

Recent LDS Scholar observations favoring a modern origin for the Book of Mormon

While most of these are likely to explain their individual observations in other ways, the following work or observations by believing LDS scholars—especially when viewed collectively—appear to lend weight to the modern origin hypothesis for the existence of the Book of Mormon:

1. Nick Frederick, [BYU Religion Professor](#) — The Book of Mormon [contains at least 650 phrases that can be convincingly be shown to be from the New Testament]({{ “/nt-in-bom-lhales-interview-frederick/” | relative_url }}) (i.e., not accidental). Language and themes from the New Testament are deliberately used in the Book of Mormon.

what we have here is **a conscious attempt to bring the language of the Book of Revelation into the Book of Mormon.**

other times the sequence of those proximity phrases will **follow the same sequence in both the New Testament and in the Book of Mormon**, which, again, suggests to me that we have a conscious attempt to draw upon the language of the New Testament in the Book of Mormon.

Significance: We do not expect ancient authors to be pulling extensively from New Testament phraseology and themes in such a manner since the NT had not even been written at the time ancient authors were first engraving the plates and the books being pulled from were not transmitted by Jesus in the New World, at least based on the record of what was transmitted.

2. Thomas Wayment, [BYU Religion Professor](#) — Joseph Smith [plagiarised from Adam Clarke’s famous commentary on the Bible](#) in producing the JST.

Our research has revealed that the number of direct parallels between Smith’s translation and Adam Clarke’s biblical commentary are simply too numerous and explicit to posit happenstance or coincidental overlap. **The parallels between the two texts number into the hundreds**, a number that is well beyond the limits of this paper to discuss. A few of them, however, **demonstrate Smith’s open reliance upon Clarke and establish that he was inclined to**

lean on Clarke’s commentary for matters of history, textual questions, clarification of wording, and theological nuance.

Significance: Joseph Smith was both willing and able to weave external works from his time into religious documents, and he relied on Clarke without drawing mention from any of his scribes.

3. Grant Hardy, [a foremost LDS Scholar on the Book of Mormon](#) — The Isaiah we see in the Book of Mormon is [not what we would expect to see from someone who came from Jerusalem in 600BC]({{ “/excerpt-on-isaiah-from-hardys-readers-guide/” | relative_url }}).

Latter-day Saints sometimes brush such criticism [that the Book of Mormon pulls from deutero-Isaiah] aside, asserting that such interpretations are simply the work of academics who do not believe in prophecy, but **this is clearly an inadequate (and inaccurate) response to a significant body of detailed historical and literary analysis.**

Recent Isaiah scholarship has moved ... in favor of seeing the book of Isaiah as the product of several centuries of intensive redaction and accretion. In other words, **even Isaiah 2–14 would have looked very different in Nephi’s time than it did four hundred years later at the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls**, when it was quite similar to what we have today.

Significance: We do not expect KJV Isaiah (even in its slightly modified form) to be in the Book of Mormon as it is represented were it a representation of an ancient text.

4. David Bokovoy, [LDS Scholar at USU](#) — The idea that Deutero-Isaiah chapters were composed after the Babylonian exile (which occurred after Lehi left Jerusalem) is [very well supported](#).

We might wonder how is it possible that Sparks can write to an evangelical audience and express such confidence in the accuracy of the mainstream scholarly perspective concerning Deutero-Isaiah. Perhaps it is because **the evidence for the mainstream view is so compelling**. And this evidence simply has to be accommodated for by people of faith, including Latter-day Saints.

Significance: The Book of Mormon [pulls fairly extensively from Deutero-Isaiah](#) and we don’t expect that the Nephites would have had Deutero-Isaiah available in the form it’s found in the KJV Bible.

5. Lincoln Blummell, [BYU Religion Professor](#) — notes that the end of Mark, which is quoted in the Book of Mormon by Moroni, [is of dubious origin](#).

Mark 16:8 is currently the earliest attested ending for Mark’s gospel (appearing in Codex Sinaiticus [] and Codex Vaticanus [B] [the ear-

liest complete manuscripts of Mark]), its abruptness is problematic ...

... others [of the early Christian fathers] seem not to have known about them [Mark 16:9–20] or were unsure of their authenticity ...

Significance: Moroni states that Jesus spoke to the disciples in the New World using [the exact verbiage from a section of Mark that is almost certainly a later addition]({{ "/moroni-quotes-sections-of-mark-dubious-origin/" | relative_url }}) to the book of Mark.

6. Royal Skousen, [BYU linguistics and English Professor](#) — the BoM grapples with [nuances in late 1600s theology](#).

there is considerable evidence that the issues and the cultural milieu of the text date more from the late 1600s than the early 1800s

Significance: We do not expect ancient authors to have the context by which to weigh in on these debates with any sophistication. [However, there are numerous reasons we might expect reference to older theological debates from someone writing in the 1800s about religious matters, though.]

7. Richard Bushman, famous LDS Historian and [advisor of the Joseph Smith Papers Project](#) made [two public observations about the early 1800s literature in the Book of Mormon]({{ "/bushman-on-19th-century-phrasing-and-theology-in-the-book-of-mormon/" | relative_url }}):

... there is phrasing everywhere—**long phrases that if you google them you will find them in 19th century writings. The theology of the Book of Mormon is very much 19th century theology, and it reads like a 19th century understanding of the Hebrew Bible as an Old Testament.**

The Book of Mormon has a lot of nineteenth-century Protestant material in it, both in terms of theology and of wording.
I am looking for an explanation of how and why it is there.

Conclusion

Most of the above scholars seem unaware of [the vast body of evidence suggesting a modern origin]({{ "/bom-parallels-to-1800s-thought/" | relative_url }}) and are likely to explain their observations using other models (for example, [an expansionist model](#) or [to expect anachronisms](#)); still, many of their honest observations lend significant credence to the possibility that the Book of Mormon was not produced by ancient minds.

Regardless, anyone who parses the early 1800s literature will observe that many, if not all, theological doctrines and themes advanced in the Book of Mormon had

[close precursors, variants, or a deep foundation in]({{ "/bom-parallels-to-1800s-thought/" | relative_url }}), the [theology and thought of the early 1800s]({{ "/documents/book_of_mormon/echoes/echoes_of_1800s.pdf" | relative_url }}).

See also

[Book of Mormon parallels to 1800s thought]({{ "/bom-parallels-to-1800s-thought/" | relative_url }})

posted [here](#) and [here](#)