chapter XXIX; it was later republished in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams & Co.), Section X; except for a few minor punctuation changes, today’s version is identical with both of these sources. Moses 5:4 is no less direct in meaning: Adam and Eve “heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden, speaking unto them”

³⁸April 4, 1860, Miscellaneous Papers, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Archives. Young apparently perceived himself to be protecting the Church from false doctrine, for in this same meeting he declared: “It is my duty to see that correct doctrine is taught and to guard the church from error, it is my calling.”

³⁹The two other instances were on December 16, 1867 (WWJ, same date) and May 14, 1876 (Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, same date, LDS Archives; cf. Journal of the Southern Utah Mission, same date, Lee Library.) Also cf. Brigham’s discourse of September 25, 1870, reported in *JD* 13:249–50; and his sermon of June 8, 1873, reported in the *DN*, June 18, 1873, pp. 308–09 (cited below).

⁴⁰Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, *Plural Marriage* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor’s Office, 1882), pp. 31, 36–37; Whitney’s testimony is somewhat tarnished, however, due to the fact that she was but fifteen years old when she married Smith, and that her published claims were not printed until thirty-nine years after the fact. Johnson’s account is found in his letter to George S. Gibbs (1903), typescript, LDS Archives. He wrote: “He [i.e., Joseph Smith] taught us that God was the great head of human procreation—was really and truly the father of both our spirits and our bodies. . . .” (p. 13) The value of Johnson’s record is also lessened since remembrance of this alleged incident came fifty-nine years after Smith’s death.

⁴¹Today’s D & C 27:11. Although James E. Talmage’s italic preface in today’s version states that this part of the revelation was received by Joseph Smith in September 1830, it did *not* appear in the revelation as it was first published in either the Book of Commandments (Chapter XXVIII) or in *The Evening and the Morning Star*, vol. I (March 1833), no. 10; both of these were dated September 4, 1830, and both had identical texts. The added text which constitutes verse 11 in today’s version was first published in the 1835 D & C (Section L). Joseph may not have first taught this principle until late 1833, for in a letter from Oliver Cowdery to John Whitmer, dated January 1, 1834 in Kirtland, he explained “Since I came down I have been informed from a proper source that the Angel Michael is no less than our father Adam, and Gabriel is Noah.” (Oliver Cowdery Letterbook, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California); also cf. his statement in the *Evening and Morning Star*, vol. 2 (May 1834), no. 20, p. 308; he may have learned this during a blessing by Joseph described in Note 44 below.

It is unclear, however, precisely when the significance of this “pre-earth” identity of Adam was first realized by Joseph, for in his 1836 “Vision of the Celestial Kingdom,” he claimed to have seen “Father Adam and Abraham and Michael and my father and my mother, [and] my brother Alvin. . . .” (Joseph Smith Diary, January 21, 1836, LDS Archives; emphasis mine.) The Prophet’s vision was canonized by the Church on April 3, 1976. The original handwritten “Manuscript History of the Church,” Book B-1, p. 695 (LDS Archives) recorded the vision as found in Smith’s diary; but the reference to Michael was deleted when the manuscript was first published in the *Deseret News*, September 4, 1852. The canonized version (now D & C 137) has also omitted the Michael reference; cf. *HC*, vol. II, pp. 380–81; and T. B. H. Stenhouse, *The Rocky Mountain Saints* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1873), pp. 63–64.

One conceivable explanation for the 1836 account is Joseph Smith’s possible role in originating the use of “Adam” (and “Eve”) as a name title—in this case “Father Adam” and “Michael-

(Adam)" being two different personages. (Cf. Moses 1:34 and 4:26) It is significant that Brigham Young is reported to have said in 1845 in the Nauvoo Temple that "[i]n the first place the name of man is given, a new name, Adam, signifying the first man,—or Eve, the first Woman—Adam's name was more ancient than he was—It was the name of a man long before him, who enjoyed the priesthood. . . . After his fall, another name was give [sic] to Adam." (Heber C. Kimball Journal, No. 93, November 21, 1845 to January 7, 1846, entry for December 27, 1845, LDS Archives) Just fourteen months later, Young stated: ". . . we are all father Adams. . . . I want to stop your calling me father Young, in the Priesthood, the term properly applies to father Adam, & to our father in heaven." (Willard Richards Journal, entry for February 16, 1847, LDS Archives)

⁴²Discourse, before August 8, 1839, reported in the Willard Richards Pocket Companion, as cited in Ehat and Cook, op. cit., pp. 8–9; cf. *HC*, vol. III, pp. 385–87. According to Orson Hyde's "A Diagram of the Kingdom of God," (*LDSMS*, vol. 9 [January 15, 1847], pp. 23–24) the doctrine of patriarchal order principally defined the future structural order within the highest degree of the celestial kingdom. With Adam at the head of the human family, other families would be sealed in "patriarchal order" to their priesthood leader (now understood to be the immediate father), with he being sealed to his priesthood leader in succession to Adam. Adam in turn would be sealed to Jesus Christ who would then be sealed to the Father. LDS theology maintains that all of these participating sealed priesthood leaders would, with their wives, be gods capable of their own eternal increase.

⁴³Discourse, October 5, 1840, original ms. in handwriting of Robert B. Thompson, LDS Archives, as cited in Ehat and Cook, op. cit., pp. 39–40; cf. *HC*, vol. IV, pp. 207–09.

⁴⁴Cf. D & C 107:53–56 in today's edition. This revelation reportedly was received on March 28, 1835 in Kirtland; however, the Kirtland Revelation Book's manuscript version (LDS Archives) does not contain these verses. Today's text is virtually identical with that in the 1835 D & C. Verses 53–55 are quoted almost verbatim in a blessing given by the Prophet to his father on December 18, 1833, recorded by Oliver Cowdery in the Manuscript History of the Church, same date, LDS Archives (cited in Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1972], pp. 38–39). This passage was omitted, however, when John Taylor printed this part of the "History of Joseph Smith" in the *Times and Seasons*, vol. VI (July 1, 1845), no. 12, p. 947.

⁴⁵D & C 78:15–16, today's edition. While the present version is practically identical to the 1835 edition's text, the earlier handwritten text in the Kirtland Revelation Book is significantly different in form. "Holy One of Zion" is recorded there as "Holy One of Israel" [emphasis mine]; and the phrase "who hath established the foundations of Adam-ondi-Ahman" (vs. 15), as well as the important passage in vs. 16 which places Michael under Christ (cited above in the text) are not recorded at all. Joseph Smith's revision to this text was therefore made between March 1, 1832 (date given) and Fall 1835 when it was first published in the D & C; it was never typeset in the Book of Commandments.

⁴⁶Indeed, the apparent speaker in D & C 78 refers to himself not only as "Lord God" and "Holy One of Zion," but also as "your Redeemer"—a clear allusion to Christ. D & C 80, announced the same month, is even more explicit: ". . . your Redeemer, even Jesus Christ. . . ." Notably, Orson Pratt once testified in a church conference held on April 7, 1843 that "It [i.e., the Ancient of Days] cannot be the Father[.]" (*Times and Seasons*, vol. IV [May 15, 1843], no. 13, p. 204) While Joseph Smith—present during Pratt's sermon—corrected one statement in his speech concerning "fundamental parts," he did *not* object to Pratt's reasoning that the Ancient of Days (Adam) could *not* have been the Father (of mankind's spirits); cf. *HC*, vol. V, p. 339.

⁴⁷The evolution of Mormonism's Godhead doctrine is discussed in Thomas G. Alexander, "The Reconstruction of Mormon Doctrine: From Joseph Smith to Progressive Theology," *Sunstone*, vol. 5 (July–August 1980), no. 4, pp. 24–33. Joseph Smith's April 7, 1844 sermon has been reconstructed in Stan Larsen, "The King Follett Discourse: A Newly Amalgamated Text," *Brigham Young University Studies* (hereafter cited as *BYUS*), vol. 18 (Winter 1978), no. 2, pp. 193–208. Background data is found in Donald Q. Cannon, "The King Follett Discourse: Joseph Smith's Greatest Sermon in Historical Perspective," *ibid.*, pp. 179–92; and Van Hale, "The Doctrinal Impact of the King Follett Discourse," *ibid.*, pp. 209–25. The June 16, 1844, sermon is in *HC*, vol. VI, pp. 476–77; the belief in a patriarchal lineage of gods may have been taught by Hyrum Smith a year previous to Joseph's sermon (cf. George Laub Journal, April 27, 1843, LDS Archives, as cited in Eugene England, "George Laub's Nauvoo Journal," *BYUS*, vol. 18 (Winter 1978), no. 2, pp. 175–77. Shortly before his death, Hyrum Smith was also quoted as saying "there were

Prophets before Adam—and Joseph has the Spirit of all the Prophets.” (Thomas Bullock Journal, entry for April 28, 1844, LDS Archives)

⁴⁸*Warsaw Message*, February 4, 1844. One additional source is occasionally cited as further evidence of Joseph teaching Adam-God: this is a brief passage in the “anti-Mormon” *Nauvoo Expositor* (vol. I [June 7, 1844], no. 1, p. 2) where it mentions God’s “liability to fall with all his creations”; the assumption is that this is an allusion to Brigham’s belief that Adam “decestralized” himself upon coming to this earth. The context of this passage, however, clearly shows that God will “fall” if he “varies from the law unto which he is subjected,” a Mormon belief which has nothing to do with the Adam-God doctrine.

⁴⁹John Taylor, *The Government of God* (London: W. Bowden, 1852), pp. 28, 30; Orson Pratt, “The Kingdom of God,” Part I, (October 31, 1848) in his *A Series of Pamphlets* (Liverpool: R. James, 1851); Parley P. Pratt, *A Voice of Warning* (New York: W. Sanford, 1837), esp. pp. 85–86, 96, and 111, reprint edition (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978). The complete absence of any hint that Adam-God was taught before 1852 is further substantiated by a literature search of over 1,000 doctrinal books, epistles, broadsides, hymnals, “anti-Mormon” texts, speeches, etc. published between 1826 and 1852, which failed to turn up any evidence. (A complete list of items reviewed is in Chad Flake, ed., *A Mormon Bibliography, 1830–1930* [Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1978], pp. 814–15.) Consultation with several individuals familiar with unpublished manuscripts and diaries dating from this period (e.g. Peter L. Crawley, James B. Allen, Reed C. Durham, Jr., H. Michael Marquardt, and others) also yielded nothing. As one member wrote, Brigham Young’s April 9, 1852, Adam-God sermon represented “new doctrine.” (Lorenzo Brown Journal, April 10, 1852, Lee Library)

⁵⁰Early references to Adam-God often identified it in terms of Brigham Young’s April 1852 sermon, thereby suggesting that this represented its initial presentation; this is readily seen in the sermons and writings cited throughout the present text and notes.

⁵¹Solomon F. Kimball Papers, “Sacred History,” LDS Archives. Wrote Stenhouse, “Brother Heber had considerable pride in relating to his intimate friends that he was the source of Brigham’s revelation on the ‘Adam-deity.’ In a moment of reverie, Heber said: ‘Brother Brigham, I have an idea that Adam is not only our father, but our God.’ That was enough; Brigham snapped at the novelty, and announced it with all the flourish of a new made revelation.” (op. cit., p. 561, fn.)

⁵²*Cf.* Gary James Bergera, “The Orson Pratt—Brigham Young Controversies: Conflict Within the Quorums, 1853–1868,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, vol. XIII (Summer 1980), no. 2, pp. 7–49.

⁵³April 5, 1860, Miscellaneous Papers, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Archives. On October 7, 1869, however, Pratt taught that “[s]ome angels are Gods, and still possess the lower office called angels. Adam is called Archangel, yet he is a God.” (reported in *JD* 13:187)

⁵⁴Discourse, May 20, 1860, reported in *DN*, June 27, 1860, pp. 129–30.

⁵⁵Discourse, October 8, 1861, manuscript entitled “A Few Words of Doctrine,” Brigham Young Collection, LDS Archives.

⁵⁶Many of Young’s public statements on Adam-God became allusionary and less direct than those previously given. For a sample of several minor statements by Brigham related to Adam-God, *cf.* *JD* 9:283 (February 23, 1862); *JD* 11:119–23 (June 18, 1865); *JD* 11:326–27 (February 10, 1867); *WWJ*, May 12, 1867; *LDSMS*, vol. 31, p. 267 (February 4, 1869); *JD* 13:249–50 (September 25, 1870); *JD* 14:136 (May 21, 1871); *JD* 16:46 (May 18, 1873); and *JD* 18:326 (December 31, 1876).

Other church members such as Eliza R. Snow published additional support in favor of Young’s beliefs on Adam-God. This body of literature is quite large; due to both space limitations and the nonauthoritative nature of these statements, they will not be discussed. For a partial treatment, however, see Rodney Turner, *op. cit.*; a more complete collection without commentary may be examined in Fred Collier, “The Mormon God,” (unpublished manuscript), copy on file in the LDS Archives and Lee Library.

⁵⁷Discourse, July 8, 1863, reported in *JD*:10:230–31.

⁵⁸Discourse, November 13, 1863, reported in *JD* 13:308–09.

⁵⁹Discourse, April 17, 1870, reported in *JD* 13:311.

⁶⁰WWJ, December 16, 1867. Young's comments were made only one week after he re-established the School's operation. Also cf. Brigham Young, discourse, November 30, 1862, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Archives; and WWJ, December 11, 1869. The LDS Journal History's entry (LDS Archives) for this last date is almost identical, except the words "for that was our Father Adam" have been handwritten and inserted above the typed version which omitted this phrase.

⁶¹"Minutes of the School of the Prophets, Provo, Utah, June 8, 1868," LDS Archives (excerpted from a typescript copy located at the Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City).

⁶²Remarks given on October 15, 1870, *Salt Lake School of the Prophets Minute Book*, LDS Archives. [Emphasis in original.] Apostle Orson Hyde was recorded three months later to have taught to a Manti, Utah audience that "Adam is our God for this Planet (Earth)." (Cf. Jens Christian Anderson Weiby Daybook, as well as his Diary entries for January 25, 1871, LDS Archives).

⁶³*Salt Lake School of the Prophets Minute Book*, entry for June 9, 1873, LDS Archives. Most of these men were prominent members of the church; Wallace became president of the Salt Lake Stake in 1874 (through 1876), and Joseph F. Smith became president of the church in 1901.

⁶⁴Remarks given on October 15, 1870, Joseph F. Smith Journal, LDS Archives.

⁶⁵Remarks given on June 9, 1873, *Salt Lake School of the Prophets Minute Book*, LDS Archives.

⁶⁶T. B. H. Stenhouse, op. cit., p. 492. Stenhouse continued, "But of them all, one only, Orson Pratt, has dared to make a public protest against that doctrine." The only other known statement made by Young which suggests (but does not directly state) a tie-in of Adam-God to Joseph Smith was made on June 8, 1873, cited below.

⁶⁷Discourse, June 8, 1873, reported in *DN*, June 18, 1873, pp. 308–09. This is the only known statement by Young where he directly claims that God revealed "that Adam is our father and God" to him.

⁶⁸*Salt Lake School of the Prophets Minute Book*, entry for June 9, 1893. Notably, "Prest. Young queried wither the brethren thought he was too liberal in launching out on this doctrine before the Gentiles."

⁶⁹Cf. "Memoranda" of L. John Nuttall to Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, June 3, 1892, Lee Library. Nuttall stated that "[a] copy of the Lecture is kept at the St. George Temple, in which President Young refers to Adam in his creation, &c." The transcript of this lecture as found in Nuttall's journal (cited below) was probably made directly from the temple copy. According to Wilford Woodruff (WWJ, February 1, 1877) and Nuttall (Nuttall Journal, February 1 and 2, 1877), the lecture was first given by Young on February 1, 1877.

⁷⁰Nuttall Journal, February 7, 1877, Nuttall—much impressed by Young's remarks—closed this entry saying, "I felt myself much blessed in being permitted to Associate with such men and hear such instructions as they savored of life to me."

⁷¹Two of the only articles published during this period which supportively mention Adam-God concepts appeared in *The Contributor* (Salt Lake City: Contributor Company, 1879–96; this was the forerunner to the church's *Improvement Era*); cf. Thomas W. Brookbank, "Biblical Cosmogony," vol. VI (April 1887), p. 218; and J. F. Gibbs, "Our Father and God," vol. VI, p. 78. The only other prominent pro-Adam-God article published during this period was Joseph Taylor's speech cited below.

⁷²Edward Stevenson Diary, entry for March 7, 1880, LDS Archives. "Bp. Hess," in attendance, "said that he could endorse all that had been said although he did not understand all yet it made him feel good & like liveing his religion."

⁷³*Ibid.*, entry for March 4, 1882.

⁷⁴Abraham H. Cannon Journal, February 22, 1888, vol. 10, pp. 178–79, Lee Library. On Sunday, June 23, 1889, George Q. Cannon reiterated his beliefs to his son, Abraham, who recorded: "He believes that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, and that Adam is His Father and our God[.]" (Abraham H. Cannon Journal, same date) Also cf. George Q. Cannon's speech published in May 1889, *LDSMS*, vol. 51, p. 278; as well as "The Origin of Man," *LDSMS*, vol. 23 (October 1861), no. 41, p. 654.

⁷⁵The speech was read in the Logan temple on June 2, 1888, and published in the *Deseret News Weekly*, December 29, 1888, pp. 19–27; the *News* published no commentary other than the speech's text. One presumes that the talk covered novel ground or it would not have been worth reporting. If this is true, one might imply that the 1877 lecture at the veil by Brigham Young was no longer being given as early as 1888.

⁷⁶Eg. Ogden Kraut, op. cit., p. 101. This individual was an old Sunday School teacher and close friend of C. Jess Groesbeck; according to Groesbeck, this member, after several conversations where he attempted to discourage Groesbeck's questions on Adam-God [he reportedly discounted the doctrine as "Brigham's theory"], one day "broke down" and recalled his surprise when upon receiving his endowment in the Salt Lake Temple in 1902, to learn that "Adam was our Father and God" and that "Eve bore our spirits." Upon returning from his mission in 1904 or 1905, he asked his father about this teaching in the temple who declined to discuss it; when he again went through shortly thereafter, the Adam-God portion had been removed. This member was in his late 70's when he related the incident to Groesbeck in 1959 [the same information was related to Groesbeck frequently over the next four years until 1963], and reportedly he had a very sharp memory; he died in the late 1960's. (Personal correspondence, C. Jess Groesbeck to D. J. Buerger, January 27, 1981, June 16, 1981, and telephone conversation on June 19, 1981.)

While this is the sole testimony that Young's lecture was taught in LDS temples as late as 1904 or 1905, a few items which may support it should be mentioned: First, the timing. If the Young lecture was to be removed, this period—in the midst of intense national scrutiny due to the Reed Smoot hearings in Washington, D.C.—would seemingly have been the most likely. Additionally, the *Salt Lake Tribune's* 1906 expose which trailed Walter Wolfe's Smoot testimony claimed that during the lecture before the veil, "Especially is it taught that Adam was not made out of the dust of this earth; that he was begotten as any other man is begotten, and that when he came here he brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. I have heard that the sermon was the one delivered by Brigham Young at the dedication of the St. George Temple." (*Mysteries of the Endowment House and Oath of Vengeance of the Mormon Church* [Salt Lake City: *Salt Lake Tribune*, 1906], p. 8) Notably, however, this basic claim was repeated in 1920 by Stewart Martin, *The Mystery of Mormonism* (London: Odhams Press, Ltd.), p. 262; and again in 1931 by Dr. W. M. Paden in his *Temple Mormonism: Its Evolution, Ritual and Meaning* (New York: A. J. Montgomery) who claimed: "The church authorities do not emphasize this doctrine [i.e., Adam-God] today but it remains in their Temple ritual. . . ." (pp. 21, 26) More recent exposés do not mention Adam-God as being part of the endowment ceremony.

Despite these exposés and this one testimony, however, it would be imprudent to claim that Young's lecture had therefore been regularly given in *all* of the temples, particularly in light of the evidence presented above in the text. It may well be that the lecture *was* given in the St. George Temple, at least until the late 1890s. This is supported by St. George Historical Record minutes (LDS Archives) on November 8, 1890, December 13, 1890, May 15, 1891, and May 22, 1891 wherein Edward Bunker, Sr. taught that "erroneous teaching was given in the Lecture at the Veil"; "he [Bunker] did not believe Adam was our God." The St. George stake high council forwarded the matter to the First Presidency for further review. (These minutes are cited in Fred C. Collier, comp., *Unpublished Revelations of the Prophets and Presidents of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, vol. 1 [Salt Lake City: Collier's Publishing Co., second edition, 1981, first printing], pp. 168–73.) One year later, ostensibly in response to this incident, L. John Nuttall's 1892 summary memorandum to the First Presidency (of events surrounding Brigham Young's 1877 St. George composition of the lecture at the veil) closed by stating that "A copy of the Lecture is kept at the St. George Temple, in which President Young refers to Adam in his creation, &c." Nuttall did not indicate that copies were also kept at the other two temples in Logan, which commenced operations in 1884, nor in Manti which began in 1888. Nor was mention made of the Salt Lake "Endowment House" (operations conducted during 1852–1889). Just eight days after Nuttall drafted this memorandum, Presidents Woodruff and Cannon declared that "it was not necessary that we should [teach] or endorse the doctrine that some men taught that Adam was the Father of Jesus Christ." (See Note 85, below) While this does not prove that Adam-God was not taught in temple ceremonies other than in St. George, it does suggest that official backing for teaching the doctrine was lacking. It is not presently known when action was implemented relative to changing the St. George lecture before the veil.

It should be noted parenthetically that extensive revisions *were* made to the endowment ceremony by a special committee of apostles during 1921–1927; members included George F. Richards (chairman), David O. McKay, Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., Stephen L. Richards, and John

A. Widtsoe, with James E. Talmage, being added in 1924. George F. Richards was the primary mover of this task force as he attempted to codify and simplify the ceremony (cf. his journal entries during this period, LDS Archives).

⁷⁷Brigham Young, Jr. Journal, entry for October 12, 1897 (LDS Archives); also cf. his entry for December 16, 1897 (cited below); Edward Stephenson Diary, entries for July 22, 1892, February 28, 1896 and March 3, 1896 (the latter two cited below in Note 86); Anthon H. Lund Journal, entry for October 13, 1897 (LDS Archives); and John Henry Smith Journal, entry for January 11, 1899 (University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah).

⁷⁸George Q. Cannon Journal, entry for January 17, 1878, as cited in Joseph J. Cannon, "George Q. Cannon—Relations With Brigham Young," *The Instructor*, vol. 80 (June 1945), no. 6, p. 259; Cannon's journal entry was written just a few months after Brigham's death. A similar point was made in an 1892 meeting of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, this time with specific reference to the question of "whether Adam is our God or not." (Cf. Abraham H. Cannon Journal, entry for May 26, 1892)

⁷⁹Samuel W. Taylor, *The Kingdom or Nothing: The Life of John Taylor, Militant Mormon* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1976), p. 278. Some of the more obvious quotations from *Mediation and Atonement* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Co., 1882) which are in disagreement with Young are his citing of a scripture (Moses, 5:8) on pp. 62–63 in which the Lord tells Adam he should repent and "call upon God, in the name of the Son, for evermore. . ."; a poem on page 70, which says in part, "And men did live a holy race/And worship Jesus face to face/In Adam-ondi-Ahman" (composed by W. W. Phelps and first published in the *Messenger and Advocate*, vol. I [June 1835], no. 9, pp. 144); a quotation from the Pearl of Great Price on page 37 in which "[God] called upon our Father Adam by his own voice, saying, I am God . . . be baptized . . . in the name of mine Only Begotten Son"; and finally, pages 134–136, which is a discussion of D & C 29, and included Taylor saying ". . . it is also stated that Lucifer was before Adam; so was Jesus. And Adam . . . was commanded . . . to call upon God in His [the Son's] name for ever more. . . ."

⁸⁰Franklin D. Richards, *A Compendium of the Faith and Doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Liverpool: Orson Pratt; and London: LDS Book Depot, 1857), pp. 148, 152, 153–54; F. D. Richards and J. A. Little, *A Compendium of the Doctrines of the Gospel* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Co., 1882), pp. 3–5, 179–83.

⁸¹Parley P. Pratt, *Key to the Science of Theology* (1855), [5th ed., Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons Co., 1891], pp. 3, 5, 50–51; Orson Spencer, *Letters Exhibiting the Most Prominent Doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1874), Letter VIII, pp. 91–101; Charles W. Penrose, "Mormon" *Doctrine, Plain and Simple, or Leaves from the Tree of Life* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1882), pp. 1–12; John Nicholson, *The Preceptor* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1883); B. H. Roberts, *The Gospel, an Exposition of its First Principles* (Salt Lake City: The Contributor Co., 1888), p. 110; and Roberts' 1893 revised edition of *The Gospel* which includes the addition of *Man's Relationship to Deity*, p. 266–71.

⁸²James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1899), p. 29. Talmage's *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1915) went much further, declaring: ". . . Jesus Christ was and is the Creator, the God who revealed Himself to Adam. . . ." (p. 32); and "Unto Adam . . . [God] the Father revealed Himself, attesting the Godship of the Christ. . . ." (p. 39) Other prominent books of this era (e.g. B. H. Roberts' *New Witness for God* [1895], Charles W. Penrose's *Rays of Living Light From the Doctrines of Christ* [1898], and Matthias F. Cowley, *Cowley's Talks on Doctrine* [1902]) contain nothing significantly noteworthy aside from Cowley's comment, "We learn from the Pearl of Great Price that before Adam departed to the life beyond, God revealed to him the plan of salvation" (pp. 112–13).

⁸³David John, Vice President of the Brigham Young Academy, recounted a sermon by Elder Edward Stevenson given at the B.Y.A. on January 19, 1896, on Adam-God "which was not generally accepted by. . . his hearers. . . ." Two B.Y.A. professors, Joseph B. Keeler and George H. Brimhall (later president of B.Y.A.), had John draft an article on Adam-God for use in their theological classes; they too disagreed with Stevenson's belief in Adam-God and discussed their differences with him—however, their feeling was the issue was too "delicate" to submit to the First Presidency. Cf. David John Diary, entry for November 1, 1900, Lee Library.

⁸⁴Cf. *The True Latter-day Saints' Herald*, vol. 1 (November 1860), pp. 259–65; and vol. 1 (December 1860), pp. 269–73, 280–85. A few other anti-Mormon writings from this period are briefly examined in Rodney Turner, *op. cit.*, pp. 71–74.

⁸⁵Charles Walker Journal, June 11, 1892, LDS Archives; typescript at Lee Library. This incident involved a high council meeting at St. George where church president Wilford Woodruff and his counselor, George Q. Cannon, addressed the “false doctrines” which were being promulgated by Edward Bunker, Sr., of Bunkerville, Nevada. Bunker’s beliefs were not unlike those advanced years earlier by Orson Pratt, when Pratt felt that men should worship God’s intelligence rather than God himself. Woodruff’s remarks made pointed reference to Brigham Young’s strong refutation of Pratt’s beliefs. He carefully pointed out, however, that God has and will reveal many “glorious things” which can’t be “proved” by the “old Bible.” (Cf. Note 76, above)

⁸⁶Discourse, April 7, 1895, reprinted in *LDSMS*, vol. 57, p. 355. The proscription apparently did not extend to the private councils of the hierarchy. Edward Stevenson wrote the following March, 1896, of having had “more pleasure than usual with a deep talk with Pres. L. Snow on the subject”; others spoke of discussions in October 1897 and January 1899, in addition to the December 1897 deliberations mentioned in the text. As to the identities and relative standing of the personages under discussion, Stevenson wrote in his diary for February 28, 1896: “Certainly Heloheim, and Jehovah stands before Adam, or else I am very much mistaken. Then 1st Heloheim 2d Jehovah, 3d Michael-Adam, 4th Jesus Christ, Our Elder Brother, in the other World from whence our spirits come. . . . Then Who is Jehovah? The only begoton Son of Heloheim on Jehovahs world.” This is in essence what Brigham told the School of the Prophets nearly three decades earlier.

⁸⁷*Fresno Morning Republican*, December 3, 1897; also cf. the following numbers of the *Republican*: October 30, 1897; November 10, 1897; November 12, 1897; November 16, 1897; November 19, 1897; and December 5, 1897.

⁸⁸Ephraim H. Nye to Franklin D. Richards, December 4, 1897, E. H. Nye Papers, Mission Letter Book, Lee Library.

⁸⁹Franklin D. Richards Journal, December 16, 1897, LDS Archives.

⁹⁰Brigham Young, Jr. Journal, December 16, 1897, LDS Archives.

⁹¹Franklin D. Richards to Ephraim H. Nye, December 18, 1897, Franklin D. Richards Letter-book, pp. 363–64, Richards Family Collection, LDS Archives. On March 8, 1898, Richards wrote Nye indicating that he and Joseph F. Smith had tried to get Nye’s article reprinted in the *Deseret News*, but the *News* declined their request.

⁹²Discourse, November 28, 1898, reported in *Proceedings of the First Sunday School Convention of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1899), pp. 87–88. Cannon’s reference to “two personages in the Godhead” is based on Joseph Smith’s remarks in his “Fifth Lecture on Faith” which remained in the D & C until 1921; cf. Thomas G. Alexander, *op. cit.*; and N. B. Lundwall’s reprint of the *Lectures* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 48–49.

⁹³Charles W. Penrose to Quincy Anderson, February 17, 1900, published in the *Deseret Evening News*, March 21, 1900, p. 4.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*

⁹⁵“Our Father Adam,” *Improvement Era*, vol. 5 (September 1902), no. 11, p. 873.

⁹⁶Edward Bunker, Jr. to Joseph F. Smith, February 9, 1902, LDS Archives. [Emphasis in original.] Bunker was the son of Edward Bunker, Sr., who was rebuked by church presidents Woodruff and Cannon a decade earlier; cf. Notes 76 and 85, above.

⁹⁷Joseph F. Smith to Edward Bunker, Jr., February 27, 1902, Joseph F. Smith Letter Books, pp. 26–27, LDS Archives.

⁹⁸B. H. Roberts, *The Mormon Doctrine of Deity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1903), pp. 42–43. On pp. 243–49, Roberts cites a sermon by Joseph Smith which discussed Adam’s stew-

ardship *under* Christ's; he also cited one sermon by Brigham Young which mentions Adam-God concepts (pp. 259–65). Roberts' comments in 1908 suggest that he personally did not believe the Adam-God doctrine (*cf.* his *70's course in Theology*, vol. II, Salt Lake City: Skelton Publishing Co., 1908, pp. 230–32). Compare Roberts' 1902 comments with those made by Anthon H. Lund, then a member of the First Presidency: "Men had ridiculed the elders for believing that Adam was a God. We are not ashamed of this doctrine. Jesus said in speaking to the Jews in relation to Abraham, that they were Gods unto whom the word of God comes. But though we look upon Adam as a God, we worship the same God that Adam worshipped in the Garden of Eden." (*LDSMS*, vol. 64, [1902], p. 742)

⁹⁹First Presidency Statement, Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder and Anthon H. Lund, *Improvement Era*, vol. 13 (November 1909), no. 1, pp. 75–81 [esp. p. 80]; also in *MFP*, vol. IV, pp. 199–206. This statement was actually composed by Orson F. Whitney who wrote it at the request of the First Presidency; *cf.* Brigham Young University Faculty Minutes, vol. 10 (January 1909–June 1913), September 25, 1909, p. 45, Lee Library. This statement alluded to the issue of organic evolution, but no distinct official church position relative to that theory has yet been given. The best overview of this subject is Duane E. Jeffery, "Seers, Savants and Evolution: The Uncomfortable Interface," *Dialogue*, vol. VIII (Autumn-Winter 1973), nos. 3/4, pp. 41–75; also *cf.* "Seers, Savants and Evolution: A Continuing Dialogue," *Dialogue*, vol. IX (Autumn 1974), no. 3, pp. 21–38; Richard Sherlock, "A Turbulent Spectrum: Mormon Reactions to the Darwinist Legacy," *Journal of Mormon History*, vol. V (1978), pp. 33–59; and Richard Sherlock, "'We Can See No Advantage to a Continuation of the Discussion:' The Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair," *Dialogue*, vol. XIII (Fall 1980), no. 3, pp. 63–78.

¹⁰⁰*Improvement Era*, vol. 13 (April 1910), p. 570. Despite the non-committal attitude portrayed by this editorial, President Smith did apparently believe that Adam was *born* on this earth. On December 7, 1913, he testified to church members in a stake conference at Mesa, Arizona: "The Son, Jesus Christ, grew and developed into manhood the same as you or I, as likewise did God, his father grow and develop to the Supreme Being that he now is. Man was born of woman, Christ the Savior, was born of woman. Adam, our earthly parent, was also born of woman into this world, the same as Jesus and you and I." (reported in *DN*, December 27, 1913, Section 3, p. 7) This testimony was later printed during Heber J. Grant's presidency in *DN*, Church Section, September 19, 1936, pp. 2, 8.

¹⁰¹First Presidency Statement, Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund and Charles W. Penrose, January 31, 1912, *Improvement Era*, vol. 15 (March 1912), pp. 417–18; also in *MFP*, vol. IV, pp. 264–65. Also *cf.* a frequently circulated letter from the First Presidency to President Samuel O. Bennion (president of the Central States mission for the church), February 20, 1912, LDS Archives; cited in *MFP*, vol. IV, pp. 266–67. The Bennion letter specifically addressed the question of Young's teaching in *JD* 1:50-51 (April 9, 1852) that Adam was the father of Jesus Christ; the argument given to negate this belief (again written in Penrose's style) implied that Young's statement had been misinterpreted. The First Presidency did not discuss any of Young's other sermons on Adam-God.

¹⁰²Thomas Clawson Journal, April 8, 1912, Utah State Historical Society; also *cf.* Anthony W. Ivins Journal, April 8, 1912, Utah State Historical Society.

¹⁰³This pamphlet was reprinted in the *Improvement Era*, vol. 19 (August 1916), pp. 934–42; also cited in *MFP*, vol. V, pp. 23–34. One year before in the April 1915 General Conference, James E. Talmage spoke concerning the title, "The Son of Man," as applied to Jesus Christ. Despite the approval of the same material by church president Joseph F. Smith—incorporated in his book, *Jesus the Christ*—Charles W. Penrose was "of the opinion that the wide-spread publication of this doctrine would cause difficulty to the elders in the field, who he [Penrose] thinks would be confronted with the charge that we as a people worship a man." (James E. Talmage Journal, May 10, 1915, Lee Library) The Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve voted to change a few sentences of Talmage's text for publication in the official conference report. A copy of his original text is found in Talmage's journal, *ibid.* *Cf.* Penrose's remarks with his *Improvement Era* article of September 1902 (cited above); among Penrose's reservations may have been his reluctance to accept Joseph Smith's "King Follett Discourse" as having been accurately recorded, for it was there that Smith publicly advanced his radical new doctrines on the nature of God (*cf.* Penrose's testimony in *Proceedings Before the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the United States Senate in the Matter of the Protests Against the Right of Hon. Reed Smoot, A Senator From the State of Utah, to Hold His Seat* [Washington, D.C.: U.S.

Government Printing Office, 1904], vol. 1, pp. 440–42, on December 20, 1904. It is notable that his only stated reservations on the accuracy of talks reported in the *Journal of Discourses* concerned Joseph Smith's sermons, of which only four are reported in the *Journal*.)

¹⁰⁴Cf. Note 18 above.

¹⁰⁵Discourse, reported in *Conference Report of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1916), April 1916, pp. 16–17 (hereafter cited as CR).

¹⁰⁶Discourse, reported in CR, April 22, 1922, p. 23

¹⁰⁷Heber J. Grant to Bishop Joseph H. Eldredge, February 26, 1931, LDS Archives; also in MFP, vol. V, pp. 289–90. B. H. Roberts' remarks reported in DN, July 23, 1921 are more tempered: "As a matter of fact, the 'Mormon' Church does not teach [the Adam-God] doctrine. A few men in the 'Mormon' Church have held such views; and several of them quite prominent in the councils of the Church. . . . Brigham Young and others may have taught that doctrine."

¹⁰⁸*Improvement Era*, vol. 48 (November 1938), no. 11, pp. 652, 690; also in *Evidences and Reconciliations* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960), pp. 67–71.

¹⁰⁹The possibility that a few Church authorities have, to some extent, misperceived the full parameters of Young's former teachings seems likely, given that most of this century's discussions on Adam-God only consider one sermon—that of April 9, 1852. Lack of familiarity with his other statements could easily have led to a misunderstanding of Young's beliefs. In 1977, for example, I wrote to President Spencer W. Kimball and asked what his specific perception of the Adam-God doctrine was. The response, signed by Spencer W. Kimball, N. Eldon Tanner and Marion G. Romney, was sent to my bishop. They stated that Brigham Young had been accused over the years of having taught that "Adam was God." They pointed out, however, that there were "many places" where Young taught that "Adam and God were different beings," citing two statements by Young (*JD* 10:230-31 and *JD* 13:311, quoted earlier in the text above) to substantiate that position.

¹¹⁰DN, Church News Section, April 15, 1939, pp. 1–6.

¹¹¹Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, op. cit., vol. V, p. 125; this "answer" was a verbatim copy of a letter from Smith to James D. Bales, November 7, 1942. Smith's arguments found in his *Doctrines of Salvation* (Bruce R. McConkie, comp., 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954–56]), vol. I, pp. 90–106, were also taken from a letter to Bales, October 12, 1942 (photocopies in my possession); also cf. Note 16 above. Other mid-twentieth-century commentary on Adam-God includes Milton R. Hunter's disputation of the transplantation of Adam belief (*Provo Daily Herald*, March 22, 1949) and Joseph Fielding Smith's espousal of it (*Man, His Origin and Destiny* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954], pp. 276–77; his *Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. I, pp. 139–40; also cf. *Answers to Gospel Questions*, vol. 5, pp. 170–71; Bruce R. McConkie's *Mormon Doctrine* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958], pp. 17–18; and Alvin R. Dyer's *The Fallacy* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964], pp. 125–137).

¹¹²In correspondence with Elder Petersen, I asked if "the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve have approved your book, *Adam, Who is He?*, as the official explanation of [the Adam-God] theory." Elder Petersen replied, "The book is accepted as is also the address that I gave in the [October 1980] general conference on the same subject." (D. J. Buerger to Mark E. Petersen, January 5, 1981 and Petersen to Buerger, January 7, 1981) Elder Petersen responded to another similar inquiry by stating that his book "was approved by the First Presidency and the Twelve and is published under their authority and that these brethren agree with what is in the book." (Mark E. Petersen to Melaine N. Layton, February 13, 1980; photocopy in my possession) The First Presidency has used the book in answering queries on Adam-God since its publication in 1976. (e.g., in response to H. Michael Marquardt's letter to President Spencer W. Kimball on December 3, 1976 [the letter was actually sent over the signature of Janice Willden] asking why Brigham Young's belief was currently held invalid by the church, Francis M. Gibbons, Secretary to the First Presidency, responded, on December 7, 1976 in behalf of President Kimball saying, "[We] suggest that you obtain a copy of the book, *Adam, Who is He?* by Elder Mark E. Petersen, which fully discusses the questions you raise."; photocopies of this correspondence are in my possession.)

¹¹³*Adam, Who is He?*, pp. 15–19; also cf. Hugh B. Brown to Morris L. Reynolds, May 13, 1966 (photocopy in my possession) for a similar response. Elder Petersen's mistranscription argument

was based upon a claim that Apostle Charles C. Rich heard Young's April 9, 1852 sermon and personally corrected the text to a "more accurate" rendition in his copy of the *Journal of Discourses*. After publication of *Adam, Who is He?*, however, subsequent research showed that Elder Rich was enroute from San Bernardino to Salt Lake City and could not have heard Young's sermon. The "personal" correction was actually made by Rich's son, Ben E., who was born in 1855. The actual inscription by Rich states, "as corrected above is what Prest Young said, as testified to me by my father C. C. Rich. /s/ Ben E. Rich" (LDS Archives). For a discussion of this oversight, cf. Chris Alex Vlachos, op. cit., pp. 99–100. This error was corrected in the book's 1979 edition.

¹¹⁴*Adam, Who is He?*, pp. 83–84.

¹¹⁵Discourse, reported in *CR*, October 2, 1976, p. 115. This citation has been reprinted in the church's 1980–81 Melchizedek Priesthood study guide, *Choose You This Day* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1979), p. 59.

¹¹⁶"The Seven Deadly Heresies," Fourteen Stake Fireside Address at Brigham Young University, June 1, 1980; transcribed from tape purchased at BYU's Media Marketing. Elder McConkie evidently was condemning claims which are still espoused by Mormon fundamentalists. Notably, the published version of his talk changed the latter sentence to read: ". . . anyone who has received the temple endowment, has no excuse whatever for being led astray by it." (Cf. *BYU Devotional Speeches of the Year, 1980* [Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1981], p. 78). A few months later in the October 1980 semi-annual church conference, Mark E. Petersen reiterated his co-apostle's sentiments: "Adam was not our God nor was he our Savior. . . . Adam was the Savior's progenitor only in the same sense in which he is the ancestor of us all. . . . Then was Adam our God, or did God become Adam? Ridiculous! Adam was neither God, nor the Only Begotten Son of God. He was a child of God in the spirit as we all are." (Discourse, reported in *CR*, October 4, 1980, pp. 22–23.

THE IDEA OF PRE-EXISTENCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORMON THOUGHT

BLAKE OSTLER

THE MORMON BELIEF that the individual spirit of man existed in the presence of God before the creation of the world is unique in modern Christianity. Mormons have rejected the Creator/creature dichotomy of Patristic theology and its logical correlaries, *creatio ex nihilo* and the idea of God as a single, infinite Absolute. Mormons consider man one of the given entities of the universe, the necessary, self-existing offspring of God and therefore of the same ultimate nature as God—uncreate and capable of eternal progression. Man, as necessary being, could not *not* exist; his primal self is not created and cannot be. Nevertheless, the history of the idea of pre-existence in Mormon thought is one of varying interpretation, of refinement and controversy. The controversy stems largely from the inherent tension in a finitistic theology from an earlier period of absolutist preconceptions. Nowhere is this tension more evident in Mormonism than in its doctrine of pre-existence.

Absolutist Preconceptions: 1830–1835.

The doctrine encountered by the earliest Mormon converts was not a significant departure from the Catholic/Protestant view of the day which stressed the Creator/creature dichotomy and a single, infinite and absolute God. The doctrine of pre-existence of souls had not been a part of Christian thought since 543 A.D. when that doctrine was declared “anathema” by a

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council at Constantinople, due in great part to the influence of Greek thought on Christian ideas of God and man.¹ The earliest publications of the Mormon Church defined God in terms borrowed from orthodox Trinitarianism as the metaphysical basis of all contingent existence manifesting himself in the person of Jesus Christ.² From the very beginning, the Mormon view of man, which like the Methodist stressed man's free will and consequent moral responsibility, was more positive than the then prevalent Calvinistic position of absolute predestination and salvation by grace. Yet, the Pauline/Augustinian doctrine of the depravity of the natural man was supported in the Book of Mormon by Alma and Mosiah, and throughout the Book of Mormon man is viewed as a creature of God.³ The Creator/creature dichotomy was accepted without revision by early Mormon commentators, as shown by a philosophical rejoinder in the *Evening and Morning Star* of October 1832 in language reminiscent of Patristic theologians: "the annihilation of a being that subsists requireth an act of power similar to that which gave it existence at first. . . . The Creator, who having created our souls at first by an act of His will can either eternally preserve them or absolutely annihilate them."⁴ Thus, man was merely a contingent being created from non-being and could lapse into non-being once again if God willed it. Warren Cowdery's letter in the May 1835 *Messenger and Advocate* echoed a similar belief: "Man is dependent on the great first cause and is constantly upheld by Him, therefore justly amenable to Him."⁵

The metaphysical foundations of Mormonism before 1835 were incompatible with the radical pluralism inherent in the idea of man's necessary existence. Although several scriptural "proof-texts" originating from this era are now cited to support the doctrine of man's pre-existence, the earliest converts seem to have been altogether unaware of the doctrine.⁶ In the absence of the clarifications of the Nauvoo era, it is to be expected that the saints assumed the usage and meaning pervading the theological concepts of the day and established by nearly fifteen centuries of absolutist elucidation. For example, the word "create" assumed *creatio ex nihilo*, the term "intelligence" implied a knowledge of truth rather than self-existing entity, and the term "spirit" did not connote a quasi-material substance.⁷ However, the Joseph Smith translation of the Bible completed in 1833 and a revelation received in May of 1833 (now known as D&C 93), indicate that Joseph understood a concept of "ideal pre-existence," that is, existence which is expressed in terms of God's foreknowledge (ontologically mind-dependent).⁸ The May 1833 revelation stated:

Ye were in the beginning with the Father; that which is Spirit, even the Spirit of truth, and truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.⁹

This statement, coupled with the declaration of the new translation that all things were created spiritually before their manifestation on earth, suggests

that man pre-existed “ideally” as a particular of the necessary and all-encompassing truth entertained in God’s infinite foreknowledge.¹⁰ Such an interpretation is consistent with the contemporary usage of the word “spiritual,” implying only a conceptual or intellectual creation.¹¹ The treatment of the first chapter of Genesis as a “conceptual blue-print” formulated by God before creation, was a popular means of resolving the seeming contradiction between Genesis 1:26–27 and 2:4 as Joseph had done in the Book of Moses.¹² Such a doctrine was not foreign to the absolutist orientation of thought prevalent at the time. For example, Georg Hegel, Joseph Smith’s contemporary, formulated a philosophy known as Absolute Idealism in which persons were considered as differentiations of the Absolute Spirit (*Geist*) or the Truth of Totality perceiving itself.¹³ Long before the philosophical Idealism prominent in the early 1800’s, Gregory of Nyssa suggested that “in the power of God’s foreknowledge . . . all the fullness of human nature had pre-existence (and to this the prophetic writing bears witness, which says that God ‘knoweth all things before they are’), and in the creation of individuals . . . the heavenly view was laid as their foundation in the original will of God.”¹⁴

Progressive Pluralism: 1835–1844.

Several facets of Mormon thought combined to develop a theological climate conducive to the idea of man’s necessary existence. First, as early as 1835 the persons of the Trinity were distinguished and, as a result, the ultimate basis of existence was defined in pluralistic terms.¹⁵ Second, Joseph Smith began his work on the Book of Abraham concurrent with the study of Hebrew in the School of the Prophets.¹⁶ Third, the idea that humans could become gods allowed for the possibility that they were ultimately like God—uncreated.¹⁷ Fourth, reality was bifurcated into two fundamental types of matter: spiritual or “purified,” invisible matter and more coarse, visible matter.¹⁸ As a result of this philosophical materialism, that which existed spiritually or “ideally” also existed “really” (ontologically mind-independent).

By 1839 Joseph Smith had publicly rejected the notion of *creatio ex nihilo* and introduced his seemingly well developed concept of the necessary existence of man. He stated simply: “The Spirit of Man is not a created being; it existed from Eternity and will exist to eternity. Anything created cannot be eternal, and earth, water &c—all these had their existence in an elementary state from Eternity.”¹⁹ To support the doctrine of the necessary existence of man, Joseph often cited a statement of the earliest Christian neo-Platonists: “That which has a beginning will surely have an end. . . . If the soul of man had a beginning it will surely have an end.”²⁰ While the Christian apologists used such logic to oppose man’s necessary existence, Joseph affirmed man’s eternal existence in both past and future. Ironically, both apologists and Joseph Smith adopted identical statements to affirm diametrically opposed views.

Joseph elaborated upon the concept of man's pre-mortal existence in the years that followed. There can be little doubt that he intended the "real" pre-existence of man's primal self. In several discourses and in the Book of Abraham, Joseph enumerated activities of pre-existent man that require individual, self-conscious and autonomous entities. For instance, Joseph stated of pre-mortal entities:

The first step in the salvation of men is the laws of eternal and self-existent principles. Spirits are eternal. At the first organization in heaven we were all present and saw the Savior chosen, and appointed, and the plan of salvation made and we sanctioned it.²¹

The Book of Abraham, published in March of 1842, clarified man's self-existent nature. According to the Book of Abraham, individuals existed from eternity as "intelligences," and although unequal, they "have no beginning; they existed before, they shall have no end, they shall exist after, for they are gnolaum, or eternal."²² The inherently unequal capacity of intelligences implies that they were considered differentiated, individual and autonomous entities from all eternity. In addition, the Book of Abraham detailed Abraham's vision of the pre-earth council—a vision remarkably like Abraham's vision in the Apocalypse of Abraham.²³

Joseph Smith's concept of man culminated in April of 1844. In the King Follett discourse, he presented a view of man unique to the Christian world and rarely matched in the history of thought for its positive characterization of man. Joseph was well aware of the wider philosophical implications of his view, for he stated that the belief that man was created *ex nihilo* "lessens the character of man," while the doctrine of self-existent man was "calculated to exalt man."²⁴ He clarified his thought by multiplying descriptive nouns about the part of man which necessarily exists:

We say that God himself is a self-existent God. Who told you so? It's correct enough, but how did it get into your heads? Who told you that man did not exist in like manner upon the same principles? . . . Man existed in spirit; the mind of man—the intelligent part—is as immortal as, and is coequal with, God himself.²⁵

Joseph's doctrine of the necessary existence of man and rejection of *creatio ex nihilo* also had serious logical consequences for his concept of God. In contrast to the absolute Being of traditional theology, classically described as static, unconditioned and unrelated, Joseph taught that God was once as man is, had actually become God and that He is conditioned by and related to the uncreated quantities of reality. He also taught that men could become as God and, as a logical corollary, he taught the plurality of gods. Joseph taught that rather than Being itself, God is a being among beings. The necessary existence of man and the ultimate structure and substance of reality imposed further conditions upon the traditional omnipotence of God. Joseph taught that God did not create these realities and that *He could not have done so*.

Neo-Absolutism: 1845–1905.

Soon after the death of Joseph Smith, a concept of pre-existence became prominent which was more congenial to absolutism. In this concept, only diffuse “spirit element” was considered to be uncreated; autonomous individual existence arose only after the organization of this eternal substance into a spirit person. This concept was an outgrowth of the seeming paradox between the doctrine emphasized by Brigham Young and popularized by Eliza R. Snow’s poem, “O My Father,” that individuals are literally begotten of divine parents and the affirmation of Joseph Smith that man, in an elementary state, is eternal.²⁶ As a result, individual pre-existence was thought to begin with literal spiritual birth, while before this birth only disorganized spirit existed. Joseph Lee Robinson, an early convert and close associate of both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, reflected upon this paradox (if his journal chronology is accurate) sometime in late 1845 while still in Nauvoo:

Some elders said that the prophet Joseph Smith should have said that our spirits existed eternally with God, the question then arose, How is God the Father of our spirits? . . . I inquired of several of the brethren how that could be—a father and son and the son as old as the father. There was not a person that could or that would even try to explain the matter.²⁷

Robinson’s intuitions appear to have been accurate, for Joseph Smith apparently had not taught that individual existence began at spirit birth. Joseph did not envision a state of existence for individuals before their existence as spirits simply because spirits were uncreate and self-existent.²⁸ Nevertheless, Robinson claims to have received a revelation solving the paradox of heavenly birth in the pre-existence. He understood

that all matter was eternal, that it never had a beginning and that it should never have an end and that the spirits of all men were organized of a pure material or matter upon the principles of male and female so that there was a time when my immortal spirit as well as every other man’s spirit that ever was born into the world—that is to say, there was a moment when the spirit was organized or begotten or born so that the spirit has a father and the material or matter, that our tabernacles are composed of is eternal.²⁹

Parely P. Pratt, a member of the Quorum of Apostles and close friend of Joseph Smith, expressed his understanding that an individual intelligence results from the organization of a more primitive spiritual element. In April of 1853, Parley declared,

Organized intelligence. What are they made of? They are made of the element which we call spirit. . . . Let a given quantity of this element, thus endowed, or capacitated, be organized in the size and form of man . . . what would we call this individual, organized portion of the spiritual element? We would call it a spiritual body, an individual intelligence, an agent endowed with life, with a degree of indepen-

dence, or inherent will, with the powers of motion, of thought, and with the attributes of moral, intellectual, and sympathetic affections and emotions.³⁰

Perhaps the most able and thorough exposition of Mormonism's unrefined doctrine of pre-existence came from the pen of Orson Pratt, Parley's younger brother. Orson was the first to attempt a systematic exposition of Joseph Smith's thought. In 1853 Orson published *The Seer*, elaborating upon ideas expressed in his 1849 "The Absurdities of Immaterialism" and in 1851 with "The Great First Cause." Building upon Joseph Smith's modified materialism, Pratt constructed an ultra-materialistic system reminiscent of the thought of Gottfried Leibniz in which all matter necessarily existed in the form of ultimately indivisible particles possessing a degree of inherent intelligence.³¹ According to Pratt, "each particle eternally existed prior to its organization; each was enabled to perceive its own existence; each had the power of self-motion, each would be an intelligent living being of itself. . . . In this independent separate condition, it would be capable of being governed by laws, adapted to the amount of knowledge and experience gained during its past experience."³² In the course of time, these eternal particle entities would be "organized in the womb of the celestial female" thereby creating an individual spirit body. Thus, through spiritual pregnancy and birth, existence began on a new level. Orson stated that "the particles that enter into the organization of the infant spirit are placed in a new sphere of action . . . the particles organized in an infant spirit can no longer act, or feel, or think as independent individuals, but the law to control them in their new sphere requires them to act, and feel, and think in union."³³ In effect, each intelligence would be analogous to a cell of a body which had its own existence but which formed another individual on an aggregate level. Thus, individual identity was created with spiritual birth, even though each intelligence or particle was uncreated. Pratt called the inherent intelligence in these primeval particles "The Great First Cause." He claimed that "while we are obliged to admit the eternity of the substance and its capacities, on the other hand, we are compelled to admit a beginning to the organizations of particles of this substance. . . . The present qualities of our minds are not eternal, but are the results of the combinations of anterior qualities, which in their turn are again the results of the exercise of the eternal capacities."³⁴

Despite Pratt's standing in the Quorum of Apostles, his views were almost immediately censured by Brigham Young. In response to Young's general criticism that some items in *The Seer* were not "Sound Doctrine," Pratt assumed that Young was referring to his concept of God's attributes.³⁵ In reality, the conflict between Pratt and Young was a much more fundamental dispute over absolutist and finitist theologies. Although Pratt's idea of eternal, individual particles seemingly implied a materialistic pluralism, Pratt interpreted his doctrine as a Monistic Absolutism and proposed a pantheistic concept of God—a concept which identifies God with whatever is real. Pratt explained to Young in a letter:

I have argued that . . . the Unity, Eternity and of the attributes, such as “the fullness of Truth,” light, love, wisdom & knowledge, dwelling in countless numbers of tabernacles in numberless worlds; and that the oneness of these attributes is what is called in both ancient and modern revelations, the One God besides whom there is none other God neither before Him neither shall there be after Him. I have still argued that the Plurality of God only had reference to the number of persons or tabernacles wherein this one God, or in other words, the fullness of these attributes dwells.³⁶

In the ensuing years President Young opposed Orson Pratt’s concept of God and rejected the implications of his opinions on pre-existence. The crux of the conflict was Young’s criticism that Pratt worshipped the attributes of Absolute Being rather than God the person, while in turn, Pratt rejected Young’s ultra-personalistic view of God as an exalted man forever becoming greater in dominion and knowledge.³⁷ Another issue of contention was the extent of God’s omniscience. Pratt asserted that the scriptures taught that God was perfect and, if perfect in knowledge, could not progress in knowledge.³⁸ Brigham Young, on the other hand, claimed that God could progress in knowledge because the body of truth is infinite and cannot be fully encompassed; otherwise, eternity would be limited—a contradiction.³⁹ Pratt’s notion of God, however, was merely a logical corollary of his idea of pre-existent particles. In Pratt’s interpretation of God’s attributes, the idea that all beings, including the Father and the Son, were the result of intelligent particles meant that the sum of their individual parts comprised the Intelligence of God, or the essence of Deity which we should worship.⁴⁰ In 1856 Pratt taught,

Each part of this substance is all-wise and all-powerful, possessing the same knowledge and truth. The essence can be divided like other matter, but the truth that each possesses is one truth, and is indivisible; and because of the oneness of the quality, all these parts are called ONE God. There is a plurality of substance, but a unity of quality; and it is this unity which constitutes the one God we worship. When we worship the Father, we do not worship merely his substance, but we worship the attributes of that substance.⁴¹ (emphasis in original)

The conflict between Pratt and Young resulted in an official denunciation of Pratt’s views by the First Presidency in 1860 and again in 1865. Citing specific passages from Pratt’s writings, President Young in conjunction with his counselors Heber C. Kimball and Daniel H. Wells, objected to Pratt’s idea of God’s absolute omniscience and discounted the concept of a “Great First Cause.” The 1865 denunciation specifically challenged Pratt’s view that “every part of the Holy Spirit, however minute and infinitesimal, possessed ‘every intellectual or moral attribute possessed by the Father and the Son,’” and that all beings were the result of self-organized, eternal particles of matter. In relation to the origin of pre-existent beings, the First Presidency stated that the church would have to be

content with the knowledge that *from all eternity there had been organized beings, in an organized form, possessing superior and controlling power*

to govern what brother Pratt calls 'self-moving, all-wise and all powerful particles of matter,' and that it was neither rational nor consistent with the revelations of God and with reason and philosophy, to believe that these latter Forces and Powers had existed prior to the Being who controlled and governed them.⁴² (emphasis added)

Even though the First Presidency's statement appears to establish the doctrine that "organized being" necessarily exists, when analyzed in relation to Brigham Young's contemporary teachings, it merely indicates that there never was a time when organized beings did *not* exist. Brigham's idea was one of eternal regression of progenitors, the doctrine that all fathers had fathers *ad infinitum*.⁴³ As in the theology of the great apologist Origen, who alone among the Patristic Fathers maintained a belief in the pre-existence of souls, the idea that beings have always existed does not mean that any given individual or group of individuals has always existed.⁴⁴ The statement did show that Pratt's ideas of particles as self-organizing and his notion that we should worship the Intelligence created by the sum of their parts were in error. Perhaps the point of both statements was that because they could not "explain how the first organized Being originated," any attempt to do so was merely philosophical speculation.

Ironically, Brigham Young's own position on man's ultimate origin was somewhat equivocal. He taught both the "eternity of man's soul" and the contingency of that soul, a creation dependent on God for its existence.⁴⁵ His position is probably represented best by his private attempts to correct Orson Pratt's views. According to the Wilford Woodruff Journal, Brigham told Orson Pratt that all beings would "never cease [sic] to learn except it was the Sons of Perdition they would continue to decrease untill [sic] they became dissolved back into their native Element & lost their Identity."⁴⁶ Brigham's tacit assumption here and in many of his discourses seems to have been that individuals were organized from a "native Element" wherein there was no personal identity.⁴⁷ In fact, neither Pratt nor Young would have argued that personal identity existed before spiritual birth. Brigham Young also believed that pre-existent spirits were begotten "in the celestial world" as spiritual offspring of Adam and Eve—a view which Pratt thought unscriptural and repugnant.⁴⁸

The conflict between absolute and finite theologies continued after the deaths of President Young and Orson Pratt. Just three years after Pratt's death in 1881, Charles W. Penrose, then chief editor of the *Deseret News*, delivered a discourse that adapted Pratt's absolutist view of God despite the statements of the First Presidency. Penrose claimed that "God is not everywhere present personally, but He is omnipresent in the power of that spirit—the Holy Spirit—which animates all created beings."⁴⁹ Penrose also taught that God's omnipresent spirit, or Intelligence, existed before the organization of the person of God.

If God is an individual spirit and dwells in a body, the question will arise, "Is He the Eternal Father?" Yes, he is the Eternal Father. "Is it a

fact that He never had a beginning?" In the elementary particles of His organism, He did not. But if He is an organized Being, there must have been a time when that being was organized. This, some will say, would infer that God had a beginning. This spirit which pervades all things, which is the light of all things, by which our heavenly Father operates, by which He is omnipotent, never had a beginning and never will have an end. It is the light of truth; it is the spirit of intelligence.⁵⁰

In Penrose' view, "this eternal, beginningless, endless spirit of intelligence" which "exists wherever there is a particle of material substance" as the basis of being, the omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient reality is prior even to the person of God. Such a Being could not be conditioned by exterior reality because He already comprehends the whole of reality.

Penrose' doctrine of God also necessitated the "creation" of individual man. He explained, "The individual, the organized person may have had a beginning, but that spirit of which and by which they [were] organized never had a beginning. . . . The primal particles never had a beginning. They have been organized in different shapes; the organism had a beginning, but the atoms of which it is composed never had . . . the elementary parts of matter as well as of spirit, using ordinary language, never had a beginning."⁵¹ Thus, Penrose' doctrine was merely Pratt's neo-Absolutist pantheism.

The postmortem popularity of Pratt's doctrine, however, did not go unchallenged by the First Presidency. In June of 1892, President Wilford Woodruff, in company with his counselor George Q. Cannon, was requested to come to St. George to aid in settling a dispute between Bishop Edward Bunker and his first counselor Myron Abbott, both of Bunkerville, Nevada. Apparently, confusion had arisen over Young's doctrine that spirits were begotten on another world as offspring of Adam and Eve and his view that spirits are eternal. In December of 1890, Bishop Bunker charged, "our spirits were not begotten by God but were created out of the elements" by Christ's organizing power.⁵² Abbott, on the other hand, maintained that spirits "were begotten in the spirit world the same as we are begotten here and that Adam is the father of our spirits."⁵³ Bishop Bunker's father was summoned before the St. George Stake High Council to explain his views, "not to try him, but to settle differences on Doctrinal points." Father Bunker explained to President Woodruff that "the Book of Covenants says in the beginning light was with the Father. One Spirit was above another, but none had beginning nor end. The Spirit is the intelligence and this intelligence is God and that intelligence of the Father was in Jesus and we worship this intelligence."⁵⁴

In response to Bunker's views, President Cannon referred to the trouble between Brigham and Orson Pratt over this very issue and corrected the view "that it was right to worship intelligence that was in God the Eternal Father and not God (as an embodied person)."⁵⁵ President Cannon distinguished between the Father and the Son, saying we pray to the Father in the name of the Son, and refuted the idea that Deity was composed of particles, each of which possessed the attributes of God.⁵⁶ However, neither Woodruff nor

Cannon specifically disagreed with Pratt's doctrine of pre-existence although it was necessarily implied in the notion of God which they rejected.

In reality, the origin of man's identity was rarely addressed. The view that man originated when spirit matter was organized into an individual through literal spiritual birth seems to have been the *only* view consistently elucidated from 1845–1905. For example, Benjamin F. Johnson's explanation of Joseph Smith's doctrine probably represented the understanding of many saints in the early 1900's:

[Joseph] was the first in this age to teach "Substantialism"—the Eternity of Matter; that no part or particle of the great universe could become annihilated or destroyed—That Light and Life and Spirit were one—That all light and heat are the "Glory of God which is his power" that fills "immensity of space" and is the Life of all things, and permeates with latent life and heat every particle of which all worlds are composed. That Light or Spirit, and matter are the first two principles of the universe or of being. That they are self-existent, co-existent, indestructible and eternal. And from these two elements both our spirits and our bodies were formulated.⁵⁷

Personal Eternalism: 1905 to Present.

The issue of personal eternalism became a subject of much controversy in the early 1900's. The issue was addressed in *Outlines of Mormon Philosophy*, a little known work by Lycurgus Wilson, written apparently in the Salt Lake Temple, and presented to the First Presidency "for the helpful criticism of their committee."⁵⁸ Wilson rejected the neo-Absolutist view "that spirits owe their origin to God" and concluded that "intelligences always were and always will be individual entities, and, however varied in capacity, never had a beginning and can never be annihilated."⁵⁹ Wilson's work was published by the *Deseret News*, the official publishing arm of the Church.

B. H. Roberts, a President of the Seventy, also took exception to the neo-Absolutist view that man, as an autonomous individual, was created. Elaborating on his views expressed in his *New Witness for God*, Roberts read a statement to the First Presidency supporting belief in the existence of "independent, uncreated, self-existent intelligences."⁶⁰ Roberts claimed that even before spiritual birth and consequent organization of a spirit body, man existed as an individual, autonomous and self-conscious entity known as an intelligence. Noting objections to his view of personal eternalism, Roberts stated that his view absolved God from responsibility for moral evil and explained man's inherent moral freedom and inequality. The First Presidency allowed Roberts to publish his views in the *Improvement Era* in April of 1907 with their appended approval: "Elder Roberts submitted the following paper to the First Presidency and a number of the Twelve Apostles, none of whom found anything objectionable in it, or contrary to the revealed word of God, and therefore favor its publication."⁶¹

Roberts met with opposition, however, when he attempted to incorporate similar views in his 1911 *Seventy's Course in Theology*. Charles W. Penrose, in

particular, objected to Roberts' view that "intelligences were self-existent entities before they entered into the organization of the spirit."⁶² Penrose, then a member of the First Presidency, preferred Pratt's view that "Intelligence" referred to an attribute of God in Joseph Smith's teachings rather than to man as a personal entity from all eternity. Both Penrose and Anthon H. Lund, members of the First Presidency under Joseph F. Smith, persuaded Roberts "to eliminate his theories in regard to intelligences as conscious self-existing beings or entities before being organized into spirit." Lund recorded, "This doctrine has raised much discussion and the inference on which he builds his theory is very vague. The Prophet's speech delivered as a funeral sermon over King Follett is the basis of Bro. Roberts doctrine: namely, where he speaks of man's eternity claim. Roberts wants to prove that man is then co-eval with God."⁶³

Even though Roberts agreed to remove passages referring to intelligences before spirit birth, the *Seventy's Course in Theology* is very explicit about man's uncreated intelligence. Roberts derived six attributes inherent in man's primal intelligence calculated to clarify man's eternal existence as a personal identity. Roberts also asserted that much of the confusion about the subject stemmed from inexact word usage. Noting possible equivocations of meaning, he attempted to reconcile the pre-Nauvoo usage of terms such as "intelligence," and "spirit" with that of the Nauvoo era, especially in the King Follett discourse. Roberts noted, "it is observed that he [Joseph Smith] uses the words "Intelligence" and "spirit" interchangeably—one for the other; and yet we can discern that it is the "intelligence of spirits," not "spirits" entire that is the subject of his thought. It is the "Intelligence of Spirits" that he declares uncreated and uncreatable—eternal as God is."⁶⁴

The First Presidency demonstrated its opposition to the idea of man's necessary existence again in 1912 when it removed the King Follett discourse from Roberts' *Documentary History of the Church*. Charles Penrose, in particular, doubted the authenticity and correctness of the reporting of the sermon. George Albert Smith agreed that "the report of the sermon might not be authentic and I feared that it contained some things that might be contrary to the truth."⁶⁵

At least one member of the Church, John A. Widtsoe, accepted Roberts' theory that intelligences existed as individual entities before they were begotten spirits. When he incorporated his view in *A Rational Theology* to be used as a source manual by the Church, however, Joseph F. Smith personally stopped its publication. In December of 1914, Joseph F. Smith wired Anthon Lund from Missouri to postpone publication until he could examine its contents. Upon examination, Lund disagreed with Widtsoe's idea "of the origin of God, which he makes an evolution from intelligences and being superior to the others He became God."⁶⁶ Commenting on Widtsoe's doctrine Lund said, "I do not like to think of a time when there was no God." When President Smith returned to Salt Lake City on December 11, he went over the work with Widtsoe and Lund and "eliminated from it all that pertained to intelligences before they became begotten spirits as that would only be speculation."⁶⁷

Accordingly, Widtsoe's *A Rational Theology* conceded that "to speculate upon the condition of man when conscious life was just dawning is most interesting, but so little is known about that far-off day that such speculation is profitless."⁶⁸ Widtsoe cautiously affirmed that "All that is really clear . . . is that man has existed 'from the beginning,' and that, from the beginning, he has possessed distinct individuality impossible of confusion with any other individuality among the hosts of intelligent beings."⁶⁹ Like Roberts, Widtsoe delineated inherent capacities of intelligences: "In addition to his power to learn and the consciousness of his own existence, the primeval personality possessed, from 'the beginning,' the distinguishing characteristics of every intelligent, conscious, thinking being—an independent and individual will."⁷⁰

As both Lund and Penrose intimated, the consequences of accepting the idea of man's necessary existence bothered them. In contrast to their need for an infinite Being who is absolutely in control of the universe, both Roberts and Widtsoe insisted that individual eternalism necessitated the idea that God is necessarily conditioned, a finite Being. Widtsoe emphatically declared, "One thing seems clear . . . that the Lord who is part of the universe is subject to eternal laws It is only logical to believe that a progressive God has not always possessed his present absolute position."⁷¹ In a classic confrontation between absolute and finite theologies, Roberts echoed Brigham Young's charge to Orson Pratt that God is, above all else, a personal Being:

God cannot be considered as absolutely infinite, because we are taught by the facts of revelation that absolute infinity cannot hold as to God; as a person, God has limitations, and that which has limitations is not absolutely infinite. If God is conceived of as absolutely infinite, in his substance as in his attributes, then all idea of personality respecting him must be given up; for personality implies limitations.⁷²

The doctrine of individual eternalism seems to have prevailed in Mormon thought for a time despite the reluctance of the First Presidency to endorse a specific doctrine of pre-existence specifying whether man, as an individual entity, is the result of God's creative action or necessarily exists. For instance, shortly after Widtsoe's *A Rational Theology* was published, James E. Talmage, then President of the University of Utah, affirmed,

In the antemortal eternities we developed with individual differences and varied capacities. So far as we can peer into the past by the aid of revealed light we can see that there was always a gradation of intelligence, and consequently of ability, among spirits Individualism is an attribute of the soul, and as truly eternal as the soul itself.⁷³

Before his death in 1933, B. H. Roberts sought to solidly establish the doctrine of the necessary existence of man in Mormon thought. In his yet unpublished manuscript, *The Truth, The Way, The Life*, Roberts said, "The conception of the existence of independent, uncreated, self-existent intelligences, who by the inherent nature of them are of various degrees of intelligence, and moral quality, differing from each other in many ways, yet alike

in their eternity and their freedom relieves God of the responsibility for the nature and moral status of intelligences in all stages of their development."⁷⁴ In addition to reaffirming the philosophical value of the doctrine of eternal individualism as an explanation for the purpose of man's mortal existence and of evil, he also refined the inherent capacities of an intelligence even before spiritual birth:

[Intelligences] are uncreated; self-existent entities, necessarily self-conscious, and otherwise consciousness—they are conscious of the "me" and the "not me." They possess powers of comparison and discrimination without which the term "intelligence" would be a mere solecism. They discern between evil and good; between good and better; they possess will or freedom—within certain limits at least. The power, among others, to determine upon a given course of conduct as against any other course of conduct. The individual intelligence can think his own thoughts, act wisely or foolishly; do right or wrong. To accredit an intelligence with fewer or less important powers than these would be to deny him intelligence altogether.⁷⁵

Because of disagreement among church authorities over its contents, Roberts' most cherished manuscript was never published.⁷⁶ While his idea of pre-Adamites was the single most offensive topic mentioned by the committee of review, his view of the nature of intelligences was explicitly mentioned as "Points on Doctrine in Question." Significantly, the committee of review, headed by George Albert Smith, was willing to accept Roberts' definition of an "intelligence" as "that eternal entity which was not created." However, the committee did not agree with Roberts that intelligences were morally autonomous in the sense that they could "rebel against truth and God." The August 10, 1929 report of the committee to the Council of the Twelve Apostles stated, "In the opinion of the committee the intention is that these intelligences after they became *spirits* may rebel, as Lucifer did. Can this be clarified to say this? We do not have any revelation stating that intelligences have power to rebel."⁷⁷

After Roberts had reviewed the suggestions of the committee, he again presented his manuscript for their consideration. On April 15 of 1930, the committee reported to Heber J. Grant and counselors that Elder Roberts' "use of 'Mind, spirit and soul,' appears confusing to us" and that contrary to Roberts' insistent claims, "intelligence as an entity . . . cannot rebel against light and truth."⁷⁸ In effect, Roberts had refused to alter a single item of his manuscript requested by the committee.

In 1936 the attempt of Roberts and Widtsoe to refine Mormon thought on man's ultimate origin was again rebuffed by Joseph Fielding Smith, the son of President Joseph F. Smith and a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. Smith criticized those who sought to define the doctrine of the Church on the nature of uncreated intelligence. Probably with Roberts and Widtsoe in mind, Smith asserted,

Some of our writers have endeavored to explain what an intelligence is, but to do so is futile, for we have never been given any insight into

this matter beyond what the Lord had fragmentarily revealed. We know, however, that there is something called an intelligence which always existed. It is the real eternal part of man, which is not created or made. This intelligence combined with the spirit constitutes a spiritual entity or individual. The spirit of man, then, is a combination of the intelligence and the spirit which is an entity begotten of God.⁷⁹

In effect, the position taken by Joseph Fielding Smith was amenable to both the notion that personal identity is created when differentiated intelligence is organized into a spirit individual or to the idea that individual identity exists inherently within created intelligences.

In spite of such cautionary statements, numerous Mormon writers have assumed personal eternalism to be Mormonism's official doctrine at least since 1940. Such is the case with Gilbert Orme, *The Four Estates of Man* (1948), Sterling McMurrin, *The Philosophical Foundations of Mormonism* (1959), *The Theological Foundations of Mormonism* (1965), Truman Madsen, *Eternal Man* (1966), B. F. Cummings III, *The Eternal Individual Self* (1968), and to a lesser degree R. Clayton Brough, *Our First Estate* (1977). Moreover, Mormon thought appears to be well established in metaphysical pluralism and finitistic theology despite vestigial rhetoric expressing faith in the vocabulary of traditional absolutism.⁸⁰

The doctrine of man's necessary existence has not gone unchallenged however. Since 1960, a philosophy known as Mormon neo-orthodoxy has arisen that emphasizes man's contingency, the creation of man as a conscious entity and God's absoluteness and complete otherness in contrast to traditional Mormon thought.⁸¹ The most influential proponent of Mormon neo-orthodoxy is probably Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. Greatly influenced by former President Joseph Fielding Smith, Elder McConkie has insisted on an absolute conception of God, including his omniscience and omnipotence in a classical sense.⁸² He also maintains that "intelligence or spirit element became intelligences *after* the spirits were born as individual entities."⁸³ In response to an enquiry for the official position of the Church on the status of intelligences before spiritual birth, McConkie said, "As far as I know there is no official pronouncement on the subject at hand In my judgment there was no agency prior to spirit birth and we did not exist as entities until that time."⁸⁴ As late as 1975, Truman G. Madsen, holder of the Richard L. Evans Chair of Christian Understanding, was cautioned to "exercise care in ascribing to intelligence more than the revelations themselves."⁸⁵ This caution, undoubtedly intended to temper Madsen's enthusiasm for the philosophical possibilities of the idea of man's necessary existence, is representative of the Church's present insistence on a non-codified theology. It also illustrates distrust among Mormons generally of philosophical elucidation and consequences of doctrine. Whenever the issue of man's eternal existence has been raised by writers of Church priesthood or auxiliary lessons in recent years (at least eight times) the matter has been described as pure speculation by the reviewing committee and deleted from the lesson.⁸⁶ The conflict between absolute and finite theologies has yet to be resolved in Mormon thought.

Implications and Conclusions.

The doctrine of pre-existence as a focal point in the development of Mormon thought is the subject of no small controversy. Much of the present conflict between absolute and finite theologies in Mormon thought stems from absolutist preconceptions inherited by early Mormons from Protestant/Catholic theologies with their absolutist connotations. Indeed, most Mormons still seem unaware that expressions of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence cannot mean for them what they mean to Protestants and Catholics. Many Mormons, and probably most non-Mormons, have failed to grasp the wide latitude of possible beliefs which can be tolerated within the tradition of Mormon thought. Although many view Mormon thought as restrictive, it is in fact more *inclusive* than *exclusive*, more thought-provoking than thought-binding. For instance, an individual member's beliefs may range from an absolutist view to a traditionally heretical, finitist view of God and man and still remain well within the bounds of traditional Mormon expressions of faith—a latitude far beyond the tolerance of Protestantism or Catholicism. The Church's reluctance to clarify its theology on an official level has left it up to individual members to think through and work out their own understanding of and relationship to God. In short, the burden of a consistent theology and vibrant relationship with God in Mormonism is not a corporate responsibility; indeed it cannot be. Rather, it is an individual burden that reflects the unique relationship of God with each member. And each member must be willing to face the implications of his or her beliefs.

The logical result of the neo-absolutist doctrine of Orson Pratt and Charles Penrose would be an "impersonal pantheism." In their neo-absolutist system all beings, including God, would be contingent upon the intelligence inherent in the totality of necessarily existing particles. This neo-absolutist view also implied that God as a person had come into being from a prior state of impersonal existence. Such a doctrine logically describes a force prior to God as an organized individual confined in space and time by virtue of His material existence. In such a context, the question becomes if man is dependent upon a more ultimate force for his existence, then should not we worship it rather than the personal "God" derived therefrom? If we are concerned only with the "attributes" of God, then the answer would seem to be yes.

Eternal personalism, on the other hand, would necessitate a "finitist theology." In such a view, both men and Gods would exist as individual entities. Man, like God in his primal nature, could choose to become god. God, however, would be related to intelligences and conditioned by uncreatable matter, space, time and eternal laws. In other words, God would not be responsible for the ultimate constituents of the universe. Such a departure from classical Christian theology generates interesting possibilities for explaining the existence of evil as arising from human experience. Moral evil therefore could be described as the result of genuine moral freedom inherent in uncreated intelligences, whose individual inequalities are not the product of God's creative actions. Natural evil could be described as the result of

uncreated eternal laws and conditions necessary for the eternal progression of individuals, neither of which God could contravene.

Even so, the doctrine of personal eternalism raises problems for Mormon thought. If the number of intelligences is infinite, then an infinite number of intelligences will remain without the chance to progress by further organization. If, on the other hand, the number of intelligences is finite, the eternal progression of gods resulting from begetting spirits must one day cease. Either way, the dilemma remains.

Although the idea of man's necessary existence has not always characterized Mormon thought, and even when it has, the philosophical strength of the doctrine has rarely been appreciated, the doctrine is a foundation upon which a consistent and unique theology has been built. The belief that man necessarily exists provides philosophical justification for the idea that man may ultimately become like God. It emphasizes the positive aspects of human existence, rejecting the dogma of original sin, rejecting salvation by grace, and emphasizing works and personal ability to do good. It accentuates freedom of the will, explains the existence of evil and the purpose of life, and most important, it asserts that God is a personal being conditioned by, and related to, the physical universe.

NOTES

¹Charles Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*. T. Clark: Edinburgh, 1895, pp. 221–228. A. Mehat, "Apocatastasis: Origen, Clement d'Alexandrie," *Vigilae Christianae* X:3/4, p. 196. Henri Crouzel and Manilo Simonetti, *Origene: Traite des Principes* (Paris, Editions du Cerf: 1978), 2 vols., I:40.

²Thomas Alexander, "The Reconstruction of Mormon Doctrine: From Joseph Smith to Progressive Theology," *Sunstone* 5:4, 1980, pp. 25–27; T. Edgar Lyon, "Doctrinal Development of the Church During the Nauvoo Sojourn," *BYU Studies* 15:4, 1975, pp. 437–39; Marvin S. Hill, "The Shaping of the Mormon Mind in New England and New York," *BYU Studies* 9:2, 1969, pp. 262–65; Timothy Smith, "Righteousness and Hope: The Biblical Culture that Nurtured Early Mormon Faith," *Mormon History Assn., Canandaigua, New York, May 2, 1980*.

³For the nature of man, see Mosiah 3:19; Alma 41:11; 42:10–12; for the nature of God, see I Ne. 11:18,21 (1st Edition), II Ne. 31:21; Mosiah 15:2–5; Alma 11:26–35; III Ne. 11:27; Moroni 8:18. An early convert would have found very little in the Book of Mormon to challenge traditional Trinitarianism; however, the Israelite authors of the Book of Mormon did not write from a perspective of Trinitarianism and therefore did not find it necessary to explain how God and Christ and the Holy Spirit are one. This Trinitarianism may also reflect Joseph Smith's earlier understanding imposed on the text through translation. Likewise, the term "natural man" could not have had Calvinistic connotations for the Nephite writers, even though the present terminology through translation may have suggested such to the early converts.

⁴*Evening and Morning Star*, Oct. 1832, p. 77. Cf. Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* II, xxxiv.2 in J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae Graecae*, 161 vols. (Paris: n.p., 1857–68), Vol. VII. Tertullian, *Contra Hermogones* vii, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae Latinae*, 221 vols. (Paris: n.p., 1877–90), II:227.

⁵*Messenger and Advocate*, May, 1835, p. 113. Cf. Alexander p. 32n12.

⁶Lyon, p. 439; Alexander, p. 33n23; Van Hale, "The Doctrinal Impact of the King Follett Discourse," *BYU Studies* 18:2, 1978, pp. 209–225. A survey of the extant letters and literature from this period failed to produce a single source commenting on the doctrine of pre-existence of man. Even so, the argument from silence is inconclusive since there was very little exegesis of the new Mormon scriptures on any subject during this period.

⁷The word “to create” was not clarified until 1842 with the Book of Abraham and again more fully in the King Follett Discourse. See Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon Cook. *The Words of Joseph Smith*, BYU Religious Studies Monograph: Provo, 1980, p. 351; the term “spirit” was not clarified until 1843 to mean pure or refined matter. See B. H. Roberts. *Documentary History of the Church* 5:392–93; the term “intelligence” was first used for entities in the Book of Abraham 3:18–22. Even here the term is equivocal.

⁸This does not mean that either Joseph Smith or his contemporaries were aware of the technical distinction between “ideal” and “real” pre-existence. The terminology was introduced by Adolph Harnack, *The History of Dogma*. New York: Dover Publishers, 1961, I:318–19, trans., Neil Buchanan, 6 vols. See also Kelly-Hammerton, *Pre-Existence, Wisdom and the Son of Man*. Cambridge: New Testament Studies Supplement: 1973, pp. 2–4.

⁹Doctrine & Covenants (1835 ed.), p. 211 (Section 93:32–34; 29 of the present edition). Several levels of analysis indicate that *ideal* pre-existence was intended in this revelation: 1) intelligence is singular; not plural as in the Nauvoo period; 2) intelligence is noted as an attribute of God’s “glory,” [vs. 36]; 3) intelligence is defined as “truth and light” [vs. 36] or as “the light of truth” [vs. 29], suggesting that intelligence is a manifestation of God’s knowledge; 4) in every case where man is said to pre-exist (i.e., “Ye were also in the beginning with the Father,” [vs. 23], “Man was in the beginning with the Father” [vs. 29]), the statement is further clarified to mean “that which is spirit, even the Spirit of Truth, and truth is knowledge,” or “Intelligence,” the knowledge of truth [vss. 23–24, 29].

However, it is possible that *real* pre-existence was intended even though no elucidation of the principle appeared until the Nauvoo period. For instance, several statements in this revelation are consonant with real pre-existence: “I (Christ) was in the beginning with the Father . . . Ye were also in the beginning with the Father” [vss. 21, 23]; “All truth is independent in that sphere which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also, otherwise there is no existence” [vs. 31]; “Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning” [vs. 38].

¹⁰Another statement of “ideal” pre-existence may occur in Alma 13:3.

¹¹*Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1933, Vol. 10, p. 628. See Spirit, meaning #6: “Of or pertaining to, emanating from intellect or higher faculties of the mind; intellectual.”

¹²Pearl of Great Price, Moses 3:5. Manilo Simonetti, “Alcune Osservazioni sull’interpretazione Oregiana di Genesi 2,7 e 3,21” in *Aevum* 36, 1972, pp. 370–381. The notion was first introduced by Philo, *De Opificio Mundi* 46, 134; *Leg. All. I*, xii.31.

¹³Georg Hegel. *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (1907), G. Lasson, Ed., *Sämtliche Werke, kritische Ausgabe*. Leipzig: F. Meiner, vol. 2. Cf. James Hastings, “Pre-existence,” *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, 10:240; for the influence of Hegel’s philosophy see Harold Hoffding, *A History of Modern Philosophy*. New York: Dover, 1955, trans., B. Meyer, pp. 177–180; 266–270. See also Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*. New York: Image Books, vol. 7, pt. 1, pp. 284–94. pp. 284–94.

¹⁴Gregory of Nyssa, “On the Making of Man,” in Philip Schaff, *The Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1956, pp. 420–21.

¹⁵Lectures on Faith #5, in D&C (1835 ed.), pp. 52–54. Cf. Joseph Smith’s 1835 account of the First Vision in Milton V. Backman, *Joseph Smith’s First Vision*. SLC: Bookcraft, 1971, pp. 158–159. Even with this development, the material tri-theism of our own day was yet to be developed.

¹⁶Michael Walton, “Professor Seixas, the Hebrew Bible, and the Book of Abraham,” *Sunstone* 6:1981, pp. 41–48.

¹⁷Van Hale, pp. 213–215.

¹⁸*History of the Church* (hereafter HC), B. H. Roberts, Ed. (SLC: Deseret Book Co., 1978 reprint, 7 vols., 5:393, May 16 & 17, 1843. Cf. William Clayton Journal, 17 May 1843. Church History Office (hereafter HCO).

¹⁹Ehat & Cook, p. 9; see also notes 4 and 6 p. 23. Quoting Willard Richards Pocket Companion.

²⁰*Ibid.* p. 60; Quoting William Clayton’s Private Book 5 January 1841. Cf. similar statements: “It is contrary to a Rashnall (rational) mind & Reason that a something could be Brought from a Nothing.” p. 61; “Is it logical to say that a spirit is immortal and yet have a beginning? Because

if a spirit of man had a beginning, it will have an end, but it does not have a beginning or end. This is good logic and is illustrated by my ring. I take my ring from finger and liken it unto the *mind* of man—the *immortal spirit*—because there would be a beginning and an end. So it is with the mind of man.” Larson, p. 204. For Patristic statements: Tertullian, *Against Hermogenes*, XI in PL 2:231; Athenagoras, *De Resurrectione Mortuorum* X,xii; Theophilus, *Ad Autolytus* XXVII; Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* II,xxxiv,2; Aristides, *Apologia* I, “When I say that ‘God is without beginning,’ this also means that everything which has a beginning will have an end.” in Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson Eds. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Christian Literature Co., 1893), II, 105.

²¹Ehat & Cook, p. 60

²²Book of Abraham in *Times and Seasons* March 1842.

²³G. H. Box. *The Apocalypse of Abraham* (New York: 1919), pp. 68–69.

²⁴Stan Larson. “The King Follett Discourse: A Newly Amalgamated Text” *BYU Studies*, 18:1978, pp. 179–192. Quotation from page 203.

²⁵Larson, p. 204.

²⁶The concept of spiritual birth was first associated with the doctrine of pre-existence by Eliza R. Snow, “O My Father” *Times and Seasons*, Oct. vi (1845), p. 1039; W. W. Phelps published a poem with a similar theme in 1854, see HC, VIII, p. 331. Cf. Linda Wilcox. “The Mormon Concept of a Mother in Heaven” *Sunstone* 5:1980, pp. 9–15.

²⁷Joseph Lee Robinson Journal (n.p.), p. 21; typescript in BYU Special Collections.

²⁸Joseph Smith used the terms “spirit” and “intelligence” interchangeably throughout the Nauvoo era. Although Joseph Smith may have secretly taught the doctrine of a Mother in heaven, he did not bifurcate the pre-existent state of man into a period of existence as intelligences and existence as spirits after spiritual birth through a heavenly mother. All sources attributing the idea of a heavenly Mother to Joseph Smith are late and probably unreliable. See Wilford Woodruff, *Millennial Star* 56 (April), p. 229, delivered Oct. 8, 1893, Susa Young Gates, *History of the Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement Association* (SLC: Deseret News, 1911), pp. 15–16; Joseph F. Smith, *Deseret News*, Feb. 9, 1895.

²⁹Robinson Journal, p. 21. Cf. Journal of Mosiah Hancock, “About the time I was one and twenty years of age (circa 1855), I know not whether to call it a dream or a vision . . . methought I was taken away somewhere . . . I say . . . the Beginning, God created man, male and female, created He them, . . . suffice it to say, that they were created in pairs, the male and his female.” (n.p.), p. 36 of BYU Special Collections typescript.

³⁰Parley P. Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 26 vols. (hereafter JD). I:7–8.

³¹T. Edgar Lyon, *Orson Pratt: Early Mormon Leader* (Master’s Thesis: University of Chicago, 1932), pp. 102–119; Cf. Gottfried Leibniz. *The Monadology*, in *The Rationalists* (New York: Anchor Books, 1974), trans. Albert Chandler, pp. 455–71.

³²Orson Pratt, *The Seer* (Washington, D.C., 1853), p. 102

³³Pratt, p. 103

³⁴Pratt, p. 102

³⁵Letter of Brigham Young to Orson Pratt, Sept. 1, 1853; Pratt’s response to Young, Nov. 4, 1853 (Brigham Young Collection), CHD.

³⁶Orson Pratt to Brigham Young, Nov. 4, 1853, Wash. D.C., CHD.

³⁷See Samuel W. Richards, BYU Special Collections typescript, March 25, 1855—“In the PM Prest. B. Young spoke to the Meeting in a very interesting manner referring to several points touched upon in the morning by Bro. Pratt. Did not seem fully to fancy Orson’s idea about the “great Almighty God” referring so especially to his attributes.” Cf. JD 3:203.

³⁸Pratt to Young Nov. 4, 1853, see also Gary Bergera. “The Orson Pratt-Brigham Young Controversies” *Dialogue* 2:1980, pp. 7–49.

³⁹Wilford Woodruff Journal, March 4, 1860, "President Young said I corrected O Pratt to day I did not say to him that God would increase to all Eternity. But I said the moment that we say that God knows all things comprehends all things and has a fulness of all that He ever will obtain that moment Eternity seases you put bounds to Eternity & Space & matter and you make a stopping place to it." Cf. JD 1:93; 6:120; 11:286.

⁴⁰Orson Pratt, "The Great First Cause" and "Absurdities of Immaterialism" both in *Writings of an Apostle: Orson Pratt* (SLC: Mormon Heritage Pub., 1976 reprint), and the "Holy Spirit" *Millennial Star*, Oct. 15, 1850, p. 308.

⁴¹"The Holy Spirit" p. 308.

⁴²The 1860 statement in James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (SLC: Bookcraft, 1965–75), 2:214–23; The 1865 statement in *Millennial Star* XXVII (Oct. 21, 1865), pp. 658–660, quotation from p. 669.

⁴³Discourse Oct. 8. 1854, JD s:58–59; 4:216–18; 10:5.

⁴⁴De Principiis, II,ix.2; III,v.3 in PG XI.

⁴⁵Brigham Young taught that man's "intelligence came from eternity, and is as eternal, in its nature, as the elements, or as the Gods" JD 1:2–3; or that "the soul of man is eternal" JD 7:285 10:5.

⁴⁶Wilford Woodruff Journal, Feb. 17, 1856, JD 3:203.

⁴⁷Brigham Young often taught that man existed as an individual only by virtue of God's organizing power: JD 2:135; 6:31; 7:285; 4:216; 8:205.

⁴⁸Wilford Woodruff Journal Sept. 17, 1854; Joseph Lee Robinson Journal, Oct. 6, 1854; Minutes of the Council of the Twelve, April 5, 1860, Thomas Bullock scribe, Brigham Young Collection LDS Church Archives; Journal of Wilford Woodruff April 5, 1860; Record of John L. Nuttall, Feb. 7, 1877, BYU Special Collections Typescript.

⁴⁹Charles Penrose, Discourse, Nov. 16, 1884; JD 26:18–29

⁵⁰Penrose, p. 27

⁵¹Penrose, p. 27

⁵²St. George Stake High Council Minutes (LDS Church Archives), Dec. 13, 1890.

⁵³*Ibid.*; Cf. Letter of President Wilford Woodruff, May 22, 1891, from Daniel D. McArthur—St. George Stake Historical Record CHD.

⁵⁴St. George High Council Minutes, June 11, 1892; see also the Diary of J. McAllister, June 11, 1892, Diary of Charles Lowell Walker, II:740–41; under date of June 11, 1892, pp. 11–13 in BYU Special Collections Typescript.

⁵⁵Walker Journal, pp. 11–13; St. George Record June 11, 1892.

⁵⁶St. George Record, "Prest. Cannon said we worship the Father in the name of the Son. Jesus prayed to the Father when he was among the Nephites And we don't worship the intelligence in no tabernacle . . . we worship a personage and not alone his intelligence . . . Father Bunker said he believed just as Prest. Cannon does that he did not believe that we worshiped intelligence separate from the body." Walker Journal, p. 13.

⁵⁷Letter of Benjamin F. Johnson to George S. Gibbs, Oct. 1903 in *BYU Studies* 4:1976, p. 206; corrected for spelling.

⁵⁸Lycurgus A. Wilson, *Outlines of Mormon Philosophy* (SLC: Deseret News, 1905), p. iv.

⁵⁹Wilson, p. 42

⁶⁰George Franklin Richards Journal, Feb. 6, 1907, pp. 128–129, also *The Improvement Era*, April 1907, pp. 401–423.

⁶¹B. H. Roberts, "The Immortality of Man" *Improvement Era*, April 1907, p. 401.

⁶²Antho Hendrick Lund Journal, August 25, 1911, p. 105

⁶³Lund Journal, Aug. 29, 1911, p. 106.

⁶⁴B. H. Roberts, *The Seventy's Course in Theology* #4, (1911), reprinted 1976 by L. H. Taylor Pub. Co., p. 11.

⁶⁵Donald Q. Cannon, "The King Follett Discourse: Joseph Smith's Greatest Sermon in Historical Perspective" *BYU Studies* 18:1978, p. 191, see notes 61 and 62.

⁶⁶Lund Journal, Dec. 7, 1914

⁶⁷Lund Journal, Dec. 11, 1914

⁶⁸John A. Widtsoe, *A Rational Theology* (SLC: Deseret Book, 1915), pp. 24–25.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 16

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 17

⁷¹*Ibid.*, pp. 24–25.

⁷²B. H. Roberts, *The Mormon Doctrine of Deity* (SLC: Deseret News, 1908), p. 49

⁷³James E. Talmage, *The Vitality of Mormonism* (Boston: Gorham Press, 1919), pp. 240; 321. The doctrine of personal eternalism was prominent enough to be taught in the seminaries during 1926 without attempts to qualify the extent of man's individualism before spiritual organization. See John M. Whitaker, Lesson notes to seminary, indicate that Intelligence was interpreted as "ego, eternal, never created or made, the thinking part of man." Whitaker was one of the writers of the lessons that year. U of U Special Collections.

⁷⁴B. H. Roberts, "The Truth, The Way, The Life" (n.p., LDS Church Archives), from chapter #26, U of U Special Collections manuscript.

⁷⁵Roberts, Ch. 26.

⁷⁶Truman Madsen. "The Meaning of Christ—The Truth, The Way, The Life: An Analysis of B. H. Roberts' Unpublished Masterwork" *BYU Studies* 15:1975, p. 19, n. 1.

⁷⁷George Albert Smith, chairman of the reading committee, to Ruderger Clawson, Council President, Oct. 10, 1929. Clawson Papers, CHD. The other members of the committee included Joseph Fielding Smith, Melvin Ballard, Stephen L. Richards and David O. McKay.

⁷⁸Ruderger Clawson, President of Council of Twelve to Heber J. Grant, May 15, 1930. Clawson Papers, CHD.

⁷⁹Joseph Fielding Smith. *The Progress of Man* (SLC: Utah Genealogical Society, 1936), p. 11

⁸⁰Sterling M. McMurrin. *The Theological Foundations of the Mormon Religion* (SLC: University of Utah Press, 1965), pp. 9–13; 96–109.

⁸¹O. Kendall White, Jr. "The Transformation of Mormon Theology" *Dialogue*, Summer 1970, pp. 9–23.

⁸²Bruce R. McConkie. *Mormon Doctrine* (SLC: Bookcraft, 1966), pp. 544–545.

⁸³McConkie, p. 387.

⁸⁴Bruce R. McConkie to Walter Horne, Oct. 2, 1974 in possession of author.

⁸⁵Madsen, p. 267, n. 19.

⁸⁶McConkie, to Horne.

DISCUSSION CONTINUED: THE SEQUEL TO THE ROBERTS/SMITH/TALMAGE AFFAIR

JEFFREY E. KELLER

FEW CHAPTERS IN twentieth-century Mormon thought are more thought-provoking than the events following B. H. Roberts' efforts to publish what he considered his greatest work, that synthesis of science and religion, *The Truth, the Way, the Life*. Much of this story, which involved the principal molders of modern church orthodoxy, is now well known through the fine recent study by Richard Sherlock, "'We Can See No Advantage to a Continuation of the Discussion: The Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair.'"¹ Newly uncovered materials, however, offer a new dimension to our understanding of this significant episode. These come in large measure from the papers of the son of one of the principals in the controversy—Sterling Talmage, who was almost in the center of things from the start.

When B. H. Roberts submitted his *magnum opus* in 1929, a publication committee composed of five members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was assigned to read the manuscript and make recommendations. This committee rejected Roberts' work for his speculations on the existence of "pre-Adamites" or races of man-like beings who had lived before the time of Adam.²

At least one member of the Twelve (and, as well, of the reading committee), Apostle Joseph Fielding Smith, interpreted the committee's decision as an important affirmation of the superiority of Mormon doctrine (as he understood it) over the theories of men, indeed as a vindication of Smith's general antagonism to science. He chose to publicize this perceived support in a

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speech in the unlikely forum of a Utah Genealogical Society Conference in April, 1930.³ He then had his remarks printed under the title, "Faith Leads to a Fullness of Truth and Righteousness" in the October 1930 issue of *The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*.⁴ After a brief introduction on the redemption of the dead, Smith observed,

Even in the Church there are a scattered few who are now advocating and contending that this earth was peopled with a race—perhaps many races—long before the days of Adam. These men desire, of course, to square the teachings in the Bible with the teachings of modern science and philosophy in regard to the age of the earth and life on it. If you hear any one talking this way, you may answer them by saying that the doctrine of "pre-Adamites" is not a doctrine of the Church, and is not advocated nor countenanced by the Church. There is no warrant in the scriptures, not an authentic word, to sustain it.⁵

Although Smith acknowledged that the exact method of creation had not yet been revealed and that there was a danger of placing "false interpretations upon the written word," he nevertheless felt the revelations to be sufficiently clear on Adam, the Earth and "so many other things which fall under the ban of present-day teaching, that we need not be led astray."⁶ One such revelation was 2 Nephi 2:22, which to Smith meant "There was no death in the earth before the fall of Adam."⁷ This premise logically led to his dismissal of fossil evidence of ancient life and death. In sum, Smith concluded, "Whom are you going to believe, the Lord or men? . . . Any doctrine, whether it comes in the name of religion, science, philosophy, or whatever it may be, that is in conflict with the revelations of the Lord that have been accepted by the Church as coming from the Lord will fail."⁸

Smith's mistrust of scientists, whom he perceived as neglecting the Gospel in pursuit of such false doctrines, was not new. "The great difficulty with most scientists," he had written in 1920, "is that they are searching to find out God and all his works through the spirit of man, which knows not the ways of the Lord, which are spiritually discerned."⁹ Later, in 1936, Smith was equally explicit on the subject of *Mormon* scientists:

The more I see of educated men, I mean those who are trained in the doctrines and philosophies of men now taught in the world, the less regard I have for them. Modern theories which are so popular today just do not harmonize with the Gospel as revealed to the Prophets and it would be amusing if it were not a tragedy to see how some of our educated brethren attempt to harmonize the theories of men with the revealed word of the Lord. Thank the Lord there is still some faith left, and some members who still cherish the word of the Lord and accept the Prophets.¹⁰

Already sensitive from the rejection of his masterwork, B. H. Roberts responded sharply to Smith's Genealogical Society address. In a strongly worded letter to President Heber J. Grant and the First Presidency, on December 15, 1930, he questioned the "strictly dogmatical and the pronounced finality of the discourse. Was this," he demanded, an "official declaration of

the Church on the subject treated? Or is it the unofficial and personal declaration of the opinion only of Elder Smith?"

In the latter event then I feel that that fact should have been expressed in the discourse: . . . If Elder Smith is merely putting forth his own opinions, I call in question his competency to utter such dogmatism either as a scholar or as an Apostle. I am sure he is not competent to speak in such a manner from general learning or special research work on the subject, nor as an Apostle.¹¹

The First Presidency responded by inviting the disputants to present their arguments in written form before the entire Council of the Twelve. Ultimately, as Sherlock has related in some detail, the controversy was resolved, at least temporarily, in April 1931, when the First Presidency declared in a statement circulated only among the General Authorities that neither man had proved his case and that the Church should take no stand on the uncertain issues of science.¹² An entry from President Heber J. Grant's journal makes the attitude of the Presidency clear:

After reading the articles by Brothers Roberts and Smith, I feel that sermons such as Orother Joseph preached and criticisms such as Brother Roberts makes of the sermon are the finest kind of things to be left alone entirely. I think no good can be accomplished by dealing in mysteries, and that is what I feel in my heart of hearts these brethren are both doing.¹³

When the Roberts-Smith controversy first arose, Apostle James Talmage was not appreciably involved. Although he was a trained geologist and regular speaker on the science/religion theme, he had not been part of the reading committee that reviewed Roberts' book and so had little contact with the discussion. This, of course, changed in 1931 when the entire Quorum of the Twelve was required to hear the protest that Roberts made against Smith.

Apostle Talmage's views were already well known, both within the church hierarchy and among the membership at large. Much of his adult life had been devoted to harmonizing science and religion. As early as 1881, as a twenty-year old teacher at the Brigham Young Academy, he had resolved "to do good among the young—probably lecture . . . on the subject of harmony between Geology and the Bible—a subject upon which so many of our people have mistaken ideas."¹⁴ Talmage eventually developed along these lines a popular lecture called "The Birth and Growth of the Earth" in which he presented a thorough review of the fossil finds up to the "advent of man."¹⁵ As a student at Johns Hopkins University three years later, Talmage wrote in his journal that his "belief in a loving God perfectly accords with my reverence for science, and I can see no reason why the evolution of animal bodies cannot be true—as indeed the facts of observation make it difficult to deny—and still the soul of man is of divine origin."¹⁶ He had stopped short of this conclusion in his popular lecture, however, in fact had chosen to avoid any mention of evolution, but he did give the fossil record in proper evolutionary order with an estimate of the respective ages. Implicit in the talk was the theme that listeners should feel less threatened by scientific theories as they become more acquainted with the hard evidence on which they were built.

In 1890 Talmage did specifically address “The Theory of Evolution” in remarks before the Utah Teachers Association. By this time he apparently had reconsidered some of his views as a student. Although demonstrating impressive familiarity with the history of evolutionary thought and the evidence used to justify the theory, most of his address was spent exposing the then widely cited weaknesses of the theory. Scientific experimentation, he reported, had not demonstrated the plausibility of a biogenesis of life from non-life. No examples had yet been demonstrated of the transmutation of one species to another. The fossil record failed to show the “missing links” between broad categories of animals. And, finally, evolution could not explain the uniqueness of the mind of man, his intellect, emotions, sense of the divine, which are far beyond what man would need for mere survival.¹⁷

Despite these reservations about the scientific evidence in support of evolution, Talmage unquestionably continued to subscribe fully to the *methods* of science. Several times over the next few decades he championed the scientific cause in real or perceived disputes with widely accepted notions within Mormonism. Responding on one occasion to an implied charge of scientific dogmatism—relating ultimately to the questions surrounding evolution—he told his audience in the Logan Temple that no one was more willing to give up a false scientific theory than a scientist. And in religion, “Faith is not blind submission, passive obedience with no effort at thought or reason. Faith, if worthy of its name, rests upon truth; and truth is the foundation of science.”¹⁸

While Talmage’s commitment to scientific inquiry is beyond dispute, he was less clear about where he felt the available evidence was pointing on questions debated that year. His public statements, while staunchly pro-science, were so carefully worded that it has been difficult to establish his views on several central issues. As Sherlock has shown, Talmage unquestionably accepted as established fact the great age of the earth, as well as the existence and death of life forms before the time of Adam.¹⁹ Although these views were not always presented conspicuously in his talks, Talmage was consistent in his affirmation of these ideas. On the question of pre-Adamic men, however, he created uncertainty as to his personal views by avoiding public comment. Although he seems to have rejected (after his college years) the theory that life forms evolved from one another, the logical implication of his comments was that his mind could be changed by further scientific evidence; his objections to evolution did not derive from a particular scriptural interpretation.

Partly because of this ambiguity in the public record, some have concluded that Talmage may have rejected both the theory of evolution *and* the existence of pre-Adamites. As will be seen, materials now available make it clear that, on the contrary, Talmage fully accepted at least the notion of pre-Adamites—in fact was described by his geologist son, Sterling, as having expressed in 1920 a concept of pre-Adamites which “went beyond anything that I had dared to think.”²⁰ Talmage thus appears to have been quite confident of the validity of notions demonstrated by his “own” science of geology (narrowly

defined), but less so of ideas derived from related fields—such as biology—with which he was less familiar.

Talmage's views during the 1931 discussions within the Quorum were thus presumably sympathetic to much of the spirit of Roberts' efforts; his personal beliefs were clearly in agreement with Roberts on some of the more sensitive points. Unfortunately, not a great deal is known about the views he expressed during these discussions. What is known, however, is revealing. Talmage was particularly upset by Joseph Fielding Smith's use of George McCready Price as an "anti-scientific" authority in geology. Price was professor of geology at a small parochial college in the midwest and author of many books purporting to vindicate orthodox Christian belief through an exposure of the weaknesses of scientific theory.²¹ After a Quorum meeting in which Smith quoted extensively from Price's *The New Geology*, Talmage decided to prepare himself more fully for a debate on the merits of this type of evidence. He wrote to his eldest son, Sterling, who at forty-one was professor of geology at the New Mexico School of Mines, for an opinion of the book.

The younger Talmage responded by pointing out a number of technical errors in the specific passages quoted by Smith, and then added:

You ask "how Price is held in the opinion of geologists in general." As far as I can tell (and it seems to be the unanimous opinion of those who know his book, at least so far as I have talked with them), he is considered as a theological fanatic, who has gone off on a tangent that most geologists seem to find funny. I never heard his book discussed, . . . without the element of comedy being dragged in.

All of Price's arguments, in principle at least, were advanced and refuted from fifty to a hundred years ago. They are not "New." His ideas certainly are not "Geology." *With these two corrections*, the title remains the best part of the book.²²

Armed with this response, Talmage brought up the subject of Smith's paper in an April 1931 meeting called to bring the issue to a final solution. In this heated meeting, as he later wrote to his son, Talmage used Sterling's evidence to "show up James [sic] McCready Price in all his unenviable colors."²³ Moreover, the senior Talmage wrote, he

. . . was bold enough to point out that according to a tradition in the Church based on good authority as having risen from a declaration made by the Prophet Joseph Smith, a certain pile of stones at Adamondi-Ahman, Spring Hill, Mo., is really part of the altar on which Adam offered sacrifices, and that I had personally examined those stones and found them to be fossiliferous, so that if those stones be part of the first altar, Adam built it of stones containing corpses, and therefore death must have prevailed in the earth before Adam's time.²⁴

Finally, Talmage made it clear to his assembled Brethren that all reputable geologists recognized the existence both of death and "pre-Adamites" prior to 6,000 years ago, the presumed date of the Fall of Adam.

This view, of course, was vigorously denied by Smith, and “a serious disruption between and among certain brethren” was in the offing.²⁵ In order to avoid this disruption, the First Presidency sought to settle the dispute quickly, although without committing themselves on one side or the other of such speculative theories. Their conclusion, given by memo dated April 7, 1931, stated that neither party “has produced definite proof in support of his views,” and, accordingly, the doctrine of pre-Adamites as well as the doctrine that no pre-Adamites existed were both declared theories which were not official doctrines of the Church.²⁶ This decision by the First Presidency, Talmage wrote that day in his journal, was “a wise one on the premises. This is one of the many things upon which we cannot speak with assurance and dogmatic assertions on either side are likely to do harm rather than good.”²⁷

Of equal importance to the decision on pre-Adamites was the First Presidency’s further instruction enjoining a continuation of the discussion. While on its face this instruction was designed to place the Church in a neutral position, in practice it did not have this effect. Only one side of the argument had been given any publicity—Joseph Fielding Smith’s “Faith Leads to a Fullness of Truth and Righteousness.” Many students, Talmage later recounted, “inferred from Elder Smith’s address that the Church refuses to recognize the findings of science if there be a word in scriptural record in our interpretation of which we find even a seeming conflict with scientific discoveries or deduction, and that therefore the ‘policy’ of the Church is in effect opposed to scientific research.”²⁸ Nor was Talmage alone in this concern, for he recalled an observation by an unnamed member of the First Presidency very early in the discussions that “sometime, somewhere, something should be said by one or more of us to make plain that the Church does not refuse to recognize the discoveries and demonstrations of science, especially in relation to the subject at issue.”²⁹

Sterling Talmage in particular had been upset by the arguments set forth in Smith’s Genealogy Society talk, a copy of which had been forwarded to him by his father. Writing to Apostle Talmage in June, just a few weeks after the apparent resolution of the Roberts-Smith confrontation, Sterling recounted how “[f]or several years I have been annoyed and irritated, — those terms are too mild, ‘affronted’ and ‘challenged’ would be better—by the type of thing you mention regarding no death on the earth, etc.” While he had refrained in the past from branding such doctrine as “ignorant dogmatism,” he felt motivated to protest now.³⁰

Rather than involve himself in the already sensitive pre-Adamite debate, Sterling felt he could make his point as well dealing with another aspect of Smith’s remarks. In the Genealogy Society address, under the sub-heading “Miracles Not Inconsistent with Reason,” Elder Smith had discussed Joshua’s command to the sun to stand still.³¹ He explained this miracle by asserting that the Lord had stopped the earth’s rotation. The chaotic centrifugal effects science would expect from such a phenomenon, Smith asserted, were avoided by slowing the earth down gradually. To Sterling, this was “so absurd that it will not stand the test of fifth grade arithmetic.”³² He prepared what was

to become an "Open Letter to Elder Joseph Fielding Smith," which he forwarded to his father for critique.

Sterling affirmed that there were two basic reasons why Smith's hypothesis was unreasonable. First, he observed, a point on the surface of the earth in Palestine is moving at the rate of almost a thousand miles per hour. To bring that spot to a halt without causing inertial effects would take days or weeks instead of hours. Second, even were the earth to slow down gradually, Sterling maintained, winds would be generated "fully six times as great as in the most violent recorded hurricane." Of course, Sterling conceded, the Lord could have accomplished all of this by fiat, but he felt that neither he nor Smith was willing to accept that explanation because both conceived of a God who operated within a framework of natural law. To the younger Talmage, it seemed more reasonable that the stoppage of the sun was in reality an optical illusion caused by unusual atmospheric conditions which could bend the rays of sunlight over the horizon; he cited recorded examples of similar phenomena.

The implications of all this and the real reason for writing the letter Sterling made quite explicit: "*some of the authorities have made statements that are not worthy of belief.*" Smith's hypothesis for Joshua's miracle was one example. The danger in this was that if a young person correctly disbelieves such a statement, "it is only a short step to doubting" all the authorities of the Church. In sum, Smith was out of place in referring to scientists as "Miserable Fools" as he had in the past, and he should not discourse in areas in which he was "not informed."³³

Apostle Talmage received his son's proposed letter enthusiastically. He strongly recommended sending the letter, with a few revisions, and suggested that Sterling give it wider distribution than originally planned:

I think it should be put into final shape and sent to its intended addressee without delay The conditions are peculiar but in my judgment and *in that of certain others* it is well to follow the course intended. I wish I could write in fuller measure of the conditions that have called forth your letter. But you have done—that is, begun and are to carry through—a good work. Finish it up.³⁴

After incorporating the changes suggested by his father, Sterling sent a copy, in late June, both to Elder Smith and to the First Presidency.

Apostle Talmage seems also to have felt that he should play a more active role himself in correcting some lingering misconceptions among the membership. In July, just four months after the April 7 decision and very soon after Sterling's "Open Letter," James chose to make a passing reference to the subject of pre-Adamites in one of his weekly radio addresses—in order, as he wrote Sterling, to "test the sensitiveness of at least some of our people on the subject." The response he received led him to conclude that the time was right to make clear, at least by inference, what was and was not the official position of the Church.³⁵

Talmage undertook this task in a speech in the Tabernacle on August 9th, 1931, entitled "The Earth and Man." In this he affirmed that plants and animals "lived and died, age after age, while the earth was yet unfit for human habitation." Perhaps because of the injunction against further discussion of the issue of pre-Adamites, he did not explicitly include them in his discourse. However, in comments on evolution reminiscent of his earlier talks, he stated that he did not regard "Adam as related to—certainly not as descended from—the Neanderthal, the Cro-Magnon, the Peking or the Pilt-down man."³⁶

Not surprisingly, the controversy that apparently had ended four months earlier was reopened. Should "The Earth and Man" be published? Several meetings of the Quorum were devoted to the talk. The deliberations, Talmage later wrote to John Widtsoe, who was in Europe, "revealed a very strong feeling on the part of a minority of the Brethren against giving public sanction to the views of geologists as set forth in the address." In particular,

The insistence on the part of three of our brethren—really to the effect that all geologists and all geology are wrong in matters relating to the sequence of life on earth—has been surprising. The author of the genealogical society address holds tenaciously to his view that prior to the fall of Adam there was no death of plants and animals upon the earth.³⁷

Elder Smith, according to his own account to Susa Young Gates, was supported within the Quorum by Rudger Clawson, the president, David O. McKay and George Albert Smith.³⁸ The official report by Clawson to the First Presidency noted that "again the scientific theory, or claim, is set forth in the sermon to the effect that man finally emerged, or was developed from and through a line of animal life reaching back, into numberless ages of the past, to the protoplasm." While in retrospect it is difficult to find evidence for this claim in Talmage's carefully chosen wording, no mention is made of his voicing a disagreement with this analysis.³⁹

Those members of the Quorum who supported publication included—in addition to Talmage himself—Reed Smoot,⁴⁰ Joseph F. Merrill⁴¹ (who was called to be an apostle in the middle of the debate), John A. Widtsoe (whose opinion was solicited by mail),⁴² and, apparently, Richard Lyman and George F. Richards. The latter two were present when Talmage delivered his address and expressed their "tentative approval" to him at the time. (President Anthony Ivins was also there and similarly supportive; Joseph Fielding Smith, present as well, was not.)⁴³ There apparently was additional support within the Quorum, for both Talmage and Smoot speak in their journals of a "majority" favoring publication.⁴⁴

Despite this reported distribution of opinion, Clawson's official report states that,

A motion was made and seconded to the effect that in the opinion of the Twelve, the sermon should not be published. This motion, after some further discussion, was followed by a substitute motion to the

effect that the sermon be returned to Brother Talmage and that he be requested to remodel it if possible by cutting out the objectionable features. Brother Talmage consented to do this. The substitute motion was adopted.⁴⁵

Predictably, the Quorum ultimately was unable to come to the requisite unanimity concerning publication, despite Talmage's willingness to state explicitly that opinions expressed were those held by himself or by contemporary geologists. (This, of course, would still accomplish the desired goal of showing the acceptability of the views cited; it was not Talmage's intent to assert them as "the" church position on the subject.)

As with the Roberts-Smith case, the First Presidency again was called upon to settle the controversy. This time they ruled in Talmage's favor. President Heber J. Grant made note of the decision in his journal, November 17, 1931:

At 11:30 Brother James E. Talmage called, and we went over his address delivered in the Tabernacle a number of weeks ago, and authorized its publication and also gave authorization for it to be printed in the same form as the radio addresses, for distribution.⁴⁶

Four days later the *Deseret News* Church Section carried the text of Talmage's remarks, and it also was issued in pamphlet form.

The publication of "The Earth and Man" marked the final chapter of James Talmage's involvement with questions of science and religion. He died less than two years later, just before his seventy-first birthday. Coincidentally, the seventy-seven-year-old B. H. Roberts, a second principal in the discussions of the past few years, died exactly two months later. The third principal, Joseph Fielding Smith, only fifty-seven at the time, continued as an influential presence for four more decades.

Following publication of Talmage's address, and still in the wake of the First Presidency guidance of April 1931, the controversy temporarily subsided. In 1934, however, just a year after Talmage's death, battle was again joined, but this time between Joseph Fielding Smith and Sterling Talmage. This episode began when Smith approved for publication in the *Deseret News* Church Section an article by Major Howard O. Bennion entitled "Is the Earth Millions of Years Old?"⁴⁷ Bennion, at the time a retired civil engineer, had served in several army and government engineering posts and had studied geology as a hobby. He answered the earth age question negatively, stating clearly that the scriptural and scientific accounts of the earth's creation were mutually exclusive, that the theory of evolution (including theistic evolution) was scripturally absurd, and that the principle of uniformitarianism upon which much of science depended was demonstrably false.⁴⁸

Sterling Talmage immediately responded with a lengthy rebuttal to Bennion's article, which he sent to Apostle John A. Widtsoe (a close friend to both Sterling and his father) and to the *Deseret News*. Widtsoe, now back from Europe, responded favorably to Sterling's article, much as he had reacted to James Talmage's address. He wrote Sterling that he had "expressed myself

as forcefully as I knew how to the brethren when the [Bennion] article was being discussed" but felt he could not formulate a direct reply himself because of the guidance against further discussion by the General Authorities. He could, however, make sure that Talmage's article was published. The matter was discussed with Elder Smith, who agreed that both sides of the argument should be aired.⁴⁹ Talmage's "Can We Dictate God's Times and Methods?" was printed one month later.⁵⁰

Sterling thus began to function for Widtsoe much as he had once served his father, as surrogate spokesman for the ideas these brethren were constrained not to discuss in print. (Howard Bennion served the same function for Smith.) Widtsoe went so far as to offer to act as Talmage's "unofficial agent in bringing matters before the public at home."⁵¹ Sterling's perspective was clearly set forth in his published essay:

As a geologist, I object to erroneous explanations of geological theories offered by one, who according to his own admission, had only a smattering acquaintance with geology As an upholder of the authority of the Church, I object to any statements from a non-authoritative source, of what constitutes "the doctrines of the Church," especially when some of these statements are in direct contradiction of the latest authoritative statements that have come to my attention.⁵²

The "latest authoritative statement" referred to was, of course, "The Earth and Man" address by his father. As to the "authority" of the senior Talmage's remarks, Anthony W. Ivins, First Counselor to the President at the time of the speech, had reportedly informed Sterling that the talk did have the approval of the presiding quorums.⁵³ Significantly, however, Widtsoe counseled Sterling immediately before publication of the latter's rebuttal to Bennion that "there appears to be no evidence on file that your father's splended article, 'The Earth and Man,' went out with what is held to be full authoritative approval, that is, the vote of approval of the Presidency and the Twelve."⁵⁴

Before their debate upon the pages of the *Church News* was over, both Bennion and Talmage had written follow-up articles. Bennion's entitled "Further Observations on the Age of the Earth," really did not address the issues raised by Talmage, simply reiterating much of the same material in his first article.⁵⁵ In the issue of the *Church News* that contained Talmage's second article, however, Dr. Sidney Sperry, a well-known Mormon Bible scholar, published an article supporting Bennion's position on scriptural grounds, and attempting a specific reply to Talmage's charges as Bennion had not done. In this Sperry maintained that "The Earth and Man" address, so heavily relied upon by Sterling Talmage, was an inappropriate airing of James Talmage's own views "for which the Church should not be held responsible."⁵⁶

Agitated by Sperry's criticism of his father, Sterling drafted a scathing rebuttal but, surprisingly, there is no evidence in his correspondence that it was ever sent to the *Deseret News*. A partial explanation may be found in the

fact that he also had immediately addressed a letter to President Anthony W. Ivins:

I do not like to come out in print, and brand another member of the Church as a plain liar, even though under the circumstances the designation seems strictly accurate. Dr. Sperry's accusation that my father assumed personal responsibility for portions of "The Earth and Man" that were not in accordance with the doctrines of the Church is utterly and unqualifiedly false.⁵⁷

Talmage requested the First Presidency to officially correct this "misstatement . . . with reference to my father's sermon."⁵⁸ Although a copy of the First Presidency's reply to Talmage is unavailable, it is apparent that they declined to comply with his request.

In the summer following the foregoing exchange of articles, Joseph Fielding Smith read an article by Dudley J. Whitney, introduced as "Esq., B.S., of Exeter, California," in the *Journal of the Transactions of the Victorian Institute* purporting to prove that the earth was 6,000 years old.⁵⁹ Smith, impressed by the article, wrote to Mr. Whitney asking him to respond to the Bennion-Talmage debate.⁶⁰ Whitney subsequently drafted a series of articles, the first of which argued that scientific data prove that the creation of the earth took place by divine fiat 6,000 years ago. Smith had Whitney's "The Fiat Creation of the Earth" published in the *Deseret News* but not in the Church Section.⁶¹

Since the Whitney article was neither written by a Mormon nor published in a church periodical, Talmage paid little attention to it. W. W. Henderson, professor of zoology at Utah State University, did write to the *News* stating that since "people generally take seriously whatever articles of this kind they find published in the *News*, it is unfortunate to publish such a paper."⁶²

As a result of this and other protests, the *Deseret News* decided against printing the last three or four articles of the Whitney series. In writing him of their decision, they suggest he could take up the matter personally with Talmage or Henderson if he wished. Talmage subsequently received an angry letter from Whitney offering Sterling \$100 to participate in a debate on the merits of the case for the fiat creation.⁶³

Talmage was astonished by Whitney's letter, especially since he had had nothing to do with discontinuing the series. In his letter, Whitney mentioned that "our mutual friend, Mr. Joseph Fielding Smith, the Church Historian," had been responsible for the publication of Whitney's articles at the *Deseret News*; Talmage therefore wrote to Smith for an explanation.⁶⁴

Smith replied that he had, indeed, favored publication of the Whitney articles:

As you know I am not in accord with many of the theories of the present day, including organic evolution and other theories taught by geologists, biologists, and others. For this reason I thought articles might be of interest showing there is another side to the questions. . . . While scientists are not atheists and are led to believe in some kind of a God, yet the tendency of the times is to destroy the Son of God and the plan of redemption.⁶⁵

Talmage expressed appreciation of Smith's reply in a return letter, although noting that Smith had merely re-emphasized the points of basic disagreement between them.⁶⁶

Although Talmage declined Whitney's offer to debate publicly, he did attempt to spell out his objections to Whitney's articles in private correspondence. To this Whitney replied, "I confess with deepest penitence that in discussing the essentials of my case I hurried over one part of the subject with some generalizations that were not strictly correct." He still felt, however, that his basic thesis was "unanswerable." As a matter of fact, "I figure that if about seven or eight of [my] series had been published, the teachings of evolution would have been pretty badly demoralized in the Inter Mountain States."⁶⁷ With this, the Whitney-Talmage exchange seems to have ended.⁶⁸

Scarcely one year later Elder Smith approved an article similar to those of Whitney and Bennion for publication in the *Church News*. This one was by Floyd Day, unmentioned in the article, and was entitled "Can the Scriptures Be Relied On?" If so, according to Day, the earth was only 13,000 years old; there was no death before the Fall of Adam 6,000 years ago; and the principles of organic evolution were blasphemous.⁶⁹ Talmage once again protested strongly to the First Presidency that "the scriptural quotations are strained and misapplied." He pointed out, again, that the article was in direct contradiction to his father's "Earth and Man" address, which "is to be considered an apostolic utterance." Perhaps wearied by the persistent appearance of such articles, he also informed the Presidency that he did not intend to draft a direct rebuttal, commenting only that "the present article . . . is so puerile that it carries its own refutation."⁷⁰

Joseph Fielding Smith, shown a copy of Talmage's letter, was particularly upset that "The Earth and Man" should be considered "an apostolic utterance delivered by appointment." He wrote Sterling that he knew personally that the talk had been issued "arbitrarily, in the absence of the President of the Church, and over the protest of the majority of the Council of the Apostles."⁷¹

To Sterling, Smith's statement was tantamount to a charge that James Talmage in publishing his talk was guilty of unethical, clandestine behavior. He responded to Smith that "I knew my father better than that; and so did you. I must admit that the paragraph carries a note of personal resentment against what appears to me to be an utterly unfair aspersion relative to my father's methods and motives."⁷²

At this point Talmage again sought confirmation of the status of his father's talk in a letter outlining Smith's charges to "President Heber J. Grant and Counselors." The First Presidency replied with a letter outlining a history of the publication of "The Earth and Man." Contrary to Sterling's belief that the sermon was authoritative, they asserted, it was twice "the unanimous view of the Twelve minus one, that the sermon not be published." As a result, "President Ivins withdrew the sermon from the consideration of the Council and himself decided that it should be published. It was printed within two or three days thereafter."⁷³ At the time Ivins made the final decision, according to the letter, President Grant was not at home and was apparently not

consulted. The Presidency continued, "You can see from the foregoing that the sermon 'The Earth and Man' cannot be regarded as an official expression of the Church;" however, "we make this foregoing statement without making any comment at all upon the matters discussed in the sermon." These remarks were followed by an exposition on the phrase, "by appointment." To the Presidency, "These 'appointments' are made merely in order that certain work shall be done, . . . but that does not mean that the Church must approve everything" that is said or done "by appointment."⁷⁴

This account of the events surrounding the publication of "The Earth and Man" is remarkable in that it disagrees with almost every other account available, including President Heber J. Grant's personal journal and Rudger Clawson's official report quoted above. One wonders what sources the 1935 Presidency consulted. A satisfactory explanation for this discrepancy is unavailable, because of the inaccessibility of critical historical records. It is probably relevant to note that when this explanation was sent to Sterling Talmage, only President Grant remained of those who were in the First Presidency in 1931. Second Counselor Charles W. Nibley had died in December 1931, and First Counselor Ivins in 1934. J. Reuben Clark, the New First Counselor and a frequent official respondent to inquiries to the First Presidency during the later Grant years, had not been a General Authority in 1931 and was not a party to the earlier discussions. The new Second Counselor was David O. McKay, formerly of the Quorum of the Twelve. (Aside from replacements for Talmage and McKay, the Quorum itself was unchanged.)

Whatever the explanation for the letter, its effect on Sterling was profound. He replied to the Presidency and to Smith in a highly conciliatory manner:

I am very grateful to you for clarifying my mind in this respect. I shall not again, either in publication or in private correspondence, place undue stress on the authoritativeness of this document, or any statements contained in it.⁷⁵

Thereafter, he was never again so willing to commit himself publicly in disagreement with conservative elements of the Church, although he had several opportunities to do so.⁷⁶ Three years later, when Apostle John Widtsoe decided to involve himself in the public defense of science against scriptural traditionalism, Talmage published one last article on the age of the earth in the *Improvement Era*, in support of Widtsoe.⁷⁷ He did not, however, follow through with plans to publish a series of articles written with Widtsoe's approval and defending the theory of evolution.⁷⁸ Although he completed a book length manuscript called *Can Science Be Faith Promoting?*, he was unable to publish this work before his death in 1956.⁷⁹

The highlights of the subsequent developments in this history have been covered elsewhere.⁸⁰ A climate sympathetic to the scientific perspective was evident in the Forties, supported by Widtsoe's important articles on science in 1938, 1939, and 1948. The Fifties saw the return of vigorous controversy, triggered by two talks at Brigham Young University by Joseph Fielding Smith, and the publication of his *Man: His Origin and Destiny* in 1954—all emphat-

ically reiterating the positions he had expressed several decades before. Ironically, the men who were counselors to Heber J. Grant in 1935 were called upon to lead the disclaimer to Smith's still authoritarian pronouncements. J. Reuben Clark, who had become First Counselor in the First Presidency, delivered his important sermon on "When Are the Writings of Church Leaders Entitled to the Claim of Scripture?" in response to questions raised by Smith's book. After David O. McKay became President of the Church, he repeatedly advised inquirers that Smith's book "was not published by the Church, and is not approved by the Church. The book contains expressions of the author's views for which he alone is responsible."⁸¹

In the Sixties, still in the McKay administration, a generally "pro-scientific" atmosphere was in evidence. The Church's *Instructor* magazine carried a series of essays on "modern problems" in 1965 which included articles by prominent LDS scientists on issues such as the age of the earth. The most controversial of these dealt sympathetically with evolution. Written by BYU botanist Bertrand Harrison, and entitled "The Relatedness of Living Things," this essay was introduced with a note stating clearly that it had been approved by the editor—David O. McKay.⁸² James Talmage's "The Earth and Man" also was reprinted in the *Instructor* as part of the same series.⁸³ The most recent decade, however, again has seen an apparent shift to a more fundamentalistic, anti-science perspective, both in official church manuals and in widely discussed talks by Apostles Ezra Taft Benson, Mark E. Petersen and Bruce R. McConkie.⁸⁴

Those who previously addressed this chapter in LDS history have noted that it illustrates several important points. At the most immediate level, as Duane Jeffery made clear in his pathbreaking study in 1974, it is evident that there is no formal "Church position" on many science-related questions historically under dispute.⁸⁵ More recently Richard Sherlock carried this conclusion a major step further with the generalization that, in fact, "Mormonism lacks theological 'orthodoxy' in the usual sense" on most issues: "We have few, if any, creedal statements to define our convictions with precise language. What usually passes for 'orthodoxy' is simply a widely held opinion."⁸⁶ Finally, Thomas Alexander pointed out that the men involved in these disputes were accustomed to acting authoritatively in actually resolving doctrinal ambiguities.⁸⁷

The present study supports these conclusions. Whatever the implications of the discrepancy in the record for 1935, two important themes emerge from the collective experiences of the Thirties. The first is that the issue of "orthodoxy" was much obscured by the carelessness with which the term "authoritative" (or its implied equivalent) was used. The second is that Sherlock's "widely held opinions" have been shaped by past protagonists not only through their own rhetorical style, but also through their intentional recruitment of vicarious opinion molders.

In support of the first point, it is easy to see that neither side has been immune from the temptation to advance its position in categorical, or authority-shrouded terms. B. H. Roberts, no less than Joseph Fielding Smith, was

willing to assert flatly the certainty of several disputed conclusions—the former in part because of his acceptance of the “truths” of science, the latter because of his acceptance of the “truth” of the fundamentalistic reading of the scriptures. Thus in 1931, the First Presidency felt compelled to take an official position denying, with the precision of a statement of classical logic, both sides of the argument: “the existence of pre-Adamites is not a doctrine of the Church;” neither was “the statement: ‘There were not pre-Adamites upon the earth.’”

Similarly, although Apostle Talmage in his 1931 address advanced his opinions in more carefully chosen language, he stated as fact scientific conclusions on which the First Presidency might correctly have ruled that the Church had no official stance. As a leading church authority, Talmage, no less than Smith or Roberts, could be viewed as speaking with religious authority. Thus, it was required before publication that such important qualifiers as “according to geologists” be added to the text.

The problem of assumed or perceived “authority” can also be seen in succeeding events. To Sterling Talmage, it was important that his father’s remarks, notwithstanding the incorporated caveats, be considered “authoritative utterances.” Conversely, both Smith and Sperry argued not only that the remarks were not “authoritative” but implied that their opposition to Talmage’s views reflected an authoritative consensus. In this context a key message in the First Presidency letter of 1935 was that James Talmage was not expressing an official position for the Church. As the Presidency affirmed both in 1935 and 1931, they did not have a position at all on the subject in dispute.⁸⁸

The Presidency’s further clarification in 1935 that discourses of General Authorities on official assignment were not necessarily official doctrine was perfectly consistent with these rulings. It also illuminates the emergence, during these and later years, of the *pro forma* disclaimer in the introduction to many books by the Authorities. Clark’s 1954 address and McKay’s responses to inquiries about *Man: His Origin and Destiny* or, a few decades later, McConkie’s *Mormon Doctrine* can be seen as obvious applications of this decades-old position.

The problem, of course, is that this practical and seemingly official view has not received significant (official) public exposure over the years. Only Clark’s talk—which it should be acknowledged could by his own standard be labelled “not official”—was delivered publicly, and it has received little reinforcement in recent years. If anything, the “follow the Brethren” theme now so much in vogue has encouraged the idea that *anything* uttered by a church authority or contained within a church manual is official. Yet ironically, the familiar disclaimer as to official status now appears in—of all places—the otherwise authoritatively presented Bible dictionary in the recent official LDS Bible.

John Widtsoe, amidst the controversies of the early Thirties, expressed his frustration at having been “afflicted with these questions [of science] for a generation of time.” It seemed to him that it was “high time that the Church

answer them definitively or declare that it does not know, so that more important questions may engage the minds of young and old."⁸⁹ To judge from his personal correspondence and diary entries, Apostle Talmage hoped to accomplish this end by publicizing the acceptability of popularly suspect notions. Ironically, his efforts to resolve what was "official" church doctrine and what was not were to some extent blunted by the question of his own "authority." Despite the decades-old infighting for "authority" to speak in the name of the Church about science (or perhaps because of it), neither the issues of science nor those associated with doctrinal authority have yet been resolved.

NOTES

¹*Dialogue* 13 (Fall 1980): 63–78.

²*Ibid.* For a thorough discussion of the contents of *The Truth, the Way, the Life*, see Truman Madsen, "The Meaning of Christ—The Truth, the Way, the Life: An Analysis of B. H. Roberts' Masterwork," *Brigham Young University Studies* 15 (Spring 1975): 259–92. At the present time, the manuscript is closed to scholarly research.

³He states, "I will make some remarks in regard to this earth and its inhabitants, which some of you may think has little if any bearing on the question of salvation of the dead," p. 146.

⁴21 (October 1930): 145–158.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 155–156.

⁷"And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end." Smith, "Fulness," p. 148.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 149, 155. For a more thorough discussion of Joseph Fielding Smith's views, see Duane Jeffery, "Seers, Savants, and Evolution: The Uncomfortable Interface," *Dialogue* 7 (Autumn-Winter 1973): 41–75; and Richard Sherlock, "A Turbulent Spectrum: Mormon Reactions to the Darwinist Legacy," *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978): 33–59.

⁹Joseph Fielding Smith, "The Origin and Destiny of Man," *The Improvement Era*, 23 (March 1920): 375.

¹⁰Joseph Fielding Smith, *Small Journals*, Dec. 28, 1938. Typescript of this quotation in Eugene Thompson Collection, BYU Archives.

¹¹B. H. Roberts to Heber J. Grant and Counselors, Dec. 15, 1930. Church Archives-Historical Department, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter cited as Church Archives).

¹²See Jeffery, "Interface," and Sherlock, "Affair," op. cit.

¹³Heber J. Grant diary, January 25, 1931. Heber J. Grant collection, Church Archives.

¹⁴Personal Journals of James E. Talmage, Dec. 12, 1881, James E. Talmage Collection, Brigham Young University Special Collection Archives (hereafter cited as BYU Archives).

¹⁵"The Birth and Growth of the Earth," *The B.Y.A. Academic Review*, Dec. 1884, p. 19.

¹⁶Talmage Journal, March 16, 1884. Italics Talmage's. Two months later, after hearing a Methodist minister preach on the evils of Darwinism, Talmage wrote, . . . like most ministers whose remarks I have heard or read upon this subject he showed his ignorance. . . . 'Darwin.' Oh yes—says 'we come from monkeys'—then

condemns. I certainly think 'tis the ministers themselves who have bred the disgust with which most scientific people regard them—because they will dabble with matters from which their ignorance should keep them at a safe distance. . . . Darwin wrote for those who can understand him: some of whom will agree with and others oppose him: but he did not write for ministers who never read beyond others' opinions of the man. (*Ibid.*, May 4, 1884).

¹⁷James E. Talmage, *The Theory of Evolution* (Provo: Utah County Teacher's Association, 1890). This last point was used later by Talmage also as a criticism of the anti-evolutionists who fail to recognize that evolution only concerns the physical body. Of the evolutionists, he wrote in this lecture:

Facts warrant me in asserting that the theory of evolution has been greatly injured through the vague, wild, aye, even insane enthusiasm of many of its professed adherents. Atheists have flocked to its standard, and with a pretence of defending its principles have hurled abroad their shafts of hatred toward their Godly parent.

¹⁸James E. Talmage, "The Methods and Motives of Science," delivered in the Logan Temple, Feb. 5, 1898, and published in *The Improvement Era*, 3 (Feb. 1900): 250–259. The controversy that gave rise to Talmage's remarks in the Temple arose in 1896, when John Rocky Park, a Mormon and retired president of the University of Utah, delivered a series of lectures on psychology which included many evolutionary notions about the development of psychological traits. He was subsequently challenged on the pages of the *Deseret News* by George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency as teaching grave error and "boldly enunciating the non-existence of a personal deity." (*Deseret News* June 16, 19, 22, 23, 24, 26, 33, 1886.)

¹⁹Sherlock, "Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair," *op. cit.*

²⁰Sterling Talmage to John A. Widtsoe, April 17, 1934. All of the letters cited involving Sterling Talmage are in the possession of William Lee Stokes at the University of Utah.

²¹George McCready Price, *The New Geology* (Mt. View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1923). Price writes of geology, for example:

In geology, facts and theories are still *in-extricably commingled*, and in the ordinary college textbook of the science, the most absurd and fantastic speculations are still taught to the students with all the solemnity and pompous importance which might be allowable in speaking of the facts of chemistry or physics.

²²Sterling Talmage to James Talmage, Feb. 9, 1931. Italics Talmage's.

²³James Talmage to Sterling Talmage, May 21, 1931.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶See Jeffery, "Interface," and Sherlock, "Affair," *op. cit.*

²⁷Talmage Journals, April 7, 1931.

²⁸Talmage Journals, Nov. 21, 1931.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰Sterling Talmage to James Talmage, June 15, 1931.

³¹Joshua 10:12–14.

³²Sterling Talmage to James Talmage, June 15, 1931.

³³Sterling Talmage, "Open Letter to Elder Joseph Fielding Smith," June 28, 1931. The reference to geologists as "miserable fools" had evidently been made by Elder Smith at a stake conference attended by Sterling Talmage.

³⁴James Talmage to Sterling Talmage, June 23, 1931. Italics Talmage's.

³⁵James Talmage to Sterling Talmage, July 23, 1931.

³⁶James E. Talmage, "The Earth and Man," *Deseret News*, Nov. 21, 1931.

³⁷James Talmage, to John Widtsoe, Nov. 18, 1931, Talmage Papers, Church Historian's Office.

³⁸Susa Y. Gates to John A. Widtsoe, undated, Widtsoe Collection, Utah State Historical Society.

³⁹When Clawson's report was read to the Council of the Twelve, the only objection voiced was that "some of the brethren took exception to the expression, '*reaching back, into numberless ages of the past, to the protoplasm.*' I presume I should have said '*reaching back, into numberless ages of the past, to the single-celled protozoan.*'" (Report of Ruderger Clawson to the First Presidency, Clawson Papers, Church Historian's Office).

⁴⁰Smoot wrote Talmage that he hadn't "a word of complaint to offer against" the address. (Nov. 24, 1931, Talmage Collection, BYU Archives).

⁴¹Merrill was reported to have "upon hearing the sermon expressed a great pleasure and satisfaction and asked for a thousand copies of the sermon to distribute among his seminary teachers." (Hand-written report of Ruderger Clawson, *op. cit.*).

⁴²Widtsoe wrote, "I am pleased, indeed, that the address was delivered publicly and hope it may soon be published." (Widtsoe to President Ruderger Clawson, Sept. 9, 1931, Widtsoe Collection, Utah State Historical Society).

⁴³Talmage wrote in his journal that "the other brethren named [Richards and Lyman], including President Ivins, expressed their tentative approval of what I had said." (Talmage Journal, Nov. 21, 1931, BYU Archives). Joseph Fielding Smith wrote in his small journals, "(attended) Tabernacle in the afternoon. Dr. J. E. T. spoke not edifying but questionable." (Copy in Eugene Thompson Collection, BYU Archives).

⁴⁴Smoot wrote, "I voted that the article with a few slight changes be published and a majority voted that way." (Reed Smoot Journals, Sept. 29, 1931, BYU Archives). Talmage wrote, "The majority of the Twelve have been in favor of the publication of the address from the time they first took it under consideration." (Talmage Journals, Nov. 21, 1931).

⁴⁵Ruderger Clawson Papers, Church Historian's Office.

⁴⁶Grant Journals, Nov. 17, 1931, Church Historian's Office.

⁴⁷Howard S. Bennion, "Is the Earth Millions of Years Old?" *Deseret News Church Department*, March 17, 1934, p. 6, and March 24, pp. 4, 7.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*

⁴⁹John A. Widtsoe to Sterling Talmage, April 11, 1934.

⁵⁰Sterling Talmage, "Can We Dictate God's Times and Methods?" *Deseret News Church Department*, April 14, 1934, pp. 3, 5 and April 21, pp. 3, 6.

⁵¹John A. Widtsoe to Sterling Talmage, April 11, 1934.

⁵²Sterling Talmage, "Can We Dictate?," April 14, pp. 3, 6.

⁵³Sterling Talmage to President Heber J. Grant and Counselors, Dec. 30, 1935.

⁵⁴John A. Widtsoe to Sterling Talmage, April 11, 1934.

⁵⁵Howard S. Bennion, "Further Observations on the Age of the Earth," *Deseret News Church Department*, May 19, 1934, p. 4; Sterling Talmage, "Some Lessons Involved in the Age of the Earth," *Deseret News Church Department*, June 16, 1934, p. 2.

⁵⁶Sidney Sperry, "What Shall We Then Believe?" *Deseret News Church Department*, June 16, 1934, p. 3.

⁵⁷Sterling Talmage to President Anthony W. Ivins, July 1, 1934. The health of the 81-year-old Ivins at this time is unclear. He died just two months later.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

⁵⁹Dudley Joseph Whitney, "The Age of the Earth as Deduced from the Salinity of the Ocean," *Journal of the Transactions of the Victorian Institute*, 65 (1933), 26-37.

The Victorian Institute was a society established in 1867 in London, England, that had as its goal "To investigate fully and impartially the most important questions of Philosophy and Science, but more especially those that bear upon the great truths revealed in Holy Scriptures, with the view of defending these truths against the oppositions of Science, falsely so-called." (*Transactions* 1 (May 1867): vi). While the society defended

many scriptural “truths” such as creation *ex nihilo* that were not compatible with Mormon thought, Smith was impressed with their treatment of evolution. Most of the society’s articles on this subject, which invariably denounced evolution as being incredible unscientific as well as unscriptural, were written by recognized scientists. Almost all of the post-1930 references in Smith’s *Man: His Origin and Destiny* are to the Victorian Institute’s *Journal*. When Smith in 1953 revised his 1930’s manuscript for publication, the addition of the Victorian Society material constituted the bulk of the revision.

⁶⁰Dudley J. Whitney to Sterling Talmage, Sept. 29, 1934.

⁶¹Dudley J. Whitney, “The Fiat Creation of the Earth,” *Deseret News*, June 16, 1934, p. 6.

⁶²W. W. Henderson to editor, *The Deseret News*, June 26, 1934.

⁶³Dudley J. Whitney to Sterling Talmage, Aug. 22, 1934.

⁶⁴Sterling Talmage to Joseph Fielding Smith, Sept. 16, 1934.

⁶⁵Joseph Fielding Smith to Sterling Talmage, Sept. 29, 1934.

⁶⁶Sterling Talmage to Joseph Fielding Smith, Sept. 16, 1934.

⁶⁷Dudley J. Whitney to Sterling Talmage, Sept. 29, 1934.

⁶⁸John A. Widtsoe remarked concerning Whitney’s articles. “Life within the Church does not hinge upon the age of the earth, nor does any vital principle within the Church body of doctrine.” John A. Widtsoe to Sterling Talmage, Sept. 27, 1934.

⁶⁹Floyd Day, “Can Scripture Be Relied On?” *Deseret News Church Section*, Nov. 16, 1935, p. 7.

⁷⁰Sterling Talmage to President Heber J. Grant and Counselors, Nov. 24, 1935.

⁷¹Joseph Fielding Smith to Sterling Talmage, Dec. 4, 1935.

⁷²Sterling Talmage to Joseph Fielding Smith, Dec. 7, 1935.

This letter contains a hint of the intense feelings that ran between the Talmage and Smith families after 1931. Sterling’s sister Elsie referred to a “Smith-Talmage family feud,” and quit her job with the *Improvement Era* so that she could escape Elder Smith’s influence. (Elsie Talmage to Sterling Talmage, Jan. 11, 1935 and April 12, 1935, George Albert Smith Collection, University of Utah Special Collections Archives).

⁷³Heber J. Grant, J. Rueben Clark and David O. McKay to Sterling Talmage, Dec. 19, 1935.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*

⁷⁵Sterling Talmage to President Heber J. Grant and Counselors, Dec. 30, 1935.

⁷⁶See, for example, Sidney Sperry, “Challenge to Scientists in the Church: Harmonize Learning, Faith,” *Deseret News Church Section*, April 4, 1936, p. 3, and Joseph Fielding Smith’s eulogy to William Jennings Bryan, “Was the Hero’s Death So Bad?” *Deseret News Church Section*, October 31, 1936, p. 1.

⁷⁷Sterling B. Talmage, “Genesis and Geology,” *Improvement Era*, 42 (March 1939): 143–144.

⁷⁸Widtsoe encouraged Talmage in this endeavor: “It is very likely that the time is ripe for someone to begin right now to prepare a wise, temperate, scientific statement of the doctrine of evolution. . . . Evolution, as a law, seems to me to have been demonstrated.” (Widtsoe to Sterling Talmage, April 20 1934). It is not clear whether this series was not published because it could not receive the approval of the brethren besides Widtsoe, or if Talmage voluntarily withdrew the manuscript.

⁷⁹The manuscript was recently rejected for publication again, this time by BYU Press.

⁸⁰See Jeffery, “Interface,” *op. cit.*

⁸¹Two of President McKay’s many letters concerning *Man: His Origin and Destiny* have been published: William Lee Stokes, “An Official Position,” *Dialogue*, 12 (Winter 1979): 90–92, and

Robert C. Stones, *Science and Religion*, (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) 18–22.

David O. McKay's opposition to the book *Man: His Origin and Destiny* has been well documented. He sought the opinions of several LDS scientists concerning the book. (See Steven H. Heath, *Henry Eyring: Mormon Scientist*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Master's Thesis in History, 1980, pp. 171–186). McKay was even more forceful in the private interviews which he granted to various individuals. In one such interview with George Boyd, T. Edgar Lyon, and Lowell Bennion (all teachers at the institute adjacent to the University of Utah), President McKay emphasized that the men "were to tell [their] students that the book . . . was not to be taken as representing the Church's position on such matters as the age of the earth and the theory of evolution." He also stated that it had been a mistake to use the book as a text at a 1954 summer school held at BYU for seminary and institute teachers. (Quotations are from George Boyd's notes of this interview). McKay indicated in an interview with Richard Poll that he personally could accept the theory of evolution as a possible explanation for the Lord's creative process. (Richard Poll interview notes.)

⁸²Bertrand Harrison, "The Relatedness of Living Things," *Instructor*, 100 (July 1965): 272–276.

⁸³James Talmage, "The Earth and Man," *Instructor*, 100 (December 1965): 474–477.

⁸⁴Summarized in Sherlock, "Affair," pp. 74–76.

⁸⁵Jeffery, "Interface," op. cit.

⁸⁶Sherlock, "Affair," op. cit.

⁸⁷Thomas G. Alexander, "The Reconstruction of Mormon Doctrine: From Joseph Smith to Progressive Theology," *Sunstone* V (July-August 1980): 24–33.

⁸⁸It should be apparent to all readers of the Presidency's letter that they were not repudiating the concepts taught in "The Earth and Man." Their point is only that the sermon is not to be considered official in the sense that it is binding upon the Church membership. The same principle applies to other similar writings such as *Man: His Origin and Destiny*.

⁸⁹Widtsoe to Susa Y. Gates, Oct. 30, 1931, Widtsoe Papers, Utah State Historical Society.



LDS APPROACHES TO THE HOLY BIBLE

ANTHONY A. HUTCHINSON

DAVIS BITTON, WRITING IN 1966, noted that “there is no reliable study of Mormon exegesis. . . . I can think of no single area of exploration which promises to be so fruitful in understanding the dynamics of Mormonism.”¹ While a history of LDS biblical interpretation has yet to be written, excellent groundwork has been laid by Gordon Irving in his work on LDS use of the Bible in the 1830s, and by Richard Sherlock in his several articles on the history and hermeneutical* background of noteworthy theological controversies in twentieth-century Mormonism.² My primary interest here, however, is less historical than theological. The goal is to attempt to typify in general terms various modern LDS interpreters of the Bible and to analyze briefly some of the underlying issues at work in their positions. I hope that two things will become clear. First, despite the commonplace that sees in Mormonism’s use of the Bible a “common commitment to biblical literalism,”³ one should not think that absolute unity reigns in LDS hermeneutics, or theory of scriptural interpretation. (The tendency to see unity where in fact there is diversity, identified by Leonard Arrington in his discussion of crippling biases in past Mormon historiography,⁴ is also a danger in descriptive theology.) Second, the fundamentalist tendencies in some Mormon commentators should not be considered normative for LDS biblical interpretation. They are highly problematical when considered in the light of LDS ecclesiastical praxis and restoration scripture. By *fundamentalist*, I mean the world-view that sees the commitment of faith as an irreducible given, extends this commitment to its broadest possible application in religious discourse, and does not therefore distinguish between the truth and authority of religion and its outward

*For readers unfamiliar with the vocabulary of biblical criticism, the author has provided a glossary at the end of this article.

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formulation.⁵ Its most obvious manifestation in the authors whom I shall discuss is a commitment to an image of revelation in which God dictates his infallible and inerrant word to chosen earthly secretaries who then transcribe it: the propositional model of revelation. The word of scripture or of living prophets is thus seen, in its original form at least, as having unqualified inerrancy.⁶

Such an attempt at typology and analysis should be prefaced by several caveats. (1) Typologies by their very nature tend to be crude and reductionistic approximations. They can be useful, however, in that they can provide access to information which otherwise would be difficult to control and analyze. (2) Most of the commentators discussed here have not explicitly outlined their theoretical hermeneutical position and occasionally seem inconsistent in their exegetical practice. Indeed, many do not write exegesis or scriptural commentary *per se*, but use scriptures in a theological or apologetic endeavor. They thus provide little grist for the mill of the typologist interested in interpretation itself rather than its general theological horizon.⁷ (3) Some of the authors discussed might consider that I have been unfair to them in referring to articles published years ago, or articles published under heavy editorial or ecclesiastical influence, and which as a result do not truly reflect their positions today. I grant this objection and stress that I am using the typology only as a device to clarify the underlying theological issues of modern LDS interpretation.

In general, the tendency an author shows toward harmonizing or *a priori* thought, or toward analytical or *a posteriori* reasoning, as well as the tools used by each, will determine his or her position in the typology below,⁸ despite an occasional wide difference of opinion in noematics and heuristics within each group.⁹ My typology is limited for reasons of space and accessibility, and my sampling of authors is by no means exhaustive, but I have tried to give a broad sampling. I have limited my discussion to twentieth-century LDS authors with examples of the century's major authors as well as recent writers.¹⁰

GROUP I: HARMONIZING HERMENEUTIC

Perhaps the majority of LDS scriptural commentary might be seen as having a harmonizing hermeneutic, i.e., an interpretive theory stressing the unity and inerrancy of the scriptures. Recent representative authors include Joseph Fielding Smith, Bruce R. McConkie, W. Cleon Skousen, Glenn L. Pearson, Monte S. Nyman, Mark E. Petersen and Duane S. Crowther.¹¹ These authors, generally unfamiliar with biblical languages, use the Authorized Version as their basic text, relying upon conservative Protestant commentaries for philological and historical information.¹² They subscribe to the propositional model of revelation¹³ and stress the absolute authority and inerrancy of God's word.¹⁴ They do not see this inerrancy in the Bible as it has come down to us because in their view it was corrupted and mutilated in transmission and translation.¹⁵

When interpreting a text in the Bible, these authors use as their main sources of authority the interpretations (as they perceive) given it by other

biblical passages, the Book of Mormon or the teachings of various LDS prophets.¹⁶ This system produces a great deal of fundamentalist harmonizing. As Edmund Cherbonnier has pointed out, when faced with a passage that might impeach the inerrancy of God's word if taken at face value, the fundamentalist is "quite prepared to avail himself of fanciful or bizarre interpretations in defiance of literary or historical context" rather than admit the problem and allow it to help him reformulate his preconceptions about God's word.¹⁷

Frequently the text is not only accommodated, but is itself modified by an appeal to Joseph Smith's revision of the King James Bible, or to parallel passages in the Book of Mormon. This corrective procedure eliminates serious problems of interpretation and possible difficulties presented by the traditional text because of the interpreter's own doctrinal positions, logical frameworks, cosmologies or religious sensitivities. These authors tend to see in these sources adduced for emendations the divine restoration of the precious divine truths once found in the Bible but now lost. These authors also recommend a high quality spirituality as the primary tool for the study of scripture.¹⁸ An internal logic pervades this procedure of authoritative accommodation and revealed emendation: overriding doctrinal and pastoral perspectives dictate the results and are thus made sure for the believer.

There are several strengths and weaknesses in this corrective hermeneutic. Within the realm of pastoral service and popular religion it is highly satisfying for many people. It provides a sense of security within the community of faith: The truth of God appears to have been the same anciently as it is today; there is a uniformity of the gospel that is universal and shared by the Old and New Testaments as well as the LDS scriptures; the scriptures are truly authoritative and can really give us the answers we need in our daily life; the scriptures are readily available to everyone willing to humble him or herself before God and his inspired interpreters of scripture, regardless of intelligence and educational background; and God therefore is no respecter of persons. The modern church is seen to have had its prototype and charter in the primitive church, and the gospel is easily understood by the true disciple. The problems of scripture are either homogenized into oblivion or ignored as unimportant, and the community of faith finds strength and unity in following its leaders who have the real gift of truth when scriptural questions arise for the community. These concepts inform and are formed by the harmonizing program, and they have enormous attraction for many people who seek after the kingdom of God.

On the other hand, there are weaknesses in this system. It is unable to cope with technical problems in scripture because it refuses to take them seriously. It is a totally closed system of reasoning with very few points of contact with believers of other faiths apart from the invitation to take the leap of accepting the authority of the LDS interpretive loci. In its feeling of self satisfaction in having the truth—the whole truth, with no ambiguities to darken its light—it runs the risk of making religion appear irrelevant and unresponsive to the human need to seek beyond the present fulfillment, of recognizing a need for further light and knowledge. Its greatest problem is that in its refusal to evaluate evidence on its own merits, it tends toward the

REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS	I HARMONIZING HERMENEUTIC	II CRITICALLY MODIFIED HARMONIZING HERMENEUTIC
LANGUAGES	Perhaps the majority of LDS authors, including Joseph Fielding Smith, Bruce R. McConkie, W. Cleon Skousen, Glenn L. Pearson, Monte S. Nyman, Mark E. Petersen, & D. S. Crowther	B. H. Roberts, James Talmage, Sidney Sperry, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., Robert J. Matthews, Keith Meservy, Gerald Lund, Ellis Rasmussen, and most current CES textbooks & manuals
EMENDATIONS	No or little control of biblical languages; reliance upon evangelical Protestant commentators	Some awareness of, and in some cases, proficiency in the languages
ATTITUDE TOWARD CRITICAL METHODOLOGY	Programmatic emendation of biblical texts, with reliance upon LDS loci (JST, B of M, D & C, P of GP, & writings of ecclesiastical authorities). Emendation necessary, since it eliminates problems & supports present beliefs.	Emendation similar to that of Group I, but less programmatic. Linguistically proficient authors are less inclined to emend thus than are authors ignorant of languages. Not necessary, only helpful to this Group's program. More dialectic between faith & experience or evidence than in Group I.
REVELATION THEOLOGY	<i>A priori</i> rejection of modern critical methods. Some references made to critical scholars, to "support" ideas otherwise derived through LDS loci, or as examples of "depraved theories of men."	Some willingness to discuss issues raised by critical methodology; weak arguments borrowed from evangelicals.
STRENGTHS	Propositional model of revelation; extrinsicist view of religious truth. "Restoration" discourse is construed in terms of extrinsic details of belief & practice. Thus, emendations are seen as the restoration of inerrant truths once found in the Bible but now lost.	More nuances in revelation theology than Group I. Although propositional model is used, other elements of the truth of revelation are mentioned. Distrust of non-propositional models of revelation, however.
WEAKNESSES	Satisfying to many and helpful in pastoral service and popular religion. Provides sense of security & certitude: scriptural truth is available to all, regardless of education & background, who are willing to submit to authoritative LDS loci; gospel is easy to understand for the true disciple. Community finds cohesiveness in its leaders and their interpretations.	Retains most of the advantages of Group I, and attempts to avoid some of the authoritarian irrationality occasionally expressed by Group I authors. Attempts to deal with evidence.
	Unable to cope with technical problems; a totally closed system of belief whose only point of contact with outsiders is its call for acceptance of the LDS loci; dogmatism sometimes informed by this ideology can crush honest strivings at understanding & living gospel, thwarting our ultimate purposes. No credibility to those aware of technical problems of scripture.	Loses some of democratic values of Group I. Shares in Group I's lack of credibility among those not sharing commitment to propositional model of revelation & inerrancy of scripture in its original form, esp. since Group II occasionally resorts to the polemic of Group I which brands any Mormon outside the harmonizing program a heretic.

<p style="text-align: center;">III CRITICAL HERMENEUTIC WITH HARMONIZING</p> <p>Hugh W. Nibley, C. Wilford Griggs, Thomas W. MacKay, S. Kent Brown, Richard L. Anderson, Benjamin Urrutia, and, perhaps, various LDS literati</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">IV CRITICAL HERMENEUTIC</p> <p>William H. Chamberlin, Ephraim E. Ericksen, Heber C. Snell, Russell Swenson, S. McMurrin, J. Sorenson, L. Bennion, S. Kenney, M. Moench Charles, R. Sherlock, M. T. Walton, E. Ashment, & K. Norman</p>
<p>Generally, proficiency in the languages</p>	<p>Proficiency in biblical languages, or if not, reliance upon critical commentators who have proficiency</p>
<p>Emendation relying upon LDS loci as well as the criteria used by Group IV. Notable lack of critical acumen when LDS loci are thus adduced. Apologetic emendations. Questions about textual matters only reflect uncertainty of all positions, & allow for suspension of judgment.</p>	<p>Emendation rarely if ever by means of LDS loci. Literary, historical, & scribal background serves as criteria for proposing emendations. Emendation is used in an attempt to obtain & understand meaning infused in text by ancient author, rather than to reflect current expressions of faith.</p>
<p>Use of some critical methodology, even form & source criticism, in apologetics. Distinct distrust, however, of conclusions of modern scholarship, esp. when LDS traditional belief seems threatened.</p>	<p>General acceptance of the critical method & its conclusions.</p>
<p>Generally, the same stance as Group II, but with a more open-ended epistemology; sees recent documentary finds as "restoration" of ancient truths which can transcend & even correct current LDS beliefs.</p>	<p>Rejects model of revelation exclusively as propositional doctrine. Other models of revelation expressly used: salvation history, encounter with the divine, categorization of religious existential or genius, Tillichian symbol or Bultmannian word-event.</p>
<p>Forms a point of contact between LDS & non-LDS views of the Bible; seems to take evidence more seriously than I or II. Group III retains a distinctly Mormon character in its overt formulations & use of loci. Readily adapted for apologetics.</p>	<p>Allows for open & free dialogue with non-LDS about core of the Judaeo-Christian heritage, the Bible. Addresses scriptural problems honestly & seems to be more reverential toward scripture than the other groups, since it tries to submit to the original sense of scripture rather than "correct" the Bible to fit present faith.</p>
<p>Has produced many apologetic works & occasional notes, but little solid commentary or introduction. Loses touch with major part of church because it concerns recondite lore. Not wholly credible to more thoroughgoing critics, because of loose treatment of LDS loci in biblical exegesis.</p>	<p>Not easily adaptable to popular religious usages & needs. Sometimes perceived as overly subtle in theology & heterodox in teaching & faith. Since is less demonstrably LDS in use of loci, it could tend to weaken appearance of sufficiency & cohesiveness of LDS community. Often accused of posing problems to restorationism as an element of LDS faith.</p>

worst type of authoritarian irrationality and may lose its credibility to anyone familiar with the technical problems this system refuses to address. Although this group claims to hold scripture highly because it believes in the inerrancy of the original form of scripture, it appears to outsiders to have low regard for scripture because it refuses to take scripture on its own terms with its imperfections as well as its strengths. Indeed, in this system, scripture and all past revelation become mere adjuncts to the present revelation, materials for proof-texting, rather than normative guides or even central reflections of faith, with a compelling attraction for and claim upon the faithful in the present time.

GROUP II: CRITICALLY MODIFIED CORRECTIVE HERMENEUTIC

This group is close in its presuppositions to Group I, but here there is more *a posteriori* thought, more dialectic between faith, experience, and evidence. James Talmage and B. H. Roberts, writing early in the century as general authorities and major forces in the Mormon progressive theology of the period, as well as recent authors like Sidney Sperry, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., Robert J. Matthews, Keith Meservy, Gerald Lund, and Ellis Rasmussen are in this group, along with most contributors to current LDS Seminaries and Institutes of Religion textbooks.¹⁹ In this group more scholars are acquainted with the biblical languages and modern critical methodology—Sperry, Meservy and Rasmussen are examples of competence in the languages. Although this group holds to the basic program of correction and authoritative interpretation of Group I, they devote a good deal more attention to details and verification of evidence. They pay greater attention to problems, and they show greater critical acumen. As a result, the use of LDS sources to correct biblical texts is more circumspect and less frequent, though still abundantly in evidence, particularly among those authors unfamiliar with biblical languages.

A clear, dogmatic, apologetic tone still is heard in much of these authors' writing. Often this apologetic tendency damages the credibility of the authors: Clark, for instance, insists on the reliability of the Byzantine textual tradition of the New Testament because of its closeness to the *Peshiṭṭa* and the *Peshiṭṭa's* supposed closeness to a postulated Aramaic substratum for the gospels, Acts and the Apocalypse.²⁰ His ignorance of New Testament Greek and Syriac prevents him from recognizing with most scholars that the *Peshiṭṭa* is dependent upon the Greek, not vice versa. His argument clearly reveals his fundamentalist bias. If the newer critical texts are accepted, we lose many traditional prooftexts for LDS belief, and the religious health of the saints is threatened. Similar tendencies toward a bottom line of doctrinal defense and authoritarianism are found to a greater or lesser extent in all the scholars of this group.

This group is less committed to the inerrancy of the Bible in its original form, and it models its concept of propositional revelation with more nuances. It shares most of Group I's strengths, while it loses most of Group I's weak-

nesses as it attempts to deal honestly with evidence and to make itself credible to non-Mormons. Because Group II attempts to explain technical biblical problems, it is not as tied to the program of accommodation and emendation. However, it loses some of the democratic strength that Group I draws from the notion of scripture as simple and accessible. Group II, however, still lacks a certain credibility in the eyes of those who do not share its commitment to propositional revelation and original biblical inerrancy. Although engaging in more serious dialogue than Group I with people of other viewpoints, these authors still resort to the polemic of Group I which brands as heretical any Mormon squarely outside of the harmonizing program.²¹

GROUP III: CRITICAL HERMENEUTIC WITH CORRECTIVE TENDENCIES

Writers in this group include Hugh W. Nibley, C. Wilford Griggs, Thomas W. MacKay, S. Kent Brown, Richard L. Anderson, Benjamin Urrutia, as well as, perhaps, various LDS literati specializing in other literatures.²² Most of these scholars, trained in philological or historical disciplines, are primarily concerned with understanding ancient texts honestly and credibly. As Nibley writes:

The first rule of exegesis is, that if a text means something, it means something! That is to say, if a writing conveys a consistent message to a reader there is a good chance that the text is being understood correctly. The longer the text is that continues thus to give forth consistent and connected meaning, the greater the probability that it is being read rightly; and the greater the number of people who derive the same meaning from a text independently, the greater the probability that that meaning is the right one. It should never be forgotten, however, that the interpretation of an ancient text never rises above the level of a high plausibility—there is no final certainty.²³

Although these scholars generally agree on the goal of exegesis, they use a variety of heuristic systems to achieve this goal. Urrutia uses the structuralist anthropology of Claude Levi-Strauss; Nibley, Griggs, MacKay, Anderson and Brown use in large part the historical-critical method.²⁴ Many of these scholars, however, have a distinct distrust of the conclusions and working hypotheses of mainstream, non-LDS biblical critics in the fields of source, form, tradition and redaction criticism both in the Old and New Testaments, particularly when they appear to impeach the validity of certain traditional LDS claims about the historicity of biblical narratives, the ancient origins of the Book of Mormon, or LDS doctrinal, missionary and pastoral use of biblical texts.

Although it seems at times that this group agrees with Groups I and II in denigrating the reliability of present biblical texts, there is a vast difference in their use of this denigration.²⁵ Where Groups I and II establish the certainty of their own exegetical positions by stressing the “corrupt state” of the present form of the Bible, Group III points to such corruption in order to establish the uncertain character of any exegetical position—not just those of non-LDS

critical scholarship. In a way, this allows Group III more freedom as scholars to differ from the supposedly orthodox positions taken by Group I. Group III generally seeks not authority but evidence.

Despite the general tendency towards free critical thought unpressured by dogmatic concern, there are occasional harmonizing patches in the writings of these authors. These tend to appear in polemic or apologetic passages.²⁶ Part of this undercurrent of harmonization is revealed in their occasional uncritical use of LDS sources.²⁷ Although these sources are not cited as authoritative but as suggestive evidence only, their apparent imperviousness to critical treatment at the hands of these authors itself reveals a permutation of the corrective hermeneutic.

This system has strengths in that it forms a real point of contact between the LDS community and the non-LDS world of biblical scholarship. It also retains a distinctively Mormon character in its outward expression, since occasional reference to LDS sources is made, and some LDS dogmatic concern is reflected. Indeed, the usefulness of this system in apologetics is one of the chief advantages the LDS church hierarchy has found in it.²⁸ In its attempt to make sense out of evidence and to work through exegetical problems ignored by Groups I and II, it reveals a refreshing credibility, honesty, and humility. The weaknesses in this system, however, are threefold. (1) Although it has produced many apologetic works, reviews and some minor notes here and there on exegetical topics, it has not produced any real biblical commentaries or introductions. (2) In that it deals with technical material and recondite lore, it often loses touch with the main body of church members, although it is still highly popular because of its apologetics and the fact that the presence of these scholars in the Church allows those suspicious of non-LDS scholarship to say "You see, we have scholars just as smart and well-informed as yours, and they still believe in the gospel!" (3) The reluctance of most of these authors to subject (at least in print) LDS sources to the same rigorous critical methodology as other evidences are subjected to seriously impairs the credibility of these authors in the eyes of non-LDS scholars and other Mormon scholars who are more thorough-going in their critical methodology.

GROUP IV: CRITICAL HISTORICAL AND PHILOLOGICAL HERMENEUTIC

This group manifests little tendency toward the harmonization or corrective interpretation shown in varying degrees by the other three groups. Representative authors are William H. Chamberlin, E. E. Ericksen early in the century; more recently, Heber C. Snell, Russell Swenson, Sterling McMurrin, John Sorenson, Lowell Bennion; and then several young LDS scholars, Scott Kenney, Melodie Moench Charles, Richard Sherlock, Michael T. Walton and Edward Ashment.²⁹ Two of these, Snell and Swenson, wrote primarily in the biblical area. The others have more general interests: Ericksen and McMurrin touch on the biblical in their concern for religious philosophy and the phenomenology of Mormonism; most of the rest touch upon it in their attempts at expostulating the relation of faith, history and critical inquiry, or the historical validity of LDS interpretive loci. Swenson has been

included here because in his classic *Gospel Doctrine Class Manuals* of the 1940s he often broke with traditional Mormon understandings and consistently refused to use any corrective emendations or accommodating interpretations based on LDS authoritarian appeals,³⁰ though his generally conservative exegesis might fit in better with Group II, and students of his are represented in Group III.

Generally, this group is characterized by familiarity with and acceptance of the mainstream of non-LDS biblical criticism. Many of these authors are competent in the biblical languages, though as a group they are perhaps less strong linguistically than Group III. They usually make little or no reference to LDS sources and loci in their exegesis of the Bible, yet strive to address an LDS audience, and to make the findings of modern critical exegesis, their own or others', accessible and meaningful to Mormons. Members of this group differ widely on specific exegetical problems and general philosophical positions. In spite of this fact, this group generally agrees that the truth of scripture lies in its spiritual and ethical import, and that the relative historicity of its narratives is not necessarily connected to its inspiration or truth. They generally reject the concept that revelation is exclusively the transmission of propositional objective doctrines, preferring instead to see revelation in terms of the various models proposed by modern theologians: salvation history, encounter with the divine, the categorization of religious experience or genius, or even as word-event. They do not reject the idea that propositional revelation is possible however. They note that when it does occur, it is conditioned by its cultural, linguistic and historical horizon. According to these writers, revelation does not occur in a vacuum. Textual emendation practiced by this group should not be confused with that practiced by Groups I and II above. There, the motivation is doctrinal, and the criteria dictating the content of the emendation are authoritative claims. Here, the motivation is literary and historical, and the criteria for establishing the text are the scribal, poetic and literary practices and thought forms manifested in the text itself and its literary tradition.

This group has strengths in that it allows for open and free dialogue between Mormons, Christians and Jews about the core of their common heritage, the Holy Bible. The Bible becomes a shared treasure rather than a battlefield. This group addresses the scriptural problems honestly and seeks to resolve them. It attempts to be rational, and credible, while allowing room for faith. It seems to take the Bible more seriously and perhaps more reverentially than do the harmonizers in its painstaking attempt to understand the Bible on its own terms.

Its weaknesses are that this is a system primarily for intellectuals, not easily adapted to popular religious needs. Occasionally some of the theological distinctions upon which this group relies to defend its methodologies from accusations of heterodoxy seem hypercritical and baroque to the harmonizers. This group's exegesis is less demonstrably LDS—Snell, for instance, rarely if ever refers to LDS sources and tradition in interpreting biblical texts. It thus could tend to weaken the appearance of cohesiveness

and sufficiency in the LDS community if it were to become predominant in the Church. Finally, the group is often accused by harmonizers of presenting serious problems to the LDS Church's claim to be the restoration of primitive Christianity and to have unique and universal import among all the world's religions. How, after all, can Mormonism be a restoration when it differs so substantially from primitive Christianity, as the critics claim? A non-harmonizing hermeneutic stresses differences as well as similarities. I shall discuss below whether this criticism of Group IV is valid. Regardless of this question, though, the group does suffer from the implied charge of heresy.

It is important to note that none of these four approaches to the Bible is canonized in the LDS church; neither is any proscribed. Granted, the LDS hierarchy and sub-hierarchy normally tend toward harmonization in varying degrees. Certainly one of the most outspoken proponents of a thorough-going harmonizing hermeneutic was Joseph Fielding Smith, and yet even here we should not see unity where in fact there is diversity, for some of the Twelve and other general authorities did in fact support Snell in his conflict with Smith in 1948–49.³¹ Likewise, after the 1911 modernist crisis at BYU, in which the "higher criticism" and Darwinism of professors like Chamberlin were investigated by church authorities and three professors were dismissed, President Joseph F. Smith wrote that the issue was not the relative truth or error of the modernist views, but rather the propriety and pragmatic advisability of having these professors use the platform of a church school to propound their ideas.³²

Several elements within the LDS faith have worked together to encourage the general tendencies toward harmonization found in the first three groups. I shall now discuss each element separately to determine whether or not they necessarily require a harmonizing LDS hermeneutic.

1. *The Book of Mormon raises doubts about the integrity and authenticity of the present text of the Bible.* 1 Nephi 13–14 speaks of a book, a "record of the Jews" (13:23), which is similar to the scriptures which Nephi possesses, "save there are not so many" (13:23). Presumably the book is the Bible.³³ This book would go forth "from the Jews in purity unto the Gentiles" (13:25) only to become distorted. Nephi describes the apostate gentile church as taking away "from the gospel many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away" (13:26). As a result, "after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, . . . there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God" (13:28). Nephi continues and prophesies that the "plain and precious things" would be restored in the far distant future.

Most LDS commentators interpret this text as speaking of the textual corruption of the Bible, and they see the modern LDS scriptures and sources as part of the restoration of the true form of the texts. Some, like Nibley, also see the recent documentary finds at Qumran, Nag Hammadi and Ebla also as a part of this restoration. They point to the eighth article of faith as further

evidence: "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God." "Translated correctly" in this view refers to transmission of texts as well as inter-lingual interpretation.

This reading of Nephi, however, ignores important aspects of the text which might allow for a less doctrinaire interpretation. Nephi distinguishes between the "book of the Lamb of God" and the "gospel" (N.B. that in 13:24, the book *contains* the plainness of the gospel). The plain and precious "parts" are deleted along with covenants from the gospel, *not from the book* (13:26). It is only after this deletion that the plain and precious "things" are seen as missing from the book (13:28). This description conceivably might refer not to deliberate and widespread scribal manipulation of the text itself, but rather to suppression of entire texts before the canon of the Bible was formulated (note that Nephi describes the book as having "not so many" writings as the Nephite scriptures, 13:23), to an interpretive (but not textual) change wrought by the hellenization of categories in which the texts were preached and explained (note the stress on the fact that the corruption was the work of gentiles, 13:25), or even to simply a religious change in the church which used the texts, thus altering the life-situation and existential horizon in which they were perceived. Indeed, the discovery of pre-Christian manuscripts of the Hebrew scriptures at Qumran which substantially support the authenticity of the Massoretic text of the Old Testament (in the case of some books, the LXX versions of them), seriously impeaches any attempt at applying the Nephi passage to the Old Testament text itself, since Nephi specifically states that the book went forth in purity from the Jews to the gentiles (13:25). Since the Qumran texts were written long before the gentile church even existed, and since they basically support the traditional text of the Old Testament, the difficulty with this use of Nephi is obvious. The Qumran texts' support of the traditional text says nothing, however, about the possibility of a religious or interpretive change removing conceptual "things" from a passage while leaving its textual "parts" intact.

Similarly, there are problems with using the eighth article of faith in conjunction with Joseph Smith's "Translation" of the Bible (hereafter JST) to argue against the validity of a good critically established biblical text. Among these are Smith's broad use of the term "translation" (it often means simply interpretation or text-triggered new revelation without any inter-lingual reference),³⁴ and the fact that many of the changes he makes in the King James text seem more concerned with problems in the English text in a modern setting than with the problems of the Greek, Hebrew or Aramaic text in its ancient setting.

Two examples will show this. First, the change from "lead us not into temptation" of the Lord's prayer (Matt 6:13) to "suffer us not to be led into temptation" (JST Matt 6:14) uses the distinction between absolute and permissive will which apparently was not a concern of Matthew or the historical Jesus. Second, the prophet changes "be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt 10:16) to "be ye therefore wise servants, and as

harmless as doves" (JST Matt 10:14). The change reflects nineteenth-century American sensitivity about the demonic reputation of snakes and the felicitous euphony of the English words and seems to override the primitive Christian writer's desire for a vividly contrasting metaphor on the lips of Jesus. This becomes clear when one notes the lack of any similarity in the Greek or Aramaic substrata of the King James words "serpent" and "servant." Passages where new, sometimes lengthy, material has been added to the King James text seem to follow this pattern—they ought to be considered inspired midrashic embellishment of biblical texts rather than restorations of primitive forms of the texts. R. J. Matthews, leading LDS authority on the JST, recognizes that:

. . . when Joseph Smith translated the Bible he was not limited to what was on the manuscript page in front of him. The manuscript seems to have been a "starting point," but the Spirit of Revelation seems to have been an additional source of information. In the case of the Bible translation, the manuscript source was the King James Bible.³⁵

When Matthews concludes from this, however, that the "additional" information is in reality "blocks of information that were once in the Bible or were directly related to the biblical events," he misses the point entirely. He does not distinguish between inspired literary artifact and its subject matter, having let his harmonistic ideology unduly affect his otherwise careful reading of evidence.³⁶ He sets up a false dichotomy between total acceptance of the JST as true, historically as well as spiritually, and total rejection of the JST on the historically questionable grounds that Joseph Smith had predetermined theological ends and a hidden doctrinal agenda in his production of it. But one can accept the obvious doctrinal development that occurred during and by means of the translation, as well as the inspiration of the JST, without accepting Matthews' notion that the JST is a critically reliable, prime piece of evidence in reconstructing the history and scripture of ancient Christianity and Judaism.

The greatest problem with the harmonizers' doubts about the authenticity of our present biblical text is that they produce scriptural interpretation totally devoid of any controls other than the doctrinal and dogmatic biases of the interpreter. They provide, as Arrington and Bitton have pointed out, "a huge loophole."³⁷ Anything which seems to contradict one's opinion can be identified as a mistranslation, the handiwork of conniving scribes, or, as in Nibley's reconstruction of the genesis of the four gospels, the product of uninspired subapostolic schismatics who committed the oral tradition to paper and anachronistically colored them with overlays of incipient catholicism.³⁸

The usual appeal made by the harmonizers to the bad translation or transmission argument has a hollow ring because in their usage, "as far as it is translated correctly" means "as far as it agrees with our present understandings," rather than "as far as it accurately reflects what the evidence points to as the original form and sense of the text." The danger in such a theology is clear. One runs the risk of totally relativizing any truth and authority which

the scriptures might have had. This danger is not merely theoretical. Gib Kocherhans, in the *Ensign*, writes off most of the Old Testament as merely a record written in the wake of an apostasy (except for Genesis, which he thinks should be considered part of the New Testament!).³⁹ Gerry Ensley, in a letter to *Sunstone* criticizing A. Bassett's appeal for a Christocentric Mormonism, argues that the basic pervasive Christocentricity of the New Testament should not be normative for us today, since, according to him, it is merely the unfortunate effect of apostate redaction of the New Testament.⁴⁰ Given the general use of the Bible in LDS homiletics, and the strident attempts made by thorough-going harmonizers to defend the status of God's word generally, it seems that such a "huge loophole" is inconsistent with the real roots of LDS scriptural belief, even if it does seem to be used by nearly all LDS biblical commentators.

2. *LDS belief has traditionally associated the interpretive office with prophets, not scholars.* J. Reuben Clark, Jr., wrote in 1954:

Here we must have in mind—must know—that only the President of the Church . . . has the right to receive revelations for the Church, either new or amendatory, or to give authoritative interpretations of scriptures that shall be binding on the Church, or change in any way the existing doctrines of the Church.⁴¹

In this statement President Clark is reflecting relatively standard LDS faith and many members of Groups I and II have used this type of statement as a muzzle to silence those they consider too heterodox in their approach to scriptures. This, however, is an abuse of the doctrine of an interpretive office in the Church, which in Clark's formulation at least is primarily a juridical concept to guarantee the peaceful and orderly functioning of the institutional church. To see this clearly, one should note that the scholars in Groups III and IV would never claim that their tentative, ever-to-be-revised-by-new-evidence exegesis is "binding" or "authoritative" upon the Church. It is extremely difficult to determine precisely what are the "authoritative" interpretations of the presidents and to know whether such interpretations involve a claim regarding intent of the ancient inspired human author, or merely constitute prophoristic rules regarding how a text is to be used in modern preaching and apologetics. Specific interpretations by authorities still must be judged on their merits. Even according to President Clark, "there have been rare occasions when even the President of the Church in his teaching and preaching has not been moved upon by the Holy Ghost."⁴² Indeed, often the prophets themselves and other LDS authorities themselves seem to contradict each other on specific points, and it is only by blatant accommodation that they are harmonized.⁴³

3. *LDS revelation has sometimes been described by its recipients in terms which might suggest a propositional model of revelation.* There are many examples from Joseph Smith's language in describing his revelations that suggest a propositional model of revelation and the plenary inspiration and inerrancy of

scriptures. One will suffice here: the prophet's reply to Oliver Cowdery's letter in July 1830 demanding that he delete a statement considered by Cowdery to be heretical from what was to become D&C 20:37. In his history, Joseph's reply is noted thus, "I asked him by what authority he took upon him to command me to alter or erase, to add or diminish to or from a revelation or commandment from Almighty God."⁴⁴ Clearly here, the prophet has taken biblical injunctions against scribal carelessness and infidelity and applied them to his own treatment of revelations God had given him. They are portrayed as issuing word perfect from the Lord's mouth, inerrant and therefore not subject to change, even by the prophet himself upon advisement from one of his close associates. Statements like this have sometimes encouraged Mormons to adopt a fundamentalist concern for the inerrancy of scripture. They have contributed in particular to an extrinsicist understanding of the doctrine of restoration, which I shall discuss below.

Richard P. Howard and Dean C. Jessee have both noted that despite statements by Joseph Smith that tend toward this fundamentalist view of scripture, the Prophet's common practice of revising, editing, adding to and reinterpreting his own revelations shows that his commitment to the concept of inerrancy and plenary inspiration was by no means an organic part of his practical theology.⁴⁵ It points to a great difficulty in the propositional model if one is trying to root a theology of revelation in LDS experience and praxis. Most of these statements occur in contexts where Smith is defending what he sees as his prerogatives as head of the Church, or defending the authority of specific teachings promulgated by him in that role. The statements thus might be best understood precisely as Clark's statement about the interpretive office must be understood—juridically rather than as a claim about the nature of interpretation and revelation itself.

The prophet's view of revelation itself cannot be simplistically reduced, moreover, to the revelation as proposition or doctrine model. Truman Madsen has shown this well in his paper on "Joseph Smith and the Ways of Knowing."⁴⁶ It is clear that for Smith revelation was dynamic, progressing, overpowering and of such a nature as to transform its human recipient.⁴⁷ This view is far removed from the extrinsicism of a systematic and clearly formulated fundamentalist commitment to revelation as transmitted objective knowledge of true doctrines. Granted, the prophet is committed to the inerrancy of revelation itself, for he says, "There is no error in the revelations which I have taught."⁴⁸ Yet he does not theoretically associate this inerrancy with the specific manner in which revelation is expressed or recorded, nor does he claim infallibility for the human recipients of revelation, including himself. The Book of Mormon admits the possibility of errors in its pages;⁴⁹ the introductory revelation of the D&C declares clearly, "Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understand;"⁵⁰ and, of course, Smith explained that "a prophet was only a prophet when he was acting as such."⁵¹

Many Latter-day Saints who use Joseph Smith's polemical defenses of his prophetic prerogatives to support their own fundamentalism forget that for

Smith the truth of the restored gospel was not merely a question of having true teachings and propositions. When asked what distinguished Mormons from other Christians, he did *not* reduce the difference to doctrinal positions. Rather, he is reported to have replied that the difference was summed up in, "the gift of the Holy Ghost," a notably non-extrinsic criterion of distinction.⁵²

4. *Latter-day Saints sometimes desire a sectarian advantage over other Christians when it comes to biblical interpretation.* Sherlock points out that Snell scandalized Joseph Fielding Smith and those of like theology merely by his attempt to interpret the Bible without recourse to LDS loci, "For them such an attempt was a de facto denial of Mormonism's claims to special inspiration."⁵³ A recent expression of this same sense of scandal is found in Norman Barlow's criticism of Moench-Charles' non-harmonizing approach to the Old Testament. He argues:

. . . if the LDS relationship to the Bible were *not* different from that of mainstream Christian commentators . . . , then our miraculous, revelation-born origins and our continuous leadership by divinely inspired prophets and leaders, . . . would have contributed very little to our penetration of these sacred historical matters.⁵⁴

Barlow implies that an LDS interpretation must be noticeably distinct from non-LDS commentary if the truth and importance of the gospel is to be reflected there. This view reveals a naive parochialism which posits a "royal road" to the understanding of ancient texts possessed exclusively by our faith. It depends totally upon the fundamentalist concern so ill at ease with LDS experience of modern revelation and production of new scripture. To be sure, our understanding of God's dealings in ages past is deepened and enlarged by the living revelation, but this fact should not encourage us to settle down in a smug self-assuredness at "having the truth." It is clear to anyone more than casually acquainted with non-LDS biblical commentaries that many scholars outside our faith understand much about the Bible which we as a group do not. Indeed, it might be the fact that the Bible is all the scripture that these scholars have that encourages them to yearn to understand it so much more than we generally do.

5. *The Latter-day Saints, in stressing the doctrine of restoration, reveal a profound need for ancient models, prototypes and charters for our modern institutions, thought-forms, rituals and doctrines.* From the earliest period of Mormonism, when "primitive gospellers" of the American western frontier joined the LDS Church in droves, Mormons have stressed their belief that the gospel of Jesus Christ was revealed to earliest man, was subsequently lost, restored again, lost, etc., in a repeated process of apostasy and new dispensation of the gospel. The primitive Christian church was therefore a model and prototype for the modern Church: The sixth and seventh articles of faith read, "We believe in the same organization that existed in the primitive church, viz., apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc. We believe in the

gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, etc.”

Truman Madsen expresses clearly this desire for ancient models:

Exultant at the new revelatory downpour, the Mormon sees the implication: unless the same truths, authorities, and powers can be found in prior times and places . . . , Mormonism is without foundation. In other words, Mormonism has no claim to be a viable religion in the present unless it has been a viable religion in the past. And this is not just a halfhearted concession that there has been sort of, or part of, or a shadow of the fulness of the gospel. It is to say that some, at least, among the ancients had it all.⁵⁵

This feeling, I believe, is a major psychological animus behind the harmonizing tendencies in much of LDS biblical exegesis. In large part, the authors of Group IV have not sufficiently addressed this issue and so have weakened their position in the eyes of many of their co-religionists.

Mark Leone has identified this tendency as a basic feature of Mormonism. He calls it “historylessness,” i.e., the collapsing of present into past by an ever-renewed and ever-changing rereading of the past in light of the present and a constant packing of the past with anachronistic meaning and value from the present.⁵⁶ Leone has accurately defined the issue and notes the various religious strengths and weaknesses of the process. (He has, perhaps, been too quick in generalizing his observations of rural Arizona LDS congregations and seeing this feature as a fundamental characteristic of Mormon religion.)

Ephraim E. Ericksen identified two ways of handling the issue of universal versus changing institutions and beliefs when he discussed the 1911 BYU modernist crisis: A conservative view which stressed the unchanging truth of the gospel and the authority of the hierarchy versus a “modernist” view which saw “all social institutions in process of change” and which admitted “no authoritative control above that of . . . experience.”⁵⁷ Although Ericksen saw no possibility of resolving the difference between the viewpoints, we might here take a lesson from recent Roman Catholic theology, where there has been much successful work done precisely in this area. Maurice Blondel, Yves Congar and Avery Dulles all touch upon a possible solution to the problem when they discuss the continuity which their faith would like to perceive between modern Catholicism and primitive Christianity, i.e., the problem of tradition.⁵⁸ For them, a playing down of the propositional and extrinsicist elements in revelation theology provides, while allowing that these elements do exist, the possible ground for a synthesis of what Blondel calls the procrustean veterism of the conservative and the protean historicist evolutionism of the modernist. In the constellation of Catholic faith and liturgy, tradition is the locus of such a synthesis. In a Mormon formulation, the locus of such a synthesis probably would lie in the life of the spirit, the power of the priesthood, what Marden Clark has called “the new Mormon

mysticism,"⁵⁹ and the reflections of these things found in personal experience, the history and life of the LDS community, and the teachings of our scriptures and prophets. With a toning down of extrinsicism in revelation theology, these things will no longer be treated as adjuncts to a fundamentalist ideology, just as "tradition" in these Roman Catholic authors no longer bears the crushing weight of pre-Vatican II neo-scholasticism.

Such a method offers promise to the LDS theologian and exegete, since by playing down the extrinsicist and propositional it fits in well with basic LDS theologoumena—that God is a person in the full sense of the word, that the living God not only speaks, but also acts in history, and that continuing, ever progressing revelation is the heritage of the saints in every age. The gospel is thus seen as truly "new" (in some of its time-conditioned formulations) as well as "everlasting" (in its heart and life). In a world where various forms of extrinsicist authoritarianism have caused much human suffering and exploitation, our claim to be the "only true and living church on the face of the whole earth" (D&C 1:30) must be buttressed by more than just a claim to possession of correct doctrine and institutional authority. Indeed, the reliance on "testimony," "spiritual witness" and the "whisperings of the Holy Ghost" in the Church's proselyting programs reveals that there is more to being the true church than having true teachings and written "lines of priesthood authority" acting as a pedigree for the institution. The LDS scriptures stress the dynamic presence of the Spirit and the priesthood sealing power in sacraments. This only echoes Joseph Smith's emphasis on the Holy Ghost as the hallmark of Mormonism, and bears out the suggestion that the tacit dimension of religion, however it be reflected, is the real core to its truth and life.⁶⁰

By distinguishing between the heart and life of our true religion and its outward conceptual and verbal trappings, we can in full faith confess that our religion is a restoration of the true religion, without blinding ourselves to the many outward differences which separate us from that primitive faith as reflected in the texts. Even a dispensationary theology becomes clearer, though less exclusivistic. The distinction saves us from the intellectual suicide of the fundamentalist (which to my mind entails certain spiritual harms as well), while keeping us firm in what the Spirit tells us in our hearts is true.

CONCLUSIONS

The harmonizing program has weaknesses in regards to LDS faith and ecclesiastical praxis. Its stress on the extrinsic, propositional and institutional nature of the truth and continuity of the gospel can lead easily to a dogmatic fundamentalism which is so inflexible that it cannot bear what Clark calls "amendatory" revelations coming through the living prophet.⁶¹ Witness, e.g., the theologies of most polygamist sects in Utah and Arizona, which claim that the Church itself has gone astray by banning polygamy, abandoning the concept of the political kingdom of God and its communitarian economics, altering the doctrine of deity, and permitting the ordination of black males to the priesthood.

To be sure, there are dangers as well in a non-harmonizing hermeneutic, as I pointed out above in my description of Group IV. But these can be obviated and overcome by Christian love and tolerance, and by LDS scholars striving in their popularizations of their critical studies to address the common Latter-day Saint in the Gospel Doctrine Class and on the Welfare Farm. I have seen how effective a non-harmonizing approach can be in instructing the saints when coupled with a desire to build faith, not aggravate fundamentalist sensitivities deliberately, teach with the Spirit, and generally support LDS church leadership in their attempts to fulfill their callings.

Kent Robson, analyzing a heated exchange between Snell and Sperry on the topic of biblical interpretation in the Church, wrote in 1967 that Mormons, since they have modern experience with the process of revelation, can and should let their understanding of biblical revelation grow out of this experience without making simplistic and dogmatic claims that “cling ‘for dear life’ to outdated traditional views that are simply no longer tenable.”⁶² The recent blossoming of “the New Mormon history,” with its careful analysis of sources and its desire to be credible and dispassionate while at the same time being faithful and well-disposed to the community, has gone far in dispelling an unreasoning harmonization of LDS history and the LDS scriptures themselves. LDS experience with doctrinal development, institutional changes, and the noticeable gap between modern LDS thought forms and those of the nineteenth-century Church—so well demonstrated by “revisionist” history—should cause us all to pause before applying the “true for now, true for then” logic of the harmonizer in interpreting the Bible. The Bible, after all, is far more removed from us than the nineteenth-century LDS Church is.

The issue in LDS exegesis is not whether or not our understanding of the Bible of design should be different from that of other religions. The issue is whether or not we are willing to be honest, judicious and competent in our efforts at learning what God’s word to the ancients was. To suggest that we must choose living prophets over dead ones, or for that matter dead ones over living ones, misses the point entirely. If we truly desire to listen to the word of God, we must allow what he has said and now says to stand on its own, on its own horizon, without anachronistic accommodations. Listen to both the living and the dead prophets, and then appropriate their words and make them your own under the guidance of the Spirit. To do otherwise would be a betrayal, however well intentioned, of our belief in all that God has revealed, does now reveal and will yet reveal. The harmonizing principle should be avoided in the future if we are at all concerned with being true to the roots of our own religious life and our communal experience of revelation in these latter days.

GLOSSARY

Accommodation (in hermeneutics): The interpretive process by which the original meanings of a text are adapted and applied by later readers in new and updated ways.

Apologetics: The branch of theology that deals with defending or proving one’s faith.

Exegesis (adj., *exegetical*): Explanation, analysis, and interpretation of texts, especially sacred scripture.

Emendation: The act of improving a text by critical editing.

Extrinsicist: Emphasizing the external and visible elements of an object. In this article, *extrinsicism* also implies any belief which tends to emphasize the external and *peripheral*, assuming that the truth of the gospel, the Church, and God's revelation is in some way external to the gospel, the Church, and revelation themselves rather than organically part of them.

Form Criticism: The discipline in biblical studies that attempts to delineate the history and development of the pre-literary oral traditions lying behind any particular text by means of careful comparison of the literary form and function of the text with the possible life situations in which the tradition might have been formed and developed.

Fundamentalism: A belief which combines firm, undifferentiated faith in the inerrancy of scripture with a generally literalistic understanding of texts. In mainstream Christianity, the term generally applies to the biblicist evangelical churches, or to like-minded theological factions within other churches. In Mormonism, the term has been applied to polygamists who reject the Woodruff Manifesto, because they generally argue for the inerrancy of earlier LDS endorsement of polygyny just as fundamentalist protestants argue for the inerrancy of the Bible. In this article, the word is defined in terms of general ideological tendencies found among all these groups.

Harmonizing: The "ironing out" of apparent contradictions in authoritative sources considered to be more or less inerrant, usually by some appeal to authority.

Heuristics: (see hermeneutics)

Hermeneutics: The branch of theology and philosophy dealing with interpretation (usually of scriptural texts). Traditionally, the discipline encompasses three sub-disciplines: noematics (dealing with the kinds of meaning which can be found), heuristics (dealing with tools and methodology), and prophoristics (dealing with rules concerning the use of scripture in preaching).

Homiletics: The branch of theology dealing with preaching and sermons.

Inerrancy: (used of a text) the condition of not containing any error because of an inherent inability to contain error.

Infallibility: (generally used of persons) a guaranteed inability to make errors in judgment when acting in an official capacity.

Juridical: Having to do with rules, law. In an ecclesiastical setting, this term applies to accepted procedures and areas of responsibility in the church polity.

Literalism: A view which purports to interpret a text "by the letter," i.e., by believing it "really happened just as it says." This view generally ignores distinctions and differences between different literary genres and conventions.

Locus (pl. *loci*) = Latin, "place": In theology, an authoritative source of teaching.

LXX: (Standard abbreviation for "the Septuagint") The Greek translation of the Old Testament.

Midrashic embellishment: The expansion and adornment of a text in a manner similar to the expansions on scripture known to us in the Jewish *midrashim* (interpretations, paraphrases) and *targumin* (Aramaic translations/paraphrases) on the Old Testament.

MT: (Standard abbreviation of "Massoretic Text") The traditional text of the Hebrew Bible, standardized and pointed with vowels.

Modernist Controversy: A dispute near the beginning of the twentieth century where some scholars reinterpreted much of Christianity and the Bible in terms of critical scholarly disciplines such as history, philology, philosophy, biology and psychology. In Roman Catholicism, it resulted in excommunications and the "anti-modernist oath" required of candidates for the priesthood until Vatican II. In Protestantism, it led to a deepening division between fundamentalist and liberal factions and communions. In Mormonism, it led to the dismissal of three BYU professors in 1911.

Noematics: (see hermeneutics)

Pastoral theology: Theology concentrating on the role and tools of the pastor, the "shepherd" whose goals include the upbuilding of the individual Christian in terms of faith and Christian conduct.

Peshiṭta: The Syriac translation of the Old and New Testaments.

Philology: The critical study of language and literature.

Plenary inspiration: Inspiration fully guaranteed in all its aspects and essentials; the inspiration thought to lie behind a text considered to be inerrant. This conception of inspiration usually is associated with a propositional model of revelation.

Polemical: Pertaining to controversy, argument, or refutation.

Praxis: Practice insofar as it reflects and generates theory, belief or teaching.

Prophoristics: (see hermeneutics)

Propositional Model of Revelation: One of several ways of understanding what revelation is. It stresses that revelation is God's literal communication of verbally formulated truths or doctrines to humankind. Other models include revelation as history, divine self-disclosure, word-event, symbolic disclosure and categorization (in Kantian terms) of value-laden religious experience and tradition.

Source Criticism: The discipline in biblical studies which attempts to identify the various literary sources of biblical texts.

Redaction Criticism: The discipline in biblical studies which attempts to identify a particular author's characteristic theology and literary style by analyzing how the author adapts and reworks preexisting sources and tradition.

Theologumena (pl., *theologumena*): an individual element of a theological system. A particular manner of theological discourse which is used to speak of faith and its object.

Tradition Criticism: The discipline in biblical studies which attempts to identify the various theological traditions underlying biblical texts by grouping texts of homogenous theology, vocabulary and narrative style, and comparing and contrasting these various groupings.

NOTES

¹Davis Bitton, "Anti-intellectualism in Mormon History," *Dialogue* 1 (Autumn, 1966), p. 122, note 30.

²Gordon Irving, *Mormonism and the Bible, 1832-1838*, Honors Thesis, Univ. of Utah, 1972; "The Mormons and the Bible in the 1830s," *BYU Studies* 13 (Summer, 1973), 473-88; Richard Sherlock, "Faith and History: The Snell Controversy," *Dialogue* 12 (Spring, 1979), 27-41; "A Turbulent Spectrum: Mormon Reactions to the Darwinist Legacy," *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978) 33-59; "Campus in Crisis: BYU, 1911," *Sunstone* 4 (Jan./Feb., 1979) 10-16; "We Can See No Advantage to a Continuation of the Discussion: The Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair," *Dialogue* 13 (Fall, 1980), 63-78.

³Sterling McMurrin, *The Theological Foundations of the Mormon Religion* (Salt Lake City: Univ. of Utah, 1965), p. 29.

⁴Leonard Arrington, "The Search for Truth and Meaning in Mormon History," *Dialogue* 3 (Summer, 1968), 64.

⁵This definition has drawn upon the analysis which Grant Wacker, of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, offered of fundamentalism as ideology at the American Society of Church History national convention on December 30, 1980. For a program announcement, see *Church History* 50 (March, 1981), 132-33.

⁶See Lorin K. Hansen, "Some Concepts of Divine Revelation," *Sunstone* 5 (Jan./Feb., 1980), 12-18; Richard P. Howard, "Later Day Saint Scriptures and the Doctrine of Propositional Revelation," *Courage* 1 (June, 1971), 209-25.

⁷Even the "classic" LDS authors of the early twentieth century such as James Talmage or B. H. Roberts were ignorant of the languages of the Bible, and generally unaware of many of the technical reasons underlying the critical approaches of their own day toward the Bible. Their work is primarily apologetic and theological. Cf. Sherlock, "The Snell Controversy," p. 40, note 48. Likewise, even the major modern writer whom most Saints mention when asked to name an LDS scriptural scholar, Hugh Nibley, has produced very little exegesis of the Bible. Most of his work is in LDS scripture or apologetics. See Louis Midgley's bibliography of Nibley in *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless: Classic Essays of Hugh Nibley*, edit. Truman Madsen (Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1978), pp. 307-23.

⁸In establishing the typology on the basis of *a priori* versus *a posteriori* tendencies in interpretation, I am not assuming that presuppositionless exegesis is possible. On the contrary, I agree with R. Bultmann that such an exegesis is impossible. See R. Bultmann, "Is Exegesis without Presuppositions Possible?" in *Existence and Faith*, edit. Schubert Ogden (Cleveland, 1960), pp. 289-96. However, because I recognize that fundamentalism is in part a function of an undifferentiated belief in the inerrancy of one's sources, I think that any harmonizing tendency which might exist in one's exegesis reveals to a certain degree such a presupposition. By using

this criterion in the typology, I hope to clarify the relationship of fundamentalism as an ideology to the hermeneutics of the various authors.

⁹See glossary for an explanation of these terms. For a background in the entire question of scriptural hermeneutics, see R. E. Brown, "Hermeneutics," in the *Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. R. E. Brown, et al. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968) vol. 2, pp. 605–623. Most of the recent interest in the study of hermeneutics, influenced by New Criticism, the philosophical hermeneutics of the late Heidegger, and French Structuralism, has centered in noematics and the question of intent. See H. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury, 1975); Sandra Schneiders, "Faith, Hermeneutics, and the Literal Sense of Scripture," *Theological Studies* 39 (Dec., 1978), 719–36. Although the recent discussion is needed and somewhat helpful, I think that some basic cautions are needed. H. D. F. Kitto spells several of these out in reference to the interpretation of classical literature in "Criticism and Chaos," chapter I in his *Poiesis: Structure and Thought* (Los Angeles/Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1966), pp. 1–32.

¹⁰I have avoided a discussion here of nineteenth-century LDS hermeneutics because of specific problems implicit in analyzing the hermeneutics of men like Joseph Smith and Brigham Young alongside their twentieth-century counterparts. The difference between the tools available to students of scripture now and then is marked enough to have major effects on the theological underpinnings of one's exegesis, and because of this, disparate elements on nineteenth-century LDS exegesis can be adduced as support for the various, often contradictory positions represented in the twentieth-century Church.

For some ideas about the interpretive system of the nineteenth-century church leaders, see note 2 above. Also see Louis C. Zucker, "Joseph Smith as a Student of Hebrew," *Dialogue* 3 (Autumn, 1968), 41–55; Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Knopf, 1979), pp. 30–31; M. T. Walton, "Professor Seixas, the Hebrew Bible, and the Book of Abraham," *Sunstone* 6 (May/April, 1981), 41–43; Heber Snell, "The Bible in the Church," *Dialogue* 2 (Spring, 1967), 55–74; as well as, perhaps less clearly, Robert J. Matthews, "A Plainer Translation": *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible* (Provo: BYU, 1975).

I have limited my discussion to the LDS church, though it should be noted here that RLDS biblical usage tends to be quite different from LDS use, despite the common acceptance of the Book of Mormon, the doctrine of an open canon of scripture and continuing revelation, and the inspiration of Joseph Smith's work in biblical interpretation. A major document of modern RLDS theology, written by the church's Basic Beliefs Committee, *Exploring the Faith* (Independence, Mo.: Herald, 1970), is consistent in stressing non-propositional models of revelation, in recognizing the fallibility of any human formulation about God (including scripture) and in attempting to endorse and make use of modern biblical scholarship. To be sure, there are some RLDS who are revolted by these positions (see in particular, Verne Deskin, "The Anatomy of Dissent," *Courage* 2:3 [Spring, 1972] 445–50.) It seems to me that comparison of the dynamics of biblical use and interpretation in the two churches could serve well in helping members of either to understand the relationship of post-primitivist restorationism and the Bible, as well as mainstream Christian churches.

¹¹Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 3 vols. compiled by Bruce R. McConkie (SLC: Bookcraft, 1954–56); *Man: His Origin and Destiny* (SLC: Deseret, 1954); "The Word of the Lord Superior to the Theories of Men," *Liahona* 1 (April, 1918), 641–44; Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* 3 vols. (SLC: Bookcraft, 1965–73); *Mormon Doctrine* (SLC: Bookcraft, 1958); "Ten Keys to Understanding Isaiah," *Ensign* 3 (Oct., 1973), 78–83; "Understanding the Book of Revelation," *Ensign* 5 (Sept., 1975), 85–89; W. Cleon Skousen, *The First Two Thousand Years* (SLC: Bookcraft, 1953); *The Third Thousand Years* (SLC: Bookcraft, 1964); Glenn L. Pearson, *The Old Testament: A Mormon Perspective* (SLC: Bookcraft, 1980); Monte S. Nyman, *Great are the Words of Isaiah* (SLC: Bookcraft, 1980); Mark E. Peterson, *Moses: Man of Miracles* (SLC: Deseret, 1977); Duane S. Crowther, *Thus Saith the Lord* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon, 1980).

¹²E.g., Elder McConkie uses Dummelow's one volume commentary and Skousen uses Peloubet's dictionary and Clarke's commentary. This occasionally leads to gross misinformation, i.e., Skousen in the *Third Thousand Years* relies on Clarke's erroneous opinion that the word *zōnā* in the story of Rahab of Jericho does not mean prostitute or whore. Simple concordance work and a lexical study of the root *znh* would have disabused Skousen of Clarke's prudery. McConkie tends to be more careful, but still is not in a position to judge the various interpretive opinions on the basis of the primary evidence.

¹³See, e.g., McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 643–50. Cf. R. Howard as well as Sherlock, “The Snell Controversy,” *passim*.

¹⁴See Smith, “Word of the Lord,” *passim*, and Petersen’s argument in *Moses* against modern source and tradition criticism of the Pentateuch.

¹⁵See McConkie, *DNTC* vol. 1, pp. 59–60; Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 274; Skousen, *First Two Thousand Years*, pp. 16–17.

¹⁶A quick perusal of these authors reveals that these are nearly the exclusive loci of authority in their exegesis. When any reference is made to modern critical studies, it is in a polemic against them, or occasionally to provide secular proof of some fundamental truth otherwise derived. See especially the two *Ensign* articles by Elder McConkie.

¹⁷Edmund Cherbonnier, “In Defense of Anthropomorphism,” in *Reflections on Mormonism: Judaean-Christian Parallels*, edit. Truman Madsen (Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1978), p. 160. See also his article, “The Logic of Biblical Anthropomorphism,” *HTR* 55 (1962), 182–206.

¹⁸McConkie, in *DNTC* vol. 1, p. 57, identifies three requisites in successful scripture study: 1) diligent private searching of the scriptures, 2) obedience and submission to the living “prophets and inspired interpreters,” 3) living worthily to receive the holy spirit’s companionship and the “gift of scriptural understanding and interpretation.”

¹⁹James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (SLC: Deseret, 1915); B. H. Roberts, *The Seventy’s Course in Theology: First Year* (SLC: Deseret, 1907), pp. 25–100; Sidney B. Sperry, *The Voice of Israel’s Prophets* (SLC: Deseret, 1952); “Scholars and Prophets,” *Dialogue* 2 (Spring, 1967), 55–85; *The Spirit of the Old Testament* (SLC: Deseret, reprint 1970); J. Reuben Clark, Jr., *Our Lord of the Gospels* (SLC: Deseret, 1957); Robert J. Matthews, *op. cit.*; “The Plain and Precious Parts,” *Ensign* 5 (Sept., 1975), 5–11; Keith Meservy, “The Making of the Old Testament,” *Ensign* 3 (Oct., 1973), 7–11; Gerald Lund, “Old Testament Types and Symbols,” pp. 39–59 in *Literature of Belief: Sacred Scripture and Religious Experience* edit. Neal Lambert (BYURSCMS 5; Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980); Ellis T. Rasmussen, “The Language of the Old Testament,” *Ensign* 3 (Feb., 1973), 34–35; *An Introduction to the Old Testament and Its Teachings* 2nd ed. (Provo: BYU, 1972–74).

²⁰Clark, *Why the King James Version*, *passim*.

²¹Note, e.g., Kent Robson’s reaction to Sperry’s reading Snell out of church in the *Dialogue* roundtable on “The Bible in the Church,” “I know from personal acquaintance with Snell that Sperry’s assertions concerning Snell’s lack of acceptance of the Prophet, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price are blatantly and cruelly false.” See Robson, “The Bible, the Church, and its Scholars,” *Dialogue* 2 (Spring, 1967), 87.

²²Hugh W. Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon* (SLC: Deseret, 1964), esp. chapter 24, which is a discussion of the commonly used proof-text for the Book of Mormon, Ezek 37:15–23; *Since Cumorah* (SLC: Deseret, 1967), esp. pp. 127–43; S. Kent Brown, C. Wilford Griggs, and Thomas W. MacKay, “Footnotes to the Gospels,” an unfortunately short-lived series in the *Ensign* 4–5 (Dec. 1974–March 1975); Thomas W. MacKay, “Abraham in Egypt: A Collation of the Evidence for the Case of the Missing Wife,” *BYU Studies* 10 (Summer, 1970), 429–51; S. Kent Brown, “Jesus and the Gospels in Recent Literature: A Brief Sketch,” *Dialogue* 9 (Autumn, 1974), 71–71; R. L. Anderson, “Joseph Smith’s Insights into the Olivet Prophecy: Joseph Smith I and Matthew 24,” in *Pearl of Great Price Symposium: A Centennial Presentation*, editor not named (Provo: BYU, 1976), pp. 48–61; “Types of Christian Revelation,” pp. 61–78 of *Literature of Belief*; Benjamin Urrutia, “The Structure of Genesis, Chapter One,” *Dialogue* 8 (Autumn/Winter, 1974), 142–43. The various literati include A. H. King, “Skill and Power in Reading the Authorized Version,” in *The Sixth Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium: January 28, 1978*, editor not named (Provo: BYU, 1978), pp. 182–92; and philosopher James E. Faulconer, “Scripture, History, and Myth,” *Sunstone* 4 (March/April, 1979), 49–50.

²³Nibley, *An Approach*, pp. 142–43; also, Nibley, *The World and The Prophets* (SLC: Deseret, 1954), pp. 251–57.

²⁴See, e.g., how Nibley attempts to turn source and tradition criticism of Isaiah to his advantage in *Since Cumorah*, pp. 138–43.

²⁵Compare Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, pp. 28–32, where the unreliability of present texts is portrayed as the opposite number of modern discoveries at Qumran and Nag Hammadi, and R.

J. Matthews, "The Plain and Precious Parts," *passim*, where the unreliability is the opposite number of Joseph Smith's Bible revision.

²⁶See, e.g., Nibley's attempt to discredit all scholarly exegetical endeavors in *The World and the Prophets*, pp. 23–29, 80–88, and 183–88. The commonplace used here by most authors of the first three groups is that since biblical scholars are not united in opinion, none of their various opinions are to be relied upon. To me, the reasoning behind this argument is totally opaque. Contradiction and refutation are, in terms of rational dialectics, two very different things. Ideally we should judge the reliability of ideas on their own merits and evidence, not upon whether other people's ideas agree or disagree with them. In addition, I would submit that critical biblical scholarship has arrived at a far firmer consensus than this argument would allow.

²⁷Urrutia, e.g., leaps upon a repointing of Gen 1:1 based upon Joseph Smith's interpretations with no evaluation whatsoever of the demythologization at work in Gen 1:1–2:4a and the profound monotheism that it reflects. Also, despite R. L. Anderson's careful treatment of LDS sources when he is "doing" LDS history, his exegesis of the Bible fails to attain the same critical acumen and finesse. Most of these authors tend to treat the "Small Plate" sections of the Book of Mormon as automatically giving us careful insight into the religion of Israel in the early sixth century B.C. From a strict critical point of view, the text as we have it—in nineteenth-century idiom and doctrinal forms—cannot be dated in its particulars earlier than the late 1820s, granting some strength in Nibley's arguments in *Since Cumorah* and *The World of the Jaredites* that some extremely archaic material is present in the book. Also, R. Bushman's argument that some of the ideologies reflected in the book are markedly foreign to nineteenth-century America tends to support Nibley's ideas. See "The Book of Mormon and the American Revolution," *BYU Studies* 17 (Autumn, 1976) 3–20. But this does not preclude the almost inevitable anachronistic contaminations that seep into and saturate any translation of a text, particularly when translation is so broadly conceived as it was by Joseph Smith. See E. Ashment, "The Book of Mormon—A Literal Translation?" *Sunstone* 5 (March/April, 1980), 10–14; and J. H. Charlesworth, "Messianism in the Pseudepigrapha and the Book of Mormon," pp. 99–138 in Madsen, *Reflections on Mormonism*.

²⁸See Joseph Fielding Smith's introduction to Nibley's *An Approach*.

²⁹See Ralph V. Chamberlin, *Life and Philosophy of William H. Chamberlin* (SLC: Univ. of Utah, 1925); Ephraim E. Ericksen, "William H. Chamberlin: Pioneer Mormon Philosopher," *Western Humanities Review* 8 (Autumn, 1954), 277–85; Arrington and Bitton, *Mormon Experience*, pp. 258–60; E. L. Wilkinson, edit., *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, 4 vols., (Provo, BYU, 1975–76), vol. 1, pp. 414–15; and Sherlock, "Campus in Crisis." For examples of the other authors' writing, see: E. E. Ericksen, *The Psychological and Ethical Aspects of Mormon Group Life* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago, 1922); "Priesthood and Philosophy," reprinted in *Sunstone* 4 (July/August, 1979), 9–12; Heber C. Snell, *Ancient Israel: Its Story and Meaning* (SLC: Stevens & Wallis, 1948; 2nd and 3rd editions revised, published by the Univ. of Utah Press); "The Bible in the Church," (See note 10 above. Also see Sherlock's discussion of Snell's *heilsgeschichtliche* conception of revelation, "The Snell Controversy," pp. 34–38); Russell Swenson, "Mormons at the University of Chicago Divinity School," *Dialogue* 7 (Summer, 1972), 32–47; *New Testament Literature* (SLC: LDS Dept. of Education, 1940); *The Synoptic Gospels* (SLC: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1945); *The Gospel of John* (SLC: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1946); *New Testament: Acts and Epistles* (SLC: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1947); Sterling McMurrin, *The Theological Foundations* (note 3, above); "On Mormon Theology," *Dialogue* 1 (Summer, 1966), 135–40; John L. Sorenson, "The 'Brass Plates' and Biblical Scholarship," *Dialogue* 10 (Autumn, 1977), 31–39; Lowell Bennion, *Understanding the Scriptures* (SLC: Deseret, 1981); "The Mormon Christianizing of the Old Testament: A Response," *Sunstone* 5 (Nov./Dec., 1980), 40; "Lowell L. Bennion's Response to E. E. Ericksen's 'Priesthood and Philosophy,'" *Sunstone* 4 (July/Aug., 1979), 13; "Knowing, Doing, and Being: Vital Dimensions in the Mormon Religious Experience: A Response," *Sunstone* 4 (Nov./Dec., 1979), 68; Scott Kenney, "Mormons, Genesis, and Higher Criticism," *Sunstone* 3 (Nov./Dec., 1977), 8–12; Melodie Moench, "Nineteenth-Century Mormons: The New Israel," *Dialogue* 12 (Spring, 1979), 42–56; Melodie Moench Charles, "The Majesty of the Law," *Sunstone* 5 (July/Aug., 1980), 43–46; "The Mormon Christianizing of the Old Testament," *Sunstone* 5 (Nov./Dec., 1980), 35–39; "Problems with Supplementing," (letter) *Sunstone* 6 (Jan./Feb., 1981), 4; R. Sherlock, "The Gospel Beyond Time: Thoughts on the Relation of Faith and Historical Knowledge," *Sunstone* 5 (July/Aug., 1980), 20–23; "Where Faith is Rooted," (letter) *Sunstone* 6 (Jan./Feb., 1981), 3–4 (also see note 2 above); Michael T. Walton, review of *The Mormon Bible Dictionary*, *Sunstone* 6 (Jan./Feb., 1981), 75–76; E. Ashment, "The Facsimiles of the Book of Abraham: A Reappraisal," *Sunstone* 4 (Nov./Dec., 1979), 33–46; "The Book of Mormon—

A Literal Translation?" (see note 27 above); Keith Norman, "A Not So Great Commentary," (a review of M. S. Nyman's *Great are the Words of Isaiah*) *Dialogue* 14:3 (Autumn, 1981) 130–32; "A Modern Evangelist," (a review of B. R. McConkie's *The Mortal Messiah*) *Dialogue* 14:2 (Summer, 1981) 139–41; "Ex Nihilo: The Development of the Doctrines of God and Creation in Early Christianity," *BYU Studies* 17:3 (Spring, 1977) 291–318.

³⁰Note that he rightly identifies the Epistle to the Hebrews as non-Pauline, although, wisely, he makes no reference to the more common LDS association of the epistle with Paul. See *New Testament: Acts and Epistles*, p. 159.

³¹I.e., Apostles John A. Widstoe and Joseph Merrill, and Levi Edgar Young of the First Council of Seventy. Snell was specifically cleared of charges of heresy by the Church Board of Education in early 1949. See Sherlock, "The Snell Controversy," pp. 31–32.

³²Joseph F. Smith, "Philosophy and Church Schools," p. 209, writes, "The students are not old enough and learned enough to discriminate, or put proper limitations upon a theory which we believe is more or less a fallacy. In reaching the conclusion that evolution would be best left out of discussions in our Church schools we are deciding a question of propriety and not undertaking to say how much of evolution is true, or how much is false." Arrington and Bitton, in *Mormon Experience*, write, "Mormonism had had its first brush with modernism. The trauma could have been worse; there were no books banned, no excommunications or schisms. No official church position was taken with regard to evolution or higher criticism . . . By deciding not to decide the evolution question, Smith averted a head-on confrontation between those newly educated Saints who found in it support for Mormon doctrine and those of a more traditional persuasion who perceived in the theory the seeds of apostasy. . . . There had always been, and would continue to be, room within the fold for a certain range of opinion" (p. 260).

³³Nibley (*Since Cumorah*, pp. 22–32) identifies the book as both the Old and New Testaments. Nephi likens it to the Nephite "Plates of Brass," which contained the "prophecies" (1 Nephi 13:23), a "record of the Jews" (1 Nephi 13:23), and "the Books of Moses" (1 Nephi 19:22–23; cf. 1 Nephi 5:11–14, and Stan Larson, "Textual Variants in Book of Mormon Manuscripts," *Dialogue* 10:4 [Autumn 1977], pp. 8–30, esp. p. 16, variant no. 19). John Sorenson has associated these plates with the Elohite tradition of the Pentateuch (See note 29, above). All of this leans toward an identification of the book with the Old Testament. Nephi's claim that the book "proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew" and contained "the plainness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record" (1 Nephi 13:24) for Nibley associates the book with the New Testament and its oral traditional sources as well. Nibley apparently believes that the major part of the corruption of the Bible came from a restrictive canon, deletion of textual elements, and regular scribal errors of hand and eye.

³⁴See the articles listed above by Zucker, Ashment, and Walton, as well as R. J. Matthews, *A Plainer Translation*, pp. 246–47. That the "wordprint" studies of A. C. Rencher and W. C. Larsen have enough difficulties with them to preclude their having any strength in altering the basic picture of translation portrayed by these authors is shown clearly by D. James Croft, "Book of Mormon Wordprints Reexamined," *Sunstone* 6 (March/April, 1981), 15–21.

³⁵R. J. Matthews, "What is the Book of Moses?" in *Pearl of Great Price Symposium: A Centennial Presentation*, editor not named (Provo: BYU, 1976), p. 24.

³⁶R. J. Matthews, *A Plainer Translation*, pp. 234–35. I am not alone in objecting to Matthews' tendency to confuse belief in Joseph Smith's divine calling and an understanding of the JST as a verbal restoration of the original form of the Bible. Richard P. Howard argues that Matthews' "faith assumptions" concerning propositional revelation and inerrancy have seriously marred his work on the JST. See Howard's review of Matthews' *A Plainer Translation* in *BYU Studies* 16 (Winter, 1976) 297–301. William D. Russell, in reviewing Matthews' book *Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible*, makes a similar argument; see *Courage* 1:2 (December, 1970) 119–20. Cf. S. Sperry's review of R. J. Matthews' *Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible* (Provo: BYU, 1969), in *BYU Studies* 10:4 (Summer, 1970) 496–98.

³⁷*Mormon Experience*, p. 30.

³⁸Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, p. 29. Interestingly, it is not the synoptics and John that give LDS readers their greatest difficulties with the New Testament, although they are generally assigned to the sub-apostolic literary compilers of the second and third generations of the Church by

modern New Testament criticism. It is the letters of Paul, the only writings of clearly apostolic authorship, which present the most difficulties.

³⁹Gib Kocherhans, "Reflections on the Law of Moses: Old Testament Apostasy in Context," *Ensign* 11 (June, 1981), 14–21.

⁴⁰Gerry Ensley, "Christ at the Periphery," (letter) *Sunstone* 5 (March/April, 1980), 2–7.

⁴¹J. Reuben Clark, Jr., "When Are Church Leaders' Words Entitled to the Claim of Scripture?" Church News Section of the *Deseret News* (July 31, 1954), pp. 2ff; Reprinted in *Dialogue* 12:2 (Summer, 1979) pp. 68–81.

⁴²Clark, *ibid.* An additional problem confusing the issue even more is the question of the relative normative value and canonicity of any written source of doctrine. Clark suggests a relatively non-hierarchical triple rule for determining the normative value of any statement in doctrinal loci: 1) the inner experience of the Spirit's witness confirming it, 2) its reception by the "body of the Church," and 3) its conformity to beliefs previously received thus, when weighed by the pronouncements of the living prophet. Cf. Armand L. Mauss' treatment of a "scale of authenticity" regarding various doctrinal loci, "The Fading of the Pharaohs' Curse: The Decline and Fall of the Priesthood Ban Against Blacks in the Mormon Church," *Dialogue* 14:3 (Autumn, 1981) 10–45.

⁴³E.g., Joseph Smith uses John 14's terms "the other comforter" and "the spirit of truth" as references to Jesus himself (*TPJS*, pp. 150–51); James Talmage identifies them as the Holy Ghost, the third personage of the Godhead (*Jesus the Christ*, pp. 603–07). For an excellent beginning discussion of LDS doctrinal development, with some reference to the varied applications and interpretations of scripture it has produced, see Thomas G. Alexander, "The Reconstruction of Mormon Doctrine: From Joseph Smith to Progressive Theology," *Sunstone* 5 (July/Aug., 1980) 24–33; also see Peter Crawley, "The Passage of Mormon Primitivism," *Dialogue* 13:4 (Winter, 1980) 26–37.

⁴⁴History of Joseph Smith, *Times and Seasons* vol. 4, no. 7 (Feb. 15, 1843), p. 108. Of particular interest here is the fact that Cowdery was apparently objecting to the phrase at issue precisely because he thought that it was an unauthorized interpolation into an earlier form of the revelation. See Crawley, "Passage of Mormon Primitivism," p. 28.

⁴⁵R. Howard, "Latter Day Saint Scripture and the Doctrine of Propositional Revelation," and Dean C. Jessee, "The Reliability of Joseph Smith's History," *Journal of Mormon History* 3 (1976) 23–46, esp. p. 28.

⁴⁶Truman Madsen, "Joseph Smith and the Ways of Knowing," pp. 25–63 in *Seminar on the Prophet Joseph Smith: February 18, 1961* (Provo, Utah: BYU Dept. of Extension Publications, 1961).

⁴⁷D.H.C. 6:366.

⁴⁸D.H.C. 5:265.

⁴⁹Book of Mormon, title page (1830 edition), "Now if there be fault, it be mistake of men." Cf. Ether 12:23–28.

⁵⁰D&C 1:24. N. B., "language" is far more than mere verbal systems; it can extend to thought forms and culturally conditioned mind sets. See *TPJS*, p. 162, ". . . if He comes to a little child, He will adapt Himself to the language and capacity of a little child." It seems clear to me that Joseph Fielding Smith, in editing this text from the Willard Richards Pocket Companion, rightly understood Joseph Smith's intent by placing the capital letters in the words "He" and "Himself," and thus understanding the antecedent of these pronouns to be God or Jesus. Two recent editors of this text, Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, have understood the reference to be to the Devil, since the phrase occurs in a section of the sermon which speaks of the deceptions and appearances of the Devil. But this reading ignores the fact that throughout this passage the Devil is portrayed as appearing "in glory," as "an angel of light," and as "an orator." Indeed Joseph Smith refers to "great manifestations of Spirit both false & true." Finally, the ellipsis is clearly marked by Willard Richards by dashes, and the immediately preceding words refer not to the Devil, but to Divinity: "Ask God to reveal it, if it be of the Devil, he will flee from you, if of God he will manifest himself or make it manifest, we may come to Jesus & ask him. He will know all about it. — If he comes to a little child, he will adapt himself to the Language & capacity of a little child. — There is no Gold nor Silver &c. It is false, all is plain in heaven; every Spirit or vision or Singing is not of God." To be sure, Richards' periphrastic note-taking style makes positive

interpretation here impossible. But in light of Joseph Smith's other statements about God's condescension in revelation, and the context of the passage, the TPJS reading is preferable here. See A. F. Ehat and L. W. Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* (BYURSCMS 6; Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980) p. 12.

⁵¹D.H.C. 5:265.

⁵²D.H.C. 4:42.

⁵³Sherlock, "The Snell Controversy," p. 36.

⁵⁴N. Barlow, "Mormon Contribution to the Old Testament," (letter) *Sunstone* 6 (March/April, 1981), 5-7.

⁵⁵Madsen, "Introductory Essay: Mormonism as Historical," in *Reflections on Mormonism*, p. xvi.

⁵⁶Mark Leone, *The Roots of Modern Mormonism* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1979). I admit that Leone's description fits very well the elements of the LDS community he used as a sample, and perhaps applies to a majority of the LDS. And I grant that some of these people are quite explicit in considering themselves to be the only "true" manifestation of Mormonism, and are willing to label Mormons of a more critically and historically minded persuasion as heretics or at least as less than true to their religious roots. But I, as a Latter-day Saint who have had my faith affirmed and my commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ enhanced by the example of such people as the founders of *Dialogue* and the "new" Mormon historians, must strongly disagree with this opinion.

⁵⁷E. E. Ericksen, *Mormon Group Life* (see note 29 above), p. 64.

⁵⁸Maurice Blondel, *History and Dogma* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964); Yves Congar, *Tradition and Traditions* (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1966); Avery Dulles, *The Resilient Church* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1977). Dulles relies upon Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (New York: Harper Torch Books, 1964), for his epistemology and terminology "tacit dimension."

⁵⁹Marden Clark, "The New Mormon Mysticism," *Sunstone* 5 (March/April, 1980), 24-29.

⁶⁰See, e.g., Joseph Smith History, v. 19, where Smith reports Jesus' significant embellishment of Isaiah 29:13, a distinction between the form of godliness in religion and its power; and D&C 84:20-22, where this power functions as part of a sacramental theology. See note 52 above.

⁶¹Or it can lead to a discomfoting loss of credibility when the harmonizer must repudiate his previous absolutistic pronouncements in light of changes in policies and doctrines. Witness Elder McConkie's difficult position in the face of his previous statements about black men and the priesthood after the 1978 revelation on the subject. See "Update" in *Sunstone* 5 (Jan./Feb., 1980), 48; also Mauss, "Pharaohs' Curse," p. 32 and note 132.

⁶²Robson (see note 21 above), p. 89.



ART

MORE SKETCHES FROM THE ARTIST'S NOTEBOOK

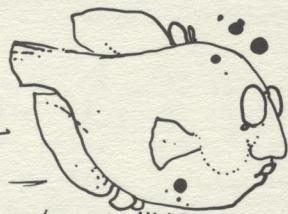
A WINGED MAIDEN RIDES through the air on a fish; a hunchback opens his jeweled hump and releases a flock of flowers; a fat dwarf in a brocade Elizabethan costume stares at an owl in a surrealist landscape. A stone Olmec head watches over a brilliant bluebird; and a procession of gremlins, miniature skeletons, trumpeters riding on birds, fish on a chain, small mice and men in glittering armor and towering turbans march across the page. Strongly influenced by Hieronymous Bosch and the school of artists known as Magic Realists, James C. Christensen feels that devoted attention to precision in his many-colored paintings and detailed drawings give him the right to create his own world. Given his cast of characters, one would expect such a fantastic world to reflect the emptiness, the fright or the hopelessness of other fantasy artists. Not so in the Christian world of Christensen. As a Mormon artist, he infuses his work with the positivism of a happy life and the bright colors of his faith. All the strange little characters have a story to tell. The story may be funny, sad or satirical, but it is always hopeful. As a reader of Tolkein and C. S. Lewis, he lets his imagination roam throughout literary symbolism, but his most exciting adventures grow out of the inventions of his own mind.

James Christensen first greeted *Dialogue* readers ten years ago in the beautiful Christmas issue edited by Robert Rees (Vol. VII, No. 3). His "Sketches from the Artist's Notebook" and his other illustrations for the poetry section signaled the approach of a major talent. Born in 1942 of a Mormon family in Culver City, California, he was educated at UCLA and BYU. After earning an MA at BYU, he taught at a junior high school in California and worked on the staff at the New Era. He now teaches in both the design and the art departments at BYU. Married to Carole and the father of five children, he lives in Orem, Utah. He feels that his quiet life there along with occasional forays into the cultures of other countries (the family recently lived for six months in Spain) provide the necessary background for his work. He thinks that fantasy is good for the mind and that it feeds the religious life. The life of the unreal can teach amazing lessons about the real.



I am a picture maker & a storyteller. I realize that my work is very narrative, very decorative, but, like an onion, it has layers of meaning that can be peeled away only to discover other, deeper considerations. I want my art to be well crafted, well designed & structured to communicate a sense of order & harmony even in the most complex pieces.

I believe that art should communicate with everyone. The elitist attitude of art for the artists and the privileged few — obscurity for its own sake — the deliberate alienation of the public is a mistake — I do not want to lower my work to the lowest common denominator, but rather offer a meaningful experience on a number of levels — so that there is a little treasure for the savant as well as the pedestrian viewer. My art must be provocative — convincing — and honest.





JOSEF ALBERS - "ART IS NOT AN OBJECT, IT IS AN EXPERIENCE"

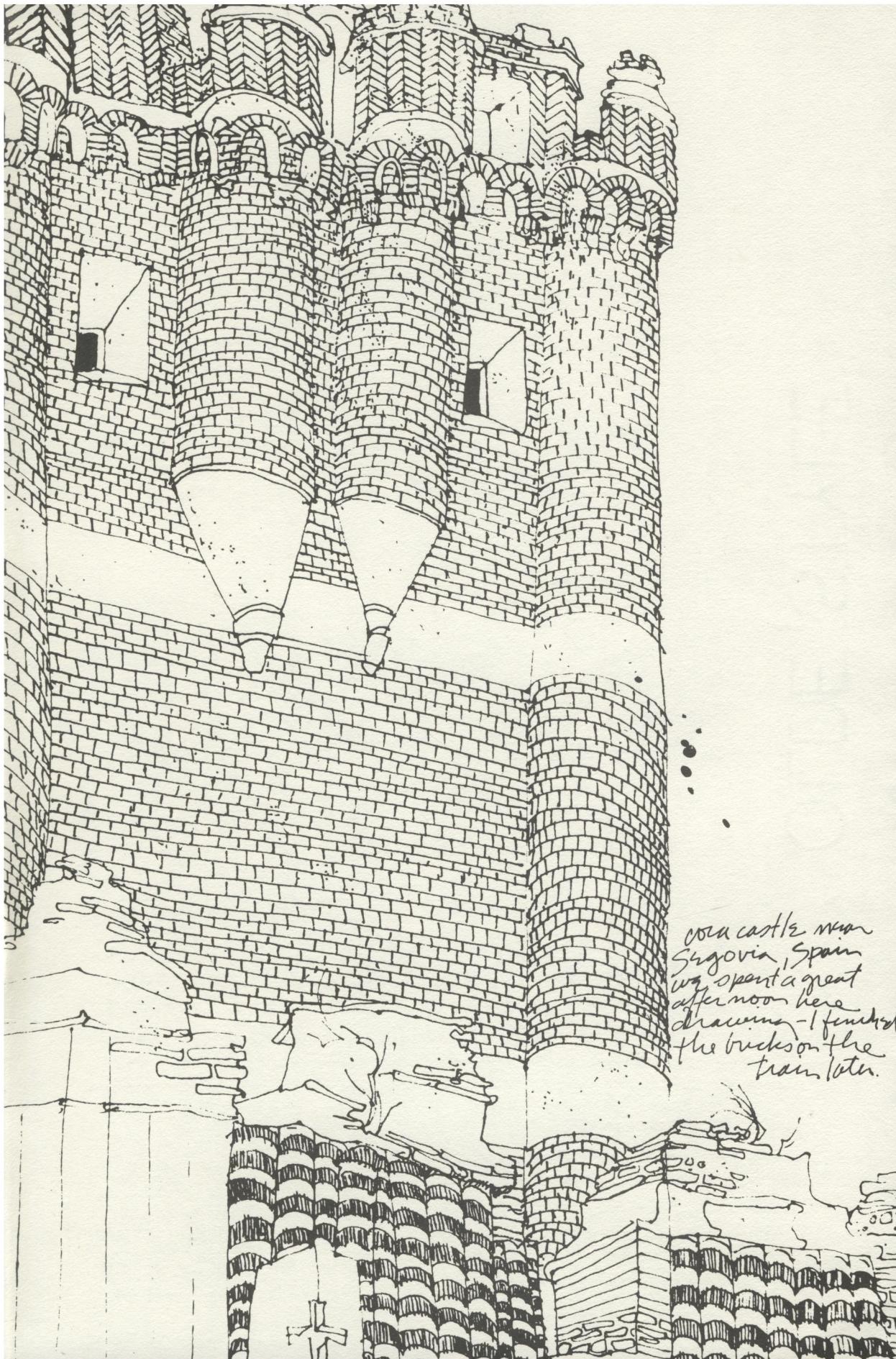
I want my paintings to be "triggers" of the imagination to propel the viewer into his own fantasy. I supply the raft and the oars, but the viewer should make his own voyage. He supplies the action - exercising his own poetic creative - IMAGINATIVE POTENTIAL.

"Ascent of the Balloon Man" sets the stage - but does not supply the drama - this drawing is very obvious - some are more obscure



The river is life - the voyage. The boats are on a journey, the passengers have purpose but we don't know what that purpose is. The passengers are not together they are "fellow travellers" along the river. All the rivers eventually empty into the sea but the path is a mystery. These drawings & paintings don't deal with the "big picture" but rather an observed moment. The viewer's imagination must create the stories, fill in the scenarios, and give meaning to the painting. I enjoy listening to people make up stories about the characters in my pictures.





Alcazar castle near
Segovia, Spain
we spent a great
afternoon here
drawing - I found
the bricks on the
train later.



San Lorenzo Market
Florence, Italy - May 21, 1981

I must draw more from life. Nature
constantly "primes the pump"
all of my imaginative work is made of
the raw material observed in nature.
I must constantly be on the cutting edge of my
craft and observing and drawing from nature
"hones the blade."



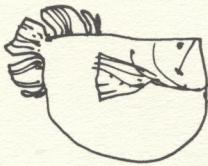
This drawing is about relationships - the kite is really a flounder pretending to be a kite to avoid becoming dinner. He flops & turns with the breeze, imitating a kite, hoping that no one will notice that he is real. The man knows that the fish is real, but ~~he~~ enjoys the graceful movements of the fish's pantomime so much that he pretends to believe that the fish is a real kite. Both are secure and happy. Marriage is a lot like that. My wife knows that I'm really a fish, but she likes my moves, so she doesn't blow my cover.



Sometimes I am working on a painting or drawing thinking that it is a clever image or interesting idea and it occurs to me that I am expressing a thought or abstract concept about something much deeper than the original idea. As I drew "BLIND MAN FEEDING PIGEONS IN THE PARK" I realized that I was drawing more than a clever twist - I was expressing my concerns about "Food for Poland" - Like so many humanitarian efforts, it was legitimately motivated, but the results were uncontrollable, and often misdirected.

Question: Should the blind man stay home and not try to feed the pigeons because they might be monsters?





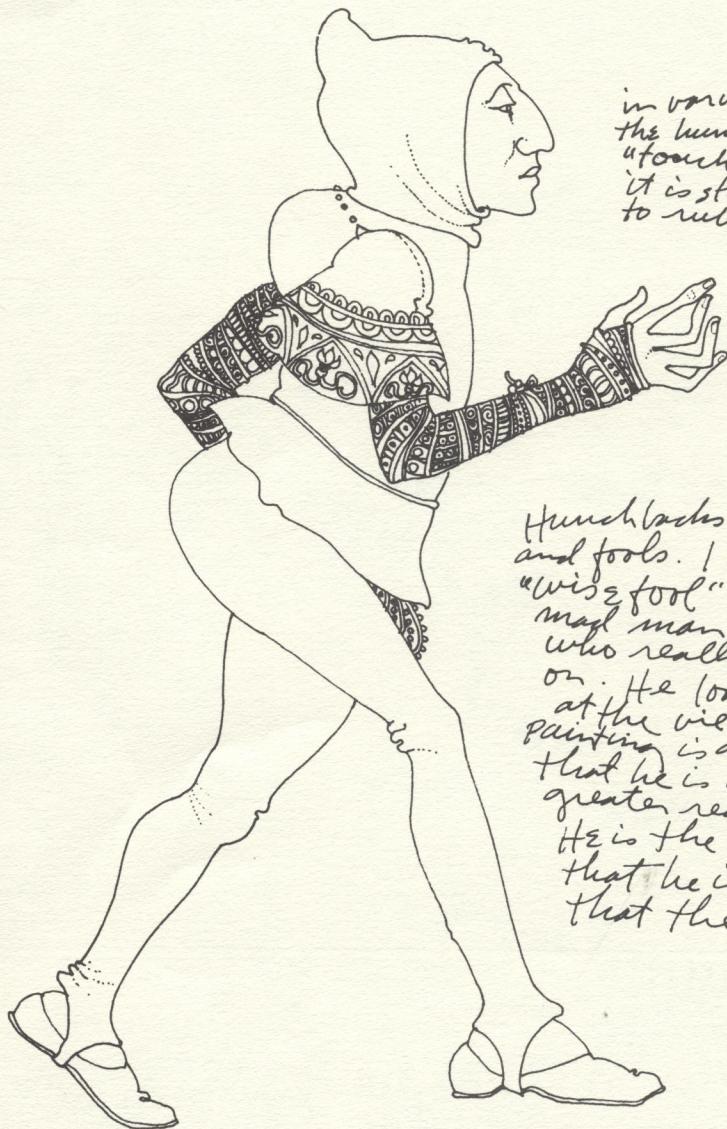
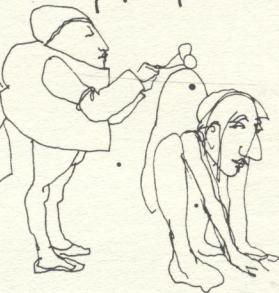
Fishes frequent motifs in my work, but seldom are they in water. A fish floating through a room creates a magical situation. It requires us to redefine or reevaluate our space. They are also interesting "objects" to paint & draw.



prospective hunchback being fitted for a new hump



playing a hunch

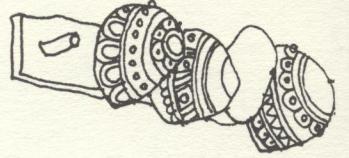


in various primitive cultures the hunchback was considered "touched by the gods" it is still considered good luck to rub a hunchback's hump.

Hunchbacks were often court jesters and fools. I like the image of the "wise fool" the fool on the hill, the mad man who is the only one who really knows what is going on. He looks out of the picture at the viewer as if aware that the painting is a small reality and that he is aware of us and our greater reality.

He is the only player who realizes that he is part of a play and that the stage is not LIFE.

humps for every occasion



detachable humps



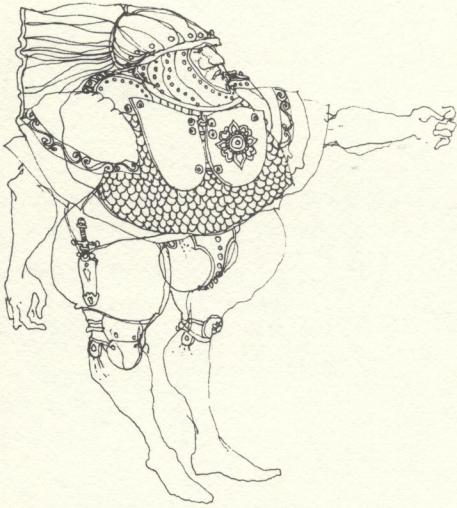
If hunchbacks are considered wise and blessed by the gods it follows that some entrepreneur will come up with the idea of an attachable hump to which will become high fashion - a member of the "inner circle" will have humps for every occasion

DOORS + WINDOWS are passages. They allow us to move thru + see thru walls, barriers. They are obvious symbols for death and revelation. They open the way from one reality to another

Heaven is a beach with warm sand, good surf and lots of tide pools to explore

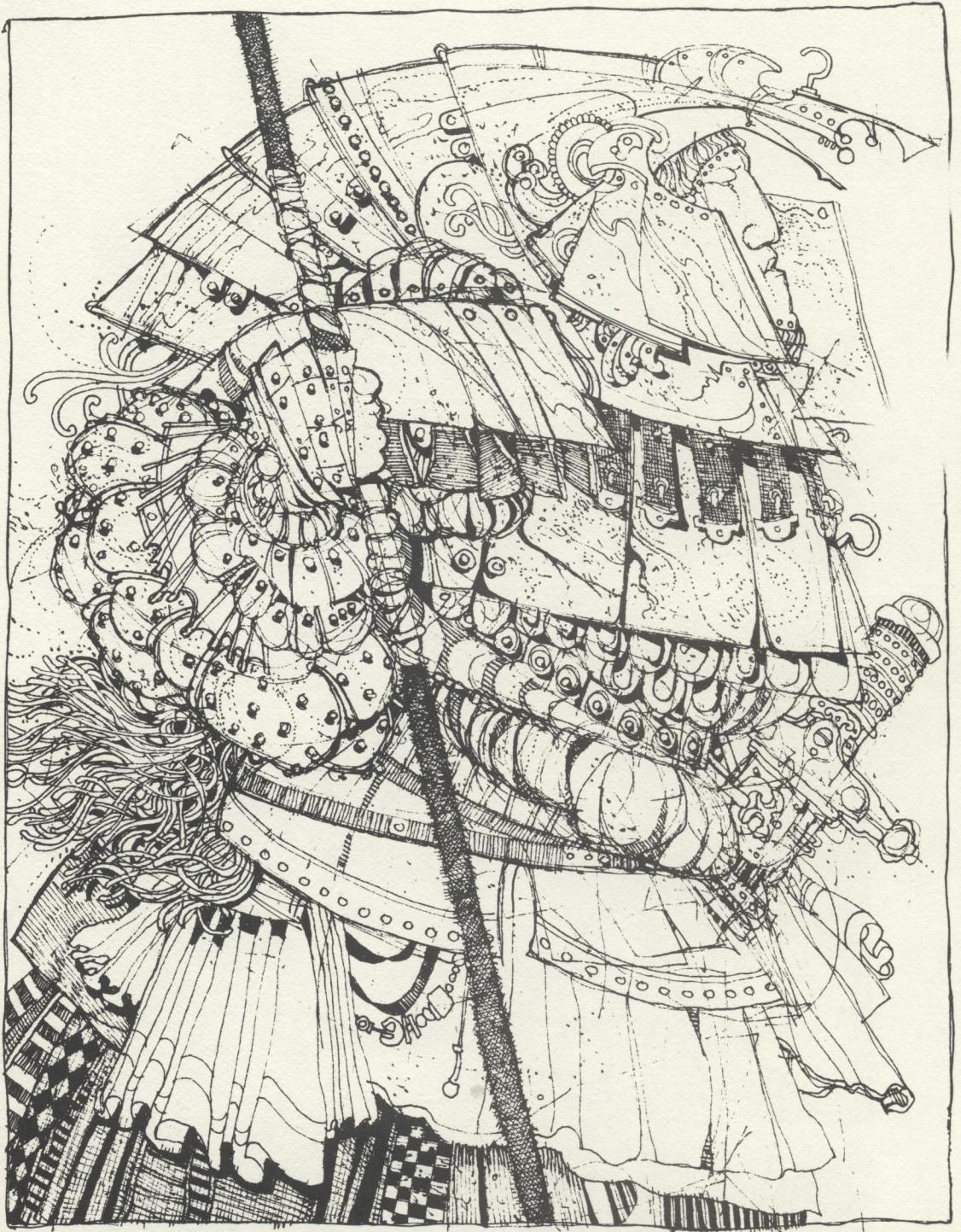


military uniforms offer lots of potential
for mountain detail



merchants

I am constantly enchanted with pattern and detail.
my drawings and paintings are complex and not instantly
obtainable - I want the viewer to spend time - get
involved - and I want him to be rewarded for spending the
time. most of the costumes have roots in historical clothing -
mostly medieval and Renaissance, but thru the sketchbooks
I am developing a "look" that is familiar, but not identifiable
with a certain period.



The ultimate motivation for doing art is not
the content, not the craft, not the structure —
it is simply the joy of doing it.

Christensen 1982



Jan Shipps

PERSONAL VOICES

AN “INSIDE-OUTSIDER” IN ZION

JAN SHIPPS

This article was written at the request of the editors who asked Jan Shipps for a “disciplined reflection” about her life.

AT THE INVITATION of *Sunstone*, I sat down a couple of years ago to write a book review of Samuel Woolley Taylor’s *Rocky Mountain Empire*. As did Topsy, that review just grew and grew until I had nineteen manuscript pages. In the way it compared Sam Taylor’s work with *The Mormon Experience* by Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton, related both works to others in the field, and moved on to make general observations about the topic rather than limited ones about the books being considered, the text read like an essay, not a book review. What was I to do with it? I had written it for *Sunstone*, but it seemed more appropriate for a publication such as the *New York Review of Books*. Should I cut it back or try to get it published as it stood?

Since I was not sure, I decided it would be very helpful to have reactions to my manuscript from my non-Mormon colleagues at that university with the long name where I teach, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis. After circulating it to several colleagues, I was faced with such comments as: “Well, Jan, this is all very interesting, but. But . . . but . . . surely you know that you’ve been wasting your time. You will *never* get anyone to publish nineteen pages about a book by . . . by . . . what’s his name? Sam Taylor. It helps that you go on to deal with Leonard Arrington’s new book [Davis does not yet exist for most non-Mormon scholars; Leonard’s is the only name they are bound to know], but this is an essay, not a book review. There’s simply too much of it to ever get it published. Back to the drawing board.”

JAN SHIPPS is an associate professor of history and religious studies at the Indiana University School of Liberal Arts, and is director of the IUPUI Center for American Studies.

Notwithstanding such collegial caveats, I decided to go ahead and send the nineteen pages to Peggy Fletcher, the editor of *Sunstone*, to get her reaction before I started cutting. So I packed the manuscript up and mailed it off to Salt Lake City, adding a covering note which said, in effect, "Look, honey (I call everybody 'honey'; it's my Southern upbringing), I know that this is much longer than you asked for and that it isn't what you expected me to write. If you don't want it or don't have room to use it, send it back to me and I'll mail it off to Mary Bradford. I'm on her Board of Editors. Maybe she can find a place for it in *Dialogue*."

Peggy's answer, which arrived by return mail, made it clear that the concern of my colleagues about length and my worry about form had both been unnecessary. "We received your excellent essay on Friday in direct response to our prayers," she began. Later in the letter, she added, "Thanks again for the great piece. I would love to see you expand the theme even further and discuss other works in relation to your thesis."

Naturally, I was pleased. I reported this "I want some more" reply to my colleagues, who were as amazed as I was amused. I concluded, however, that I had already spent more time than I should have writing about what other people had written. I needed to turn my attention to other things. So I called Peggy to tell her that she would have to use the essay as it was. She took me at my word, publishing the piece exactly as I had submitted it. Even down to a typographical error or two.

Once upon a time, back before 1965 when my dissertation was finished and distributed by University Microfilms, I wrote things rapidly and easily. I did not always stop to think through all the implications of everything I said. Then, in 1967, I had the sobering experience of opening a University of Utah master's thesis—for the life of me, I can't remember whose it was—to find this (approximately) in the preface: "In her dissertation, Jan Shipps said . . . [something about more Mormons becoming Democrats than Republicans in the 1890s]. One purpose of this thesis is to test that statement." Although it so happened that my assumption had been right, I have never since been able to write rapidly and easily. From this experience I also learned—after all, it was an *unpublished* dissertation to which the thesis writer responded—that, quite apart from any intrinsic merit it might have, what "outsiders" write about Mormonism draws special attention to itself, both within and without the LDS community. This, I concluded, placed a great responsibility on me to weigh carefully everything I said about the Mormons thenceforth.

In the preparation of "Writing about Modern Mormonism: An Essay Review of Samuel W. Taylor's Latest Book, with Some Attention Paid to Other Works on the Same Subject," I had been particularly attentive to what I said and how I said it. I am likewise engaged in the study of modern Mormonism, and I did not want to saddle Sam or Leonard and Davis with my ideas about what Mormonism now is and how it operates in modern life. Therefore, I made every possible effort to remove myself from my argument. But, even so, in some quarters that *Sunstone* essay stirred more disagreement about where I stand with regard to Mormonism than reflection on what I had to say

about the nature of history or consideration of my suggestion—made there explicitly for the first time—that Mormonism has become more than a cult, a sect, a church, or even simply a religious movement; that, in fact, it is a new religious tradition.

Some people, it turned out, were mainly interested to see that I had emphasized the way in which *The Mormon Experience* concentrates almost entirely on the LDS mainstream. In doing that, I was intimating, they said, that nowadays all is not well in many parts of Zion by implying that Mormonism has a negative underside that Davis and Leonard consciously tried to hide. Others complained, not that I was too critical, but that I was much too sanguine about today's LDS culture. Saying that I failed to appreciate the validity of Taylor's pessimistic reading of modern Mormonism and, most especially, faulting me for failing to mention that the chapter on women in *The Mormon Experience* is apologetic, superficial, and far too rosy to ring true, they worried that I had projected a picture of modern Mormonism that is at once too positive and too optimistic.

Sam Taylor went even further. In his inimitable style, he reacted to what I had said about his work by writing to *Sunstone* to suggest that I must be one of the faithful carrying out an assignment to defend the Church against the charge of continuing to encourage, or at least condone, the solemnization of plural marriages after 1890. In implicit verification of my suggestion that his reading of the early twentieth-century situation in Mormondom betrayed his acceptance of a conspiracy theory of history, Taylor's terribly witty, yet totally serious, letter implied that my essay must itself be seen as a part of a great conspiracy that he believes the Church continues to perpetrate in order to obscure the distinction between the Church and the priesthood.

So far-fetched is this idea that it led me to wonder if Taylor's reaction would have been any different if he had known that I spend every Sunday morning sitting in the third pew back from the front on the left-hand side of the First United Methodist Church in Bloomington, Indiana. But eventually I concluded that it would have made no difference whatsoever. Even though I am not a Latter-day Saint, the things I said about Mormon history in my essay guaranteed that Samuel Woolley Taylor would mistakenly see me as a defender of the faith.

Sam is not alone in charging that defense of the church animates my work. When I wrote a piece on Sonia Johnson's excommunication for the *Christian Century*, I suggested that the episode is best seen in the context of heresy trials which, throughout history, have operated to establish and maintain boundaries of acceptable belief and behavior within religious communities. Although I did say that her excommunication was not unexpected and that it was probably inevitable, my approach was purely descriptive and analytical. I did not say that Sonia had done anything wrong, nor did I intimate that she deserved what happened to her. Yet outrage was the reaction many Mormon women had to my article (including, I am told, virtually the entire female membership of the RLDS Church, and another large contingent of LDS women). This once, these sisters apparently agreed with the mostly

liberal Protestant readers of the *Christian Century*, from whom had come many letters indicting me for writing a defense of the actions of the Mormon Church.

Such letters would have puzzled those Latter-day Saints who are convinced deep down that *real* Mormon history can only be written from within and who, as a result, regard what I write as both wrong and antagonistic toward the Church. Some of the members of this group interpreted the editors' decision to publish a Shipps essay on Joseph Smith as the lead article in the first *Journal of Mormon History* issue as an attempt to enhance the professionalism of the LDS historical enterprise by "currying favor with the Gentiles." They wondered about the judgment of those who nominated and elected me to the presidency of the Mormon History Association. The paper I read in Logan on Lucy Mack Smith's *History* they heard as an assault on Brigham Young and the Utah Mormon Church. My presidential address they heard as an attack on Joseph Smith and Mormonism. Jan Shipps, defender of the faith? Not on your life.

Actually, the LDS spectrum has two extremes: active, intense, serious, literal-minded Mormons are located at one end, while active, intense, serious, literal-minded *anti*-Mormons are located at the other. At both of these extremes, people confuse the study of Mormonism with the investigation of its truth claims. To those people I seem to be an enigma. Those at the super Mormon extreme expect that I'll sooner or later turn out to be a closet member of the Modern Microfilm set or an ally of the Ex-Mormons for Jesus; while those at the opposite super *anti*-Mormon extreme are confident that I will fall over into the baptismal font any day now. That I could still be fascinated with the study of Mormonism after more than twenty years without either being an investigator preparing to join the Church or one planning to write an exposé of it, appears to be beyond the comprehension of those who fit into either of these two outermost Mormon categories.

Yet that precisely describes my situation. My consuming interest in Mormonism is obvious to everyone. Once, for example, when Alfred Bush, Fawn Brodie, and I were talking Mormon talk over a leisurely lunch, Fawn turned to Alfred and said in perplexed astonishment, "I just don't understand it. Jan is as fascinated and excited about all this as we are!" Richard Bushman often has said that if he really wants to know what's going on in Zion, he talks to Jan Shipps. In New York for a meeting one time, I spent an afternoon and evening with Robert Flanders and my sister, Sue Parrish. Sue (who went with me to the Canandaigua MHA meeting but knew very little about the Saints before that) listened patiently for hours and hours and, finally, with some exasperation, said to Bob and me, "Don't you two ever talk about anything but Mormonism?" And my husband, whose profound lack of interest in the subject is a mirror image of the intensity of my own, reported one day that in answering a telephone query about where I was—I had an appointment with "my" stake president—he said, "She's off with one of her Mormon friends again." Whereupon the voice at the other end of the line said, "This is Ruth. I'm another one of Jan's Mormon friends. Please tell her to call me."

Tracting missionaries are bewildered when they are invited into our home. Bookshelves look as if they had been filled from the stockroom of the Deseret Book Store. On the wall hangs an elaborately framed reprint of an 1845 broadside that pictures Joseph and Hyrum Smith towering over the Nauvoo temple. The coffee table holds several wonderful antique photograph books of nineteenth-century Salt Lake City, and the Calvin Grondahl cartoon books, copies of *Dialogue*, *Sunstone*, *Exponent II*, *B.Y.U. Studies* and the *Ensign*. It also holds my cup of coffee. How much do I know about Mormonism? Yes, I would still like to know more.

Despite the fascination with Mormonism all this reflects, I have somehow managed to keep truth questions "bracketed out" through all my years of study. To a significant degree, this has been a conscious scholarly strategy adopted to provide me with enough distance to be analytical. But it is not only that. In all honesty, the matter of whether, in some ultimate sense, Latter-day Saints are or are not correct when they bear their formulaic testimonies that "Mormonism is true" is simply not on my agenda of things to try to find out.

Because literal acceptance of the Book of Mormon automatically turns people into Latter-day Saints (whether they join the Church or not), my non-Mormon status makes it obvious that I am not to be counted among the millions for whom the Book of Mormon's content is *prima facie* evidence that the book is precisely what it claims to be. Despite that, however, I do not feel compelled to take a position on the disputed issue of whether Joseph Smith was the author or the translator of this extraordinary work. The content of this basic LDS scripture and the connection between its content and its function within Mormonism are the issues about the Book of Mormon which are of the greatest concern to me.

In like manner, I do not find it necessary to establish a position for myself with regard to the source from which the LDS priesthoods derive their authority. Although I am very much concerned with the process by which that authority established itself, its source is a matter about which empirical evidence has nothing definitive to say. As is the question of how the Book of Mormon came into being, the question of the source of priesthood authority is a faith question which I continue to bracket out of consideration in my work.

My concern with *content*, *function* and *process*, and my stubborn silence on fundamental LDS faith issues sets me apart from many of my "Gentile" compatriots whose work is, at bedrock, dedicated to disproving the "Mormonism is true" proposition. Although my Methodist roots and Methodist commitment locate me squarely in the mainstream of traditional evangelical Christianity, my methodological approach to Mormon studies sets me apart even further from those who pursue the study of LDS history attempting not merely to prove false Mormonism's exclusive claim as the only really legitimate form of Christianity, but to prove their counterclaim that their conservative brand of evangelical Protestantism is the only really legitimate form of Christianity. But by no means has my being set apart from what I call "the

loyal opposition" (all those non-Mormon and alienated Mormon scholars who have theological axes to grind) meant that I have moved over into the opposite camp. I was an outsider in the beginning and, from the standpoint of religious affiliation, I still am.

Yet my adventures as a student of LDS history for more than twenty years have made me something more than an observer. Almost without knowing what was happening until after it had happened, I found myself coming to occupy a sometimes uncomfortable, very often misunderstood, but nonetheless exciting, from time to time even exhilarating, continually gratifying place as an "inside-outsider" in Zion.

My first introduction to the Mormon world came in September 1960, when our family (my husband Tony, our eight-year-old son Stephen, and I) moved to Logan, Utah. Between the spring of 1949, when we married, and that fall when we took up residence in the land of the Latter-day Saints, Tony and I—and after 1952, Tony, Stephen and I—lived in a variety of different places and situations. We lived for a year in Pittsview, Alabama. With a brand-new B.A. from Mercer University, Tony was the principal of a sixty-pupil, twelve-grade school, while I taught piano lessons to practically every child in that tiny Southern town which had altogether three stores, three churches* and a railroad station. We lived for four years in suburban Chicago, where Tony went to graduate school at Northwestern, while I worked for a time selling clothes on weekdays and playing piano in a bar on Saturday nights. (Since Tony always sat at the end of the bar and studied, I felt safe even if the bar was in Chicago.)

In those days, in addition to a meager salary, houseparents in orphanages received room and board. After we discovered this, we left the fleshpots of Evanston to take up the task of overseeing the older girls' unit (ages 10 to 14) at the Methodist Children's Center in Lake Bluff, Illinois. Then, during the six years before our departure for Utah, we lived in Detroit, where Tony taught English at Wayne State University. He finished his dissertation and was awarded a Ph.D. in English literature, and he earned a University of Michigan library degree. At the same time, we were houseparents at Williams House, an Episcopal residential institution for troubled teen-aged girls where I also served as recreation supervisor. With that as background, we went off to Logan so that Tony could become the new assistant librarian at Utah State University.

While he worked—our plan went—I would return to school to work toward a bachelor's degree in history and a teaching certificate. We would move into a house on Hillcrest Avenue and live a more-or-less normal life. This would give Stephen (who, so to speak, was born in an orphanage and who had, to that point, been reared in a home for "pre-delinquent" teen-aged girls) an opportunity to learn what it would be like to live in a single-family dwelling alone with his natural parents.

In some ways, I welcomed this change in the character of our lives. While working with troubled teen-agers had been a happy occupation for me, and

while I had grown so attached to the girls who lived with us that it was difficult to leave Detroit, deep down I am not a city person. After all those years around Chicago and living in the central part of the Motor City, I was beginning to develop a homesickness for life in a town. Although I realized that Logan was a Western rather than a Southern or Midwestern town, I looked forward to a life there that would closely approximate life in Alabama and Georgia or Illinois towns of similar size.

When I first discovered that living in this provincial Utah town was not as much like living in medium-sized towns in the South or the Midwest as I had anticipated, I concluded that the presence of the university was the main difference. Little by little, however, I learned that the dissimilarity was not to be so easily explained. As Logan started to appear to me more and more as one of those "twilight zone" towns where, without any reasonable way to account for it, everything seemed to be ever-so-slightly out of kilter, I realized that a persuasive explanation for the difference would have to be at once more subtle and more fundamental.

Although I went to live in Logan with preconceived notions of what everyday life would be like, I was not sure of what to expect at Utah State. Since superannuated students were campus rarities in 1960, I remember being afraid that I would feel out of place because of my "ten o'clock scholar" status, but that is about all. In the town, I realized very quickly that I perceived the world in one fashion and that most of the people around me perceived the world in quite another way. But in my life as student I had to reorient myself so that I could function in a scholastic universe which demands openness and alters understandings as a matter of course. For that reason it took me longer to realize that Utah State was as much a part of the "twilight zone" world as Logan was, and this delay acted as a cushion so that I did not suffer the same intense "culture shock" that many outsiders do when they are, as a Methodist minister friend from Idaho Falls described it, "dropped down in the middle of LDS culture and have to learn to survive."

As I registered for the fall quarter at Utah State, it simply never occurred to me that the next nine months would make such an enormous difference in my life. My going back to school had been more Tony's idea than my own. Trying now to reconstruct the situation, I can recall only that when I started, my main concern was the dispatch with which I could complete a degree and get a teaching certificate that would let me teach in the public schools. In and around stints of teaching the fourth grade in an Alabama mill town *sans* teaching certificate, and teaching piano at the Georgia Academy for the Blind before I was married, I had completed a little more than two years of college-level work as a music major at the Alabama and Georgia colleges for women at Montevallo and Milledgeville. But I did not want to go back to the study of music. Para-professional social work proved so satisfying to me that I started to find people in the midst of life far more interesting than life reflected through the art of piano performance. I wanted to change my major not only for the very practical reason that it is difficult to go back to the study of music after a twelve-year hiatus, but because I wanted to learn about people.

That I chose to change my major from music to history, rather than to sociology or psychology, was an entirely pragmatic decision, however. A required freshman “western civ” course at Alabama College meant that I had more credit hours in history than in any other subject than music. If I majored in history, carried course overloads every quarter, completed some courses by correspondence and others by examination—and if I worked very hard—it would just barely be possible for me to earn a baccalaureate in a single academic year. So, naturally, I majored in history.

History students often matriculate at colleges and universities where knowledgeable faculties offer specialized courses in their specialized history interests. When the interest is colonial history, for example, an institution in New England is often the student’s choice; when a student is mainly interested in the American Civil War, an institution in Virginia or some other more Southern state is selected; when the interest is Mormon history, a student generally decides to go to school in Utah. As the circumstances of my going back to school suggest, interest in Mormon history did not account for my choosing to attend Utah State. In fact, as far as I know—and I have thought about it a lot—I had never known a Latter-day Saint personally before we left for Utah. Although George Romney was the governor of Michigan when we lived there, newspaper coverage guaranteeing that everyone knew the state’s chief executive was an “active Mormon” made little impression on me because I thought that being an “active Mormon” was pretty much analogous to being a “good Presbyterian” or, perhaps, a “devout Catholic.” I reached the Great Basin not even knowing who Joseph Smith was. I knew Brigham Young’s name and vaguely remembered learning about the practice of polygamy in a high school history class. But what I knew about Mormonism when I started back to school at Utah State was limited to the knowledge one could gain from reading news magazines and the *Reader’s Digest*.

If I had practically no knowledge of the subject in the fall of 1960, the same could not be said about what I knew about Mormonism in the spring of 1961. Nowadays, I am told, studying history at USU is not unlike studying history at any large state university; it is not a particularly provincial enterprise. There might be an understandable emphasis on the history of Utah and the West, but the history of the rest of the world does not get short shrift. When I majored in history at USU in 1960–1961, however, it turned out that, for all practical purposes, I majored in the study of the LDS past.

And I did so without taking the courses offered by Professors Leonard Arrington and S. George Ellsworth. Nineteen Sixty through Nineteen Sixty-One was one of the very last years in which Professor Joel Ricks taught his famous Western History course which cast all Mormon history in Frederick

*All three churches were served by itinerant ministers. Everyone in town went to the Baptist Church on the first Sunday of each month, to the Episcopal Church on the second Sunday, back to the Baptist Church on the third Sunday, and to the Methodist Church on the fourth Sunday; if a month had a fifth Sunday, everyone stayed home.

Jackson Turner's mold. Professor J. Duncan Brite was still there, teaching young Utahans about the "Renaissance and Reformation" by making more or less constant "just like the Mormons" comparisons as he described the actions of medieval Roman Catholics. The new "A.B.D." Stanford Cazier, in his first year of teaching after finishing graduate school at Wisconsin, taught the Civil War course, hardly managing to get to Fort Sumter, much less Appomattox, because the class spent so much time discussing the Utah War in the context of the causes of the larger and grander one that followed it. The knowledgeable Dr. Everett L. Cooley, who taught full-time for only that one year, offered the required methods course for history majors, properly insisting that students work with primary source materials, thereby mandating that research papers be written on LDS topics.

In addition to study in my major department, I took a sociology course in which nearly every example touched in one way or another on Mormon society. Several of my professors of education likewise drew on local culture in finding "for instances" to illustrate useful teaching methods. And then there was practice teaching: Having come to Utah with no knowledge of LDS history and having lived in Logan less than three months, I hurried down to the high school on the day when practice-teaching assignments were given out for the second quarter and found out that I would be teaching nineteenth-century Utah history.

How much did I know about the Mormons? I desperately needed to know more.

People frequently ask me why I keep on "keeping on" with the study of Mormonism. For a long time I was not quite sure how to answer. I have just about concluded, however, that the best explanation is the fact that I knew nothing at all about Mormonism when we moved to Logan and then, all at once, I was confronted with it from the intellectual, religious and cultural standpoints simultaneously.

Many people (both Mormon and non-Mormon) assume that all historians of Mormonism grow up in stereotypically active LDS families. Although this is a mistaken assumption, it is true that, whether they would have to be classified at the "super Mormon" end of the spectrum or the "super anti-Mormon" end, or somewhere in between, historians of Mormonism are generally people whose initial acquaintance with the Saints came either in a religious or a cultural context. Or both. There are exceptions, of course, but most serious students of Mormon history tend to be people born into the Mormon world or people who became a part of that world through conversion, or near-conversion. Or else they are people who came to know it as outsiders living in an LDS culture region. The exceptions are scholars, necessarily non-Mormons, whose life experiences did not include close contact with Latter-day Saints before they commenced their Mormon studies, i.e., historians whose first encounters with Mormonism were intellectual rather than religious-cultural.

These differences in the context of first encounters lead to different perceptions. Met primarily intellectually, Mormonism appears all too often abstracted from life as an unusually complex theological system imposed on the Saints, who, as rational creatures, engage in actions following logically from the theological tenets that make up the system. When it is encountered as a religious institution, complete with scriptural base, doctrinal rigor, ritual form and clearly defined roles for Latter-day Saints from the bottom to the very top, Mormonism seems more than anything else a strong, healthy, self-sufficient organization whose structure and mode of operation are determined by an elaborate set of rules enforced from the top down. Experienced as a culture, however, Mormonism is not as organized and systematized, logical and amenable to rational comprehension as it looks from the outside. Because it provides both religious and cultural identity, and thus serves as the ground of being for a whole people, an ambiguity inheres in Mormonism that blurs its institutional edges to allow the richness and diversity of the multi-dimensional LDS world to show through.

That ambiguity was revealed to me in dramatic ways during the year we lived in Logan. Sometimes in the course of a single week I might listen to a rhapsodic lecture on the courage and ingenuity of the LDS pioneers ("Just look at those mountains they had to cross to get up to Bear Lake!"); be involved in a discussion about the Mormons and the blacks in a sociology class (black football players dating white girls made this a "hot" issue at USU in 1960); read a section of *Great Basin Kingdom* ("the" book to read that year); be visited by stake missionaries (they came practically every Wednesday night); go with Tony and Stephen to the public library (where *The True Story of Short Creek, Arizona* was shelved in the fiction section, and where *No Man Knows My History* and Juanita Brooks' new *Mountain Meadows Massacre* were kept with the sex manuals behind the desk); stand in a supermarket line (to notice a checker looking askance at the person in front of me who was buying coffee, and hearing that person say something about "company coming"); be invited to a dinner party given by a part of the "jack-Mormon" contingent of the USU faculty (which would be complete with bourbon, ginger ale and conversation about what the Church was like in President Heber J. Grant's day); make an offhand remark to the class I was practice teaching about Charles C. Rich having been one of the most married men in the Church, only to have a class member say "That's my grandpa" (then to realize that the same statement could likely have been made in a multiplicity of seventh-grade classes in Utah); and travel to Salt Lake City to do some research in the genealogy library for my methods class research paper (to find there so many people trying to trace their families that I could only record needed information by bracing my notecards up against the wall).

In addition to the *Great Basin Kingdom*, moreover, I read a variety of other works about Mormonism: Virginia Sorensen's *A Little Lower than the Angels*; the histories of Utah by Neff and Creer; Ray B. West's *Kingdom of the Saints*; a good proportion of the documentary *History of the Church*, edited by B. H. Roberts; Fawn Brodie's *No Man Knows My History*; Milton R. Hunter's *Brigham*

Young, the Colonizer; Fanny Stenhouse's *Tell It All*; *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* by Juanita Brooks; *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder* by LeGrand Richards; and *The Truth about the Mormons* by C. Sheridan Jones.

Separately, I found my many encounters with Mormonism perfectly intelligible. But when I tried to integrate what I saw and heard with what I read, the various bits of Mormoniana which I experienced and all the diverse historical interpretations rattling around in my head combined to produce a view that is probably best described as kaleidoscopic. The enigma that I seem to be to those who fail to comprehend how I can continue to study Mormonism with such intensity without being "fur 'em or agin 'em" is nothing compared to the enigma that Mormonism itself was to me at the end of a year of living and going to school in Logan.

Because Tony is not only the world's best librarian, but a gentleman and a *scholar* as well, he needs to work in a library with a very good book collection. For reasons mainly connected with the character and size of the library at Utah State in the early sixties, our family joined in the giant academic musical chairs game then in progress. As soon as the end of June commencement gave the signal, we changed places, moving across the mountains to Boulder, Colorado. There Tony went to work in the university library and, because the teaching certificate which—along with a bachelor's degree—I had earned in Utah was not valid in Colorado, I went back to school.

To qualify for a Colorado teacher's certificate, I had a choice of earning thirty more education credit hours or completing a master's degree in a subject area. I elected the latter and entered the M.A. program in the history department at the University of Colorado. Here again, I concentrated on the study of Mormon history. But this time the concentration was not merely happenstance. My departure from Zion had seen me as a Gentile still, but as one with a passionate desire to find a way to transform my kaleidoscopic vision of Mormonism into one which was integrated so that nothing would be left out and all the pieces would fit together properly. Writing seminar papers on LDS topics and doing a thesis on Mormon history under the direction of distinguished professors would, I thought, make it possible for me to find a satisfactory framework in which to advance a sufficient explanation to account for what then seemed to me the mysterious Mormon phenomenon.

So naive was that expectation that, as I look back, it seems almost laughable. Instead of finding a means of comprehending Mormonism, as I worked for my M.A., I found its astonishing complexity being revealed in all its fullness while I searched for information about the Mormons and the blacks for "Second-class Saints," a paper which became my first published article and for my thesis on "The Mormons in Politics, 1839–1844." In Logan I had discovered Utah Mormonism; the next year, my problem of fitting things together and making sense of Mormonism grew infinitely more complicated when I discovered that the multi-dimensionality of Utah Mormonism was paralleled by a multi-dimensional *Reorganization* of Latter ("eliminate the hyphen, make sure the "D" is uppercase") Day Saints.

How much did I know about the Mormons? The more I learned, the less I really knew.

The efforts I made to fill lacunae in my store of knowledge about the Latter-day and Latter Day Saints varied in intensity across the next dozen busy years. During that time I completed a Ph.D. in history (an unanticipated university fellowship at CU made me abandon my plan to seek a high school teaching position); worked as a research assistant for the University of Utah Press (on its abortive Reed Smoot diary project); taught part-time at the University of Colorado's Denver extension (now CU, Denver); served as a project coordinator (read that glorified secretary) at the Institute for Sex Research at Indiana University; and, at the conclusion of that unlikely episode in this pretty straight lady's existence, started to teach again, this time at Indiana University—Purdue University at Indianapolis.

In the first years of my doctoral work, history in general, the excitement of doing it, and the necessity of learning enough to become one of Clio's licensed practitioners meant an end to any idea I might have entertained about continuing to concentrate on the history of the Saints. While I chose to expand my study of the Mormons in politics when the time for selecting a dissertation topic came, by then I was so committed to the virtues of comparative history that I sandwiched my LDS research in with continued reading about the Puritans, Anglicans and Quakers in the American colonies; the Methodist "revolution" in England; the American Civil War; the politics of Progressivism; and so on. Rather than satisfying my curiosity about the Saints, completion of my dissertation whetted my interest in the Mormon past. But the overwhelming task of preparing history lectures for the first time and, after a family move to the Midwest, the tension connected with working at the "Kinsey" Institute—where the reading I was asked to do in connection with my work was about sociology, psychology, survey research and sex—meant that I found it hard to even keep up with what other people were writing on Mormon topics. Re-entry into the classroom and association with working historians at IUPUI was so invigorating, however, that my enthusiasm for research returned. As a result, I set to work on a time-consuming, full-scale study of American attitudes toward the Mormons between 1860 and 1960 and worked on it at such a feverish pace that I was able to report its results at the 1973 annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians in a paper with the descriptive title "From Satyr to Saint."

During much of this, for me, crucial period, getting my bearings with regard to the Mormon world seemed far less important than reorienting myself so that I could function in the academic world I had somewhat inadvertently entered. I had to struggle to learn to live as a woman with professional credentials in a high-powered academic environment without being transformed, on the one hand, into a person I did not like, or being consumed, on the other, by the practical difficulties and personal complications that are all a part of being at one and the same time a wife, a mother, and a scholar. Because I went off to college at age fifteen, my childhood and adolescence

passed too quickly to allow very much time for me to wonder just who I was and what I wanted to be. Now I had an identity crisis to deal with. Or at least I suspect that is what it was since the whole painful process was made much easier when the matter of whether I was mainly Mrs. Shipps, one-half of a corporate personality known by Tony's name, or just Jan, a person in my own right, was settled by my mainly being Stephen's mother. The identities Tony and I had in those years, whatever they might have been, were engulfed by an identity which was entirely rooted, as they say, in our biological fate. More and more, as time went on, we were simply the parents of a gifted young violinist whose picture also appeared regularly on the sports pages of the local newspapers in connection with his tennis exploits.

Our family's move from Colorado had been undertaken so that Tony could become the Librarian for English at Indiana University, a position precisely suited to his training and scholarly predilections. By accident more than design, the move was a perfect one from the standpoint of Stephen's musical training, as well. To understate the initial situation considerably, however, our move left me at loose ends. I could find no teaching job within commuting distance and had, therefore, no ready-made collegial circle with whom to share my interest in history—Mormon history or any other kind. My working at the Sex Institute let us send Stephen to New York to study and, incidentally, it taught me a great deal about research design, but it certainly was not work that did much for me as a student of LDS history. What I did in the Mormon studies area while working there, I did alone. And even after my return to LDS research with such renewed intensity after I started teaching at IUPUI, I worked at very long range from the Mormon community.

The seclusion in which my studies of Mormonism were carried out after we moved to Indiana was a change of degree rather than kind. From the beginning, my Mormon history *modus operandi* was long periods of preparation for trips to Utah or elsewhere to do research, liberal use of copy machines and other forms of rapid recording of information during my working time in archival repositories, and extended periods of study of the materials thus obtained before returning for more research. This procedure meant that, even as a graduate student, I pursued my investigations in virtual isolation from real live Latter-day Saints, Latter Day Saints, and Mormon culture. During research trips, at meetings of the Utah State Historical Society and at Stan Kimball's grand bash celebrating the opening (in 1968) of the SIU Edwardsville collection of source materials about the Mormons in Illinois, I had precious opportunities to visit with other scholars working on LDS history. But for the most part, during the twelve years after I commenced work on my doctorate, my encounters with Mormonism were limited to meetings with the Saints on the handwritten and the printed page. After the experiential religio-cultural Logan encounter and its immediate aftermath, I retreated to the abstractions of the intellectual arena.

Probably for that reason, although it was not a conscious decision, I set aside my search for an explanatory framework within which all Mormonism's disparate elements could be reconciled. Instead, working much of the time in

the primary sources, I set out to learn for myself about the Mormon past. Ranging all across the LDS experience, I read what the Saints themselves said as Mormon history unfolded. Often it was possible for me only to sample the richness of the sources, even back in the days when the best collection available to scholars was the one in John James's shop at the Utah State Historical Society. But there were times when I was able to do more than sample and spot check, as when I worked for months with Reed Smoot's diary. And, although Stanley P. Hirschson was surely wrong when he said that the real sources for Mormon history were located in New York City, a surprising amount of LDS source material is available in print. I read and read and read. I filled file drawers with materials, bought books, and, in Bloomington, made so many library requests for LDS book purchases that once when Mike Quinn came through, and I took him over to see the Mormon section at the Indiana University Library, he said that it was better than the general Mormon collection at Yale.

From this "data base" I drew information enough to write a narrative account of the Mormons in politics during the first hundred years. In addition, it provided information for me to write enough papers, articles and book reviews for people to begin to wonder who I was. Notwithstanding this name recognition, I could hardly have been described as an inhabitant, much less an insider, of the Mormon world, as was made very clear in the remark made by Bloomington Stake President Hollis Johnson upon first meeting me in the fall of 1973. "I thought you were a pseudonym," he said.

How much did I know about the Mormons? Perhaps almost as much as it is possible to know if one is still standing on the outside looking in.

When the John Whitmer Historical Association met in Nauvoo that same fall (1973), my "Prophet Puzzle" paper was the main part of the program. After I had read the paper and the session had been dismissed, I went with a friend into the bright sunshine on that beautiful historic point along the river. We talked a bit about the way people had responded to my paper. Then suddenly he turned to look straight at me and said, "Jan, you are a challenge to us all. How can you know so much and not believe?"

He was completely serious. Of that I have no doubt. I have had too many similar walks and talks with too many dear friends in too many Mormon pilgrimage places not to miss the entrance of a missionary tone into a conversation. Yet as he spoke, a twinkle came into his eye and a welcome into his voice which let me know that it was not absolutely necessary for me to become a Mormon to be a part of Mormondom. I could still be a Gentile and not have to stay outside. A common interest in the Mormon past established a communal bond which was serving as the passageway inviting me to become an "inside-outsider" in Zion.

I hesitated because I felt intuitively that becoming an "inside-outsider" in a world belonging to another people is something more than a limited fieldwork exercise with a beginning and an end or a clearly defined project using participant observation techniques. Those research methods allow

investigators to remain detached from the objects of their investigations. An "inside-outsider" surrenders that detachment, giving up the emotional as well as professional safety of the so-called "objective approach" in exchange for the ambiguity and uncertainty that comes with being "in but not of" a strange universe. Even when the exterior of the new world seems reassuringly familiar, this is risky business because it can lead to disorientation and almost surely to misunderstanding. The insiders who allow an outsider to enter also take risks since "inside-outsiders" occupy a platform from which to speak that hardly can be gainsaid. Having stopped standing on the outside looking in, I have to live, for example, with the inevitable descriptions of Jan Shipps as the "Thomas L. Kane of the twentieth century" and the just as inevitable descriptions of me as a "potential Fanny Stenhouse." But, in turn, the Saints have to put up with my observations published in newspapers and news-magazines about everything from the significance of Mark Hofmann's latest find to the long-range future of the LDS Church.*

Because the process of conversion is such an interior one, sometimes it is very difficult to determine exactly when an investigator stops being a "golden" Gentile and starts being a Mormon. As far as conversion is concerned, however, the community has a means of knowing where people stand because baptism is the symbolic line of division between the outside and the inside. Giving up an outsider's detachment is also an interior process. But in spite of Jim Allen's threat to baptize me in a giant pot of coffee, the fact is that no comparable ceremony exists to signify a change in status that is not so clear-cut.

A sign not at all like baptism first marked my having left the observation platform. In the spring of 1973 I was informed that I had been elected to the MHA Council, the governing body of the Mormon History Association, in a friendly letter of notification which started out "Dear Jan," expressed gratitude to me, and conveyed the message that the association was pleased to find a non-Mormon who was willing to serve. When I received a letter outlining the agenda for a forthcoming council meeting the next fall, however, at its head were the words "Dear Brethren." As it quite obviously did not refer to my physical characteristics, I took this salutation to be an inadvertent announcement of a change in my position vis-à-vis the Saints.

Among more subtle and more significant signals of what was happening were: my being welcomed into rump sessions at professional history meetings where "Brighamites" and "Josephites" sat on beds and floors in cramped hotel rooms and talked together into the small hours of the night; my sharing with Paul Edwards and Doug Alder an early morning walk through the deserted streets of Nauvoo in the tension-filled aftershock of the explosion ignited by Reed Durham's dramatic detailing of the connections between

*When news stories about the Saints need to be set in context for the general public, reporters hunt up "outside-insiders," as well as "inside-outsiders." This may help to explain why the national media seems to find the opinions and explanations of persons like Sterling McMurrin or the late Fawn Brodie of greater interest than the opinions and explanations of LDS ecclesiastical authorities.

Mormonism and Masonry; my being invited not only to attend but to speak at a Southern Indiana Stake priesthood leadership meeting; my going to dinner on a Monday with Leonard and Grace and having the privilege of participating in an Arrington family home evening that transcended Mormon-Gentile differences; my strolling on a sun-drenched October day in Temple Square at conference time and, upon seeing a counselor in “our” stake presidency standing near a door of the Tabernacle, experiencing the wonderful warm feeling of being greeted in that place by a “brother” from back home (actually this was Uwe Hansen, Klaus’s brother); my being introduced to an LDS General Authority as “the Beloved Gentile” by “my” stake president; and my sitting in the holy stillness of the Kirtland Temple on a historic Sunday morning, listening to a Latter Day Saint and a Latter-day Saint reading antiphonally the prophet’s magnificent 1835 dedicatory prayer, hearing a brass band playing “The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning,” and knowing full well thereafter what scholars mean when they speak of sacred space. But these were all by and large private signs notifying me that Zion was no longer foreign land; they were not the symbolic signals that could alert others to what was going on. And consequently, my continuing presence in Mormonism started to really become a mystery to many people.

Upon reflection, I have concluded that if this is a mystery, the best solution to it lies in a clear delineation of the Saint-making process and the realization that only a part of this procedure was at work in my case. Non-Mormons become Mormons when they respond to Mormonism’s fundamental truth claims by taking the Book of Mormon at face value and accepting the exclusive authority of the Restored Priesthood. They enter the Mormon world through the mediation of gathered communities. Because these two things frequently occur either imperceptibly, as in the case of birthright Mormons, or simultaneously, as in the case of converts who successfully negotiate the transition from outside to inside, they are usually thought of together as a single process. A recognition that the two are separable, that only the second happened with me, and that I entered the Mormon world primarily through the mediation of the Mormon History Association goes a long way toward explaining what once, in an obvious word play on the title of my “Prophet Puzzle” article, someone once spoke of as “the Jan Shipps riddle.”

As a “gathered community” serving to usher an outsider into Mormonism, the Mormon History Association is not unlike an LDS ward or an RLDS congregation in the way it functions to “fellowship” one in. But because the association was formed to foster scholarly research and publication and to promote fellowship and communication among scholars, and because history *as a scholarly discipline* treats humanity’s perception of divinity’s dealings with it while history *as sacred story* treats God’s dealings with mankind more directly, the certainty is missing in the association which, in ward and congregation, inheres in doctrine. Indeed, the organization’s diversity—its membership includes scholars and “buffs” from every conceivable point on both LDS and RLDS spectra and a good many points beyond—militates against the promulgation of doctrinal positions and unitary visions of the

LDS past. Although disestablishing orthodox understandings of what happened in Kirtland, Nauvoo, and elsewhere is not the association's intent, it becomes crystal clear in MHA sessions wherein several scholars discuss a topic from different perspectives that, even as they work with precisely the same data, the manner in which scholars reconstruct the past depends very much on their particular angles of vision. That clarity creates an exhilarating atmosphere of openness that generates its own experiential community, a community which brings all sorts of Saints together, allowing members of the Reorganization to comprehend the complexities in Utah Mormonism, making it possible for Latter-day Saints to understand the RLDS form of Mormonism and permitting this Gentile, at least, to make some sense of both.

From the organization's beginning in 1965, its leadership has always been aware of the potential for tendentiousness surrounding the forum the MHA provides for discussions of the Mormon past. Therefore, encouraging adherence to the strictest canons of history, seeking out responsible officers, Council, and committee members and working for balance have been the association's guiding principles. So consistently applied that the MHA has earned the respect and sometimes even the envy of the historical profession, these principles when translated into action mean RLDS commentators for papers presented by Latter-day Saints; LDS commentators for papers presented by members of the RLDS group; active/orthodox Mormon commentary for papers presented by jack-Mormons and Gentiles, *et cetera*. Working for balance means broad-based representation on committees and Council and among the officers and, more than that, so much symbolic program participation that it often appears that a formula exists, one somewhat like the one covering federal offices in the early days of Utah statehood, requiring every MHA program to have one RLDS, one Gentile, and two Utah Mormon participants.

In a different situation this might be called "tokenism." And perhaps to some extent it is. But tokenism is an empty gesture because it results from reluctant compliance with either real or perceived pressure. Here such pressure has never really been a problem. The nominations to positions as officers, Council members, or committee members of, say, Bill Russell, Mel Smith, Barbara Higdon, Chas Peterson, Richard Howard, Dean Jessee, Larry Foster, Ken Godfrey, Dick Poll, Milt Backman, Alfred Bush and almost all the others were made because it was expected that they would serve effectively and (as I was involved in much of the selecting as well as being selected, I can add) because they were representatives of the MHA in the Midwest, along the Wasatch Front, or the "outside;" or they represented groups of active Saints or inactive Saints; historians working in some capacity for the LDS Church or the RLDS Church or historians who would never even consider working for either one. And so on. Instead of "tokenism," informal representation of various constituencies with the organization has always been the unwritten rule in the MHA.

All these constituencies reflect sub-groupings in the larger LDS and RLDS cultures. For that reason, my election to the MHA Council brought my years of studying Mormonism in isolation from the Saints to an end. Almost before

I knew it, I was plunged back into the ambiguity of the Mormon world as experienced.

At first it felt a bit like being back in Logan. (No doubt, although I barely knew Doug and, before they came, knew the rest of the family not at all, this was partially due to the happy coincidence that the Alders—Doug and Elaine, plus Scott, Elise, Nathan, and Linden—came to Indiana in 1973 so that Doug could spend a sabbatical year at the university. Inevitably, because Doug is Doug, I was drawn into the local LDS community.) But it was soon apparent that there was a dramatic difference between living in a Mormon environment as a student at Utah State University and knowing the Mormon world through being active in the Mormon History Association. Things now were so much more complicated. And, instead of being a casual observer, I was standing, to use an expression of my mother's, "smack-dab in the middle." In addition to becoming reacquainted with all the sensitivities and intricate intramural LDS relationships I had first known in Cache Valley a dozen years before, I likewise had to learn about the sensitivities and intricate intramural relationships in the Reorganization. Moreover, as I started to fulfill my first MHA assignment, which was helping to plan the MHA Nauvoo annual meeting program, I also discovered that I needed to study very closely the super-sensitivities and intricate intramural relationships developing among all the various historians of Mormonism.

When the program committee met, I ventured the suggestion that since a good deal was known about the political, social, and economic aspects of Illinois Mormonism, a paper on worship in Nauvoo could be the high point of the program, especially if it could be read at the temple site. The very mixed response this suggestion received made it evident to me that there was a lot more to the distinction between Latter-day Saints and Latter Day Saints than the belief of the "Brighamites" that Joseph Smith introduced polygamy and the belief of the "Josephites" that Brigham Young did.

As I look back, I can see that my own response to an event which centered around that very distinction was a turning point for me, marking the close of a period of transition that brought this outsider into full participation in the Mormon History Association and, by extension, established her peculiar place in Mormondom.

On the morning after the Mormon History Association's 1975 annual meeting in Provo, we all got up very early and drove up to Heber City for the traditional MHA Sunday morning gathering, held this time in the partially-restored tabernacle there. The site was interesting; the day as pristinely beautiful as only days in the Utah mountains can be; but the hour was early and the program, which consisted of a readers' theatre presentation of selections from early Mormon diaries, was very long. As I sat there feeling very much at home with Tom and Marilyn Alexander on one side and Jim and Renée Allen on the other, my thoughts wandered away from what was happening onstage to how Tom's extraordinary presidential address the night before (on "Wilford Woodruff and the Changing Nature of the Mormon Religious Experience") had made the spiritual dimension of Mormonism

more accessible to me than it ever had been. I thought, too, about the conversation with the Allens and the Alexanders as we drove to Heber City. I admitted to them that I am sometimes embarrassed when I forget and am the only one chiming in with audible "Amens" at the end of Methodist prayers, which led Marilyn to tell me, "You are so much like us that it's hard to believe you're not a Mormon."

Musing, thus, I realized only vaguely that an attractive young woman on the stage had started to read from the diary of Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightener, one of Joseph Smith's plural wives. The inappropriateness of that choice of text for that setting was immediately understood by others, I was told. But the impact of the suggestively endearing words about the prophet read by that young reader on many of the people sitting there simply did not occur to me until its counterpoint suddenly thundered forth from somewhere behind me: "I will not sit here and hear a good man defamed," a furious voice uttered loudly, as its owner virtually lifted his companion from the seat beside him, and the two strode angrily out the tabernacle door.

As a student of Mormon history and Mormon culture, I should have been fascinated by this occasion which drew deeply held beliefs and feelings out into the open. And naturally I was. But no amount of intellectual fascination or excitement at being at the scene when something historic happened could account for the tears which welled up in my eyes and started streaming down my face. Things at MHA meetings had touched me before. For instance, I was aware that a very special event was taking place when we all stood in the rain at Haun's Mill in the spring of 1972 listening to Alma Blair's evocative account of the terrible tragedy that gave that place its significance, and I could almost feel his poetic picturing of that terrible time bringing the Saints together. Nearly always, too, when I heard the testimonies of faith and friendship at the close of MHA meetings, I would get all choked up. But those were things that strengthened the fabric of the MHA, infusing meaning into the professional history enterprise. The event in Heber City tore at that delicate fabric with enough force to let us see just how fragile were the threads holding the association together. At the time, I was not certain why I was so upset. Now I know that, just as I would be surprised by joy years later when the revelation about the blacks was announced, as a nearly full-fledged member of the community, I was close enough to feel the pain.

When I first met Paul Edwards I was intimidated. His lineage, his bearing, and his skill in argumentation—deriving in part from his training as a philosopher—made conversations with him a real challenge. Our mutual interests in the history of Mormonism and the phenomenology of religion drew us together, however, so that whenever the opportunity presented itself, we talked and talked and talked. After our extended periodic discussions had been going on for a year or two, in the midst of one of those spontaneous soirées held in some hotel room at some history meeting somewhere, Paul heard me out as I talked about the Mormon prophet and the "Great Chain of

Being." Then he said, "Jan, every time we talk you have a different theory to account for Mormonism."

In everyday life Mormons have no need for theoretical models or sophisticated conceptual frameworks to understand Mormonism. They know that theirs is the Restored Gospel and the Only True Church, reestablished on the earth under the leadership of a prophet in these, the latter days, the new "Dispensation of the Fulness of Times." But unless suitable analogues are found to enable non-Mormons to make sense of the Restoration Movement, avoiding misconceptions and misunderstandings is almost impossible. If Paul's perceptive Edwardean observation overstated somewhat the rapidity with which I had moved from one theoretical model to the next in my extended search for adequate analogies, it nevertheless captured the essence of my efforts to deal with my ever-expanding amount of information by searching for a conceptual framework to fit my body of Mormon data without leaving any significant part unexplained.

Because socio-political and politico-economic explanations were advanced in the early sixties in the field of history to account for just about everything that ever happened in the past, I started out in Mormon history using more or less secular models, picturing Mormonism as a social movement, an economic movement, a political movement. Notwithstanding the conclusion in my master's thesis, however—that the major factor behind the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith was politics and my suggestion in "Second-class Saints" that economic factors figured prominently in the receding importance of abolitionist sentiment in Mormonism—from the beginning of my search for analogues, I drew very heavily on what I knew about religion.

In Logan that first year I kept asking myself whether Mormonism was a cult or a sect or a denomination, even though this was a question I could not have answered since the work of such scholars as Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch was still unknown to me. When I came under the influence of Professor Hal Bridges at the University of Colorado, however, I managed to acquire a rudimentary skill in handling the analytical tools that keep the study of religious history from being (as Henry Steele Commager once warned me it would be) "like swimming in muddy water." Professor Bridges is a specialist in American society and thought whose chief interest in the years I studied with him was the impact of religion on human life. For that reason, perhaps, he seemed nearly as interested as I was in finding a descriptive classification for Mormonism.

Although the "afterclap of Puritanism" definition of Mormonism was popular back then, a close look at the characteristics of sectarian movements and the characteristics of Mormonism reveals that a picture of early Mormonism as a "saving remnant" withdrawing from the world does not entirely capture the movement. At best, the sectarian model fits only partially. When cult and denomination are tested as descriptive models, the fit is also partial; similarities abound but differences keep Mormonism from fitting securely into these categories. Correspondences between attributes and historical circumstances can, as Mike Quinn's and Bill Juhnke's Mormon-Mennonite com-

parisons illustrate, be marshaled to argue that Mormonism was a Reform movement which would bring it into the denominational fold as a part of the Reform branch of Protestantism. But surface configurations sometimes mislead. Fundamental differences in movements of reformation and restoration keep the denominational model from being any more helpful than the sectarian one.

When cult is used as a descriptive model rather than a pejorative term, it refers to a movement whose truth claims are exclusive; one which maintains high boundaries clearly defining insiders and outsiders; one in which the cultic identity must supersede all other means of identity; and one in which devoted attachment to and extravagant admiration of the leader is the norm. Insofar as Mormonism advanced exclusive truth claims for the LDS gospel; as it drew distinctions between insiders and outsiders; as it required people to be Saints first and foremost in the early years; and as many, if not most, early Mormons had a devoted attachment to and extravagant admiration of Joseph Smith, it is possible to argue that in the beginning Mormonism was a cult. But to stop there and to make an argument that Mormonism was and still is a cult and nothing more requires such a distorted reading of Mormon history that it is only convincing to true unbelievers, the ones who seem obsessed with telling the world that Mormonism is a heretical, diabolical cult whose main reason for being is dragging otherwise deserving Christians away from the foot of the cross.

Since the sect/denomination/cult triad failed to provide a suitable model on which to base a conceptual framework that would reconcile the diversity and complexity of Mormon history, I needed to find a more inclusive model. But which one? Taking clues at once from my nineteenth-century Protestant forebears and their Roman Catholic Nemeses, I decided with the former that, while the Saints might be white and Anglo-Saxon, they most assuredly were not Protestant, and that, whatever else they were, the Saints did not fit into the prevailing Roman Catholic conception of Christendom. Mormonism, I concluded, must be a new subdivision of Christianity combining the characteristics of the descriptive models "church" and "religious movement."

For a long time this "subdivision-of-Christianity" conception served as my basic explanatory framework for Mormonism. As Mario De Pillis demonstrated by employing the church model and using Roman Catholicism as analogue, and as Klaus Hansen showed in employing the religious movement model and using earlier Christian millennial movements as analogues, it is an extremely serviceable model, especially in explaining Mormonism's institutional development, its early history, and its stormy relationship with the rest of the nineteenth-century world. Moreover, seeing Mormonism as a subdivision of Christianity can be a comfortable means whereby one not of the faith may be sibling to the Saints. After all, according to the old story in which Saint Peter guides newcomers about the landscape of eternity, Mormons get to heaven just like Baptists, Methodists and everybody else. Only their abode is situated behind a great high wall because "they think they're the only ones up there."

Ironically, my search for an adequate conceptual framework for Mormonism was almost over when Paul made that remark about the fickle nature of my theorizing. After a decade of working almost exclusively with LDS written documents, an accelerating level of association with the Saints told me that it can make a world of difference when one reads about something and when one meets it, as it were, in the flesh:

“But where was the Garden of Eden?”

“Oh, it was forty miles down the road.”

Overhearing this bit of dialogue during an MHA visit to the site of Adam-ondi-Ahman gave me a new perspective on the difficulty of fitting the literalness of the LDS mind—set into the universe of symbol and metaphor which sustains traditional Christianity. How radically Mormon understandings of this life and the next diverge from those in Roman Catholic and Protestant Christian traditions was dramatized for me as I learned in casual conversations with friends, rather than through reading doctrinal works, that while the unit of redemption in Mormonism is the individual, the unit of exaltation is the family. And, in working for weeks going through the manuscript of Lucy Mack Smith’s *History* during the day and discussing what I learned with LDS friends during the evening, I came to understand that really useful analogues for Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon are simply not found in the history of Christianity. And so I was forced to abandon my idea that Mormonism is only a subdivision of this historic religious tradition.

How much, then, have I learned about the Mormons in more than twenty years of study? Enough, now, to be sure that B.H. Roberts was not being pretentious in prefacing the official LDS documentary history with a discussion of the foundation of the world. Reopening the canon through the publication of the Book of Mormon commenced the “restoration of all things.” That which is “plain and precious” has indeed been added to the LDS gospel. The Saints truly do live in this, the last and greatest “Dispensation of the Fulness of Times.” Translated into the language of scholarly analysis, this means that I have learned that Mormonism is not merely an exclusivist subdivision of Christianity, “a sect to end all sects.” It is a new religious tradition.

As are all the world’s religious traditions currently amenable to study, of course Mormonism is derivative. It draws inspiration from the same Hebraic wellsprings that nourish Judaism and Christianity. But, in this instance, the means by which that inspiration was infused into Mormonism can more readily be investigated because this new religious tradition came into being in the full harsh light of historical time. Yet despite endless speculations about its origins and sources, it is ever more evident that Mormonism is not merely a variant Christian or Judaic form. Instead, it is an original synthesis giving life across more than 150 years to both Mormonism’s religious manifestations and to the culture which it generated.

In an almost unimaginable variety of ways in more times and places than I can recall, I have been asked to “bear my testimony” by more Saints than I can remember. Until I found this perspective which regards Mormonism as *sui generis* and gives me a ground on which to stand, that allows me to

understand the Mormons as well as to appreciate them, my responses were always vague, albeit warm, expressions of friendship. But now things are different.

With the realization that Mormonism is a religious tradition in its own right came the accompanying testimony that, as it does through the histories of all great faiths, through Mormon history, too, divinity reveals itself to humanity in the lives of the members of a believing community. Without any question whatsoever, that is the most important thing I have learned during all the years in which I have been an "inside-outsider" in Zion.



DALE BJORK

THAT MEN MIGHT BE

Where she walked,
Trees were quiet with the leisure of monkeys,
And the dew on the leaves seemed forever.

When she walked,
Gliding among idle gazelles,
The mist curled behind the cut of her ankles.

She moved easily among the beasts.
The soft sweep of her hand brought brown bears to her side,
And yellow blossoms from the dark earth.

She strolled with lions
Through herds of grazing cattle
And gazed at the shoulders of great bulls.

She palmed white flowers of hanging vines
Whose blue leaves clung to her smooth arms.
But all this is known.

And it is known that he who came
In bodily shape like a serpent
Dripped poison into her unblemished ear;

That she sank her teeth into mortality
And roamed awhile; how the vines drew back
at her approach and the lions turned away.

How then she saw the garden perfectly fruitless,
The flowers and beasts as in still-life
And deep within her own still life, a hunger and a promise.

How Adam wandered off—his wife dead to him—
And lay long in the wet grasses
(Monkeys sat among glistening leaves, pondering)
Before biting that sweet-skinned, violent fruit.

And it is known that then the wind cried
Like wild cats in the night, and the deer fled,
Driven by their hot blood;

That the sword of the cherubim flashed, sang death,
And cut the cord that fed that bright, green womb.
All this is known.

And some say she was weak,
Given to fainting spells and dark fantasy,
That her head was easily turned.

But I say:
Chavah, mother of many,
Through a thousand wombs, you are my mother.

And through a thousand births, I am your son.
Let men speak of sin; I will sing of joy.
Let the wandering children of earth

Be one with roaming lions and muscled bulls,
With wild blue mountain flowers,
In remembering your name and your heavenly hands.

Let it be known among your sons
That God has gently dabbed
Your smooth and sweat-streaked brow;

That he has dressed your sorrow in raiments of praise,
Your mourning in robes of delight.
Let it be known that your eyes are clear

(Once sightless, so deep was your seeing in Eden);
That your bold hands are bright with the blessing of heaven,
Bright with the blazing of suns.

Eve, mother of many,
Through a thousand fruitful wombs, I hear your name
And sing your dying for your sons.

KARL SANDBERG

THE RABBIT DRIVE

*They were of the old people, two sisters
With their measured tones and gunnysack
Of nickels, dimes, and quarters
To take out and polish when they met,
Telling as if the time were new
How False Teeth Hill had got its name,
Or how the people when they cleared
The valley had heaped the brush piles high
To burn at night and thus to greet
Each other across the empty spaces.
And always they rehearsed how they
Had surprised the world in contradiction —
God had said "Thou shalt not kill,"
But this commandment was a lesser law,
For in every living thing
There was commandment written inward
To live and thrive, and thus to kill.
And God said to the beasts,
"Divide and multiply and fill up the earth,"
But God also said,
"Let man subdue the earth and have dominion
Over the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field."*

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So it was not wrong to kill the rabbits.
By thousands they laid waste whole fields of grain,
Could overnight crop gardens close, or eat
From underneath a stack of hay until it fell.
The prairie dogs people could poison,
But rabbits they had to drive,
Walking in a long curved line,
Moving the rabbits before them
Into a netwire pen on the flat.

Yes, the rabbit drive was justified
By logic, for it had to be,
And by the Lord, for the world is such
You can't just walk straight through, not breaking
One commandment or another,
They said, and as they told their tales,
It was justified by a slant in the morning sun
And the meetinghouse bell tolling a break in time,
For this is the day the Lord hath made
Out of milk and manure on bib overalls,
Sweat congealed in the stuff of shirts,
Wind and dust rubbing thin on cheeks,
In nostrils sage and manzanita pinching,
And talk, oh Lordy, talk,

A break in time, the girl shouting
With the others, sending the rabbits
Bounding, leaping through the brush,
This day her first in a rabbit drive,
The cry contagious, the walking light
Through the sage standing shoulder high,
The cry, the cry, and the morning.

Rabbits now by hundreds dashing,
Crossing zig-zag, the line moving them forward,
The line closing to a three-quarter circle,
Driving the rabbits into the netwire pen,
The men running up to the pen
And drawing the front wire tight.

Away from the pen the women talk,
The dam of silence broken, words
Rushing out, who has been sick,
What is in the garden, whose
Relatives have written, what
Has been sent for C.O.D. in the catalogue,

Who is pregnant, Ida Steed
Brought a harmonium from Salt Lake,
And she has it in her house: words
That mean nothing but bear the weight
Of the soul, which craves the break in time,
Which must move sometime with abandon
Lest it die. The girl, apart, sees

the men climbing over the wire,
Some with axe-handles, some with clubs or hatchets,
Now walking in a phalanx through the pen,
Smashing the rabbits' heads, some expert
And practiced with one stroke, others
Clubbing the animals pulpy to kill them,
Some methodical as if wielding a scythe,
Others, eyes glistening, shouting,
Dashing out of line, to catch
A leaping rabbit with a club,
"Home run!" the cry, Arthur Tuttle,
Swinging wildly, catching old man Schneider
On the shoulder, he replying,
"Every hunter becomes a hare."
Five times through the pen, a thousand and seven
Rabbits dead upon the ground,
And one remaining still alive
Having five times sprung past the clubs,
Willy-do Jackson, 17,
Hatchet in hand, "Let me get him,"
Running the rabbit to a corner, crouching
To meet the rabbit's leap, the rabbit
Darting to the side, Willy-do springing,
The arm and hatchet striking out,
The blade splitting the rabbit's skull,
The rabbit convulsing, its hind legs jerking,
Willy wiping his mouth on his sleeve.

The girl sees the rabbit die.
She knows it must, and still, she hears
What Bertha Rapplay says, out loud,
And wishes a moment she might be
A Rapplay, too, so she could say
The words: "The poor bastards."

And yet the day was justified
For that night in the hewn log meetinghouse
Archie Drew, his fiddle, and a pint

Of whiskey played for a dance. Now
Archie had rhythm and knew the chords
Of the fiddle's music, and the Lord's.
Sundays he led the hymns of praise
That tuned the heart to purer ways,
And led in a way that showed he meant
To find in the chords the Lord's intent,
But he was himself and was not ready
To follow a path too cramped or steady.
He knew (oh, life is full of choices)
The Spirit speaks in many voices:
It speaks when the fasting soul is lean,
But just as well when the grass is green,
So tonight he drinks from a generous cup
And turns and tunes his fiddle up,
Then talks of things through gut and wood
That never a bishop in sermon could,
First a trickle and then a flood
Of sudden truths to warm the blood,
Impertinent truths, and sly and frisky,
Celestial gossip passed on by whiskey.

Feet that never have followed a master
Follow the fiddle fast and faster
As Archie's foot and the fiddle's sound
Spin the hall and the night around.
Babies lie bundled at the end of the hall
On two wood benches against the wall,
Bottled or nursed when they start to cry,
"The Pretty Quadroon" their lullaby.

The women go back when each dance ends
To talk alone with women friends
While men, outside, tip up a bottle,
As an engineer will slide the throttle.
Agreed that wise men would have refrained,
But the soul must once move unrestrained.
We know the bottle for a slippery crutch—
The morning will never amount to much—
But for now it will tear the shrouds apart
That hang so heavy about the heart.
It is now, and the now is the soul's concern.
The music starts and the men return
To the middle of the floor with a swaying slide,
Waving partners from the other side.

A look from Willy invites the girl.
The people, the hall begin to whirl,
For foot must follow the spheres about,
Lips must cry and the throat must shout,

For all is true and nothing false,
Then Archie's fiddle jigs up a waltz,
Letting never a foot be stayed
(This is the day the Lord hath made,
laughter fat that once was thin,
let all rejoice and be glad therein)

The girl was never again a child.
She knew the cry of Spirit is wild.
She knew as she felt the free blood run
The cry of the spirit and blood are one.

The music and hours are a flooding tide
The dark is deep, but the heart is wide,
And the world awhile is justified,
For everyone dances, the spirit rises
As Archie's fiddle philosophizes
"If ninety-nine girls want to be missed,
If ninety-nine girls want to be kissed,
Why don't you?"

then

Good-night ladies
Good-night ladies
We're going to leave you now.

Long after the dance, on her mattress atop
A bin of grain for the summer night,
Looking motionless at the stars,
The girl went on hearing the fiddle
And kept whirling with the dancers in the hall,
While she listened to the howling
And yipping of coyotes, hundreds of them,
From the direction of the rabbit pen.

FICTION

THE QUILT

ANN EDWARDS-CANNON

THE QUILT HAD BEEN magnificent once. Passed down through the years like a sacrament between mother and daughter, it had been made by Sarah's great grandmother and her friends—all of them from Manchester. On long winter evenings they sat together and pieced patches of materials embroidered with gulls, squares and compasses, sego lilies, beehives, temples, tabernacles and one blazing Union Jack. When spring came, the friends put quilting frames up beneath flowering trees and stretched the material taut across them. Then they took their places around the frames in an unbroken square and began quilting with tiny perfect stitches, thousands of miles away from England.

The quilt would be Sarah's one day.

As she spread it over her own grandmother (who was sleeping again) she couldn't help but wish that the quilt were a little newer looking. There was a distinctly used quality to it: the quilt, in fact, was ratty with years. Sarah herself would have carefully wrapped it in blue tissue paper and stored it safely in the corner of her cedar chest. By the time the quilt belonged to her, it would hardly be worth having.

The grandmother stirred. A hand, brittle as dry leaves, fluttered.

"Parley?" The grandmother's voice was thin and flat as wallpaper. Parley was her brother. Sarah knew he had died in either World War I or World War II—she couldn't remember which.

"It's okay, Gran," Sarah said. "Go back to sleep."

The grandmother had been rambling a great deal that day—more than usual—calling out the names of people who had died long ago, talking of incidents that no one remembered. At least Sarah didn't remember them.

"It's all right Gran," she said again in a breathy voice.

The grandmother's hand folded into itself like a flower.

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Sarah sighed and sat down in the chair where she had been reading a Gothic romance checked out of the school library. She picked up the book, looked at a page or two, then put it back down and gazed out the window.

How could anybody read on such a perfect spring day?

The apricot trees were raining blossoms now—together they stood whispering like girls. Sarah had walked under their low heavy branches that very morning, plucking herself a few sprigs of blossoms which she later braided into her hair.

Sarah would give anything to be outside again where things smelled fresh instead of old like the objects in the grandmother's house. They were everywhere: porcelain figurines of shepherdesses draped with stiff ruffles, heavy gold-rimmed china, ornate silverware, charcoal sketches on rotting paper, brown and ivory photographs of strange people, musty-smelling copies of books by a man named Trollope, and then, of course, the clocks. Sarah had never seen so many clocks in one home. They were in every room—sometimes two to a room—and they were old, which might have been the reason no two of them ever told the same time.

"Did I tell you?" The grandmother's voice rose suddenly as crickets at night.

"Tell me what, Gran?" Sarah picked up her book again.

"Tell you what Father's other wives did to my mother after he died?"

"No, you didn't." Sarah tried to answer politely, but she wasn't interested. Not really. Polygamy, like the grandmother's things, belonged to another age.

The grandmother didn't continue and Sarah didn't encourage her.

It wasn't that Sarah didn't love her grandmother. She did certainly. A granddaughter always loves her grandmother. Why else would she have volunteered to stay with the grandmother over the Easter vacation while the rest of her family went to southern California? She thought suddenly of David, who had promised to come see her while everyone was out of town. Sarah lightly touched the flowers in her hair and smiled to herself.

When the doorbell rang, Sarah started guiltily. She dropped her book and dashed to the door.

It was only old Sister Wakefield, the grandmother's neighbor of many years. She stood on the porch, holding a steaming bowl in her hands.

"Hello, Sarah," she said.

"Hello, Sister Wakefield," said Sarah, masking her disappointment.

"I thought I'd bring you and your grandma some good bean and ham soup."

Sarah grimaced inwardly. No matter the weather or the occasion, Sister Wakefield was always good for a bowl of bean soup. Sarah's brothers called her "the Beaner" behind her broad back.

"Thanks," she said. "That's nice of you. Please come in."

Sarah took the bowl and carried it into the kitchen. When she returned, she found that Sister Wakefield had taken off her bright green sweater and had made herself comfortable on the couch.

"How's your grandma today?"

"About the same," Sarah replied, critically appraising Sister Wakefield's appearance. Shapeless slate-colored polyester dress, sensible shoes, flashing glasses, gray brillo-pad hair—Sarah wondered why old women looked so much alike and why they just let themselves go once they reached a certain age. She, Sarah, would never be old. At least not in the sense that Sister Wakefield was. Sarah was quite positive that if she exercised regularly and ate sensibly for the rest of her life, she would look relatively young until the day she died. She had read somewhere that this could be done.

Sister Wakefield was shaking her head now like a wire-haired terrier. "It's real hard for me—for all of us who knew your grandma well—to see her like this."

Sarah agreed although she wasn't quite sure what Sister Wakefield was talking about.

"Your grandma in her day was a strong woman—real mind of her own that one had. She used to boss your grandpa around something fierce. Poor Henry," Sister Wakefield chortled, and Sarah smiled in return, wishing that Sister Wakefield would take her sweater and leave.

"But then she was a real lady. You could tell just to look at her. And you could tell by her things, too." Sister Wakefield threw a half-covetous glance around the room. "She always had to have the best, that's for certain."

Sister Wakefield fell for a moment into private memories while Sarah sat fidgeting covertly. The grandfather clock in the hallway chimed.

"I think most of the sisters at church were a bit afraid of her," she said, rousing herself, "which is probably why old Bishop Peterson kept her in the Relief Society all them years. 'Course the bishop was afraid of her, too." Sister Wakefield chuckled again, then nodded to herself. "You know, Sarah, me and your grandma—we never counted on being this age." Sister Wakefield turned huge fish eyes blandly on Sarah. Then she slapped her knees with both hands and stood up. "Well, gotta be goin'. You take good care of your grandma now."

Unnerved, Sarah stood up and followed Sister Wakefield to the door. Sister Wakefield paused on the porch and took a deep breath.

"The apricot trees are nice this year, aren't they?" said Sarah, searching for something to say.

"They was always your grandma's pride and joy."

"I like them, too," said Sarah.

Sister Wakefield snorted. "Well that don't surprise me none. You got a lot of your grandma in you from what I've seen, Missy. You're the spittin' image of her when she was young."

Sarah's mouth flew open, and Sister Wakefield narrowed her eyes.

"Don't believe me, huh? Go take a look at that picture of her on the mantel." Sister Wakefield heaved herself off the porch and waddled down the walk. "Tell your grandma I come by when she's feeling better." Sarah nodded and watched the elderly woman go.

Look like her grandmother? Sarah found the notion unpleasant, almost repulsive. She thought of her grandmother lying across the bed, beached like a piece of human driftwood. A moan filtered down the hallway.

"I'm coming, Gran," said Sarah, throwing the door shut.

She found the grandmother sitting upright in bed.

"Did you give Ellie her chickens like I told you to?" she demanded. "I won't have Ellie saying we took any of her chickens. That woman will say anything to make us look bad." The grandmother trembled like a knotty old aspen.

The grandmother's spells had taken a turn for the worse. Sarah's parents had asked her to call if something like this happened, but she could manage just fine on her own. She would show them all—her father, her mother, everyone else waiting to point a finger—that she was old enough to take care of things and old enough to know her own mind about David, too!

"I will!" cried the grandmother suddenly. "I *will* marry him."

Sarah gasped. The grandmother was glaring at her defiantly.

"He will be mine," the grandmother went on, "and I will not share him with another."

Rattled, Sarah began moving about the room like a marionette—fluffing needlepoint pillows, rearranging the grandmother's pins and combs on her oak dresser, straightening the quilt once again.

"Now calm down, Gran," said Sarah. "I'll get you some milk."

"You know something, they wouldn't even stop to pick me up," said the grandmother.

"Take it easy, Gran. Now I mean it." Then, more gently, "Lie down and rest. You'll feel better if you do." Sarah reached for the old woman's hand. The grandmother clung to her.

"We were walking to church on Easter Sunday, Parley and I. Our mother had washed and ironed our old things the night before. Didn't have enough for new clothes that year. After father died, the other two wives, Aunt Louisa and Aunt Emily (they were sisters) took all his money. Parley didn't care, and I pretended not to—didn't want to hurt Mother's feelings. My poor little mother. Father loved her because she was so pretty, but I saw her grow old right before my eyes.

"She sent us on to Church ahead of her that Sunday. We walked along the road, trying not to scuff our shoes. Then out of nowhere we heard a car—there weren't many around then. We ran to the side of the road just like a couple of rabbits and who do you think it was? Aunt Louisa and her daughter Ellie. Had on new dresses and hats and gloves. Aunt Louisa honked. Ellie waved and laughed at us. They didn't even stop to ask us for a ride." Fierce tears sheathed the grandmother's eyes. "They didn't even give me the opportunity to turn them down to their fat, self-satisfied faces."

She slowly closed her eyes, wilting into the bed. Sarah stood perfectly still, feeling as though she would suffocate in that heavy, dark room where the grandmother lay shrouded in memories. She turned and left the room, shutting the door determinedly behind her.

In the front room again, Sarah wandered aimlessly about, her arms folded across her chest. She noted in a distracted way that the furniture needed dusting and the plants watering. As she took silent inventory, Sarah noticed Sister Wakefield's green knit sweater wadded in the corner of the couch. With a sign of irritation, Sarah moved forward to pick it up, but the memory of the old woman's visit stopped her. What had Sister Wakefield said as she was leaving? Something about Sarah and the grandmother. Forgetting the sweater, Sarah turned slowly and moved toward the photographs that adorned the fireplace like a garland. When she was close enough, she touched each one separately, holding her breath.

Although the photographs and the intricate gilt frames that enshrined them were old-fashioned, Sarah noticed with some surprise how modern the captured expressions, postures, and gestures actually were. The camera's subjects were scornful of time.

There was a particularly small photograph on the mantel's edge. Charmed by its size, Sarah picked it up and held it in the palm of her hand as though it were a robin's egg. A chill raced down her spine: the tiny face there—staring serenely and silently at her from another age—was undeniably Sarah's own. The fussy collar and buttons, the proper hat and gloves were strange, but the face was as familiar as the sound of her own voice. Trembling, Sarah set the photograph back on the mantel at a crazy angle, causing it to fall forward and clatter loudly. A muffled moan, light as cobwebs, floated down the hallway.

Sarah stood before the photographs uncertainly. Then speaking in a thin, high voice she said, "I'm going, Grandmother!"

Only the sound of clocks answered her as she left the house, throwing the door shut.

II

It was twilight when Sarah stole guiltily into the darkened house.

"Gran?" Sarah crept almost fearfully to the bedroom. She sighed in relief when she heard the grandmother's regular breathing. Sarah lowered her head and stepped quietly into the room.

There in the half-light filtering through Venetian blinds, the grandmother looked like a young woman again, her face smooth and her hair rumped against the pillow. Sarah dutifully took a chair by the bedside.

"Sarah?" The grandmother awoke.

"I'm right here, Gran. I'm sorry I left you. I won't ever leave you alone like that again."

But the grandmother was lost somewhere inside herself.

"Did I tell you what he looked like?" the grandmother asked in a dreamy voice.

"Who? Grandpa?"

The grandmother smiled. "He was tall. Slender like a cowboy. My young man had a shock of blond hair sprouting like a wheat field right across the crown of his head." She laughed girlishly.

Sarah listened and smiled in spite of herself at the unexpected romance of it all. Her memories of her grandfather, of course, were quite different: he hadn't had hair when Sarah knew him, and he hadn't been slender either. She remembered him only as a short, dumpy but kindly old man who brought her bags of balloons and called her "Sis."

"We met in Park City." The grandmother's voice slipped into a distant intimacy. "I was teaching then. Taught those children everything—their multiplication tables, their ABC's."

The grandmother bobbed her head and began singing the first verse of an old alphabet ditty. Sarah turned her head in embarrassment.

"I put myself through college to do it. Earned my teaching credential at Weber with no help. Told Parley I wouldn't stay in Garden City with Ellie to boss me another day. I put myself through with no help from anyone but Parley. Some nights there it used to be so cold. But Park City was colder. That's where I taught. That's where we met." The grandmother's voice faded.

Sarah forgot her embarrassment and inched forward. "Yes? That's where you met Grandpa?"

A look of annoyance flickered across the grandmother's face. "That's where I met him," she said sharply.

Sarah sank back, feeling strangely reproved.

"Ellie didn't want me going to Park City, but I didn't give two figs about that. Now Parley was different. He didn't want me going either—I could tell it—but he wouldn't say so. Not Parley. He just hugged me real close before putting me on the train and called me 'baby sister.' He gave me five of his silver dollars all stitched up nice and neat in a little bag. 'Don't go marryin' the first man you meet, Missy,' he said to me. 'Don't go marryin' the first man you meet.' He was laughing but I saw tears in his eyes. I can't say what it did to me seeing him like that and all."

The grandmother paused and rolled her head back and forth across the pillow. She mumbled.

"What, Gran? What is it?"

"So cold."

Sarah scrambled to her feet and rearranged the old quilt around the grandmother's shoulders.

"So cold on the train. Thought I'd nearly freeze," she said frowning. "You don't know. There's lots of things people don't know." Then the frown disappeared. "But he was there at the depot waiting for me—like spring after the winter." (The grandmother smiled inwardly here.) "We did surprise each other greatly, he and I."

Sarah waited for an explanation, hardly daring to breathe for fear she might disturb the collecting memories, but to her intense disappointment the grandmother was nearly asleep.

In the sudden quiet of the room, Sarah was almost able to imagine her grandmother as a girl—young and auburn-haired—waiting determinedly with her sad, gentle brother for a train. It was her grandfather that she couldn't imagine. Not yet at least.

There was finally a small groan and then another. The grandmother's eyes fluttered open.

Sarah shifted her weight. "Are you okay?"

The grandmother nodded weakly.

"Gran, you were telling me a story. About Park City when you were a teacher there. Remember?"

"Well now, you see, that's where we met, wasn't it? He boarded with the superintendent's people, you know, and that's why he was sent to pick me up. Did I say we were surprised?"

Sarah nodded in confirmation, but the grandmother wasn't looking.

"We saw each other every day after that," she said. "He always came in the evenings because he worked in the mines during the day. Crawled out of the earth's belly dirty as an old mule. But he wasn't like the others. He was studying on his own to be a mining engineer. Said he was going to learn everything there was to know about a mine so that when he had his own, he'd know what to do with 'em. He wanted to be rich as Mr. Thomas Kearns and build a mansion next to his in Salt Lake City. Brought me apples. Said I was his favorite. His favorite school teacher." The grandmother laughed. "One May evening he brought me lilacs and asked me to marry him. I said yes.

"School was hard after that, I'll tell you. Couldn't keep my mind on things, but then neither could the children. They wanted to be outside where things smelled fresh. So did I. I kept the door propped open and the windows up. One afternoon—two days before summer recess—Ian Davies showed up, his face all black and shirt all torn.

"Miss Sweetman! Miss Sweetman!" he screamed at me.

"Well what is it, Ian Davies!" I answered him sharp as I could.

"There's been an accident at the mines, Miss Sweetman. Lots of men are buried up there!"

"You should have seen those children after that. They were everywhere—screaming, crying, running for the door. Most of their daddies worked in the mines." The grandmother's eyes clouded. "I stood there like a fool. Finally, though, I heard myself yelling at the children. 'You are not dismissed! Take your seats now!' I grabbed one little boy by the arm and dragged him back to his desk. Then I grabbed another and threw him into his chair. They knew I meant it after that. They all obeyed me—even the big boys. I kept them there, too, until dismissal time.

"After they were all gone, I waited for him just like I always did. This time, though, it grew way dark outside. So I just tucked the chairs under the desks and cleaned the board with an oil rag till it glowed. Then I left.

"When I stepped outside, it crossed my mind to go there and look for him, but I knew what I would find. So I went home instead, and when I got there, I drew the drapes tight and fixed myself some tea—just like Mama used to after she laid someone out. Mama always used to say she'd left her home where it was green, crossed the plains, and settled in a godforsaken place like Deseret for the Lord: Surely He'd forgive her her little cups of tea."

Sarah sat very still. Then, with a tight chest, she stood up and straightened the quilt across her grandmother.

There was a rap on the front door, then another.

Sarah left the bedroom, glancing at the grandmother. She answered the door.

It was David. He stood leaning against the front porch railing, a half-grin cocked on his face, his thick hair jutting out all over his head.

"Hi, Sarah," he said.

Sarah looked at him standing there—slender and sinewy as willows. He was breathless and filled with the sweet evening air.

"David."

"I told you I'd come."

The grandfather clock in the hallway began to chime softly.

"It's nice outside," he said, taking one of her hands. "Let's go for a walk."

Sarah threw a long glance down the hallway.

"I can't—my grandmother isn't too well tonight."

"Okay," the boy shrugged. "We'll just sit out here beneath the trees."

Their eyes met and Sarah thought of the grandmother's story.

"Yes," she whispered. "That would be nice."

Laughing, David pulled her gently into the night.

III

The next morning the grandmother was herself again—at least the self that Sarah had always known. She got out of bed by herself, put a light blue robe over her shoulders, and surprised Sarah, who was making an omelet in the kitchen.

"Gran! What are you doing up!"

"Same thing as you are."

"Are you all right?"

The grandmother, her thin face quivering, looked insulted.

"Of course I'm all right."

There was a short silence between them.

"Well, what did you do with yourself last night, Sarah?"

"I took care of you, Gran."

The grandmother dismissed this with the wave of her hand.

"What else?" The grandmother looked directly at Sarah.

At first Sarah was going to say that she had spent the night reading in the living room, but then she looked at the grandmother levelly, matching the old woman's blue gaze.

"I saw a boy last night."

"A young man?"

"Yes."

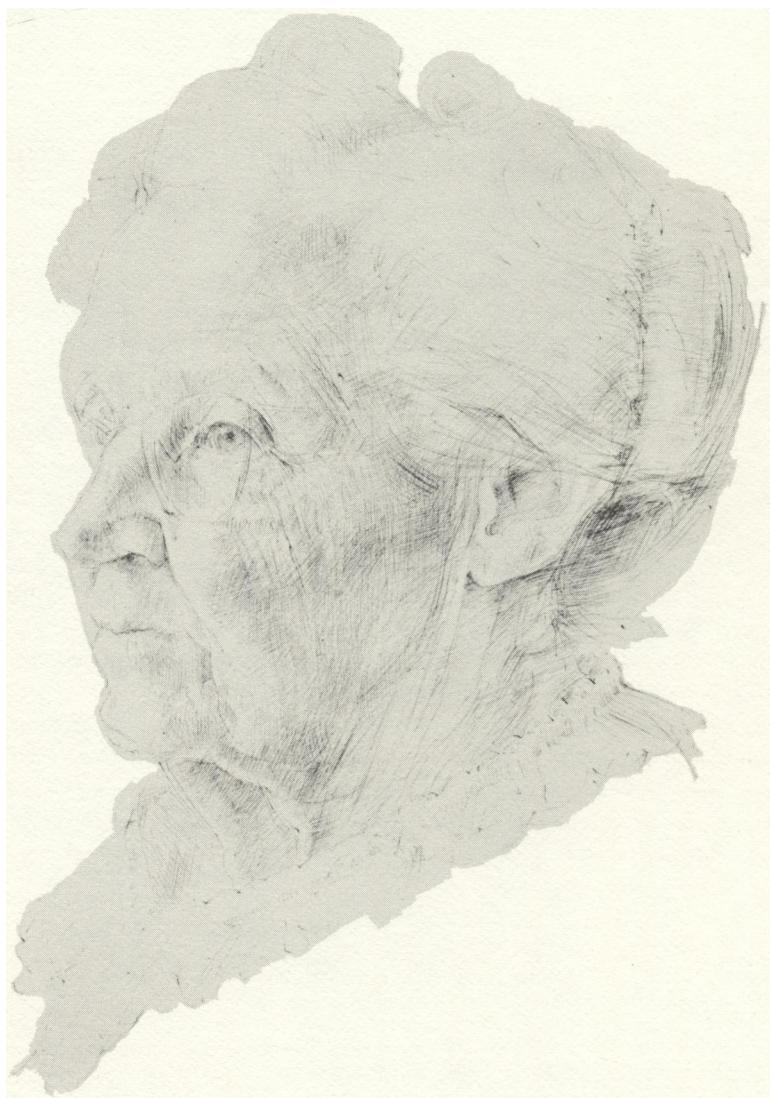
"Your young man?"

Sarah lifted her chin. "Yes. We sat outside together and talked about all sorts of things. Important things."

The grandmother twisted the amethyst ring she always wore on her right hand. Then she touched her pewter hair delicately.

"It's cold, Sarah," she said after a moment had passed. "Will you please go to my room and get my mother's quilt? You know which one it is."

Sarah slid the omelet out of the frying pan, put it on a plate, and offered it to her grandmother. They looked at one another. Then she went to the bedroom and picked the rumbled quilt up from the bed. Sarah smoothed it and folded it carefully, all the time thinking that perhaps one day the quilt would belong to her own daughter's daughter.



NOTES AND COMMENTS

GREY MATTERS

GARY JAMES BERGERA

LAST FALL a new publication appeared at Brigham Young University, "an independent student weekly," *The Seventh East Press*. Its first stated reason for going into business was that "[t]here is no publication that puts in print issues that should be discussed among students." The efforts of *Seventh East Press* to fill this void have been quite remarkable. In addition to articles relating solely to BYU, the first few issues carried other thoughtful pieces on the involvement of Mormons on both sides of the Central American conflicts, the Mormon history "underground," Fundamentalism, the development of garments and the abandonment of the proposed new church hymnal. Lengthy excerpts have been carried from B. H. Roberts' unpublished *The Truth, the Way, the Life*, as well as a detailed listing of changes in the latest edition of the *Book of Mormon*. The first in-depth reporting on Apostle Packer's assault on the "new Mormon history" appeared in *The Seventh East Press*, as well as the only detailed coverage of historian Michael Quinn's address in response. Other talks of particular interest to students have been highlighted, and interviews are carried in most issues.

Among the regular features, the *Press* has carried a column initially by Gary Bergera called "Grey Matters." This column looks at "official doctrine" in some controversial areas. Among the subjects discussed: sex education, human sexuality, the Adam-God doctrine, evolution and eternal progression. Two of Bergera's columns are reprinted below.

GARY BERGERA will graduate this August from BYU in Public Administration. He will enter the University of Utah in September to begin a master's program in history.

The following articles are reprinted with the permission of *The Seventh East Press*, Box 7223, University Station, Provo, Utah 84602. These columns appeared in the 3 November 1981 and 28 October 1981 editions.

Does God Progress in Knowledge?

Sometime try asking a group of otherwise sedate Mormons the following two seemingly contradictory questions: Does God know everything that can be known? and Does God continue to progress in knowledge? The often ensuing confusion and occasionally heated disagreement attest to the unsettled status of our understanding of the nature of the Lord's "omniscience." There are those members today who passionately embrace Orson Pratt's belief of 130 years ago that the "Father and the Son do not progress in knowledge and wisdom, because they already know all things past, present, and to come" (*The Seer*, p. 117, par. 96). Others, with equal force and feeling, find faith in Brigham Young's declaration, "According to (some men's) theory, God can progress no further in knowledge and power, but the God I serve is progressing eternally, and so are his children" (*Journal of Discourses* 11:286).

Scriptural literalists point to various references throughout the Standard Works in support of their contention that, in the words of Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, "I believe that *God knows all things and that his understanding is perfect, not 'relative'*" (*Doctrines of Salvation* I:8, emphasis in original). They note, for example, I Nephi 9:20 ("he knoweth all things, and there is not anything save he knows it") and D & C 38:1–2 ("the same which knoweth all things, for all things are present before mine eyes"). The writer of these and related verses, they believe, is to be taken at his word: that whatever is capable of being known, is known absolutely by God; that there is nothing he does not know.

Four factors, however, prevent the unqualified acceptance of the literalists' absolutist interpretations. First, while these and other scriptural references would seem to indicate that God has ceased to progress in knowledge, the exact nature of this knowledge possessed is unclear. He has "received a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth" (D & C 93:26), but truth in what sense? Truth, meaning a "knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come" (D & C 93:24)? Truth, meaning "light" and "intelligence"

(D & C 93:36)? Or truth, meaning an absolute foreknowledge of all acts past, present, and future (D & C 130:7)? And a fulness in what sense? A sequential acquisition, line upon line? Or an innate characteristic of God as testator and revelator of truth? “[H]e has all power, all wisdom, and all understanding” (Alma 26:35) because “He comprehendeth all things,” that is, that “all things are before him, and all things are round about him; and he is above all things, and in all things, and is through all things, and is round about all things, and all things are by him, and of him, even God, for ever and ever” (D & C 88:41). Thus, it appears that the Lord knows, or comprehends (i.e., encompasses), all things by virtue of his attendant glory, or light, which “preceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space—the light which is in all things . . . by which all things are governed, even the power of God” (D & C 88:12–13). But as to whether or not he continues to progress in knowledge, that is, to advance from one principle of perfection to another, discovering perhaps in the process things which he did not “know” previously, the Standard Works are mute.

Second, the Church institutionally has declared that the notion that God’s infinite knowledge precludes him from progressing further in knowledge is not simply a doctrine or teaching of the Church, but it is false. In 1860, the First Presidency, then composed of Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Daniel H. Wells, publicly took issue with several teachings and doctrinal theories being advanced by Elder Orson Pratt. Prominent among Pratt’s questionable ideas was his above mentioned belief that the Father and the Son do not progress in knowledge. Specifically citing this and other points, the First Presidency officially observed, “ ‘It is not true’ ” (*Messages of the First Presidency* II:222–223). Their statement has never been modified by ensuing First Presidency declarations.

Third, the prevailing view of the majority of Church authorities until very recently has been that eternal progression, in its fullest expression, entails, among other things, eternal progression in and of knowledge. Though admittedly equivocal, the Prophet Joseph seemed to be implying that God’s progression includes the eternal acquisition of knowledge when he announced, “All the minds and spirits that God ever sent into the world are susceptible of enlargement and improvement. The relationship we have with God places us in a situation to advance in knowledge” (King Follett Sermon). Reference to Brigham Young’s strong feelings has already been made. Elder Wilford Woodruff believed, “God himself is still increasing and progressing in knowledge, power and dominion, and will do so, worlds without end. It is just so with us” (*Journal of Discourses* 6:120).

In this century, President Lorenzo Snow taught, “Whatever changes may arise, whatever worlds may be made or pass away, our identity will always remain the same; and we will continue on improving, advancing and increasing in wisdom, intelligence, power and dominion, worlds without end” (*Conference Reports*, April 1901, p. 2). President B. H. Roberts asked, “[I]s it too bold a thought, that with this progress, even for the Mightiest, new thoughts and new vistas may appear, inviting to new adventures and enter-

prises that will yield new experiences, advancement and enlargement even for the Most High" (*Seventy's Course in Theology*, "Atonement," pp. 69–70). "Throughout eternal life," Elder John A. Widtsoe wrote, "increasing knowledge is attained, and with increasing knowledge comes greater adaptation to law, and in the end an increasingly greater joy" (*A Rational Theology*, 1915, pps. 30–31). Finally, Elder Hugh B. Brown noted, "[T]he time will not come when I or any other man will arrive at a point in knowledge, experience or understanding beyond which we cannot go" (*Continuing the Quest*, p. 4).

Fourth, a belief in the absolute omniscience of God is one of the fundamental underpinnings in the adoration of a Deity foreign to latter-day theology. In other words, and without entering into a detailed exposition of mainstream Catholic and Protestant philosophy, infinite and absolute omniscience necessitates a being with which the vast majority of members would experience considerable discomfort.

The issue of God's progression in knowledge is far from resolved in either the Standard Works or in the writings and sermons of latter-day prophets and apostles. Not surprisingly, then, the two questions posed at the beginning of this column will likely continue to elicit differences of opinion mixed with uncertainty as to the nature of divine omniscience. Perhaps the very fact that the issue is open to such discussion attests to, at least, our own progression in knowledge.

Is There Progression Among the Eternal Kingdoms?

The Standard Works offer uncertain insight as to whether or not eternal progression will be possible as it is applied to passage from one degree of glory to another. While Doctrine and Covenants 76:112 does seem to suggest that for those of the telestial kingdom, at least, eventual communion with the Father and the Son will not be possible, "worlds without end," such a conclusion may be challenged. For example, there is no explicit provision that inhabitants of the telestial kingdom will not, at some point, have access to the blessings of either the terrestrial or even some part of the celestial kingdoms. Additionally, one of Joseph Smith's earliest revelations, D & C 19, received March 1830, one month before the formal organization of the Church, clearly redefines the terms "endless" and "eternal." They are no longer descriptions of time, but rather are synonyms for the noun "God." Taken in conjunction with Joseph's revision of Genesis, the Father declares his work and glory to be that of bringing to pass the immortality and eternal (i.e., God's) life of man" (Moses 1:39). Thus, the indication is that the Father's plan might extend to all his children the distinct possibility of eventually attaining the life he has come to enjoy.

Whatever the outcome, the Church officially embraces no position as to progression from one kingdom of glory to another. In 1952 and, again, in 1965, the First Presidency authorized their secretary to respond to such a question in virtually identical language: "The Brethren direct me to say that

the Church has never announced a definite doctrine upon this point. Some of the Brethren have held the view that it was possible in the course of progression to advance from one glory to another, invoking the principle of eternal progression; others of the Brethren have taken the opposite view. But as stated, the Church has never announced a definite doctrine on this point."

That differences of opinion exist among several of the general authorities on this topic is evident from a cursory overview of their statements. Brigham Young held, for example, that "none would inherit this Earth when it became celestial and translated into the presence of God but those who would be crowned as Gods . . . all others would have to inherit another kingdom . . . [yet] they would eventually have the privilege of proving themselves worthy and advancing to a celestial kingdom but it would be a slow process" (Wilford Woodruff Journal, 5 August 1855.) Wilford Woodruff believed, "If there was a point where man in his progression could not proceed any further, the very idea would throw a gloom over every intelligent creature" (*Journal of Discourses*, 6:120).

In late 1910, President Joseph F. Smith apparently sanctioned the view that at least some form of progression would be possible: "[O]nce a person enters these glories there will be eternal progress in the line of each of these particular glories, but . . . the privilege of passing from one to another (*though this may be possible for especially gifted and faithful characters*) is not provided for" (*Improvement Era* 14) [November 1910]:87, emphasis added). Apostle Melvin J. Ballard, however, disagreed. "Those whose lives have entitled them to terrestrial glory," he maintained, "can never gain celestial glory. One who gains possession of the lowest degree of the celestial glory may ultimately arise to the highest degree of that glory, but no provision has been made for promotion from one glory to another" ("Three Degrees of Glory," discourse delivered in the Ogden Tabernacle, 22 September 1922). Elder Ballard's feelings were later shared and echoed by Elders Joseph Fielding Smith and Bruce R. McConkie. "It has been asked if it is possible for one who inherits the celestial glory to advance in time to the celestial glory?" Elder Smith posited. "The answer to this question," he continued, "is, *No!*" (*Doctrines of Salvation* II:31, emphasis in original). Elder McConkie forcefully remarked, "There are those who say that there is progression from one kingdom to another in the eternal world. Or if not that, lower kingdoms eventually progress to where higher kingdoms once were. This is worse than false. It is an evil and pernicious doctrine" ("Seven Deadly Heresies", 1 June 1980, unedited).

Yet these are not the only views espoused by ranking Church authorities. Reference to the First Presidency's disclaimers has already been made. In early 1960, President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., admitted, "I am not a strict constructionist, believing that we seal our eternal progress by what we do here. It is my belief that God will save all of His children that he can; and while, if we live unrighteously here, we shall not go to the other side in the same status, so to speak, as those who lived righteously; nevertheless, the unrighteous will have their chance, and in the eons of the eternities that are to follow, they, too, may climb to the destinies to which they who are righteous

and serve God, have climbed to those eternities that are to come" (*Church News*, week ending 23 April 1960, p. 3).

The Church's determined reluctance to endorse either view is evidenced by the changes in wording that appeared in successive editions of James E. Talmage's *The Articles of Faith*. Originally, Talmage had written,

It is reasonable to believe, in the absence of direct revelation by which alone absolute knowledge of the matter could be acquired, that in accordance with God's plan of eternal progression, advancement from grade to grade within any kingdom, and from kingdom to kingdom, will be provided for. But if the recipients of a lower glory be enabled to advance, surely the intelligences of higher rank will not be stopped in their progress; and thus we may conclude, that degrees and grades will ever characterize the kingdoms of our God. Eternity is progressive; perfection is relative; the essential feature of God's living purpose is its associated power of eternal increase. (1899 edition, pps. 420-421).

In 1917, the words "within any kingdom, and from kingdom to kingdom," were replaced by the words "within each of the three specified kingdoms." Finally, in 1924, this paragraph was changed even further. The words "from grade to grade" and "But if the recipients of a lower glory be enabled to advance, surely the intelligences of higher rank shall not be stopped in their progress; and" were entirely deleted. In place of the second set the following was added: "though as to possible progress from one kingdom to another the scriptures make no positive affirmation. Eternal advancement along different lines is conceivable." The most recent edition of *The Articles of Faith* reads identically to the 1924 edition. No mention of the changes incorporated into the text, however, is offered.

Neither explicitly treated in the Standard Works nor discussed by the First Presidency, except to disavow any position as being that accepted by the Church, the notion of progression among the kingdoms is an open question. Opinions expressed, either in favor of or against, should no more be used to determine orthodoxy than does the colors of one's clothes.

REVIEWS

A Gift from the Hart

Edward L. Hart, *Mormon in Motion: The Life and Journals of James H. Hart 1825–1906 in England, France and America* (n.p.: Windsor Books, 1978) 300+ pp., Index, illustrated.

Reviewed by WILLIAM G. HARTLEY who is a Research Historian at the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, BYU.

This fine book is a composite: one-third edited diaries and two-thirds biography. It provides readers, Hart descendants and historians with valuable bits of information about James Hart, LDS missionary work, emigration, St. Louis and Bear Lake stakes, and plural marriage not readily available otherwise. The book gives us much, but it also disappoints a little. The editor-author, a BYU professor of English, is no stranger to *Dialogue* readers (see Summer 1980 issue).

James H. Hart, born 1825, was an English convert to Mormonism in 1847 who spent his next six years doing missionary work. He kept an eleven-page diary of his English mission during February and March 1851 and a 175-page diary of his French mission from June 1851 to February 1854 (with a big 1853 gap), most of which time he was a counselor in the French mission presidency. The first diary is short and skimpy, the second more informative, especially when James copied letters into it. The French mission diary is important for Mormon historians because (a) there are very few primary sources for that early mission, and (b) the diary contains important comments about gospel struggles in France and the Isle of Jersey, about such personalities as presidency members Andrew L. Lamoureaux and Louis A. Bertrand, and about hardships faced by a missionary with his wife along (James and Emily). One notable

story told in the diary is a case of hurt and bitter feelings between the Harts and President Lamoreaux which, unlike too many personality clashes in church history, ended with Christian resolution rather than alienation.

Dr. Hart's primary purpose is to present the reader with an edited version of the two mission diaries. He sought to reproduce the text as accurately as possible while "keeping it readable." He said he did not delete or suppress. He followed up random French language entries with bracketed English translations. He employed some footnotes for citations and for information. He liberally riddled the diary text with bracketed editorial comments set off in smaller type—except when typesetters forgot the pattern (pp. 31, 46, 110–118). His bracketed annotations include many quotations from non-Hart diaries, from letters and from *Millennial Star* excerpts. In places where James' eighteen-page handwritten autobiography or his published "Early Reminiscences" contain more information about a diary matter than the diary does, the inserts sometimes dwarf the actual entries.

For some reason Dr. Hart does not refer to the French Mission Manuscript History in the LDS Archives. About 100 detailed pages of that history discuss James' mission setting and James himself, including such items not mentioned in *Mormon in Motion* as the fact that James was an ex-policeman, that a fellow missionary of James in Jersey talked Mormonism to famous French refugee Victor Hugo and that the mission presidency including James issued a lengthy letter to French saints which summarized mission history for 1853—the period skipped by James' diary.

The diary reader would benefit from a solid summary of the French mission to

place James better in the context of his colleagues and times.

The last two-thirds of the book is an “afterword” to the diaries—a long tail on a medium-sized animal. Dr. Hart, while preparing the diaries for publication, uncovered more and more family documents too valuable to ignore—James’ letters and small autobiography, diaries of relatives and associates. “The new materials made it obvious that a simple annotation of the longhand journals would not suffice.” Fearing the materials might never be assembled again, he created the lengthy “afterword” to capitalize on them.

The “afterword” covers a half century of James’ more important life experiences—St. Louis stake leader 1854–1857, pioneer and stake presidency member in Bear Lake region, delegate to the Idaho legislature 1876–1881, LDS emigration agent in New York City 1881–1887, locator of the Church’s only portrait of Oliver Cowdery, interviewer twice of David Whitmer, persecuted polygamist with three wives, poet, and pioneer Idaho newspaperman and attorney. As biography the “afterword” is survey rather than comprehensive, documentary history rather than reflective narration. It is based on readily available secondary sources like Journal History clippings, on a few diaries of Hart associates, some interviews and some Church unit records.

Historians will want more understanding than the book offers about James’ emigration agency work—how many emigrants did he process through New York year by year? From what countries? What impact did he have on Church emigration policies and procedures? In the Bear Lake stake presidency, what impact did he have on the region’s leadership style? How did Church stakes function at that point in time? In the Idaho legislature what legislation did James introduce, favor and oppose, and why? Making readers want more is a criticism

but also a compliment for whetting the appetite. A James Hart time-line in the front of the volume would be helpful, and so would a conclusion and summing up instead of an abrupt ending.

Proper citations are lacking, something we would not expect from an English professor. Too many statements stand without documentation—the summary history of cholera, a letter in the “Church Historian’s Office” (what collection?), Sabina’s obituary, James’ obituary, Maud Osmond Cook’s quote, Emily’s detailed New Year’s menu, and the Osmond and Paterson diaries, to name a few. Some citations (Chard thesis and Pratt article) should be footnotes rather than editorial insertions. And a bibliography is needed.

The book is packaged nicely—good layout, binding, illustrations and indexing. Typesetting of inserted materials in smaller type is not always consistent. Pictures are well chosen and useful, but for some reason, no picture is included of the Hart diaries or of a diary entry in James’ handwriting. Maps too are needed to help general readers and relatives not familiar with Huntingdonshire and St. Heliers and the Bear Lake region.

Despite the above, *Mormon in Motion* is a cut above most published family history books. It is an ambitious project generally well done. While not great or definitive Mormon biography, it does provide badly needed information. As an edited diary it is faithfully transcribed and carefully annotated, although a cut below the editing standards of Juanita Brooks or Dean Jessee. Overall Dr. Hart has given us a solid contribution to Mormon history sources for which he deserves professional credit. Library shelves devoted to Utah, Idaho or Mormon history need this book.

It is hoped the James Hart descendants will be sensitive enough to obtain and appreciate the fine family history gift Dr. Hart has painstakingly produced for them and for the scholarly world.

The Unreliable Narrator: Or, A Detour Through Pecos

Little Sins, by Patricia Hart Molen, New York City: Leisure Books, 1980, 206 pp. \$1.75 (paperback). May be ordered from the publisher, P.O. Box 270, Norwalk, CT 06852; add \$.50 for shipping costs.

Reviewed by SUSAN HOWE, editor of Exponent II. Reprinted by permission from the Newsletter of the Association for Mormon Letters.

"What was a nice girl like Florence doing in a Cuban bordello—stone cold dead?" As the question from the cover indicates, this paperback is packaged to sell as a murder mystery, the kind one picks up in the supermarket or airport. Flossie Robertson, twenty-five-year-old journalist from Pecos, Utah, has been sent by the *New Woman* magazine to cover the 26th of July celebration in Cuba. But on the day of the festivities, which Flossie is supposed to be covering in Santiago, she is found murdered in a cheap Havana hotel that rents rooms by the hour, hit on the head with a bottle of rum. The story opens as Fred Wright, life-long friend and next-door neighbor of Flossie, is asked by the Robertson family to go to Cuba to retrieve the body. When Fred arrives in Havana, he discovers that Flossie's remains have already been cremated, so he sends home the ashes and stays to unravel the mystery of the killing. Sounds like a tidy, typical murder mystery plot.

But the book wants to be more than a typical mystery. As the author goes through the customary search-out-the-suspects-and-discover-the-murderer formula, she superimposes on this structure a gradual revelation of the relationship that has developed over the years between Flossie and Fred and a look at their experiences within juktah Mormon culture, to show its part in forming them into the individuals they have become. The second structure finally becomes more important than the first. By the end of the

novel one knows much more about Pecos, Utah than about Havana, Cuba.

The solution to the murder is almost incidental. The parts of the plot that deal with the discovery of the murderer seem contrived and superficial, and finally are not very interesting. The value of this book is in the deeper material it offers about Fred and Flossie, an examination into the lives of two young adults of Mormon background, disillusioned with their faith and the people around them.

The juxtaposition of Cuba and Utah is possible because Fred narrates the novel and Fred is prone to reminisce. One of the book's chapters is entitled "The Unreliable Narrator, or Fred Takes a Detour." As a narrator, Fred is certainly unreliable and he is usually taking a detour. He is apt at any moment to go off on whatever subject suggests itself to his quick but unfocused mind. His allusions and asides are clever to the point of tedium and some of them just plain don't make sense. Despite those faults, however, Fred paints a fairly vivid picture of life in Pecos.

In creating this imaginary Utah town in which one can recognize characteristics of Ogden, Provo, Logan and Salt Lake City, if not the entire state, Molen manages to satirize just about everything there is to satirize about Utah Mormon culture. For instance, Pecos is situated on a polluted lake, across from the Moriancumer Cast-Iron Rod Company. The local newspaper is the *Pecos Examiner* (Flossie calls it the *Substandard Examiner*). In Pecos there are both a college and a university—the Mormon-run Andrew Young College, a two-year school, named for either a son or a grandson of Brigham Young (there is a discrepancy in the novel on this point); and University of Northern Utah, the four-year school with a half-Mormon, half-Gentile population. The president of Andrew Young is Houston Cluster, a lawyer and "local interpreter of the Constitution," who ensures

the morality of his faculty by having their wastebaskets checked for Coke cans. The broadcaster of the church television station is Orson Spencer Knurd (silent K); wayward youth and other hardies are sent on "wild survival;" and C. Carey Lambert has a popular book out called *I Raise You/ I Call You*, half of which is written on the right-hand side of the page, and the other half of which is upside down on the left-hand side of the page. One needs only a little exposure to Utah Mormon culture to see the reality behind this fiction.

As Fred seeks Flossie's killer among the Fidel-inspired Cubans of Havana (all of whom, interestingly, lack the hostility towards the United States and its citizens that I expected), he is reminded of Utah. The author's device is to have Fred compare the politically-converted Cubans, who are euphoric in their praise of Castro and post-revolution Cuba, with the religiously-converted Mormons who are just as zealous and singleminded in the defense of their faith. This comparison enables Fred to resolve his animosity toward the Mormons in his home town and leave Peadillo forever. The story is finally Fred's.

The book does have some problems. One of them is the way Fred tells the story. Another is the overall scheme. The attempt to join an in-depth look at Fred and Flossie with a lightweight murder mystery is not entirely successful. Molen can do either type of fiction well, as is evident from her serious stories "Skim Milk," "Mormon Miracle Pageant," and "Always the Nazi War Criminal," and her three-part murder mystery in *Utah Holiday* magazine. But the two types of material just do not come together well in the same piece.

It is my opinion that Patricia Hart Molen is one of our most gifted young writers and that she has a great deal to contribute to our literature. She is very skilled at development, at balance—the structure beneath the work—and she certainly knows how to tell a good story. I would hope, personally, that in the future she will turn more of her attention to her deeper material. Although, in the short run, serious fiction may be more difficult to publish, in the long run it will be of most value to us and to her as well.

Not Quite a Butterfly

The Cocoon by Cheryl Ann Baxter, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 90 pp., \$4.95.

Reviewed by GLADYS C. FARMER who is an author, teacher, musician, mother of five and occasional housewife living in Provo, Utah.

A book as personal as Cheryl Baxter's *The Cocoon* can't help but evoke a very personal response. I share with the main characters of the book a career as a teacher, an abiding interest in French and an unforgettable experience while doing temple work for a relative. As a result, I related to this short and simple book with much emotion.

Most well-read church members shy away from books that even hint of preach-

iness or schmaltz. Ordinarily I would not have read a Deseret Book publication catalogued under "genealogy." *The Cocoon*, however, was a pleasant surprise: the moral was clear, it was generally well written, the tears occasionally flowed freely and only the most cynical reader would be "put off" by its contents.

The personal interplay between Carrie Langué, a young, empathetic student who craves love, and Marjorie Thorpe, her demanding, emotionally scarred French teacher, is a sensitive drama of communication. In fact, one could eliminate the last thirty pages and market the book nationally as a poignant short story of a human relationship.

The last third of the book, a report of Carrie's conversion and her subsequent genealogical research and temple work for

her friend, is not necessary to make it a meaningful story. Although it brings the story to a rewarding conclusion, it not only limits the market to an LDS audience, but it reads like an appendix.

The book is divided into three sections: Cocoon, Metamorphosis and Flight. The symbolism is obvious. In the "Cocoon" the reader is intimately drawn into the lives of two women who are so wrapped up in personal needs that they are unable to break out of their protective shells without the warmth of each other's love. Mrs. Baxter describes their relationship skillfully and engagingly. The "Metamorphosis" gives a glimpse of the changes that self-confidence has brought to their lives: marriage for Carrie and a pleasure-filled excursion for Mme. Thorpe. The "Flight" records that final step which most of us fail to take. Carrie puts forth the effort required to free her friend (taken by unexpected death) for an eternal journey.

The subject matter of the last two sections is as lofty as that of the first; the presentation is not. The reader is suddenly removed from the intimacy that was so entrancing throughout the first sixty pages and is simply told the next eleven years of history in seven letters and twenty-one journal entries. One entry is a clear thesis statement of the entire book:

"I have gained a personal testimony that relationships are eternal and are meant to be so, that we form friendships in the pre-existence that may continue during our second estate. I believe that those friendships will continue and endure through eternities. This is why it is so hard for us to part with someone we love . . . Instinctively we know that loneliness is not natural . . ."

I had, earlier in the book, *felt* the pain of loneliness and the healing power of love. I was deeply moved by it. It seemed unnecessary to be told the conclusions I had already reached.

I understand the difficulty of trying to communicate the intense spiritual feelings associated with doing temple work for someone you love. Experiences that are uniquely Mormon are seldom communicated convincingly in writing, even to an LDS audience. Perhaps Mrs. Baxter felt that a simple understatement would be preferable to a didactic novel on the joys of temple work. If so, she was right. However, the first section of the book shows that she does have the skill to handle emotional subject matter with sensitivity and control. I wish that she had attempted to treat the "Flight" in the same way.

Clay County for Young Readers

As Wide As the River, by Dean Hughes, Salt Lake City, Deseret Book Company, 1980. Grade 5 Up. \$6.95.

Reviewed by KATHRYN GARDNER, *who completed a master's degree in library science and instructional media at Indiana University and presently resides in Davis, California.*

Twelve-year-old Joseph Williams and his family have settled in Clay County, Missouri, following their expulsion by mobs in Jackson County. Robbed of his strength by a brutal beating, Joseph's father, Mat-

thew Williams, fights an unrelenting fever which saps his body and an unforgiving heart which numbs his spirit. Joseph, younger than sixteen-year-old Matthew, finds it difficult to bend to the authority of his weakened father or his more obedient older brother and longs to free himself from the drudgery of the never-ending farm work and poverty. He sees the more romantic life of the river men as an answer to the frustrations and helplessness he feels. He cannot accept the events and trials of the Saints in Jackson and Clay Counties without at least trying to change things.

The personalities of this believable family react in such a way that the reader is able to feel the terror of the times for Mormons seeking at first mere survival and then an opportunity to grow stronger physically and spiritually in a hostile land at a time when even the Prophet Joseph Smith seems dismayed at the chastisement of the Saints.

As Wide As the River deals with a family's attempt at coping with and adjusting to violence, terror, loss and a subsequent search for identity as individuals and as a family. As the body of Saints has to deal with its expulsion from Jackson County and eventually from Clay County with an absence of immediate leadership from the prophet, so does the Williams family have to draw upon its own inner resources without its patriarch. Mother Elizabeth, Father Matthew and Joseph, all in their own ways, have to learn various aspects of obedience and deal with the loss of something especially dear. Father's loss of physical strength, his own paralyzing hatred toward the Jackson County mob and fear for the welfare of his family require almost more than he can give. Mother's loss of security and anger that her husband would leave her to cope

alone almost destroy her ability to nurture her family. Young, impetuous Joseph, so determined to do things in his own way, has to give up his illusions of going back to Jackson County, his desire for God to strike back at their enemies and his dream of the grandeur of becoming a river pilot. Obedience comes hard for Joseph, and alienation from his family requires him to grow in ways that run against his grain. Even steady, reliable Matthew, who is so determined to carry out the promises made to his father, learns the strength found in forgiving and understanding.

Ollie, the young boy who plays the interesting role of Joseph's protector, has an important part in Joseph's search for himself and will undoubtedly play an even larger role in the story of this family's saga in subsequent books.

As this family picks up the pieces and gathers strength to meet the exodus from Clay County, so the body of Saints nears readiness to meet the purifying forces to be unleashed in the near future.

As Wide As the River follows *Under the Same Sky*, but can be enjoyed on its own merits. I hope the author will carry this family through several more volumes.

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General guidelines.

1. Subject headings appear in CAPITALS. Occasionally an author will also be listed as a subject.
2. Articles are set off by quotation marks; only the page number on which an article begins is listed.
3. Within an entry, names in sub-headings are listed alphabetically by *first* name. Thus, Brigham Young will precede Joseph Smith.
4. The following abbreviations are used: (L) designates a letter-to-the-editor; (R) designated a book review, and (F) a film review.

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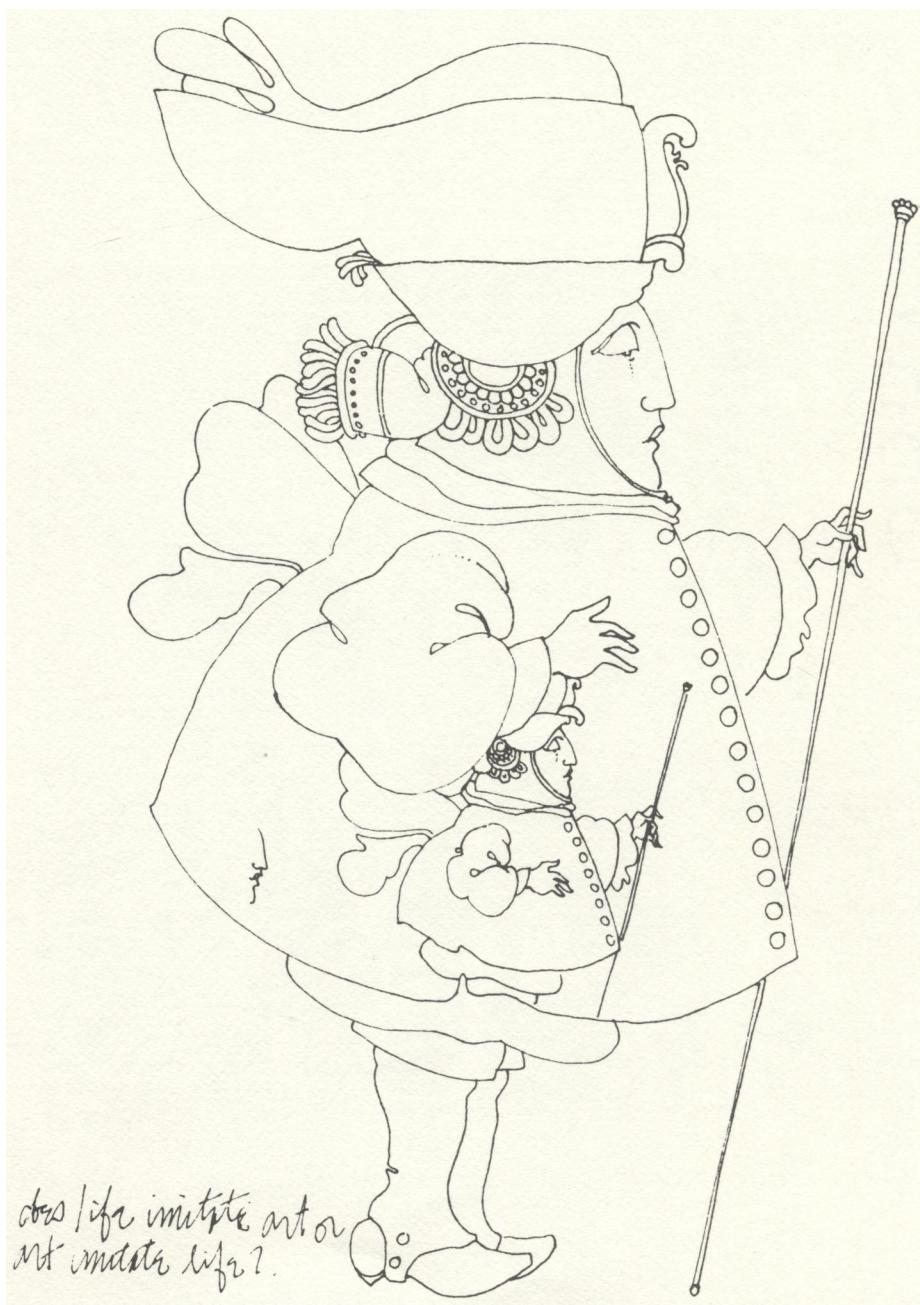
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- YOUNG, BRIGHAM, and controversy with Orson Pratt, (L) David S. Alleman, 1/6; Gary

Sturgess, 1/4; Heinz Platzer, 1/4; Karl Sandberg, 1/6; Merle H. Graffam, 1/5; R. Paul Cra-croft, 1/6; and the Word of Wisdom, 3/66; review of biography, 1/104

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ZITZ EVANCHI, CAROLINE "CARRIE," pho-tograph of, 4/200
ZUNDEL, LE ORA, photograph of, 4/193



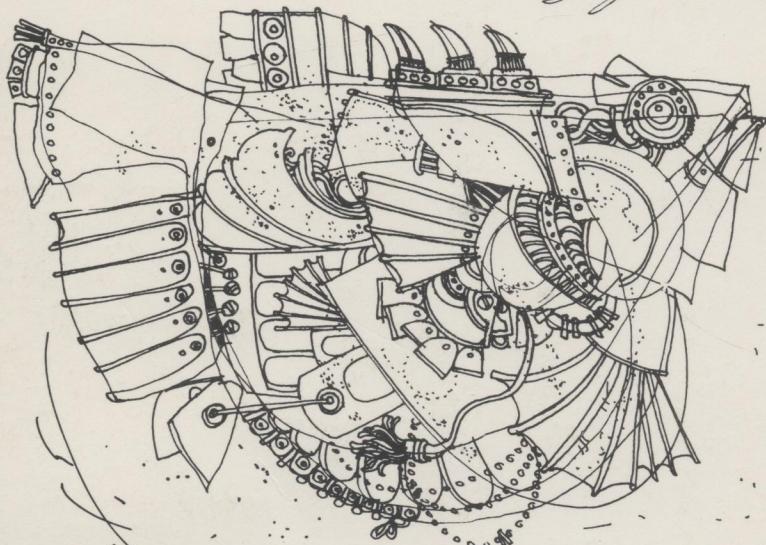
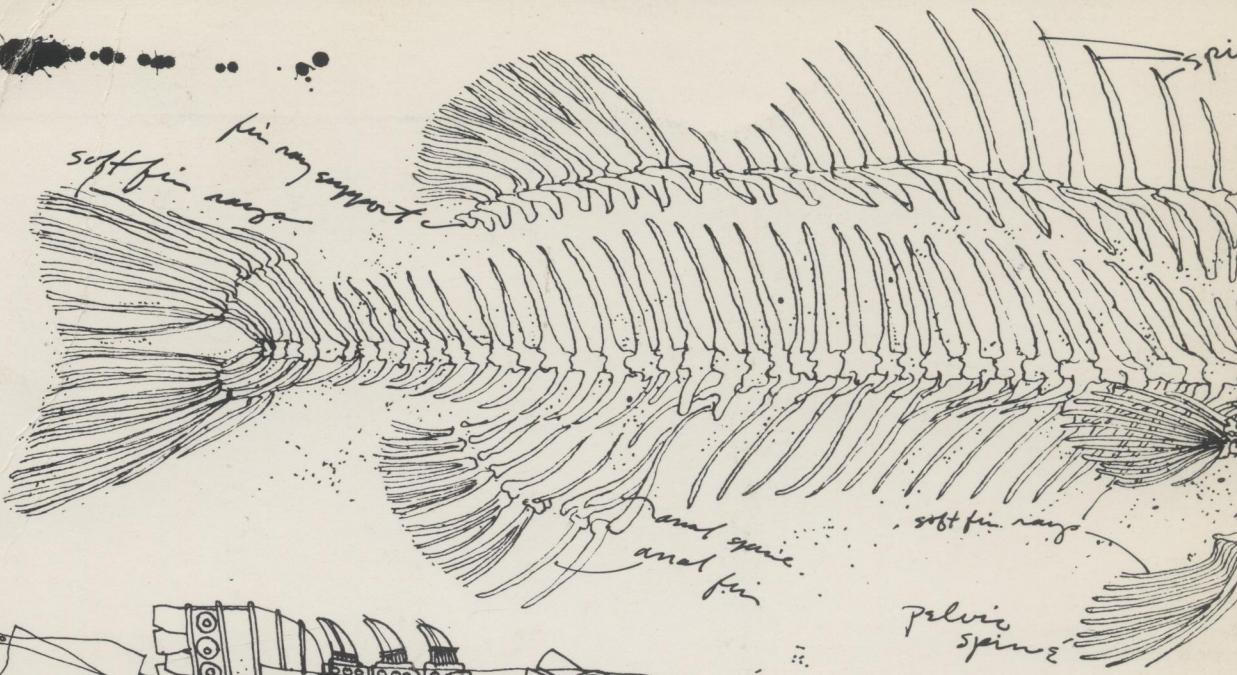
A Calling

We are pleased to announce the appointment of L. Jackson Newell and Linda King Newell as co-editors of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, with Lavina Fielding Anderson as Associate Editor, Fred Esplin as Business Manager and Randall Mackey as Legal Counsel. This new Executive Committee will be joined by Allen Roberts and Julie Randall at Nine Exchange Place, 215 Boston Building in Salt Lake City, Utah 84111. The editors will be appointing more staff members and a new Board of Editors in the next few months.

Dr. Newell is Dean of the College of Liberal Education at the University of Utah and former faculty member at the U. of New Hampshire, Deep Springs College, and Clemson University. He was educated at Duke and Ohio State Universities. Linda King Newell is the author, with Valeen Avery, of the forthcoming biography of Emma Smith to be published by Doubleday. She is also the winner of the Mormon History Association's best article award for "A Gift Given, a Gift Taken" (published in *Sunstone*). The Newells, parents of four children, bring to *Dialogue* a strong academic background and long experience in church and community work. They are both committed to *Dialogue* as an outlet for independent scholarly thought on Mormon culture, history, literature and theology. Jack, a convert to the Church in his youth, reports that when he was a young scholar, *Dialogue* made the difference between commitment and disillusionment. "I intend to help the journal remain a positive force for those who seek a lively, graceful balance between faith and reason."

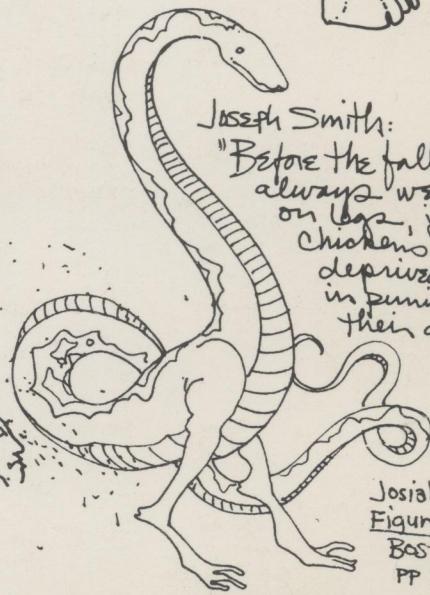
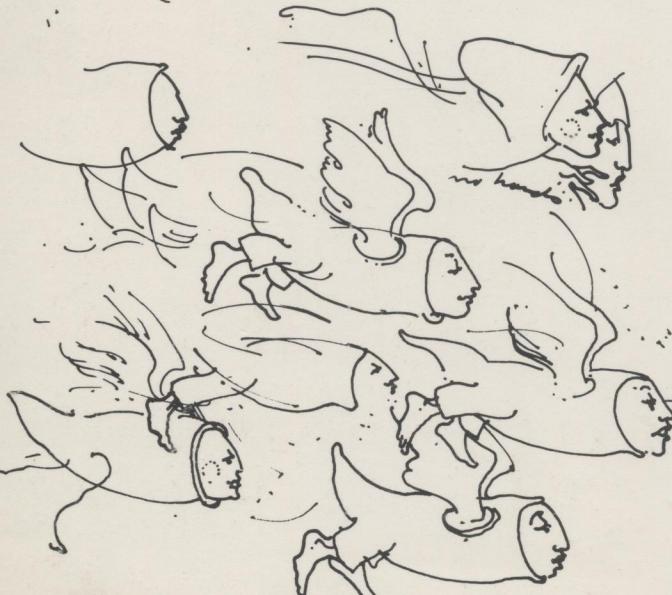
Lavina Fielding Anderson, President of Editing Inc., is well-known to Mormon readers and writers. Formerly an assistant editor on the *Ensign*, she is published in many independent church publications. Fred Esplin, a long time member of *Dialogue*'s Board of Editors, is Station Manager of KUED at the University of Utah. Randall Mackey, a partner in the firm of Fabian and Clendenin, has degrees from Utah, Harvard, Columbia and Oxford universities. Allen Roberts is a designer/historic preservation consultant and former co-editor of *Sunstone*. Julie Randall is a graduate in English from the B.Y.U. and the *Dialogue* B.Y.U. intern for 1982.

Mary L. Bradford
Lester E. Bush, Jr.
Alice A. Pottmyer
P. Royal Shipp
David A. Stewart



mechanical fish - rusty patina
 old brass and iron - by one lamp
 with port hole for eye with a little
 guy driving it - maybe its a submarine
 invented by guys who based it on a real
 fish - they were using nature as the
 pattern for their technology.

try these characters
 with clown hooves.



Joseph Smith:
 "Before the fall, snakes
 always went about
 on legs, just like
 chickens. They were
 deprived of them
 in punishment for
 their agency in
 the ruin
 of man."

Josiah Quincy
 Figures of the Past
 Boston, 1883
 PP 386-387