

BOOK NOTES

Eric A. Eliason, ed. *Mormons and Mormonism: An Introduction to an American World Religion*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001. ix + 250 pp., with index. \$17.95 (paperback); \$39.95 (hardback).

This collection of eleven Mormon studies makes available to the Saints the work of such scholars as Nathan O. Hatch, Richard T. Hughes, and Rodney Stark, each well known for his work on American religion and its history. Eliason has augmented these papers with some of the better work by Latter-day Saints and others. However, only a few of the essays have been revised or updated for this volume. It is noteworthy that Eliason has reprinted a portion of Terryl L. Givens, *The Viper on the Hearth: Mormons, Myths, and the Construction of Heresy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 76–93. This remarkable book—a major study in anti-Mormon rhetoric—was not widely known by Latter-day Saints until the publication in 2002 by Oxford University Press of Givens's *By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture That Launched a New World Religion*. The other essays are much better known to Latter-day Saint scholars. Eliason's introduction to this volume constitutes a well-documented, candid overview of the range of topics covered in this anthology.

Irving Hexham. *Pocket Dictionary of New Religious Movements.* Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2001. 120 pp. \$6.99.

Irving Hexham, a professor of religion at the University of Calgary, provides brief definitions or descriptions of over four hundred “groups, individuals and ideas” associated in some way with what are now being called “new religious movements.” Hexham has provided a useful little reference tool that covers a host of exotic topics and individuals. One finds several entries on items of interest to Latter-day Saints, including “Joseph Smith,” “Mormons,” “cult,” “cult apologist,” “countercult,” “Christian Research Institute,” and “Martin, Walter (1928–1989).” Hexham does not entirely shy away from difficult issues. For example, he indicates that “Dr.” Martin “shaped popular Christian attitudes to contemporary religions” but that he “had a penchant for ad hominem arguments.” The information in the *Pocket Dictionary* seems to be both nonpolemical and generally accurate. Hexham maintains an interesting Web page, found at www.ucalgary.ca/~hexham/ as recently as 17 March 2003. In addition to his interest in the contemporary array of different and competing religious movements, he manifests his own piety in a series of Christian travel guides, published by Zondervan, to such places as Great Britain, Italy, Germany, and France.

Paul Y. Hoskisson, ed. *Historicity and the Latter-day Saint Scriptures.* Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2001. ix + 248 pp. \$29.95.

On 8–9 February 1996, a conference on historical authenticity, the scriptures, and the faith of the Saints, organized by Paul Y. Hoskisson, was held at Brigham Young University. This volume, edited by Hoskisson, contains a selection of many, but not all, of the papers read at this conference. Some have been revised or heavily edited. A previously published address (delivered on 29 October 1993 at the annual dinner of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies) by Elder Dallin H. Oaks has been included in this collection

of essays, as has an essay by James E. Faulconer. This volume contains the introductory remarks made at the conference by Elder Alexander B. Morrison, as well as essays related in various ways to the general topic by John Gee and Stephen D. Ricks, Hoskisson, Kent P. Jackson, Robert J. Matthews, Louis C. Midgley, Robert L. Millett, Daniel C. Peterson, and John S. Tanner. The volume has no index.

Andrew Newberg, Eugene d'Aquili, and Vince Rause. *Why God Won't Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2002. 234 pp., with references and index. \$14.00.

This is a popularized version of d'Aquili and Newberg's *The Mystical Mind: Probing the Biology of Religious Experience* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1999). Dr. d'Aquili, a clinical assistant professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, passed away in 1998 before this book was completed. Rause is a journalist, and Newberg is an M.D. working in the Department of Radiology in the Division of Nuclear Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, where he also teaches Religious Studies. The thesis is that meditation is a voyage inward in which the conscious mind is blotted out in an effort to connect with a deep part of ourselves. The result is neurotheology (or the neurobiology of mystical experience). The argument is that rhythmic stimulation yields mystical union with something they define as "God" in the interior of self-consciousness. The authors build on Evelyn Underhill's classic *Mysticism* (first edition, 1911, later much revised) by providing what they describe as "natural causes for 'supernatural' events" (p. 99). Mystical experiences are not thereby treated as mere illusions; they are, instead, understood as neurological events generated by various exercises crafted by mystics to produce those experiences and thereby resolve tensions in the life of the mystic. The point of meditative exercises, according to d'Aquili and Newberg, is to satisfy the need to reduce an otherwise intolerable anxiety generated by the experience of opposites in life. The result of such self-induced neurological brain patterns is a kind of "experience" of "union," as the brain makes the conscious mind, of an inner

“transcendence” over the exterior world. This “neurotheology” is used to account for the origins of all religion, ritual, and myth. Such an explanation is, of course, reductionist.

Joy M. Osborn. *The Book of Mormon—The Stick of Joseph: Evidences That Prove the Book of Mormon to Be a True Record of a Remnant of Joseph*, 2nd ed. Salt Lake City: Ensign Publishing, 2000. 287 pp., with bibliography. \$17.95.

In forty-three brief chapters, Joy Osborn discusses a wide array of topics related to the origin, purposes, claims, and evidences of the Book of Mormon. Her work offers a summary for persons new to the study of this scripture and affords a review for the more informed reader. It may also point the way for further in-depth study. Topics in part 1 include the patriarch Joseph and his importance in understanding the Book of Mormon, the scattering and gathering of Israel, Joseph Smith and the origins of the book, apostasy and restoration, biblical relationships, and the Book of Mormon as a second witness for Christ. Part 2 offers a concise review of many evidences for the book, including those well established and others of interest but more speculative. Among the topics are Nephite record keeping, the relevance of the Popol Vuh and other records, temples, fortresses and types of construction in ancient America, migrations, the mission of Columbus, and ancient Christian influence. A minimal bibliography is included.

LaMar Petersen. *The Creation of the Book of Mormon: A Historical Inquiry*. Salt Lake City: Freethinker Press, 1998 (hardback); 2000 (paperback). xxvi + 259 pp., with selected bibliography, appendix, and index. \$16.95 (hardback); \$15.95 (paperback).

In this book, LaMar Petersen deals with the Book of Mormon by offering a pedestrian, essentially anti-Mormon account of the early visions of Joseph Smith, the use of seer stones in its recovery, the witnesses to the plates, and so forth. His survey of arguments for and against the Book of Mormon is perfunctory. Hence, one will not find

a careful historical examination of the arguments for and against the truth of the Book of Mormon, though this is exactly what is promised. An appendix entitled “Book of Mormon Archaeological Tests” is an edited version of chapter 5 of Stan Larson’s *Quest for the Golden Plates: Thomas Stuart Ferguson’s Search for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Freethinker Press/Smith Associates, 1996), 175–234. Larson (pp. 169–230) attempts to argue that the presumed defection from the faith of Ferguson, an amateur archaeologist, somehow settles the question of archaeology and the Book of Mormon. Petersen was either unaware of recent scholarship or he dealt with it superficially.

John Sillito and Susan Staker, eds. *Mormon Mavericks: Essays on Dissenters*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002. xi + 376 pp. \$21.95.

This is a collection of essays lionizing former Latter-day Saints, dissidents, and cultural Mormons. The editors characterize the so-called “mavericks” they celebrate as “a small part of the larger story of Mormonism” (p. ix). They turn rebellious types into heroes by seeing them—presumably unlike faithful Saints—as “motivated by the desire to promote truth in the face of falsehood” (p. x). The dissenters, apostates, and rebels include James Strang, T. B. H. and Fanny Stenhouse, Amasa Lyman, and Samuel Woolley Taylor. Of the thirteen essays in this anthology, only two are published here for the first time. One of these—Brigham D. Madsen’s panegyric for Sterling McMurrin—is not genuinely original, since it is heavily dependent on the published work of L. Jackson Newell and others. The one genuinely new and significant contribution, if one can get past the silly title, is Lavina Fielding Anderson’s “DNA Mormon: D. Michael Quinn” (pp. 329–63). Anderson at least partially demythologizes Quinn by removing portions of the veil he has constructed to hide, even from himself—she reluctantly grants—the real reasons for his excommunication. She has managed to draw, from materials Quinn provided her, a sympathetic and somewhat more accurate and less heroic picture of his eccentricities than has previously been publicly available (pp. 347–55). Quinn

has found peace, she claims, “despite those who have wronged him in sometimes mean-spirited and bullying ways” (p. 360). Like some of the other authors of the essays reprinted in this volume, Anderson is herself no stranger to operating outside the mainstream of the faith and fellowship of the Saints. This volume has no index.

Lucy Mack Smith. *Lucy’s Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith’s Family Memoir*, edited by Lavina Fielding Anderson, introduction by Irene M. Bates. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001. ix + 947 pp., with biographical summaries, bibliography, and index. \$44.95.

The memoir of Lucy Mack Smith, mother of Joseph Smith the prophet, is an important primary source for much of the history of Joseph and the Smith family. Many details are given that are not found elsewhere. Written in Nauvoo after the martyrdom of Joseph and his brother Hyrum in 1844, Lucy’s history was first published by Orson Pratt at Liverpool in 1853. It has since had a complicated publishing history, with substantial editing and revision at times. The present editor, Lavina Fielding Anderson, has included a detailed account of the textual history of the book, both in its initial preparation and in past efforts to publish it. She has also provided many annotations throughout, as well as an introduction on “The Domestic Spirituality of Lucy Mack Smith.” Irene M. Bates has contributed an introductory essay to help place Lucy’s work in historical perspective. A section in the back gives biographical summaries of individuals named in the book. This new publication of Lucy’s history is the most complete and accurate edition now available for study and scholarly use.

To All the World: The Book of Mormon Articles from the Encyclopedia of Mormonism. Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2000. xvii + 343 pp., with index of passages. \$15.95.

Following the landmark publication by Macmillan of the four-volume *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* in 1992, Daniel H. Ludlow, S. Kent

Brown, and John W. Welch selected over 150 articles about “the contents, peoples, teachings, and coming forth of the Book of Mormon” (p. vii). These concise articles bring into one volume material dealing with the Book of Mormon in an accessible, large-paperback format. Many articles contain a bibliography, and some additional sources have been included in this edition. The statements and opinions of this book do not represent the official position of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints but are intended to “serve as a valuable introduction to the Book of Mormon, leading readers into its pages and especially into its covenantal testament of and with the Savior Jesus Christ” (p. vii).

Chris Tolworthy. *The Bible Says 1830*, 2nd ed. Lincoln, Nebr.: Writers Club, 2002. v + 116 pp., with appendixes. \$11.95.

This small volume reviews matters of biblical chronology and prophecy and looks forward to the last days and the establishment of the kingdom of God as prophesied in the book of Daniel. Tolworthy reviews past efforts to determine the chronology, and he attempts to show the significance of the year 1830 as a pivotal time anticipated by Bible prophecy. Corresponding with the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the restoration of scripture and the fulness of the gospel, the year 1830 is seen not only as a time when such prophecy was fulfilled, but also as a religious turning point with the climax of the Second Great Awakening. Additionally, the year marks the establishment of railways, a development that “sparked economic, political, philosophical, theological and technological revolutions that are still taking place” (p. 46). Appendixes treat the message of the gospel, additional discussion of Daniel’s prophecy, and the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A bibliography is not included, but the study has many footnotes, usually cited with sufficient completeness that a bibliography could be developed.

Bryan Waterman, ed. *The Prophet Puzzle: Interpretive Essays on Joseph Smith*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999. xiii + 352 pp. \$18.95.

The editor of these fifteen essays dealing with Joseph Smith published over the past three decades grants that, “for believing Mormons, Smith’s revelations and translations are best understood literally” (p. xi). He then boasts that “many of the essays collected” in this volume treat the Book of Mormon and other special divine revelations as mere windows into Joseph Smith’s own mind (p. xi)—that is, as explicit attempts to explain away his truth claims. Examples include the efforts of Richard D. Anderson, Lawrence Foster, and Gary Bergera to follow in the footsteps of Fawn Brodie’s effort to psychoanalyze Joseph Smith. Three of the essays included in this anthology are published here for the first time. “Joseph Smith as Translator,” by Richard Bushman, is the most significant. This collection, however, is problematic. For example, Jan Shipps publicly repudiated her essay entitled “The Prophet Puzzle” (originally published in 1974) at the Mormon History Association meetings held at Snowbird, Utah, in May 1996, when she commented on Dan Vogel’s effort to explain away Joseph Smith’s prophetic truth claims. Her essay is, like all of the others reprinted in this anthology, given without revision or updating of any kind. This volume has no index.