

Frederik S. Kleiner

**“Experiment
upon
the Word”**

**A Post-Secular Literary Approach to
*The Book of Mormon***

“Experiment upon the Word”:
A Post-Secular Literary Approach to
The Book of Mormon

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Frederik S. Kleiner

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Erstgutachertin: Prof. Dr. Anna M. Horatschek

Zweitgutachter: Dr. Bruce W. Young

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List of Abbreviations

CoC – Community of Christ

DhvL – Ingalls, Daniel H., Jeffrey M. Masson, and M. V. Patwardhan, eds. *The Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana with the Locana of Abhinavagupta*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1990.

KDhv – Krishnamoorthy, K, ed. *Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana: Critically Edited*. 2nd ed. Delhi, Varansi, Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1982.

KJV – *The Holy Bible: Authorized King James Version*. Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1989.

LDS – Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

MW – Monier-Williams, Monier. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary: Etymologically and Philologically Arranged*. Revised 2008. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899.

Book of Mormon editions (arranged chronologically)

FE – Smith, Joseph. *The Book of Mormon*. 1st ed. Palmyra, NY: E. B. Grandin, 1830.

SE – Smith, Joseph. *The Book of Mormon*. 2nd ed. Kirtland, OH: O. Cowdery & Co., 1837.

ThE – Smith, Joseph. *The Book of Mormon*. 3rd ed. Nauvoo, IL.: Robinson and Smith, 1840.

L81 – Smith, Joseph. *The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ*. Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1981.

RAV – Smith, Joseph. *The Book of Mormon: Revised Authorized Version*. Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 2002.

RE – Hardy, Grant, ed. *The Book of Mormon: A Reader's Edition*. Urbana, Chicago, Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

- YE – Skousen, Royal, ed. *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*. New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2009.
- L13 – Smith, Joseph. *The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ*. Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 2013.
- MSE – Hardy, Grant, ed. *The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ – Maxwell Institute Study Edition*. Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 2019.

Important Characters¹

- Alma₂**: Father of Helaman₂ and first Nephite chief judge. Voice of the soliloquy in Alma XV.
- Amaleki₁**: Descendant of Jacob₂. Last narrator of the book of Omni and the narrator before Mormon₂ introduces himself.
- Ammon**, people of: Lamanites converted by the missionary work of Mosiah₂'s sons (in particular Ammon₂). Group from which Helaman₂ recruits the 2000 young soldiers.
- Amulek**: Alma₂'s missionary companion.
- Benjamin**: Father of Mosiah₂. Nephite king who receives the records from Amaleki₁ but never narrates.
- Brother of Jared**: First prophet in the book of Ether. His own name is not given in the *Book of Mormon*.
- Helaman₂**: Son of Alma₂. Nephite prophet and record-keeper and military commander at the battle for Antiparah.
- Jacob₂**: Son of Lehi₁ and younger brother of Nephi₁. Second narrator and second Nephite record-keeper. Progenitor of line of record-keepers that ends with Amaleki₁.
- Jacob₃**: Nephite dissenter and commander of the Lamanites at the battle for Mulek.
- Jaredites** (*also* people of Jared): Chronologically, the oldest group in the *Book of Mormon*.
- Joseph₁**: Great-grandson of the biblical Abraham.
- Joseph₄**: Joseph Smith Jr. as he appears in the narrative.
- Laman₁**: Son of Lehi₁ and older brother of Nephi₁. Progenitor of the Lamanites.
- Lamanites**: Generally those who descend from Laman₁. Also a cultural allegiance.

¹Cf. RE, 690–706; MSE, 634–43

Lehi₁: First prophet in the *Book of Mormon* and father of Laman₁, Nephi₁, and Jacob₂.

Lehi₃: Nephite military commander who fights alongside Moroni₁.

Limhi: Grandson of Zeniff and king of the people of who find the plates of the Jaredites.

Mormon₂: Father of Moroni₂ and principal narrator of the *Book of Mormon*.

Moroni₁: Nephite supreme military commander in the book of Alma.

Moroni₂: Son of Mormon₂ and final narrator of the *Book of Mormon*.

Mosiah₂: Nephite king who translates the plates of the Jaredites and father of the princely missionaries.

Nephi₁: Son of Lehi₁ and first narrator of the *Book of Mormon*. Progenitor of the Nephites.

Nephi₂: Son of Helaman₃ and prophet at the end of the book of Helaman.

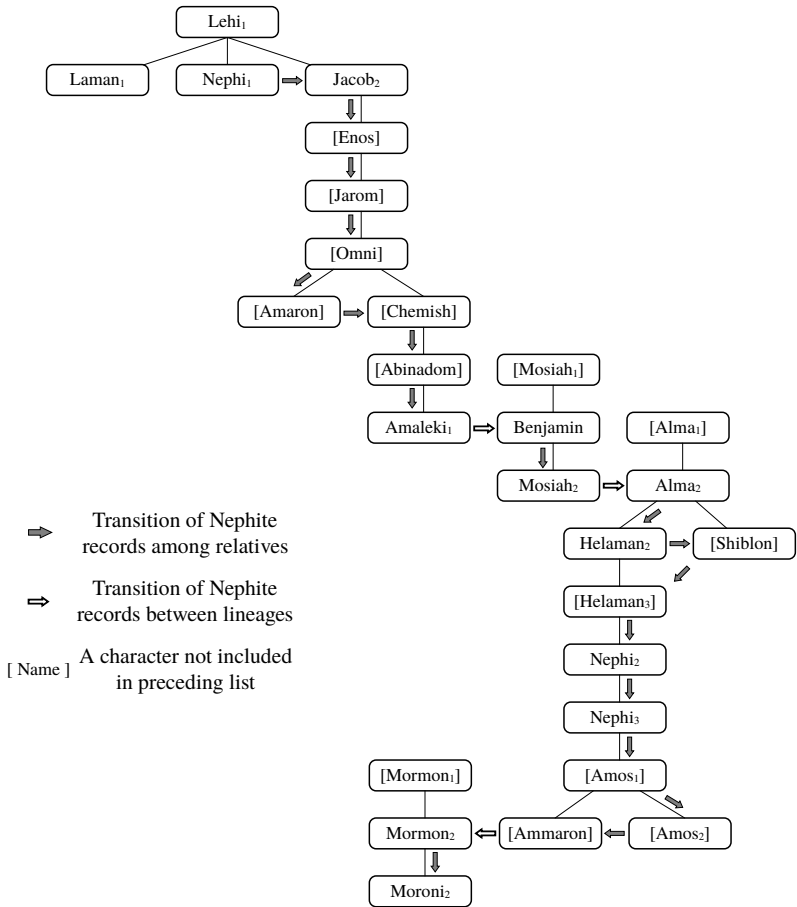
Nephi₃: Son of Nephi₂ and prophet at the time of the theophany of Christ.

Nephites (*also* people of Nephi): Generally those who descend from Nephi₁. Also a cultural allegiance.

Zarahemla, people of: Group discovered by Mosiah₁ when the Nephites emigrate in the book of Omni.

Zeniff: Leader of the emigrants mentioned by Amaleki₁.

Genealogy of Recordkeepers²



²Adapted from: John. W. Welch and J. Gregory Welch. "Who Kept the Records in the Book of Mormon?" in *Charting the Book of Mormon* (Provo: FARMS, 1999), chart 16; cf. also RE, 673, 684; MSE, 605.

German Summary

Der Status „Heilige Schrift“ entsteht dadurch, dass bestimmte Texte auf spezifische Weise behandelt und verwendet werden. Dieser Prozess der *Scripturalization* (Seth Perry) besteht aus komplexen kulturellen Prozessen, durch die Texte diesen Status empfangen und über Jahre oder gar Jahrhunderte beibehalten. Grundlage für diesen Status ist, dass solche Texte oft ein eigenes internes Textverständnis haben, besonders was ihre Produktionsgeschichte angeht. Viele von ihnen behaupten, dass sie auf einen *Schreibbefehl* (Ursula Peters) einer transzendenten Macht hin geschrieben wurden. Anstatt vom *Autor* dieser Texte zu sprechen, ist es angemessener, den Begriff *Skriptor* (Roland Barthes) zu nutzen, da diese Skriptoren – Männer wie Frauen – diese Texte nicht auf dieselbe kreative Art verfassen wie säkulare Autoren oder Autorinnen. Daher wird ein anderer interpretativer Ansatz als für säkulare Literatur benötigt.

Sakrale Texte sehen sich selbst als *vertikale* oder *metaphysische Übersetzung* (Jared Hickman) vom Transzendenten zum Irdischen. Sie werden eine *Epiphanie* (Mircea Eliade), ein Ort, wo das Heilige für den Gläubigen fassbar wird. Dieses Selbstverständnis Heiliger Schrift, gestärkt durch den Prozess der *Scripturalization* durch die Gläubigen, macht einen säkularwissenschaftlichen Zugang besonders schwierig. Allem voran steht das Problem der repräsentativen Beziehung zwischen Narrativ und faktischer Geschichte. Diese Studie betont die *Performativität* (J. L. Austin) solcher Texte anstelle der *Konstativität* historischer Fragen.

Ein Großteil der Schwierigkeiten eines säkularen Ansatzes für Heilige Schrift ist, dass diese Texte an konstativer Analyse scheitern. Narrative Heilige Schriften wie das *Mahābhārata* oder die Bibel, selbst wenn sie im Kern auf historischen Ereignissen basieren, sind manipulierte Geschichte, wo das Performative vom Konstativen kaum oder gar nicht zu trennen ist. Ausschließlich konstative Analyse der Korrespondenz-Wahrheit dieser Texte untergräbt ihren Anspruch, anstatt sie zu erfassen, da solche historischen Studien den performativen Wesenskern dieser Texte verfehlen. Diese Studie entwickelt einen Ansatz, der versucht, geschriebene Heilige Schrift in dieser komplexen Performativität als geschriebenen Text zu erfassen.

Das Studienobjekt ist das *Book of Mormon*, welches 1830 im Staat New York in den Vereinigten Staaten veröffentlicht wurde. Es wird Joseph Smith Junior zugeschrieben, dem religiösen Gründer der *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints* (Kirche Jesu Christi der Heiligen der Letzten Tage) bzw. der ‚Mormonen‘. Der Text bildet neben der Bibel den Kerntext dieser religiösen Tradition. Joseph Smith leugnet, wie andere Skriptoren, die eigene Kreativität beim Verfassen des Textes. Er behauptete – wie auch die Titelseite des Textes es zeigt –, dass es sich um eine bloße Übersetzung eines Originaltextes handle, welcher durch die Gabe Gottes geschaffen wurde. Unabhängig von der Wahrheit dieser *Standard Story* (Christopher Thomas) platziert diese Behauptung den Text und seine diegetische Entstehungsgeschichte in die lange Tradition Heiliger Schriften, zustande gekommen als Produkt eines transzendenten Schreibbefehls.

Dessen ungeachtet besitzt das *Book of Mormon* als geschriebene Heilige Schrift Eigenschaften, die auch im säkularen wissenschaftlichen Diskurs und nicht nur im religiösen von besonderem Interesse sind. Das Werk ist höchst selbstreflexiv und die Erzählstruktur wird durch den diegetischen Verfasser und Haupterzähler Mormon mediiert. Der Text ist hochkomplex und benutzt des Weiteren Strategien wie z. B. utopische Romane, indem es die Bibel, den Leser und überhaupt Geschichte und Geographie in einer Welt mit *immanenter Schlüssigkeit* (Hans-Jürgen Krysmanski) zusammenführt. Der Text wurde jedoch lange Zeit trotz dieser Komplexität selten außerhalb der religiösen Tradition, die von Joseph Smith gegründet wurde, ernsthaft betrachtet.

Die größte Schwierigkeit bei der Rezeption des *Book of Mormon* besteht darin, dass der Text und seine religiösen Ansprüche und Behauptungen mit einer fundamentalistisch-monolithischen Auslegung der Bibel konfrontiert wurden, was zu religiöser Anfeindung führte. Diese religiös begründete Problematik wurde durch den säkularen Anspruch der modernen Literaturwissenschaft verschärft, wodurch der Text bis heute fast ausschließlich innerhalb seiner eigenen religiösen Tradition wissenschaftlich rezipiert wird. Literaturwissenschaftliche Studien seitens gläubiger Forscher versuchen meist die konstative Wahrheit entweder der *Standard Story* oder der Historizität des Narrativs zu beweisen.

Grundsätzlich religiös-motivierte Studien, selbst die, die nicht explizit

an konstativen Fragen interessiert sind, gehen von dieser konstativen historischen Wahrheit aus. Dies erschwert jede säkulare wissenschaftliche Auseinandersetzung, da der Text von Gläubigen und ihren religiösen Interessen beansprucht wird, und führt zu einem gespannten *hermeneutischen Dualismus* (Hickman und Elizabeth Fenton) zwischen konkurrierenden Seiten. Diese Studie folgt dem Vorbild der Studien, die vermehrt konstative Fragen beiseitelegen, insbesondere dem Vorbild derer, die als Teil des *Affective Turn* gewertet werden können.

Um den Text literaturwissenschaftlich weitestgehend unabhängig von der Dichotomie zwischen dem Säkularen und dem Religiösen zu fassen, bezieht sich diese Studie auf die Erstausgabe aus 1830. Dies geschieht prinzipiell wegen der Zugänglichkeit dieser ersten Leser-Ausgabe des Textes. Es gibt zwar noch Teile (ca. 28%) des diktierten Manuskripts (*Original Manuscript*) und fast das komplette Manuskript, welches vom Drucker verwendet wurde (*Printer's Manuscript*), jedoch waren diese nicht für eine weite Leserschaft gedacht.

Diese technischen Texte laden nicht auf gleiche Weise zu literaturwissenschaftlicher Betrachtung ein. Die Formatierung der ersten Leser-Ausgabe (wie die beiden Folge-Ausgaben aus den Jahren 1837 und 1840, die beide noch von Joseph Smith selbst betreut wurden) ähneln mehr einem Roman als einer modernen Bibel-Ausgabe mit Fußnoten und Querverweisen. Diese ursprüngliche Formatierung muss in einem literaturwissenschaftlichen Kontext berücksichtigt werden und signalisiert überhaupt, dass literaturwissenschaftliche Methoden angemessen sind, was in bisherigen wissenschaftlichen Studien des Textes nicht mit einbezogen wurde.

Der vorliegende Ansatz, eine gebundene veröffentlichte Ausgabe einerseits als autarkes Werk und andererseits als selbstreflexiven Text zu betrachten, basiert auf der spezifischen Entwicklung des Begriffs des *Post-säkularen* (Jürgen Habermas) nach Burkhard Hasebrink und Peter Strohschneider. Ein postsäkularer Ansatz versucht, die moderne Pluralität der Religionen nicht zu kritisieren, sondern die unterschiedlichen religiösen Ausprägungen als kohärente, in sich stimmige Ansätze zu fassen. Der Ansatz hinterfragt die axiologisch geladene Dichotomie zwischen dem Säkularen und dem Religiösen. Es wird versucht, die *axiologische Asymmetrie* (Strohschneider) zwischen diesen Begriffen flacher zu machen und wei-

testgehend mit *reziprok-symmetrischer Irritabilität* (Strohschneider) zu ersetzen.

Im Kontext der Literaturwissenschaft bedeutet das, dass Texte als solche hinterfragt werden müssen und nicht mehr als gegeben gesehen werden können. Diese Perspektive findet sich im pragmatisch-historisierenden Literaturbegriff von Fotis Jannidis, Gerhard Lauer und Simone Winko, welcher Texte auf Funktionen anstatt auf rein semiotische Operationen hin untersucht. Dieser Literaturbegriff betrachtet fünf Aspekte: *Fiktionalität*, das repräsentative Verhältnis zwischen Text und extratextueller Realität; *Poetizität*, die stilistischen Eigenschaften des Textes; *individuelle Funktionen*, alles was mit dem Individuum (sei es Autor oder Rezipient) zu tun hat; *kollektiv-soziale Funktionen*, die Rolle der individuellen Funktionen und des Textes im weiteren gesellschaftlichen Kontext; und *ästhetisch-formale Funktionen*, Strategien, die den komplexen internen Strukturen Bedeutung geben. Diese Aspekte dienen dazu, den Begriff *Literatur*, welcher in jedem nichtsäkularen nichtmodernen Kontext (besonders im Kontext Heiliger Schriften) problematisch ist, von verschiedenen Gesichtspunkten aus von Grund auf zu definieren.

Die Erstausgabe des *Book of Mormon* wird in dieser Studie durch Konrad Ehlichs Textbegriff definiert, der Text als *Überlieferung* definierte, die geschlossene räumlich-zeitlich Einheit, die immer wieder aufs Neue rekontextualisiert werden kann. Wie Annette Mangels im Kontext des *Mahābhārata* argumentiert, sollten Heilige Schriften als solch eine geschlossene Einheit, wie heute überliefert, literaturwissenschaftlich interpretiert werden, anstatt sich mit genetischen oder konstativen Fragen textkritisch zu beschäftigen.

Die internen Grenzen dieses geschlossenen Textes werden als *Paratext* (Gérard Genette) definiert, welcher zwischen dem extratextuellen *Epitext*, dem werksinternen *Peritext* und dem *Text* selbst unterscheidet. Der *Peritext* besteht aus allen Aspekten, die im gebundenen Werk, wie es sich zur Interpretation präsentiert, vorhanden sind. Im Kontext vom *Book of Mormon* ist die romanhafte Formatierung des Textes von besonderer Bedeutung. Des Weiteren spielt der Text mit dem Verhältnis von Paratext und Text, indem viele Paratexte, wie z. B. die Titelseite, diegetisch vorhandenen Personen zugeschrieben werden.

Die Selbstreflektiertheit des Textes ermöglicht es, den Text in einem postsäkularen Kontext als Überlieferungstext mit einem pragmatischen Literaturbegriff zu fassen. Dies bedeutet, dass der Text unabhängig von einem explizit religiösen Kontext trotzdem in seinem Selbstverständnis als offenbarte Heilige Schrift erfasst werden kann. Der Text wird somit unabhängig vom sozialen Kontext – konfessionell wie wissenschaftlich.

Diese textimmanenten Rezeptions-Anweisungen werden mit der südasiatischen *Rasa*-Ästhetik gefasst. *Rasa* als Tradition geht mindestens in das 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr. zurück und wurde über mehr als zweitausend Jahre weiterentwickelt. *Rasa* basiert auf der Analyse von theatralisch-tänzerischen Darstellungen, wurde jedoch für andere Kunstformen – insbesondere die Literatur – im Laufe der Zeit anpasst. Die Ästhetik-Tradition betont das Primat der empathisch-affektiven Kunsterfahrung, welcher alle Aspekte des Kunstwerks untergeordnet werden. Die individuelle Affektivität, die von *Rasa* betont wird, wird von der Tradition nicht nur auf der Rezeptions-, sondern insbesondere auf der Textebene betrachtet. *Rasa* im Allgemeinen bietet etablierte Begriffe, mit denen man den Anspruch Heiliger Schrift zu individueller religiöser Erfahrung erfassen kann.

Wegen der langen Tradition bezieht sich diese Studie auf eine individuelle Schule, die *Dhvani*-Schule der Theoretiker Ānandavardhana (9. Jh. n. Chr.) und Abhinavagupta (10. Jh. n. Chr.), mit besonderem Fokus auf ihre Werke *Dhvanyāloka* und *Locana*. Die *Dhvani*-Schule versucht, die *Rasa*-Theorie auf literarische Texte anzuwenden, und sieht die literarisch-poetische Bedeutung eines Textes als emotionale Kommunikation. *Rasadhvani* argumentiert, dass sämtliche Aspekte der Sprache – vom Phonem über Metaphern, Satzbau und den Erzählern – zur emotionalen Vermittlung eingesetzt werden können.

In der *Rasa*-Theorie wird ästhetische Emotion mit unterschiedlichen Geschmacksrichtungen des Essens verglichen. Der Grundbegriff der *Rasa*-Ästhetik ist *sthāyibhāva*, welcher in der Studie als *emotional mode* übersetzt wird. So wie Speisen in Grundgeschmäcker wie herzhaft, süß, sauer usw. unterteilt werden können, können die unterschiedlichen Emotionen in einem Werk nach ihrem Grundmodus betrachtet werden.

Der Begriff *emotional mode* bezieht sich in dieser Studie außerdem auf musikalische Modi, welche Werke in ihrer Komposition und Tonalität or-

ganisieren und klassifizieren. Dieser Vergleich ist angemessen, da es in der *Rasa*-Tradition bereits seit dem *Nāṭyaśāstra* sowie z. B. in der antiken griechischen und der deutschen Barockmusik eine klare Assoziation zwischen unterschiedlichen Modi und emotionaler Kommunikation gibt. Der Begriff *Modus* ist auch hilfreicher als das statische Bild der Geschmacksrichtungen, um den fließenden Übergang zwischen unterschiedlichen Modi durch *Modulation* zu beschreiben.

Wie ein Gericht soll ein *Rasa*-Werk eine dominante emotionale Geschmacksrichtung haben, die mit dem Grundmodus eines musikalischen Werks vergleichbar ist. Andere emotionale Modi, wie andere musikalische Modi, bieten Kontrast, ändern aber nichts am Vorhandensein eines Grundmodus. Wie jeder musikalische Modus auf ein paar wenigen Grundnoten basiert, gibt es unterschiedliche Grundbegriffe der emotionalen Analyse in der *Rasa*-Ästhetik.

Das allgemeine Begriffs-System der *Rasa*-Tradition und das spezifische System der *Dhvani*-Schule wird für die Gegebenheiten und Notwendigkeiten dieser Studie des *Book of Mormon* abgeändert. Der wichtigste Begriff ist der *āśraya* (experiencing character), der Charakter, in dem die jeweilige Emotion situiert wird. Nach Abhinavagupta besteht die emotionale Gesamtbedeutung eines Werks in der emotionalen Entwicklung des Protagonisten.

Dieser wird definiert als der Charakter, der sich die Handlung der Geschichte unterordnet. Die weiteren Begriffe sind *uddīpana vibhāva* (interacting object), die Dinge oder Personen, die auf einen Charakter einwirken und eine Emotion hervorrufen; *ālambana vibhāva* (intentional object), die Person, das Tier, das Objekt usw., auf das die Emotion gerichtet ist; *anubhāva* (consequence), die Folgen, die im *experiencing character* durch die Emotion hervorgerufen werden; *sāttvika bhāvas* (feelings), körperliche Reaktionen; und *vyabhicāribhāvas* (acute states), kurzweilige, akute Zustände im Charakter.

Diese Grundbegriffe bilden das Gerüst, um das sich die *Rasa*-Ästhetik aufbaut. Ein gegebenes Werk produziert somit eine einzigartige Komposition innerhalb eines übergreifenden emotionalen Modus. Diese spezifische emotionale Konstellation nennt sich dann *rasa* (sentiment). Ein jeder *rasa* bewegt sich somit innerhalb eines emotionalen Modus und ist, wie ein

Musikstück, eine einzigartige Ausprägung einer Grundstruktur.

Von besonderem Interesse ist Ānandavardhanas und Abhinavaguptas Analyse des *Mahābhārata*. Dieses Epos ist überhaupt von besonderem Interesse, da seine narratologische Grundstruktur und die Handlung denen des *Book of Mormon* sehr ähneln. Am wichtigsten in diesem Zusammenhang ist das Merkmal des diegetischen Verfasser-Kompilierers, Vyāsa. Ānandavardhana unterscheidet im Kontext Heiliger Schriften zwischen zwei unterschiedlichen Methoden, solche Texte zu lesen: als *śāstranaye* (Glaubenslehre) und als *kāvyanaye* (Poesie), somit als affektives *Rasa*-Werk.

Beide *Dhvani*-Theoretiker kombinieren diese zwei Bedeutungen, indem sie argumentieren, dass einerseits die Glaubenslehre des *Mahābhārata* die Befreiung vom Kreislauf der Wiedergeburten (*mokṣa*) und andererseits die affektiv-poetische Bedeutung der Zustand *śānta* sei. Dieser Zustand ist der des erleuchteten Asketen. Er kann provisorisch dem christlichen Begriff *Erlösung* gleichgesetzt werden und er wird somit die ästhetische Erfahrung der soteriologischen Glaubenslehre.

Ānandavardhana und Abhinavagupta erklären, dass der *sthāyibhāva* von *śānta* der Zustand *vairagya* bzw. *nirveda* sei. Beide Begriffe beziehen sich auf die Desillusion gegenüber der sinnlichen Welt (*māyā*) und auf den Wunsch, sich der Welt zu entziehen. *Śānta* ist daher eine spezifische Konstellation an Elementen, die anders zusammengesetzt auch zu Depression führen könnten. Die emotionale Bedeutung des *Mahābhārata* als poetisches Werk wird damit der Zustand, der zur präsentierten Glaubenslehre führt.

Dieser emotionale Zustand kann in Vyāsa, dem Seher, dem das *Mahābhārata* zugeschrieben wird und der im Text auch als Charakter auftritt, verortet werden, da er nach Abhinavaguptas Definition des Protagonisten diese Rolle durch sein narratologisches Handeln erfüllt. Er ist der narratologisch mächtigste Charakter, der die Gesamtstruktur des Werks und die Ausführung des Erzählens bestimmt und damit die Gesamthandlung seinem Handeln als charakterisiertem Erzähler unterordnet. Die emotionale Bedeutung des *Mahābhārata* befindet sich somit auf der Ebene des diegetischen Verfassers und der extradiegetischen narratologischen Ebene.

Eine unkompliziertere *Rasa*-Analyse des *Book of Mormon* auf der Haupt-handlungsebene wird anhand von zwei unterschiedlichen, aber intertextuell

verwandten Handlungen aus den ‚Kriegskapiteln‘ des Textes durchgeführt. Die Erzählungen zweier Schlachten signalisieren durch Intertextualität in Form paralleler Formulierungen und Elemente des Geschehens, dass beide Schlachten zusammenhängend gelesen werden sollen. Beide sind oberflächlich betrachtet fast deckungsgleich. Jedoch entwickelt jede ihren eigenen emotionalen Charakter, wenn sie auf der feineren Ebene der unterschiedlichen *Rasa*-Komponenten betrachtet wird.

Die Schlacht um die Stadt Mulek zeigt einen geläufigeren heldenhaften Charakter der Soldaten, die Gefahren überwinden. Die Schlacht um Antiparah ist sowohl in der Erzählung als auch in der Emotionalität chaotischer. Auch ist die Schlacht mehr von Fürsorge und Glauben erfüllt, während die Schlacht um Mulek die martialische Fertigkeit der Soldaten betont. Eine *Rasa*-Analyse zeigt, dass die Emotionalität einer Erzählung durch genaues Betrachten der Elemente gefasst werden muss. Die zwei Schlachten zeigen unter anderem auch, dass Mormon als Erzähler emotional und strukturell engstens mit der Erzählung verwoben ist. Er existiert nicht als neutrale Erzählinstanz, sondern zeichnet sich, wie Vyāsa, durch seine emotionale Involviertheit aus.

Die narratologische Struktur des *Book of Mormon* wird von unterschiedlichen und zahlreichen Erzählern maßgeblich geprägt, eine Art *Akkordeon-Struktur* der Erzähler. Die Narratologie wird in dieser Studie anhand von Genettes Begriffen erklärt. Alle Erzähler des *Book of Mormon* sind *homodiegetisch*, Teil der Welt des Textes. Die Erzähler existieren jedoch auf unterschiedlichen Ebenen, allen voran Mormon auf der extradiegetischen Ebene. Mormon greift außerdem oft durch *Metalepsis* (transgressiver Übergang zwischen Erzählebenen) in die Erzählung ein. Auch zeichnet sich sein sonstiges Auftreten als Erzähler durch ein invasives Auftreten aus.

Die höchst disruptive und unübersehbare Metalepsis (im Gegensatz zu anderen kaum bemerkbaren), durch die sich Mormon zuerst als Erzähler vorstellt, etabliert ihn als die gestaltende Hand im Text. Jedoch ist selbst Mormon als extradiegetischer Erzähler der Kontrolle Gottes untergeordnet, der im Text als supradiegetische Veto- und Garanten-Instanz auftritt. Gottes Absichten werden somit das implizite Organisationsprinzip, das den Text zusammenhält. Dies rechtfertigt indessen das Konzept des *impliziten Autors* (Wayne Booth) durch textimmanente Strukturen.

Mormons Auftreten als disruptiver Erzähler und diegetischer Verfasser des Textes kann mit Abhinavaguptas Definition zum Hauptprotagonisten des *Book of Mormon* erklärt werden, da er den gesamten Text inhaltlich und strukturell seinem diegetischen Wirken unterwirft. Des Weiteren ist Mormon der Abhinavagup'sche Protagonist, da er die Resolution der Handlung erlebt. Im Falle Mormons macht ihn das zu einem tragischen Helden, der die zerstörerische Entladung der sozialen und historischen Spannungen der Erzählung erlebt und letzten Endes als Prophet und Befehlshaber scheitert. Nach der *Rasadhvani*-Definition wird somit die poetisch-emotionale Bedeutung des *Book of Mormon* in Mormon als extradiegetischem Erzähler verortet. Wie Vyāsa ist er der Verfasser-Protagonist seiner Heiligen Schrift.

Der erste Schritt, das *Book of Mormon* textimmanent zu fassen, ist die Betrachtung der mikrokosmischen Eigenschaft des *book of Ether* (ein Unterbuch im Gesamttext). Dieses kleinere Buch im Buch ist in jeder Hinsicht das *Book of Mormon* in Miniatur, von der Erzählstruktur, über den Inhalt der Erzählung, bis hin zur diegetischen Entstehungsgeschichte als gefundener Text, der durch die Gabe Gottes übersetzt wird. Dieses Unterbuch kann somit auf Hinweise, wie das *Book of Mormon* als Ganzes zu verstehen ist, hin untersucht werden.

Die Frage zur konstativen Historizität der Handlung, die unter die Rubrik des pragmatischen Begriffs der *Fiktionalität* fällt, wird textimmanent durch den Umgang des Textes mit seiner Geographie und Chronologie betrachtet. Wenn die Frage der Fiktionalität aus dem *Book of Mormon* selbst heraus angegangen wird, wird klar, dass die Erzählung mehr wie ein utopischer Roman à la Platons *Politeia* oder Aldous Huxleys *Brave New World* zu sehen ist. Hier werden Elemente der extratextuellen Welt ins Narrativ des Textes genommen und zu einer geschlossenen textuellen Welt geformt, was Hans-Jürgen Krysmanski die *utopische Methode* solcher Erzählungen nennt.

Die Verortung in der extratextuellen Welt wird somit vom Text selbst nicht erwünscht. Das *Book of Mormon* ist in seiner Behandlung der Geographie und Chronologie der Handlung so aufgestellt, dass die Erzählung sich unverkennbar in der biblischen Welt verankert, sich jedoch geographisch abgrenzt, indem die Handlung wiederholt Reisen durch liminale Schwellen einsetzt, um eine eindeutige Verortung in der extratextuellen

Welt unmöglich zu machen.

Das Motiv der Insel – welches wiederholt von Erzählern des *Book of Mormon* aufgegriffen wird und in vielen utopischen Romanen vorkommt – signalisiert des Weiteren den isolierten, mikrokosmischen Charakter der Handlung. Die Chronologie ist außerdem zeitweise wegen Sprüngen und fehlenden Zeitangaben unklar bis verwirrend. Dies alles signalisiert, dass der Text von der religiösen Frage der konstativen Historizität getrennt gelesen werden kann, ohne dem textimmanenten, selbstreflexiven Verständnis des Textes zuwiderzulaufen.

Die individuellen Funktionen der Leseanweisungen können zuerst mit Hilfe des *book of Ether* betrachtet werden. Der diegetisch übersetzte Text verursacht in der Zuhörerschaft einerseits Trauer und vermittelt andererseits Wissen. Daher sollte das *Book of Mormon* auch mit diesen zwei Perspektiven angegangen werden. Des Weiteren möchte Moroni, der Erzähler des *book of Ether*, dass seine geschriebenen Worte „*unto the overpowering of men to read them*“ seien mögen, dass das Lesen den Leser überwältigt.

Diese affektive Erfahrungs-Komponente kommt auch am Anfang des *Book of Mormon* im ersten Propheten, Lehi, vor. Dieser erlebt wiederholt körperliche und überwältigende Visionen und sogar eine, in der er vom Geist erfüllt wird, während er in einem himmlischen Buch liest. Dies passt zu Moronis Einladung an den Leser im letzten Kapitel des *Book of Mormon*, wo er, explizit zum Leser sprechend, ihn einlädt, über den Text zu beten. Er verspricht, dass Gott die Wahrheit des Textes *manifestieren* wird. Dieses Wort hat sonst im Text einen eindeutigen Bezug zu Offenbarung und dem Erscheinen Jesu Christi. Moronis Einladung ist somit eindeutig, mit dem Text performativ-erfahrungsmäßig umzugehen.

Die affektive Einladung wird durch eine Belehrung des Propheten Almas noch bekräftigt. Er lädt seine Zuhörer ein, Heilige Schrift als *Experiment* zu lesen. Dieses Experiment, wenn es mit der nötigen Offenheit und Willigkeit ausgeführt wird, wird dem Leser im übertragene-n Sinne süße, weiße Frucht bescheren. Diese Metapher kommt außerdem in Lehis Traum vor, in dem er, in der Form einer mikrokosmischen Traumwelt, von der Frucht eines Baums isst. Dieser Traum ist überhaupt mit dem Ausdruck *partake of the fruit* (von der Frucht essen) durchsetzt.

Der Traum, zusammen mit der Belehrung Almas, ruft somit den Leser

auf, ein affektives Experiment mit dem Text zu wagen. Dies überschneidet sich mit dem postsäkularen Aufruf von Hasebrink und Strohschneider, sich mit Religion als ein disruptives *tremendum* (Rudolf Otto) auseinanderzusetzen. Das utopische *Book of Mormon* etabliert sich somit sowohl als mikrokosmischer *Experimentalapparat* (Krysmanski) und gleichzeitig auch als Erfahrungsapparat (*experiential apparatus*), und er verlangt vom Leser, den Text affektiv zu rezipieren.

Das beste Vorbild eines solchen affektiven Ansatzes ist Mormon, der durchweg als exemplarischer *Vor-Leser* (Mireille Schnyder) fungiert, ein Charakter, der die erwartete Lesehaltung vorführt. Verschiedene Episoden zeigen Mormons affektive Reaktionen auf und emotionale Involviertheit in das, was er als Erzähler präsentiert. Diese Affektivität ist durch verschiedene textuelle Signale erkennbar, z. B. durch Veränderungen in der Poetizität von Mormons Erzählen oder seiner geladenen Wortwahl.

Mormons intensive emotionale Involviertheit zeigt sich des Weiteren mit dem Charakter Alma, wo beide Erzählerstimmen durch wiederholte Metalepsis ineinander verschwimmen. Dieses Verschmelzen der Stimmen produziert den Effekt, dass Alma aus Mormons ‚Seele spricht‘. Er spricht auf gewisse Art für Mormon und drückt unterschiedliche Gefühle aus, z. B. Sehnen und Resignation, die alle mit Mormons Erfahrungen in seinem Unterbuch, dem *book of Mormon*, intertextuell überlappen. Die intradiegetische Stimme Almas schwingt somit in Mormons Erfahrung als extradiegetischer Vor-Leser mit und wird ein Vorbild und Modell für den echten Leser.

Weitere Charaktere sprechen sozusagen aus Mormons Seele und drücken ihre Frustration über die Wankelmütigkeit ihres Volkes und über die Umstände ihres eigenen Lebens aus. In Kapitel IV vom *book of Helaman* zeigt sich besonders eindeutig ein atemlos frustrierter Mormon, der sich über die Wankelmütigkeit der Menschen ereifert, was sich maßgeblich durch die Zeichensetzung der ersten drei Ausgaben des *Book of Mormon* erkennen lässt. Die Zeichensetzung und ihr Potenzial, Mormon als Erzähler zu charakterisieren, muss daher literaturwissenschaftlich ernst genommen werden

Mormons Frustrationen führen sich fort in das, was diese Studie *Secret Combinations Loop* nennt. Hier ist die Erzählung vor und nach der Theo-

phanie Jesu Christi ein chiastisches Spiegelbild. Der Fokus des kurzen Buches *fourth book of Nephi* ist auf die Regression des Volkes, das trotz des persönlich-körperlichen Eingreifens Jesu Christi wieder in alte Rivalitäten und Konflikte zersplittert. Die Zerwürfnisse, die vor der Theophanie entstehen und bald danach vorerst überwunden werden, werden alle wieder in den Jahrhunderten zum Anfang von Mormons autodiegetischer Erzählung nach und nach zunichte gemacht.

Die Zerwürfnisse der vorherigen Jahrhunderte enden in einem letzten großen Krieg, der mit der Schlacht am Hügel Camorah (Cumorah in späteren Ausgaben) in der völligen Vernichtung des Volkes der Nephiten durch die Lamaniten gipfelt. Auch in der Erzählung dieser Schlacht tritt Mormon als affektiv involvierter Erzähler auf. Am Ende bricht er zusammen und ruft eine Apostrophe an sein Volk aus. Die Tragik dieser Apostrophe zeigt sich insbesondere im Wechselspiel zwischen Konjunktiv und Indikativ. Mormon bringt wiederholt zum Ausdruck, dass sein Volk hätte umkehren können und doch jetzt vernichtet wurde. Diese Apostrophe enthält auch die Frage *par excellence* des *Book of Mormon*: *How is it that ye could have fallen?* Wie konnte es sein, dass das Volk der Nephiten vernichtet wurde?

Diese Frage spiegelt die affektiv vermittelte Glaubenslehre wider. Der rote Faden, der sich durch alle Episoden, die in dieser Studie betrachtet werden, zieht, ist die Entscheidungsfreiheit und die Möglichkeit und Tatsache des Missbrauchs. Einerseits können alte Konflikt-Zyklen unterbrochen werden, wie bei der Bekehrung des sogenannten Volk Ammons (*people of Ammon*). Andererseits kann die Entscheidungsfreiheit auch weitreichende destruktive Auswirkungen haben, wie in Ammonihah oder bei Camorah. Alle Episoden dramatisieren oder betrachten diese Frage von unterschiedlichen Blickwinkeln aus. Besonders auffällig ist Mormons Emotionalität in diesen Episoden. Er kommt wiederholt zur Trauer zurück, auch wenn andere Modi zeitweise zur Geltung kommen.

Mormons Affektivität wird somit vom Text genutzt, das Gewicht und die Dringlichkeit der Entscheidungsfreiheit zu kommunizieren. Die Leserschaft wird implizit und explizit aufgerufen, umzukehren. Die Kopplung von Glaubenslehre und Affektivität kann nicht durch bloßes Erläutern vermittelt werden. Religiöse Vermittlung benötigt ein Erfahrungs-Moment. Mormons Frage, wie es sein kann, dass das Volk fiel, trifft nicht nur lo-

gisch den Kern der Glaubenslehre. Die emotionale Tragweite der Frage befindet sich in der Zerrissenheit der Apostrophe Mormons.

Die *Rasa*-Analyse vom Text zeigt, wie Glaubenslehre mit Hilfe von affektiver Performativität vermittelt wird. Mormon als Vor-Leser muss die Tragweite und das Gewicht der Lehre in ihren Höhen und Tiefen erleben. Nur so kann dem Leser oder der Leserin eindrücklich vermittelt werden, was die Glaubenslehre mit sich bringt, und nur so kann er oder sie bestenfalls zum Handeln angespornt werden. Dies bedeutet eine große Spannweite an Emotionen, die jedoch wiederholt in Trauer zurück modulieren. Die vermittelte Glaubenslehre benötigt daher einen langwierigen Verarbeitungsprozess. Dieser Prozess wird durch den Propheten Ether angedeutet, der mit sich und seinem Leben Frieden geschlossen hat.

Die Gegenwart Gottes als supradiegetisches Kohärenzprinzip, welches durch Gottes erzählerische Vetos und sein Eingreifen in die Geschichtsarchive geschaffen wird, führt auch dazu, dass Mormon eine messianische Offenbarungs-Figur wird, durch die das Wesen Gottes dem Leser zugänglich gemacht wird. Der Text bietet dem Leser somit schmeckenden Zugang zu einer *Manifestation* Gottes. Der Gott vom *Book of Mormon* ist ein weinender Gott, der zulässt, dass seine Schöpfung den Grundsatz der Entscheidungsfreiheit missbraucht. Wie Vyāsa im *Mahābhārata*, der in seiner Affektivität nur indirekt fassbar ist, wird das *Book of Mormon* ein Offenbarungstext, der den Leser einlädt, auf den Text als Epiphanie – als Ort, wo das heilige Wesen Gottes zugänglich wird – einzugehen.

Dies führt dazu, dass der Text, wie andere Heilige Schriften, nicht bloß Beweis einer Offenbarung ist, sondern selbst die Möglichkeit weiterer Offenbarung bietet. Das geschlossene Werk wird ein persönlicher Erfahrungsapparat, durch den der Text eine eigene Auffassung der Wesensart Gottes kommunizieren kann. Diese Kommunikation geschieht dann nicht nur auf der Ebene der logischen Glaubenslehre, sondern nutzt auch Affektivität, um die Glaubenslehre an den Leser oder Leserin heranzutragen. Beide Lesemodi und -ansätze werden somit komplementär anstatt widersprüchlich.

Die mikrokosmische Eigenart des Textes erlaubt auch, dass der Text unabhängig von seiner religiösen Tradition affektiv gemäß seinen selbstreflexiven Anforderungen gelesen werden kann. Das *Book of Mormon* kann dadurch in seiner religiösen Performativität postsäkular und literaturwis-

senschaftlich gefasst werden, ohne der textimmanenten Selbstreflektiertheit zuwiderzulaufen. Der Text wird somit auch außerhalb seiner Tradition als Heilige Schrift erfassbar. Er wird ein postsäkulares *tremendum*, welches nicht durch bloßes wissenschaftliches ‚Interesse‘ gefasst werden kann. Der Leser oder die Leserin muss ein Wagnis eingehen, was immer mit Risiken verbunden ist. Ein postsäkularer Ansatz muss reines Interesse überwinden und muss Faszination einen Platz einräumen. Dies ermöglicht dann Zugang zu rein säkular unzugänglichem religiösem Erleben und Wissen.

1 Introduction: Of Scripture and Scriptors

What makes a text “scripture”? Why are some texts and not others designated in this manner? This is a special textual category. Not all texts (either oral or written) can possess this status. It has to do with how scripture is treated by members of a religion or a society as a whole. Seth Perry refers to the complex processes by which certain texts receive and maintain this elevated status as *scripturalization*.¹

Scripture as a category is closely tied to the concept of divine revelation. In a German² work on Jewish mysticism, Gershom Scholem defines revelation (*Offenbarung*) in a Jewish context as “a concrete message with a positive, objective, and expressible content.” In this conception (also followed in Christianity and Islam), revelation (usually to a prophet) consists of declarative grammatical sentences that can be recorded in human language. The content can then be fixed by “deposition in scriptures.”^{3a}

Once the revelation has been fixed in such a manner, “tradition” can begin (in contrast to the original revelation), the process that deals with “how the revelation can be preserved and transmitted from generation to generation” and “whether and how the revelation can be applied.”^{3b} In other words, *tradition* is the process of scripturalization: how a text is treated and applied over time by a group. The revealed scripturalized text examined in this study is the controversial nineteenth-century American text, *The Book of Mormon*, by the religious founder Joseph Smith Jr.

¹Seth Perry, *Bible Culture and Authority in the Early United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 6, 41.

²A note on German sources: Much of my study’s larger theoretical frame comes from German scholarship. I translate quotations from these sources myself. As a matter of convenience for the Anglophone readership, I include the English translation in the body of the text and the German original in the footnotes.

³Gershom Scholem, “Offenbarung und Tradition als religiöse Kategorien im Judentum,” in *Über einige Grundbegriffe des Judentums* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp): a 92, my translation: eine konkrete Mitteilung eines positiven sachlichen und aussprechbaren Inhalts [...] Niederschlag[] in heiligen Schriften; b 93: wie die Offenbarung als konkrete Mitteilung bewahrt und von Geschlecht zu Geschlecht überliefert werden kann [...] ob und wie diese Offenbarung angewandt werden kann.

The 2002 foreword of the Community of Christ’s Revised Authorized Version of the *Book of Mormon* succinctly summarizes the two main components of the scripturalization process: “This is a book of scripture. It is holy *because* it was presented to the world by the gift of the Holy Ghost through Joseph Smith Jr. and *because* it has been an inspiration to generations of readers.”⁴ The divine source to which both text and “author” lay claim sanctifies the text, and the text is considered holy *because* it was given by inspiration (at least according to the text and the prophet). This claim to divine origins is then corroborated by the religious experiences of believers. These are so impactful that they then pass the text on and down. It is shared because it exerts power in the lives of its readership. This sharing is prompted by readers’ desire to have others participate in the transformative reading they have experienced. Holy Scripture is therefore scripturalized by both the retrospective revelatory origins and the prospective revelatory future reading.

1.1 Scripturalization: From Text to Scripture

Scriptural texts centrally define themselves by their rejection of individual creativity as part of their production. These texts see *themselves* as fundamentally different from modern *literature*, with its emphasis on expression and creativity. This self-understanding exists independent of how believers or non-believers might interpret this self-reflexivity over the course of the centuries-long practice of scripturalization.

A secular and especially an atheist reading would call those who produced these texts the *author* or, as with accretion scripture like the Hindu *Mahābhārata* (ma-ha-BAH-ra-ta), the text’s *authors* or *contributors*. However, the actual producers of these works and especially the texts themselves deny authorship and composition in the sense of modern creativity. The texts are not created out of the volition of the prophet or mystic, but by the command of the transcendent. Sacred writings often contain this motif of

⁴Joseph Smith, *The Book of Mormon: Revised Authorized Version* (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 2002), xix, my emphasis.

the “command to write” (*Schreibbefehl*).⁵ One of the unique characteristics of many sacred or ‘religious’ texts (I include mystical writings in this category) is that they are not written down due to some internal desire for expression or communication. The text is only given definite form once the external command comes.

The Bible contains multiple such commands to write. Moses writes the Law due to a command: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words” (Exodus 34:27).⁶ John the Revelator receives the instruction to write at the beginning of his vision: “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book” (Revelation 1:11). These simple statements, not emphatic in themselves, come from Yahweh and Jesus Christ respectively and therefore must be obeyed. The prophet Isaiah also receives a command to write, but with a specification for how this is to be done: “Moreover the Lord said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man’s pen” (Isaiah 8:1). He is specifically commanded to use the tools of the mundane in order to perform a relocation (a literal *trans-lation*) from the sacred to the mundane. Scriptural production therefore employs the translation mediums of the mundane pen and paper and the mind and soul of the prophet. It is what Jared Hickman refers to as *metaphysical* or *vertical translation* (as opposed to linguistic lateral translation between language systems).⁷

The motif of the command to write is also followed in other scriptural traditions. Muhammad is commanded and even given the words to say: “Say (O Muhammad): ‘It is not for me to change [the Qur’ân] on my own

⁵Ursula Peters, *Religiöse Erfahrung als literarisches Faktum: Zur Vorgeschichte und Genese frauenmystischer Texte des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1988), 7; Peter Strohschneider, “Über mediävistische Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft,” in *Germanistentreffen Deutschland - Korea 5. - 7.10.2005: Dokumentation der Tagungsbeiträge*, ed. Werner Roggusch (Bonn: DAAD, 2006), 75.

⁶All Bible quotations from *The Holy Bible: Authorized King James Version* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1989).

⁷Jared Hickman, “‘Bringing Forth’ the Book of Mormon: Translation as the Reconfiguration of Bodies in Space- Time,” in *Producing Ancient Scripture: Joseph Smith’s Translation Projects in the Development of Mormon Christianity*, eds. Michael H. Mackay, Mark Ashurst-McGehee, and Brian M. Hauglid (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2020); he referred to *vertical translation* in his keynote at the 2017 Book of Mormon Studies Association conference.

accord; I only follow that which is revealed unto me' ” (Sûrah 10:15).⁸ He only recited the text following the will of Allâh: “Say (O Muhammad): ‘If Allâh had so willed, I should not have recited [the Qur’ân] to you’ ” (Sûrah 10:16).

The *Mahābhārata* begins with the mythic production history of the text. After Vyāsa, the *rishi* (seer) to whom the work is attributed, had composed the text of the ‘poem,’ he is visited by Brahma himself: “I know thou [Vyāsa] hast revealed the divine word, even from its first utterance, in the language of truth. Thou hast called thy present work a *poem*, wherefore it shall be a [written] poem [...] Let Ganesa (*sic*) be thought of, O Muni, for the purpose of writing the poem.”⁹ Whereas it was previously only a text held in Vyāsa’s mind, he was later commanded by Brahma to have it written down. This transcendental translation via inscription was to be done with the aid of none other than the god Ganesh, the remover of obstacles. Writing down the sacred is itself a divine act and requires divine assistance.

The command to write is not restricted to the male-dominated realm of foundational scripture. There are many mystical writings by women who also deny creative authorship of their texts.¹⁰ One of the most famous female mystics in the Western tradition is the eleventh-century German nun, Hildegard von Bingen, who produced multiple mystical texts, such as the *Liber Scivias*. This vertical *command to write* could also come from a more mundane source—which is nonetheless on a higher ecclesiastical level—, such as the female mystic’s confessor encouraging her to write down her visions.¹¹ In these cases, the female scriptor’s will is subsumed under an ecclesiastical authority.

These inspired men and women, be they prophets or mystics, do not compose their texts in the way a more mundane author would. They are

⁸*The Noble Qur’an: In the English Language*, trans. Muhammad Taqî-du-Dîn Al-Hilâlî and Muhammad Muhsin Khân (Madinah: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur’an, 1985).

⁹Protap C. Roy and Kisari M. Ganguli, *The Mahabharata of Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa: Adi Parva* (Calcutta: Bharata Press, 1884), 5.

¹⁰See, for example, Peters, *Religiöse Erfahrung* for a study on female mystics in the 13th and 14th centuries.

¹¹Peters, *Religiöse Erfahrung*, 7.

instead only the focal site of the vertical translation. Thus Roland Barthes' term *scriptor* is more appropriate.¹² Even more so than the postmodern dead author, the scriptor does not have agency over the text. The scriptor's will is subsumed under a higher, even divine will. In the case of dictated scripture, the prophet or mystic is yet a step further removed from the production process, sub-contracting the inscription to a third party.

Through the inspired scriptor, the word of God is made flesh (i.e. takes on materiality) and is able to dwell among us (i.e. becomes a stable locus) (cf. John 1:14). The text becomes an *epiphany*, "a place where the sacred appears or becomes sensible to the worshiper."¹³ Paul Ricœur describes scripture as a manifestation of *The Word*. It fulfils its function as manifestation because "it is deemed the *trace* left by the Word that founds it."¹⁴ The text is a mark left on the world, a trace of the divine. Especially in the case of the commanded text, the text is not considered itself profane, but constitutes a shard of the sacred which is able to dwell among profane humans and through which the transcendent can be accessed.

This shard can subsequently be passed on to other believers and passed down to successive generations. And yet scripture does not have the same characteristics as a notarized document which declares or proves that a transformative event has taken place in the past. For a believer, scripture has a special quality which enables continued access to the transcendent. For a believer (especially a fundamentalist), "holy speech cannot be distinguished from holy writ, and [scripture] is not testimony of revelation but instead is itself revelation."¹⁵

¹²Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 145–47.

¹³Daniel H. Ingalls, Jeffrey M. Masson and M. V. Patwardhan, *The Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana with the Locana of Abhinavagupta* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1990), 694 n12 with a term by Mircea Eliade.

¹⁴Paul Ricœur, "Experience and Language in Religious Discourse," trans. David Pellauer, in *Phenomenology and the 'Theological Turn': The French debate*, eds. Dominique Janicaud and Jeffrey L. Kosky (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 133, my emphasis.

¹⁵Peter Strohschneider, *Höfische Textgeschichten: Über Selbstentwürfe vormoderner Literatur* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2014), 19, my translation: [D]ie heilige Rede [könne] von der heiligen Schrift nicht unterschieden werden... sie [sei] nicht Zeugnis von Offenbarung sondern Offenbarung selbst.

Unlike a marriage certificate, which formally states that the performative act of the wedding ceremony took place, scripture at once *proves* that there was once the performative event of revelation and is simultaneously a *continuing site* thereof. Scripturalized text, as scripture, and not only as written artifact, is not solely constative or didactic. Scripture is primarily *performative*. Scripture is not only the textual marriage certificate. Scripture is continued and repeated *experience* of the wedding day.

1.2 Performative, not Constative

My distinction between the constative notarized wedding certificate and the performative wedding ceremony comes from J. L. Austin's development of the terms. A *constative* statement is an utterance which is either *true* or *false*.¹⁶ Jacques Derrida, who draws extensively on Austin, explains that it is "speech that consists in saying what is, describing or noting what is."¹⁷ In the context of narrative scripture, such as the *Book of Mormon* or the *Mahābhārata*, it would be a question of whether the events presented actually took place.

In pedantic terms, this historical reality would mean a group of *homo sapiens* with specific names who lived in the past an X number of cycles of planet earth around the sun at latitude Y and longitude Z. The text would be false if either the chronological, geographic, or other specific details do not line up with what actually happened, or if no such events occurred at all. Did the great war of the *Mahābhārata* actually occur? Did Moses exist, and did he actually part the Red Sea? Did Jesus Christ actually appear in the flesh to ancient inhabitants of the Americas? Were hundreds of thousands of Nephites killed somewhere in the Americas around the time of the fall of Rome?

This is a form of *correspondence theory of truth*, which is "the view that truth is correspondence to, or with, a fact." In this conception of truth, "truth consists in a relation to reality, i.e., that truth is a relational property

¹⁶J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 3.

¹⁷Jacques Derrida, "A Certain Impossible Possibility of Saying the Event," *Critical Inquiry* 33, no. 2 (2007): 446.

involving a characteristic relation (to be specified) to some portion of reality (to be specified)."¹⁸ Either the statement corresponds with reality, or it does not. If it corresponds, it is *true*. If it does not correspond, it is *false*. If the *Mahābhārata*'s narrative is examined from a constative perspective, a lack of correspondence with historical reality will cause the text to be *false*, to *lie* to the reader.

The same applies to the *Book of Mormon*, the object of study. This lack of correspondence would make Joseph Smith as the *Book of Mormon*'s scriptor (and many would deny him even this designation) a liar, since claims about the history of the narrative and the text's production history are false. There would be no reality with which these statements have a representational relationship. All of these questions would be interrogating scripture as to its *constative* function.

Much of scripture (and practically all of what we would conventionally call 'fiction') would fail miserably by this standard of truth. If the narratives of the books of Job or Jonah are only 'true' (and therefore valuable) if these events took place as described (i.e. God and Satan literally got together and made a wager over whether ruining a man's life would cause him to spiritually break; a man was literally swallowed by a large fish and sat in its stomach for three days), we just might have to cut them from the Old Testament.

According to Northrop Frye, the book of Job is "never seriously regarded as anything but imaginative drama" and yet it "is obviously profounder spiritually than the lists of choir singers and the like in the Book of Chronicles."^{19a} In other words, spiritual scriptural value is not solely dependent on literal constative truth of the narrative. Requiring such a standard of constative-correspondence truth would mean "that the story of Jonah must describe a real sojourn inside a real whale, otherwise we are making God, as the ultimate source of the story, into a liar."^{19b}

This question of whether the narrative and by extension God 'lies' to

¹⁸Marian David, "The Correspondence Theory of Truth," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Fall (2016), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2016/entries/truth-correspondence>.

¹⁹Northrop Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*, ed. Alvin A. Lee (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2006), a 58, b 63, c 58, d 60.

the reader seems to arise from the fact that the protagonist of the book, “Jonah the son of Amittai” (Jonah 1:1) is mentioned in 2 Kings 14:25: “[Jeroboam, King of Judah] restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant *Jonah, the son of Amittai*, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher” (my emphasis). The logic is that if Jonah is mentioned in a historical section of the Old Testament, then he must have been a real, historical person, and therefore the story of Jonah must relate to the real experiences of a real man.

This view must deal with Frye’s dim assessment of biblical history in general: “[W]hen we move into what looks like actual history, to which we can attach some dates and supporting evidence, we find that it is didactic and manipulated history.” Frye calls the Bible in general a “violently partisan book” and “propaganda,” where “what is true is what the writer thinks ought to be true.”^{19c} It is undoubtedly beneficial for a propagandist to claim that the exploits of a king who, according to v. 24, “did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord” could nonetheless be a tool in the hands of God in preserving his chosen people. In other words: *We are God’s chosen people, since we were preserved by even an unrighteous king*. Whether Jonah was a historical figure can no longer be untangled from Israelite manipulated history. Sifting out ‘true’ history from manipulated history breaks the very fabric of the text, since that severing was never part of the text’s or narrative’s function or functioning.

Questions about the literal correspondence historicity of the *Book of Mormon* narrative or the production history claimed by Joseph Smith are therefore only constative questions. Either Joseph Smith produced the text the way he claims or he did not. If the translation process did not occur the way he described, the least we could say is that his claims are *false*. Whether this falsehood rises to the level of deceit is another matter.

And here we see the difficulty which often arises when reading the *Book of Mormon*. The constative nature of its statements is interrogated and is considered the basis of attributing value to or of rejecting the text. I join in Frye’s call to break with an “obsession with the Bible’s historicity” and to examine “other and more promising hypotheses.”^{19d} In the case of this study, the call is to break with the obsessive attempts at ‘proving’ and

thereby validating the *Book of Mormon* by means of constative analysis in favor of a literary approach. In fact, as section 6.2.3 will demonstrate, the *Book of Mormon* is almost entirely unconcerned with anchoring itself in the real geography and history of the actual reader.

This leads to Austin's use of the term *performative*. He draws on the examples of getting married, establishing inheritance, making a bet, and naming a ship. For example: "‘I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth’—as uttered when smashing the bottle against the stem."^{20a} If statements such as this are judged by the measure of constative correspondence truth, they will seem absurd. At the very least, they will break this category. The only constative analysis one can make is whether these words were uttered and that before uttering the words, the ship had no socially accepted name and, almost as if by magic, the ship then suddenly has such a name.

The analysis of the performative is concerned with precisely this magical transformation. What happens when the ship suddenly has a name? What are the requirements for this transformation to occur? Objectively speaking, all that happens is that a few words are said, and an expensive bottle of champagne is wasted. And yet the words act on and within the world and by so doing change it: "In these examples it seems clear that to utter the sentence (in, of course, the appropriate circumstances) is not to *describe* my doing of what I should be said in so uttering to be doing or to state that I am doing it: it is to do it."^{20b}

The most important aspect in Austin's description of the performative utterance is the "appropriate circumstances." This leads to *infelicity conditions*, "whole dimensions of unsatisfactoriness."^{20c} These are circumstances which make the performative utterance fail, to not bring about the desired transformation. Not just anyone can officially name a ship. Specific factors need to align. This means that there are very strict *felicity conditions*, or conditions which must be met for the performative to succeed.

Bruno Latour takes up Austin's concept of the performative and places it in the context of scripture. He considers the performative the central function of sacred writ. In his view, scripture's *truth* rests not on its correspondence relationship with extra-textual reality. In fact, he argues that

²⁰Austin, *How to Do Things*, a 5, b 6, c 21.

what he calls “religious speech” actually “*has no reference*,” nothing outside of the text it is pointing to.^{21a} Scripture is not concerned with constative truthfulness at all, but is purely performative.

Do a test: compile a list of everything said by the angels in the Bible, despite supposedly being tasked ‘with conveying messages,’ and you’ll learn next to nothing about anything. The information content of those thousands of injunctions remains close to zero [...] This is because angels do not convey messages; they change those they address. What they transfer is not an information *content* but a new *container*. They don’t bring maps offering some hold to beings starved of knowledge—they transform their interlocutors. What they convey are not telegrams but persons.^{21b}

In this conception of scripture, the function of reading the text is to transform the reader. If the reader has a transforming, even revelatory experience, then scripture has fulfilled its performative function. From the perspective of the performative, the text is *true*. To be such a ‘falsehood’ means failing in the transformatory intent. Latour describes false performative utterances as those which “don’t reproduce, don’t perform, don’t transport what they talk from.” This causes them to “immediately, without any inertia...begin to lie, to fall apart, to stop having any reference, any ground.” Performative utterances which are false “are worse than false, they are simply irrelevant, parasitical.”²²

Latour’s complete rejection of constative questions as it relates to scripture will be difficult if not impossible for many believers to accept. For many believers, one of the central functions of scripture is to show the road to heaven and salvation. If scripture tells me I have to be baptized in the name of Christ when, in fact, I need to become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa (Krishna), or else I will not gain salvation, then the text has lied to me. Its description of doctrine is false. For many, this is the question at stake

²¹Bruno Latour, *Rejoicing, or the Torments of Religious Speech*, trans. Julie Rose (Malden: Polity Press, 2013), a 28, b 32, emphasis in original.

²²Bruno Latour, “‘Thou Shall Not Freeze-Frame’ or How Not to Misunderstand the Science and Religion Debate,” in *Science, Religion, and the Human Experience*, ed. James D. Proctor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005): 29.

when it comes to scripture and religion. The message which angels bring is then a message about what one must *do in order to* be saved. That being said, believers would not deny that scripture has intensely performative, even transformative properties. I return to the relationship between the doctrinal-didactic and performative-experiential aspects of scripture in section 4.3.1 on the *Mahābhārata*.

The distinction between the performative and the constative shows that questions of historicity of the narrative and truthfulness of Joseph Smith's claims are only a narrow and specialized type of textual interrogation. The purpose of this study is to show that constative analysis is not the only valid analysis of scripture. These texts can also be examined as to their performative quality and worth: their *performative truthfulness*. Scripture is the temporally and spatially defined locus where the sacred has been made sensible and is thus capable of being encountered again and again by the religious seeker.

This stable textual locus also makes scripture undeniably *literary*. It is made up of letters on a material page in the same way as any other non-sacred text. And yet sacred texts do not function the same way as *literature*, and place different demands on the reader. The purpose of this study is to develop an approach which can do performative, written scripture justice. The goal is, in part, to determine scripture's felicity conditions for the performative. Scripture's unique textual self-reflexivity and internal functioning along with its religious appeal is to be unpacked as a coherent textually derived discourse.

This approach is to be accessible without requiring belief in the constative claims of the text. At the same time, it seeks to allow belief in this truth to stand. The findings of this study are to be accessible to believers and non-believers alike while simultaneously not diminishing these scriptural self-reflexive claims or the sacred appeal believers see in their scripturalized text. This will be accomplished through a combination of contemporary German (chapter 3) and Medieval South Asian theory (chapter 4).

1.3 The *Book of Mormon* as it is and was

This finally brings us to the object of study itself: The *Book of Mormon*. The first edition (hereafter as FE with in-text citation) was published in English in 1830 on the frontier of a fledgling United States.²³ Grant Hardy describes the *Book of Mormon* as “one of the most successful new scriptures of the last few centuries (arguably second in importance only to the Adi Granth of the Sikhs).”²⁴ Paul Gutjahr argues that the *Book of Mormon* “might be considered the most important religious text ever to emerge from the United States.”²⁵ Other early examples include the writings of Mary Baker Eddy.²⁶

The book has since spread into the whole world, in large part due to the proselyting efforts of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. After all, the two “Testimonies” of the *Book of Mormon* included since the first edition are directed at “all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come” (FE, 589, 590). This distribution effort has turned it into world scripture, revered far beyond its provincial American origins.

The original preface of the *Book of Mormon* (found only in the FE) follows the scripturalizing pattern of the command to write: “Wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, I have, through his grace and mercy, accomplished that which he hath commanded me respecting this thing” (iv). The title page says that the *Book of Mormon* text was “written by way of commandment” (i). This command also exists on the level of the narrative. For example, the first narrator, Nephi, explains that he creates his writings because he was commanded to. He admits that he does not even know why: “Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me to make these plates, for a wise purpose in him; which purpose, I know not” (21).

²³ Joseph Smith, *The Book of Mormon* (Palmyra, NY: E. B. Grandin, 1830).

²⁴ Grant Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 11.

²⁵ Paul C. Gutjahr, *The "Book of Mormon": A Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 17.

²⁶ For example, the central text of Christian Science: Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health: with Key to the Scriptures* (Boston: The First Church of Christ, Scientist, [1875] 1994).

Chemish, the most taciturn recordkeeper, writes because that is his duty passed down since the first recordkeeper: "... we keep the records: for it is according to the commandments of our fathers" (149). And most importantly, Mormon creates his text (which constitutes the majority of the *Book of Mormon*) on the one hand due to the traditional task of recordkeeper being placed on him by Ammoron (518–19). On the other hand, he creates his text because the spirit tells him to: "And I do this for a wise purpose; for thus it whispereth me, according to the workings of the spirit of the Lord which is in me" (152). The command to write is therefore found woven throughout the entire *Book of Mormon*.

The English *Book of Mormon* does not even claim to be an original composition, but a translation of an existing record originally written in "reformed Egyptian" (538). The basis for the pre-translation 'original' is mostly Mormon's text with additions from Nephi and other early recordkeepers and finally the additions made by Mormon's son, Moroni. The FE text calls itself an "interpretation" (or rather, a linguistic translation) (i). The author's preface repeatedly states that the text was "translated" (iii). This translation was completed using the "gift and power of God" (i). In no uncertain terms, the text presents itself as commanded, revealed, sacred scripture—a divine book made accessible through a miracle.²⁷

William James, the American psychologist, philosopher, and author of the seminal *Varieties of Religious Experience*, briefly discusses Joseph Smith and his claims. James situates Smith in the tradition of other religious founders such as the Buddha, Jesus Christ, Saint Paul, Saint Augustine, Martin Luther, Ignatius of Loyola (the founder of the Jesuits), and Protestant theologians such as Jan Hus and John Wesley, all of whom reported "visions, voices, rapt conditions, guiding impressions, and 'openings.'" James further situates Smith's specific claims concerning the inspired production of the *Book of Mormon* in the long tradition of religious texts whose scriptors similarly attributed their texts to divine inspiration, such as the Hebrew prophets, Muhammad, and some Catholic saints.²⁸

²⁷Eduard Meyer, *Ursprung und Geschichte der Mormonen: mit Exkursen über die Anfänge des Islâms und des Christentums* (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1912), 78.

²⁸William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature: Being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion Delivered at Edinburgh in 1901–1902* (London, New

Eduard Meyer, a German historian of religion working during the same period as James, wrote an entire (German) work on the religious movement started by Joseph Smith and continued by Brigham Young. He all but ignores other movements. Like James, he is sympathetic towards Joseph Smith and ‘Mormonism.’ He sees striking analogies between Joseph Smith and Muhammad and sees the value of studying ‘Mormonism’ as a way to better understand both that prophet and the religion he founded.^{29a} These analogies are valuable, since Joseph Smith and his movement are a very recent phenomenon (especially for Meyer writing at the beginning of the twentieth century) with a plethora of well documented and reliable sources from all perspectives (‘pro’ and ‘anti’ Mormon). This provides an exceptional evidentiary basis for the beginnings of new religious movements and their struggles to spread.

Meyer, like James, places Joseph Smith and his visions in the long tradition of “inspired personalities” who existed “in all times, in the furthest past as well as in the present, by the thousands, among all peoples (*Völker*) and religions.”^{29b} If anything, this makes Joseph Smith sound almost ordinary. But the strongest parallel Meyer sees is with Muhammad. Both prophets were driven by the same problem: “the demand for a revelation for one’s own people,” which means that both men follow in the tradition of “revelation laid down in a divine book which is made accessible to them through a miracle.”^{29c}

Joseph Smith is thus wholly in line with the long tradition of commanded sriptors like Isaiah, Muhammad, and Vyāsa, tasked to bring the divine word into the world. The principal difference between Joseph Smith and these earlier visionary religious figures and their texts is that Joseph Smith made his scriptural claims in a post-Enlightenment world and after the supposed rise of secularism. This context has made the *Book of Mormon* qua revealed scripture controversial ever since its publication. The first

York, Bombay: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1902), 478.

²⁹Meyer, *Ursprung und Geschichte*, a 1; b 2, my translation: Inspirierte Persönlichkeiten derselben Art wie Joseph Smith hat es zu allen Zeiten, in der fernsten Vergangenheit wie in der Gegenwart, zu Tausenden gegeben, bei allen Völkern und in allen Religionen; c 78: die Forderung einer Offenbarung für das eigene Volk [...] die Offenbarung ist niedergelegt in einem göttlichen Buch, das ihnen durch ein Wunder zugänglich gemacht wird.

attempt to disprove its claims to divine origin was written within one year and published within two years of the *Book of Mormon*'s publication.³⁰

The controversy surrounding Joseph Smith, his claims, and the question of the historicity of the narrative has not abated over the last 190 years. The American historian Daniel Howe summarizes the disconnect between the text and its reception: "The *Book of Mormon* should rank among the greatest achievements of American literature, but it has never been accorded the status it deserves. . . non-Mormons, dismissing the book as a fraud, have been more likely to ridicule than to read it."³¹ The intent of this study is to show that there is much to be gained from the text irrespective of the correspondence truthfulness of the narrative. The text can stand on its *performative truthfulness*.

Unfortunately, the text has been plagued by what Elizabeth Fenton and Jared Hickman call a "hermeneutical dualism," which tends to split readership of the text into two competing camps: 'Mormons' and 'anti-Mormons.' The dualism "has tended to transform all discussants of the text into either debunkers or defenders of the Mormon faith." Scholarly study has therefore been dominated by the 'Mormon' side. Academic study "has been cowed or co-opted by the charged theological questions surrounding the text's historical status."³² As I discuss in the next chapter, a significant portion of modern studies to this day seek to functionalize analysis for religious-apologist ends. This has all too often led to the dichotomy lamented by Howe: People believe and therefore read, or they do *not* believe and therefore do *not* read, especially in an academic context.

My own study is in part a challenge to a strict secularism narrative, which is especially prevalent in Americanist literary criticism.³³ At the

³⁰Alexander Campbell, *Delusions: An Analysis of the Book of Mormon with an Examination of its Internal and External Evidences, and a refutation of its pretences to divine authority* (Boston: Benjamin H. Greene, 1832); see section 2.1.

³¹Daniel W. Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 314.

³²Elizabeth Fenton and Jared Hickman, "Introduction: *Learning to Read With The Book of Mormon*," in *Americanist Approaches to the Book of Mormon*, eds. Elizabeth Fenton and Jared Hickman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019): 3.

³³Cf. Elizabeth Fenton, "Open Canons: Sacred History and American History in *The Book of Mormon*," *J19: Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists* 1, no. 2 (2013): 342.

same time, it is not an apologia for the *Book of Mormon*, but it is a charitable, *post*-secular analysis of the *performative truthfulness* of the text, irrespective of constative questions. I argue that such analysis does not require picking a side in the seemingly intractable hermeneutical dualism. The text itself calls for a performative reading practice through its extensive self-reflexivity. Its form and content provide the basis for this type of reading.

Performative truthfulness becomes the text's means of teaching its overarching doctrinal lesson. Even though I am not interested in historicity, I nonetheless argue for a special, 'scriptural' status of the *Book of Mormon*. The text's internal self-reflexivity and internal functioning are fully in line with the long tradition of revealed and revelatory scripturalized text. This special status is not based on partisan theological debates, but on how the text sees and establishes itself through its form and content. This means that even this study falls squarely into the continuing process of scripturalization.

1.3.1 The Printed Text(s)

The *Book of Mormon* in English exists in multiple diverging editions. The English text has itself been widely translated from early on due to the European (and eventually world-wide) missionary efforts of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The first published translation was into Danish in 1851, followed by French, Welsh, German, and Italian in 1852. Gutjahr lists 109 full or partial translations as of 2008.³⁴ More have been added since. The early dates of the translations and the sheer number of them show that translation and wide distribution is tightly woven into the process of scripturalization of the *Book of Mormon*.

During his lifetime, Joseph Smith published three editions, the initial 1830 edition, the second edition in 1837 (hereafter as SE), and the third edition in 1840 (hereafter as ThE).³⁵ The original *Book of Mormon* text also exists in two different manuscript forms. Royal Skousen, professor of

³⁴Gutjahr, *Biography*, 95–98.

³⁵Joseph Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 2nd ed. (Kirtland, OH: O. Cowdery & Co., 1837); Joseph Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 3rd ed. (Nauvoo, IL.: Robinson and Smith, 1840).

linguistics at Brigham Young University and the foremost expert on *Book of Mormon* textual history, spent years recovering as much as possible of the severely damaged Original Manuscript,^{36a} which Joseph Smith dictated to his scribes. Skousen devoted painstaking work to restoring the manuscript, which had been almost entirely reduced to a clump of cellulose.

In 1841, Joseph Smith had placed it in the cornerstone of the Nauvoo House (a mansion in the city of Nauvoo built as part of the founding of the city by Joseph Smith and his followers), resulting in its unfortunate condition. The manuscript was only retrieved in 1882, by which time it “was severely damaged by water that had seeped in” and “much of it had been eaten away by mold.” Taking all fragments into account, Skousen estimates that approximately twenty-eight percent of the Original Manuscript is extant.^{36b}

The other manuscript is the Printer’s Manuscript, which was the basis for five sixths of the 1830 typesetting, the other sixth coming from the Original Manuscript.³⁷ The Printer’s Manuscript, which is a handwritten copy of the Original Manuscript, is “fully extant except for three manuscript lines on the first leaf.” It is available as a two-volume work published in 2001.³⁸ Most significantly, Skousen’s work resulted in the 2009 publication of a critical text edition by Yale University Press, which I refer to as the *Yale Edition* (hereafter as YE). It draws on twenty previous *Book of Mormon* editions.³⁹ Given Skousen’s linguistic background and text-critical approach, the YE divides the text into individual clauses.

On top of issues surrounding manuscripts and editions, there are also two major textual traditions of the *Book of Mormon*, both of which were consulted for the YE. The first and most known textual tradition follows that of the largest church which grew out of Joseph Smith’s movement: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (hereafter as LDS), based

³⁶Royal Skousen, “The Original Text of the Book of Mormon and its Publication by Yale University Press,” *Interpreter* 7 (2013): a 58–66, b 58.

³⁷Royal Skousen, “Why was one sixth of the 1830 Book of Mormon set from the original manuscript?,” *Interpreter* 2 (2012): 94.

³⁸Royal Skousen, ed., *The Printer’s Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Entire Text in two Parts*. 2 vols. (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2001).

³⁹Royal Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2009), 739–41.

in Salt Lake City, Utah. The other major textual tradition is that followed by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints—Community of Christ (hereafter as CoC) as of 2001—based in Independence, Missouri.

After Joseph Smith was killed in Carthage, Illinois, in 1844, different groups vied for control of the church.⁴⁰ The successorship for Joseph Smith's prophetic mantle was principally disputed between Joseph Smith's son, represented by Joseph Smith's wife, Emma Smith, and the head of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Brigham Young Senior. Those who favored Smith's son later formed the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, while what is now the LDS church followed Brigham Young. The CoC *Book of Mormon* tradition, as separate from the LDS tradition, begins in 1858 with the publication of their own *Book of Mormon* edition (cf. YE, 743–44). Thus the two textual traditions diverged only a few decades after the work's initial publication.

My study employs some comparative work focused on formatting aspects of different editions, and I use in-text citations with abbreviations.⁴¹ I do not examine the extent to which the textual traditions diverged over time. I focus on the FE, but also draw on the SE and the ThE, both of which were published before the schism and, most importantly, during Joseph Smith's lifetime and under his control (the 1841 edition was set and published in England). When discussing differences between the earliest and modern editions, I focus on the two most recent LDS editions: 1981 (hereafter as L81) and 2013 (hereafter as L13).⁴² This is partly due to my lack of familiarity with the CoC tradition, but mostly because the L81 and L13 are by far the most widely used. All LDS non-English editions closely follow the formatting of the L81.

I also draw on Hardy's *Reader's Edition* (hereafter as RE), based on the 1920 LDS text, and his recent *Maxwell Institute Study Edition* (hereafter as MSE), based on the 2013 LDS text. Hardy's texts both reformat the

⁴⁰cf. Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 725–26.

⁴¹See the page of abbreviations at the start of this study for the full list.

⁴²Joseph Smith, *The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1981); Joseph Smith, *The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 2013).

respective base texts, creating new paragraphs and placing certain passages in verse.⁴³ The MSE also contains large woodcuts by LDS artist Brian Kershnik as headers for the various books. And finally, I sometimes refer to the 2002 edition of the 1966 CoC Revised Authorized Version (hereafter as RAV).⁴⁴

This brings us to some of the specific formatting differences between editions and traditions. There are five different types of versification: three from the CoC and two from the LDS tradition. All of these were added after Joseph Smith's death.⁴⁵ There are two extremes. The Original Manuscript does not include any paragraphs or even punctuation. The only formatting marks are comments on where to begin a new chapter. Other division and formatting, most notably the individual paragraphs and punctuation, were added by the typesetter, John Gilbert. Skousen estimates that nearly all paragraphing and over 90% of the punctuation in the FE are Gilbert's work.⁴⁶

Interestingly, Gilbert did not believe in the text's scriptural status and never became a believer. Gutjahr describes a conversation between Brigham Young Jr. and John Gilbert in which Gilbert was asked whether he considered the "Mormon Bible a humbug" and his reply was that he considered it "a very big humbug."⁴⁷ And yet he clearly took the task seriously and completed it in a professional manner.⁴⁸ His copy-editing choices are the foundation on which Joseph Smith's later editions were built.

Gilbert's influence on the text is only exceeded by Orson Pratt's 1879

⁴³Grant Hardy, ed., *The Book of Mormon: A Reader's Edition* (Urbana, Chicago, Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2003); Grant Hardy, ed., *The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ – Maxwell Institute Study Edition* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 2019).

⁴⁴Smith, Joseph. *The Book of Mormon: Revised Authorized Version*. Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 2002.

⁴⁵Royal Skousen, "Changes in the Book of Mormon," *Interpreter* 11 (2014): 162–63.

⁴⁶See Royal Skousen, "John Gilbert's 1892 Account of the 1830 Printing of the Book of Mormon," in *The Disciple as Witness: Essays on Latter-Day Saint History and Doctrine in Honor of Richard Lloyd Anderson*, eds. Stephen Ricks, Donald Parry, Andrew Hedges (Provo, UT: FARMS), section 10.

⁴⁷Gutjahr, *Biography*, 28.

⁴⁸Cf. Skousen, "The Original Text," 75.

versification.⁴⁹ This later system uses small, numbered verses of similar length to contemporary Bible verses. The new chapter divisions are also of similar length to contemporary Bible chapters. Most of the original FE chapters are much longer. Pratt's divisions have been maintained in the LDS tradition to this day. The RAV also uses short verses and sometimes divides up the original chapters. However, some chapters still run to over two-hundred verses.

In contrast to the raw Original Manuscript stands the L13 as an example of the other formatting extreme. This edition is almost identical to the L81 and only includes small changes in wording and formatting. The L81/L13 text includes many footnotes, most of which are cross-references to the Bible, other LDS scripture (the *Doctrine and Covenants* and *Pearl of Great Price*), or the Topical Guide (an appendix which groups scriptural references by topic).

The footnote letters are included in the verses as superscript. The text is formatted in dual columns and includes chapter summaries before every chapter. These summaries are not part of the original *Book of Mormon* text, but are later additions. These editions also include a significant amount of introductory material, including multiple tables aiding new readers. Some printings of the L81 and L13 even include multiple color paintings depicting scenes from the *Book of Mormon* narrative.

The RAV is a compromise between narrative and scriptural formatting, having short verses and generally shorter chapters but no further additions. This is made explicit from the beginning of the volume. After the title page, there is "An Invitation to Read the Book of Mormon," underneath which is the short section "How to Read the Book of Mormon." These ways of reading the text are, in order: "as a narrative from page one through page 349" (the final page of the RAV); "as a sequence of story highlights with an emphasis on action and major events"; and only then "as a text that presents distinctive teachings and prophetic writings" (iii). The bullet summaries following the introductory page give "Highlights of the Story Sequence" (iv–v) first and "Distinctive Teachings and Prophetic Writings"

⁴⁹Paul C. Gutjahr, "Orson Pratt's Enduring Influence on *The Book of Mormon*," in Fenton; Hickman, *Americanist Approaches*, esp. 94–99.

(vi–vii) second. This squarely puts the emphasis on the narrative of the scriptural text ahead of didactic theology.

In contrast to later editions, the FE more closely resembles a modern novel, even having a similar size and thickness. Even the binding is significant, since the volume “was bound in such a way that it looked strikingly similar to . . . two American Bible Society editions” of the Bible published around the same time.⁵⁰ This leads to the understandable call found in the recent *Americanist Approaches* to historicize and in a way limit the text to its nineteenth-century American context. The tension created between a historicizing and a ‘literary’ approach (such as mine) is examined in the introduction of the volume.⁵¹ Whatever the specific historical debate on scriptural binding and formatting,^{52a} the simpler binding of the text projects the type of reader engagement expected by the text. It presents a text which should be read and enjoyed rather than meticulously parsed. The signaling quality of formatting is continued into the pages themselves.

The formatting of any text, especially scripturalized text, is not neutral. It instead “carr[ies] interpretive meaning and instruct[s] readers in that meaning.”^{52b} The *Book of Mormon* uses this signaling to great effect through its seamless narrative, familiar to both an 1830 and a contemporary reader. The text has no footnotes of any kind. There are only occasional textual headnotes, meaning headnotes included by Joseph Smith in the first manuscript and which are part of Mormon’s function as principal narrator. The FE has occasional summaries, but these fulfill particular narratological functions, such as when upcoming events are missing in the summary. I return to such an example in section 7.1.1 on Mormon’s narration of the events at Ammonihah.

The FE has numbered chapters and unnumbered paragraphs running the whole width of the page. For an 1830 reader, “[t]his seamless quality invokes the style of historical writing at the time. History was more than recorded philosophy and events. It was also a story intended to bring past

⁵⁰Gutjahr, “Golden Bible,” 278

⁵¹Fenton and Hickman, “Introduction: Learning to Read With *The Book of Mormon*,” in Fenton and Hickman, eds., *Americanist Approaches* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

⁵²Perry, *Bible Culture*, a 40–62, b 41.

events to life in the present.”^{53a} Gutjahr compares the style and formatting of the *Book of Mormon* as (pseudo-)historical narrative to “the historical fiction of the first best-selling novelists of this period: Washington Irving, Sir Walter Scott, and James Fenimore Cooper.”^{53b} For example, Cooper’s popular *The Last of the Mohicans* was published in 1826, only four years before the FE. This formatting therefore called and still calls for a particular type of reading: narrative rather than analysis.

This formatting seems significant, since Joseph Smith was aware of dual-column Bibles using short verses that employ cross references marked by superscript. For example, the Bible which he used for his revised translation of the Bible has such formatting.⁵⁴ And yet, the FE does not follow such biblical, analytic, didactic formatting. Hardy points out that despite the text’s clear “scriptural aspirations, *The Book of Mormon* was never published with biblical references, cross-references, or even verse numbers during Smith’s lifetime.”⁵⁵ One might argue that the FE was only formatted in the simpler novelistic style as a matter of efficiency or as a cost-saving measure. However, Gutjahr considers the FE formatting to be a deliberate choice on the part of Joseph Smith, since he “was intimately involved in *The Book of Mormon*’s production process.”⁵⁶

This novelistic formatting receives extra significance, since Joseph Smith had two opportunities to change this formatting: once in the SE and once in ThE. These editions were reexamined closely in preparation for their respective publication. The SE “shows major editing by Joseph Smith towards standard English.” The ThE “shows minor editing by Joseph Smith (including a few restored phrases from the original manuscript).”⁵⁷ This proves that the text itself was edited on the level of individual words and phrases, meaning it was not copied wholesale. A significant change made for the SE and maintained in the ThE is found in Nephi’s vision at

⁵³Gutjahr, “Golden Bible,” a–b 287.

⁵⁴*The Holy Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments: Together with the Apocrypha* (Cooperstown, NY: H&E Phinney, 1828).

⁵⁵Grant Hardy, “*The Book of Mormon* and the Bible,” in Fenton; Hickman, *Americanist Approaches*, 114.

⁵⁶Gutjahr, “Golden Bible,” 278.

⁵⁷Skousen, *Book of Mormon*, 739–40.

the beginning of the narrative. His spiritual guide, called the *Spirit*, shows him different vignettes as part of a larger vision. The FE's account of the vision has the virgin as the "mother of God" and the "Lamb of God" as the "Eternal Father." The SE and ThE change these to "mother of the Son of God" and "Son of the Eternal Father." These differences are highlighted in figure 1.1.

FE, 25	SE, 27–28 and ThE, 26
<p>And he said unto me, Behold, the virgin which thou seest, is the mother of God, after the manner of the flesh [...] And the angel said unto me, behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Eternal Father!</p>	<p>And he said unto me, behold, the virgin whom thou seest, is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh [...] And the angel said unto me, behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father!</p>

Figure 1.1: Addition of *the Son of* starting in SE

While the change is only the inclusion of a two-word phrase, it shows that Joseph Smith examined the text closely enough to find such a theologically controversial passage. All of the other editing changes also show that the production of the SE carefully weighed the text.

Since the text was examined so closely, these two later editions could have been brought more in line with the Bibles Joseph Smith was familiar with. Versification or other major formatting changes could have taken place and yet they did not. Both editions almost exactly follow the paragraphs established by Gilbert for the FE and exactly follow the layout and formatting of that text. My comparative work⁵⁸ found only seven minor differences between the three editions' paragraphs. A difference includes any instance where any of the three deviates from the other two. The first instance of a deviation in paragraphs is on page 16 of the FE during Nephi's instructions to later recordkeepers. The SE and ThE add a paragraph break.

⁵⁸Here I must thank my long-suffering and supportive wife.

The difference is illustrated in figure 1.2, in which the respective lines are complete and line breaks and indents are as they appear in the respective texts.

FE, 16	that they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the children of men . And now I would that ye might know, that after my father Lehi had made an end of prophesying concerning his seed, it came to pass that the
SE, 18–19	that they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the children of men . <i>(page break)</i> And now I would that ye might know, that after my father Lehi had made an end concerning his seed, it came to pass that the Lord spake
ThE, 18	fore, I shall give commandment unto my seed, that they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the children of men . And now I would that ye might know, that after my father Lehi had made an end concerning his seed, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto him

Figure 1.2: Difference in paragraphing starting in SE

Such differences are scattered throughout the text. The last difference is on page 535 (out of 588).⁵⁹ The fact that there are any changes in paragraph divisions at all shows that such changes were considered throughout the text and that Gilbert's choices were accepted in almost all cases. The other textual manipulations (from spelling to line-length) also show that the novelistic formatting received Joseph Smith's blessing on three separate occasions. Apart from the incidental literary effect of the formatting, it should be considered essential to the form of the text and part of the implicit reader instructions.

However, formatting is not always considered an important factor in readings of the text. Skousen, as a linguist and textual critic, considers the

⁵⁹See Appendix A for a more detailed examination.

formatting of the text to be an Aristotelian *accidental*, which

refers to distinctions which do not change the essence of something. In textual studies, *accidentals* refer to variants that change the form of the text but not the actual words (which are called *substantives*). Under the class of accidentals we include paragraphing, punctuation, the spelling of common English words (but not names), and capitalization.⁶⁰

This places paragraphing and punctuation (two of the most important features in a literary context) into the same category as spelling conventions. For a textual critic, formatting does not play a significant role. The precise wording and spelling, however, do. Conversely, most literary readings will not be significantly affected by changes in things like relative pronouns. For example, the FE text follows the Middle English usage of *which* rather than the modern *who* as a relative pronoun for people. This is already changed in the SE. There are also differences in capitalization. Compare the same passage from the title pages of the FE and SE in figure 1.3:

FE, i	SE, iii
<p>...written to the Lamanites, which are a remnant of the House of Israel [...] a Record of the People of Jared, which were scattered at the time the LORD confounded the language of the people.</p>	<p>...written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel [...] a record of the people of Jared; who were scattered at the time the LORD confounded the language of the people.</p>

Figure 1.3: Changes in relative pronouns and capitalization

A literary study will not give such differences the same weight as a text-critical approach. I do not mention Skousen's approach to accidentals as a matter of criticism, but only to show how different disciplines prioritize different elements of the text. His emphasis on manuscript variation and

⁶⁰Skousen, "Changes," 163.

word choice derives from historical criticism, which uses very different premises from the literary approach of my study.

Apart from the literary considerations of the formatting, I turn to the FE of the text for one main reason. Compared to other scriptural traditions, the *Book of Mormon* has the great fortune of complete access to its readerly original. While portions of the Original Manuscript and almost all of the Printer's Manuscript are extant, neither of these was intended to be read by a non-technical group. The form of these two texts does not invite the same type of analysis as the published FE. These texts *can* be analyzed using literary means, but their formatting makes it clear that they were never intended to be interpreted with the techniques of literary analysis.

And even though the text has a complete *published* original, the FE still contains the age-old scriptural frustration of lost portions. The preface of the FE mentions "one hundred and sixteen pages" taken "from the Book of Lehi." This initial manuscript was lost to Joseph Smith, or as he describes it in the preface: "[W]hich said account, some person or persons have stolen and kept from me, notwithstanding my utmost exertions to recover it again" (iii).

One could reasonably ask that if the pages are a translation of a stable text, why could Joseph Smith not just translate them again? It would mean more work, but it should be possible. Joseph Smith claims that he was "commanded of the Lord that I should not translate the same over again." The rationale for not doing this was that the manuscript could be altered and incongruities between the original and his new translation would be used against him. Those with the manuscript would spring this trap

by altering the words, that they did read contrary from that which I translated and caused to be written; and if I should bring forth the same words again, or, in other words, if I should translate the same over again, they would publish that which they had stolen, and Satan would stir up the hearts of this generation, that they might not receive this work (ibid.).

This strange 'commanded to *not* write' is convenient for Joseph Smith as supposed fraudster, since he did not have to remember what he wrote the first time around. If he did not receive or produce a literal translation of

a stable text, the repeat-translation would deviate considerably from the original. The lack of a close (much less identical) match would then prove that he only wrote the text himself instead of receiving revelation or using a stable non-English original.

And yet this preface is “not merely a convenient story to explain away a text that has fallen out of [Joseph Smith’s] control.” The account of the lost manuscript “offers an interpretive frame for the book as a whole.”^{61a} This account of the command to *not* write foregrounds the published text’s incompleteness. Whichever way one interprets the rationale for the ‘command to not write’ (a fraudster covering his tracks or a prophet being thwarted), these pages are now lost.

All that is still available includes the extant portions of the Original Manuscript, the majority of the Printer’s Manuscript, and the finished 1830 publication. Most readers (past and present) will only ever read a published readerly volume. That being said, access to the technical texts has been greatly improved through Skousen’s work and the Joseph Smith Papers project. There is a first readerly edition, but it does not contain all of what *could* have been part of that edition. The reader must be content with what is available and must not agonize over what these one hundred and sixteen manuscript pages said and what they would have added to the text or how they would have altered the message. The textual functions can only unfold in the context of the published text as available to us today. As Fenton describes it: “By its own account, then, *The Book of Mormon* is neither a complete account nor even a complete document.”^{61b} The text’s acknowledgement of this issue will be relevant for my theoretical approach to the concept of *text* in section 3.5.

This basis in a particular closed volume of a specific edition allows for an approach which can examine the text as scripture, while not requiring acceptance of its literal theological or historical truthfulness. This study examines the text’s many implicit and explicit self-reflexive passages about the purpose of scripture and its functioning in the lives of its readers, the process of translation, and the difficulties of writing down spiritual experiences. This leads to the analysis of how the *Book of Mormon* text drama-

⁶¹Fenton, “Open Canons,” a 349, b 351.

tizes the type of performative reading practice self-reflexively called for by the text. This study gives special weight to the principal narrator, Mormon, as a model reader.

1.3.2 Book and Character Names

Before delving into the text itself, I need to ensure that my references are clear. The title of the entire work is the *Book of Mormon*. The volume contains several subdivisions, each called a ‘book’ (except for the short subsection ‘Words of Mormon’). Each of these has a unique name, except for four separate ‘books of Nephi.’ I follow the biblical convention when referencing these numbered subsections. Following this model, ‘2 Nephi’ refers to the second book of Nephi. The first two books of Nephi, which are also the first two books of the volume, are narrated by Nephi, the son of Lehi.

The third and fourth books of Nephi are narrated by Mormon and take place centuries after the first two books of Nephi. They are found about three quarters into the text. The FE does not refer to 3 Nephi and 4 Nephi by these ordinal names. What is now commonly called 3 Nephi has the title “The book of Nephi, the son of Nephi, which was the son of Helaman” (FE, 452). What is now referred to as 4 Nephi is titled “The book of Nephi, which is the son of Nephi, one of the disciples of Jesus Christ” (514). I will refer to these books by their modern ordinal names in order to avoid confusion.

The *Book of Mormon* as a whole also contains a subsection called the ‘book of Mormon.’ This sub-book covers the narrative of Mormon’s own life as narrated by himself and also a short section narrated by his son, Moroni. In order to clearly distinguish between the text as a whole and the sub-book, I refer to the entire volume as the *Book of Mormon*, with an upper-case **B** and in italics, and to the subsection towards the end of the volume as the book of Mormon, with a lower-case **b**, not in italics. I use the same convention when referring to other books, for example, the **book** of Mosiah or the **book** of Ether. I shorten chapter references to the name of the book and the chapter number. For example, Alma XII refers to chapter twelve of the book of Alma.

When referring to chapters, I use FE chapter divisions. These are referenced with the original Roman numerals, whereas the Bible and the LDS and CoC editions are cited with Arabic numerals. The Concordance at the end of the volume (pages 386–90) gives the page ranges for FE chapters together with the LDS chapters that are covered by a given FE chapter. I rarely provide the LDS chapter and verse for passages I reference, and the page ranges given in the Concordance can help orient readers more familiar with the LDS divisions.

The differences between the FE divisions and the LDS and CoC divisions usually include an FE chapter being split into two or more smaller chapters. For example, the single FE chapters that cover the discovery of Limhi and his people and Zeniff's narration are each split in two in the LDS divisions (the RAV maintains the original chapters). However, there are a few more substantial changes, such as at the end of the book of Mosiah, where Pratt moved around chapter divisions and grouped the text differently from the original divisions. He placed the translation of the Jaredite record together with the start of the ministry of the princes in Mosiah 28. The original divisions have a very short chapter (XII, covering what is now vv.1–19) for only the start of the ministry (FE, 215–16). The translation is grouped in the last chapter (XIII) with the sermon on the danger of kings (217–21). Thus, unless otherwise stated, a 'chapter' or 'chapter break' refers to the FE chapter divisions.

The text as a whole covers four different groups or civilizations. Each of these four groups crosses an ocean and arrives in the same Promised Land. The groups also interact in various ways. Two of these can be considered 'minor' groups. This is not because they are smaller in population, but because the text covers their respective narratives in far less detail and in far fewer pages than the narrative of the two major groups. Chronologically speaking, the first minor group is the people of Jared (also called Jaredites), which comes from the Tower of Babel under the leadership of Jared. The great tower construction from which they flee is never referred to by this name, but the details surrounding the confusion of the languages of the people make this biblical allusion clear. The group's narrative is covered separately in the book of Ether.

The second of the two minor groups is the people of Zarahemla. They

leave Jerusalem under the leadership of Mulek at the time of the city's destruction at the hands of the Babylonians and eventually settle in the land of Zarahemla. Modern usage often refers to this group as the Mulekites, following the common *Book of Mormon* naming pattern of adding the suffix -ite.⁶² However, the text never refers to them as such, and only ever calls them *the people of Zarahemla*. I follow the textual usage.

The text's two principal groups are the Nephites and the Lamanites, which derive from two brothers, Nephi and Laman, who are the sons of the first prophet mentioned in the text. This first prophet, Lehi, leads a small emigrant group a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem. I speak of the *Lehite* narrative when referring to the principal narrative of the *Book of Mormon*, excluding the book of Ether. The term *Lehite* refers to the narrative as it pertains to all of the inhabitants and not only the Nephites and Lamanites individually. While the text focuses primarily on the Nephites, many of the events also involve the Lamanites. Many episodes even take place in the land of the Lamanites. Thus rather than speaking of the Nephite narrative, I refer to the narrative of the descendants of Lehi, or the Lehite narrative. This term is also useful for its broadness, since many episodes in the *Book of Mormon* involve groups switching allegiances from the Nephites to the Lamanites and vice versa. The term *Lehite* is therefore used to allow the individual terms *Nephite* and *Lamanite* to make it clear that I am referring to specifically one group and not the other.

One of the most challenging aspects of the *Book of Mormon* is its sheer number of named characters. Many characters also share the same name. Some names repeat with completely unrelated characters. There are three (perhaps four) Lehis: the first prophet; the son of the Nephite commander mentioned at the beginning of Alma XI (who is probably distinct from the officer who fought during the battle for the city of Mulek⁶³); and finally the great-great-grandson of the first Alma and the brother of the second Nephi. There are two different Ammons: The first leads the scouting expedition that finds Limhi and his people. The second is one of the princely missionaries that go and preach to the Lamanites. There are also three different

⁶²Cf. pp. 291 and 298 in this study.

⁶³See n. 5 on p. 152 in this study for a more detailed discussion.

Helamans, the first being the son of the second Mosiah and the other two being direct descendants of the first Alma.

I follow Hardy's use of subscript to mark which character I am referring to in a given passage. From here onwards, I follow the numbering as summarized at the end of the MSE (634–43). A list of the characters that feature most prominently in my own study is given after the list of abbreviations. With this pattern, the first narrator is referred to as Nephi₁. The prophet at the time of Christ's appearance is Nephi₃, whose father is Nephi₂. The first high priest of the church is Alma₁, and his rebellious son and first chief judge is Alma₂. An important distinction is between Moroni₁, the Nephite commander in the book of Alma, and Moroni₂, the son of the narrator Mormon₂. And yes, even the principal narrator has a subscript name. He explains: “[A]nd my father's name was Mormon” (FE, 519).

1.4 Thesis of the Study

In summary, the *Book of Mormon* as a whole exhibits a complexity and textual functioning that invites close literary analysis. As the rest of this study will show, the narrative maintains a complex relationship with its extra-textual world and its actual reader. The representational relationship is beyond the binary *fictional-factual*. The reader is implicated into the world of the text and asked to affectively immerse him- or herself in the events presented, rather than only analytically parse the text. The reader is asked to engage with the text in a performative, transformative, even revelatory manner. This is supposed to result in an experiential-empathetic manifestation of the characterized principle of coherence of the text: none other than God himself. This revelation is achieved through Mormon₂ as principal narrator and messianic protagonist.

These demands and functions are difficult to grasp in their complexity and breadth using only traditional exegetical approaches. They require developing an approach geared specifically to the *Book of Mormon* as self-reflexively revelatory scripture. The principal questions become: How does one approach the religious text without diminishing its self-understand-

ing as revealed scripture? How does one not denigrate the sincere religious faith centered on it? I propose a *post-secular* approach (section 3.2). This takes religion seriously as a coherent discourse and seeks to understand the internal functioning of this discourse separate from constative theological questions.

The next question is how one approaches the scriptural text and its self-reflexivity. I begin with a pragmatic concept of literature (3.4) as a way of approaching the term *literature* in such a manner as to adapt it to the specific needs of scripture. How then to grasp the experiential, revelatory demands of the scriptural text? I employ the South Asian aesthetic school *rasadhvani* and its approach to scripture in a poetic context (4.3). This considers scriptural reading at the intersection of didactic-doctrinal and affective-poetic engagement.

The answers to these questions taken together demonstrate that constative analysis is not required for grasping the *Book of Mormon* in its self-reflexivity. Performative analysis of the felicity conditions of both text and reader is sufficient for access to the revelatory-scriptural experience espoused by the text. My study ultimately demonstrates that post-secular analysis can gain access to religious knowledge which is inaccessible by strictly secular approaches. My approach requires a willingness to engage with the religious text as something fascinating and even risky, as the *Book of Mormon* invites its readers: *Experiment upon the word!* In order to demonstrate how the approach of this study differs from previous literary criticism, we must examine recent literary approaches to the *Book of Mormon*.

2 The Meanest Book: Scholarship since Alexander Campbell

To understand just how far literary criticism of the *Book of Mormon* has come over the last 190 years, we should examine the first (supposedly literary) critique of the text. The provisional definition of *literature* and *literary* is non-constative reading of the spatial-temporally stable volume. The specific concepts of the term *literature* and *text* are discussed in the next chapter.¹ A “literary” reading—in contrast to an explicitly denominational, devotional, and doctrinal “religious” reading—is not focused on constative soteriological concerns, but on the literariness of their representation.

2.1 Alexander Campbell’s Literary “Critique”

Alexander Campbell, a minister in the American Restoration Movement, wrote a polemical critique of the *Book of Mormon* in 1831, published in 1832. Campbell has only contempt for the text and Joseph Smith. Perhaps the main reason for this negativity is the fact that the *Book of Mormon*, in both content and its very existence, challenges the basis of Campbell’s own ministry. Samuel Brown describes Campbell as Joseph Smith’s “chief theological competitor.”² However, there was also a very personal component. One of Joseph Smith’s earliest allies was Sidney Rigdon, “one of Campbell’s most promising protégés.” This poaching by Smith and betrayal by Rigdon “enraged his former mentor.” Campbell’s response to “Rigdon’s perfidy” was the “first extended critique of the *Book of Mormon*.”³ The text thus had an uphill battle from the start.

Campbell compares Joseph Smith to the false prophets and sorcerers mentioned in the Bible. He bases his criticism of the *Book of Mormon* text and especially the narrative in large part on “Internal Evidences,” which

¹Sections 3.4 and 3.5 respectively.

²Samuel M. Brown, “‘To Read the Round of Eternity’: *Speech, Text, and Scripture in The Book of Mormon*,” in Fenton; Hickman, *Americanist Approaches*, 165.

³Gutjahr, *Biography*, 29.

are mainly concerned with how the text's narrative runs contrary to canonical readings of the Old and to some extent the New Testament. One of Campbell's main criticisms of the narrative is the fact that the *Book of Mormon* presents another lineage which possesses priesthood power. Since the Levites received sole claim to the "everlasting priesthood," no other lineage could, according to Campbell, legitimately act in a priestly capacity. He says that "Joseph Smith overlooked [this] in his impious fraud."^{4a}

He cannot accept the implication of the *Book of Mormon* that "God is represented as instituting, approbating, and blessing a new priesthood from the tribe of Joseph, concerning which Moses gave no commandment concerning priesthood."^{4b} Campbell also takes issues with passages which differ regarding specific details of the New Testament, such as where John the Baptist baptized or where Jesus was born.^{4c} Nephi₁'s vision has John baptizing "in Bethabara" (FE, 22). Alma₂ explains that Jesus "shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem" (240).

It should be immediately obvious that Campbell's 'internal evidences' have very little to do with the internal functioning of the text. For Campbell, the Bible is the unalterable, perfect, and unambiguous Word of God. The *Book of Mormon* and its narrative are false because they differ from and even directly challenge the nineteenth-century American hegemony of biblical narratives. Campbell reads the *Book of Mormon* intertextually, but in bad faith. If the *Book of Mormon* disagrees with the Bible in any way, it is a fraud.

Campbell does consider legitimately internal functions of the text. He hits on the surprisingly sophisticated idea that Joseph Smith cannot be the inspired translator of the text, since the FE calls him the "author and proprietor."⁵ To address this point, we can turn to what Gérard Genette calls "rules of onymity" (as opposed to anonymity or pseudonymity). A text having someone claiming to be its author is not the same as the person having actually written it. Such textual indications "are matters of *legal responsibility* rather than of factual authorship: under the rules of onymity, the name of the author is the name of whoever is putatively *responsible* for the

⁴Campbell, *Delusions*, a–b 11, c 13.

⁵Campbell, *Delusions*, 13.

work, whatever his real role in producing it.”⁶ By signing as the author, Joseph Smith claims the legal rights to and responsibility for the contents of the work. This legal claim is made clear on the very next page: the FE copyright.

Joseph Smith actually used this copyright based on his use of his real, legal name and the legal protection of an author’s copyright at least once. Gutjahr explains:

During the typesetting, a Palmyran named Abner Cole obtained some loose pages of the book and, under the pseudonym [!] O. Dogberry, began to publish excerpts of it in his new weekly periodical, the *Reflector*. Joseph personally intervened to stop Cole’s work, warning him of the penalties for infringing upon his established copyright. After printing two issues that contained excerpts from the Book of Nephi, Cole desisted.⁷

Had Joseph Smith written under a pseudonym or only claimed to be the translator, his legal claim against Cole (writing under a pseudonym) would have been much weaker. Thus while Campbell’s criticism is superficially valid, it overlooks an important function of the unequivocal copyright claim under the legal rules of onymity.

Campbell continues his critique by complaining about “Smithisms,” such as “And it came to pass” and “I sayeth unto you,” with which the text “is patched up and cemented.” He also takes issue with the presence of Early Modern English grammar in an 1830 English text. He scoffs at “all the King James’ *haths*, *dids* and *doths*—in the lowest imitation of the common version.” For Campbell, this results in “the meanest book in the English language.”^{8a} He also cannot accept Joseph Smith’s description of the production history, which Campbell still includes under the heading *internal evidences*, even though the *Book of Mormon* text itself says very little as to the production of the English text.

Campbell’s polemic is useful as a starting point, because it shows just

⁶Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 40, my emphasis.

⁷Gutjahr, *Biography*, 25.

⁸Campbell, *Delusions*, a 15, b 3–4.

how far textual criticism has come. The first reactions to the text by the educated class were hostile. The narrative was weighed against a monolithic Bible. The production history as claimed by Joseph Smith outside of the text challenged orthodox concepts of a closed canon of revelation and scripture. The central problem to be answered was literal historicity and theological veracity of the narrative presented. And for the nineteenth-century American intelligentsia, the answer was obvious. King James Version (KJV) English was a clear sign of plagiarism and lack of creativity.

And yet Campbell's internal evidences have very little to do with the text itself. Granted, his text is only a short pamphlet (twelve pages of critique, excluding the two pages of "Prefatory Remarks" by Joshua Himes^{8b}), which means that it does not have space for a thorough analysis. At the same time, the pamphlet is of comparable length to a compact academic paper of today. Campbell spends so much space in his "Analysis of the Book of Mormon" complaining that Joseph Smith is a tool of the devil that he neglects the *Book of Mormon* text itself and hinges much of his argumentation on Joseph Smith (the man who poached his protégé).

The last almost two hundred years since Campbell's pamphlet have seen a transition from a focus on Joseph Smith and surface readings with a monolithic Bible to the *Book of Mormon* text itself. However, the process has been slower than one might have expected. The foundation of an academic approach to the *Book of Mormon* as literature goes back to the 1960s and 1970s with John Welch arguing for the existence of chiasmic structures in the text. His own work has focused on taking the rhetorical complexity of the text's use of chiasm as evidence of ancient origins and therefore the veracity of Joseph Smith's prophetic claims.⁹ He therefore functionalizes literary analysis for religious-denominational argument, and he makes this programmatically explicit when he asks: "What spiritual value do such

⁹See for example John W. Welch, "Criteria for Identifying and Evaluating the Presence of Chiasmus," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4, no. 2 (1995); John W. Welch, "What Does Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon Prove?," in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997); John W. Welch, "How Much Was Known about Chiasmus in 1829 When the Book of Mormon Was Translated?," *FARMS Review* 15, no. 1 (2003); John W. Welch, "The Discovery of Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon: Forty Years Later," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 16, no. 2 (2007).

evidences [in support of the *Book of Mormon*] have?”¹⁰

Even some contemporary studies which are rigorous in their literary approach still directly or indirectly return to questions of literal historicity or inspired origins. These readings are mostly from an LDS perspective and are centered in the confessional Brigham Young University. A full severing of the *Book of Mormon* from historicity or questions of divine inspiration has only taken place over the course of the last twenty or so years. To illustrate this transition, I focus on the period from the mid 1990’s onwards. The nineteenth century and the period since the 1970’s have been covered by Richard Cracroft, Daniel McKinlay, and Scot Hanson.¹¹ Since 2017, the yearly issues of the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* have compiled detailed lists for the previous year.¹²

2.2 The *Book of Mormon* and Genetic Questions

Modern religiously based studies tend to examine the text from two interrelated perspectives. The first is the question as to the linguistic and cultural origins of a supposed original, non-English text. This comes in the form of assuming that the text has Egyptian, Semitic, or Mesoamerican influences. The common Semitic assumption is directly based on Moroni₂’s explanation that he wrote in “reformed Egyptian” (FE, 538). The other common perspective takes on an authorial lens. It asks whether certain structures in the text (usually forms of parallelism) are used ‘intentionally’ or instead only ‘subconsciously.’ Both of these perspectives are therefore genetic: They are concerned with the origins of the text as it relates to its language and its author and relate the current value of the text to these origins. Many of these analyses directly or indirectly seek to prove the historical nature

¹⁰John W. Welch, “The Power of Evidence in the Nurturing of Faith,” in *Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon*, eds. Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson and John W. Welch (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2002): 17.

¹¹Richard H. Cracroft, “‘Had for Good and Evil’: 19th-Century Literary Treatments of the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 12, no. 2 (2003); Daniel McKinlay and Scot Hanson, “A Selective Bibliography of Book of Mormon Literary Features,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 16, no. 2 (2007).

¹²The last contribution of each issue is “A Book of Mormon Bibliography” for the previous year. The 2017 issue has the bibliography for 2016 and so on.

of the text and therefore the veracity of Joseph Smith's religious (even ecclesiastical) claims. There is a strong undercurrent of the genetic fallacy: The text is valuable since its origins are 'true,' the implication being that the text is *not* valuable should its origins be 'false.'

2.2.1 The Genetic Fallacy

The genetic fallacy is defined as "confusing the causal origins of a belief with its justification."¹³ This means that those using the genetic fallacy see a current belief (but also practice) as justified or justifiable not due to current conditions, but based on the source or historical origins. Such argumentation neglects subsequent developments or arguments and the practices themselves, severed from a possibly unreliable source. Edward Damer defines this fallacy as "[e]valuating a thing in terms of its earlier context while ignoring relevant changes that may have altered its character in the interim, and then using that evaluation to support a conclusion in the present."¹⁴ This means that one's value-judgment of a person, object, statement, etc. is based solely on origins rather than on current constitution, conditions, and even more importantly, current practice.

Admittedly, genetic questions can play an important role in certain contexts, such as in 'decoding' the text. It is, after all, the genetic *fallacy* and not the genetic *error*. Much of human knowledge is genetic. This is "the widespread and indispensable practice of forming one's beliefs, and acting on them, on the basis of the testimony of others." Or in more technical terms, whether "testimonial sources satisfy appropriate conditions on reliability."¹⁵ We know how quantum mechanics or climate change work—and that they are real—because we trust the origin of the information (the scientists and their processes of peer review and general scientific rigor).

Law systems based on witness testimony cannot get around issues of how trustworthy witnesses are. The issue with genetic questions arises

¹³Ted Honderich, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 306.

¹⁴T. Edward Damer, *Attacking Faulty Reasoning: A Practical Guide to Fallacy-Free Arguments*, 7th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, 2011), 99.

¹⁵Honderich, *Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, 307.

when worth is *reduced to* such questions. Value becomes a binary: Either the origins are valid and therefore the current object or person has value, or the origins are invalid (for example, they contradict current or past testimony) and therefore the object or person has no value or is forever untrustworthy. A rejection of the genetic fallacy, or rather of *genetic reduction*, is to show the “appropriateness of separating the worth of a thing from how it started.”¹⁶

In a confessional context, genetic reduction enables a very productive (if highly problematic) epistemic short-cut: If the text is ‘true,’ Joseph Smith Jr. was a prophet, therefore he restored the priesthood and the church founded by Jesus Christ, and therefore the current LDS prophet possess Smith’s prophetic mantle (at time of writing this is Russell M. Nelson, who became president of the LDS church in 2018). The ‘truthfulness’ of the *Book of Mormon* is used to answer two centuries of ecclesiastical and theological issues in one fell swoop. The issue of the ecclesiastical CoC – LDS schism is usually glossed over in this short-cut. This produces the understandable genetic anxiety over justifying belief through its origins.

While Frye uses the much more loaded term “obsession with the Bible’s historicity,”¹⁷ I use the slightly weaker *anxiety* to summarize the underlying impulse for genetic studies. I do not simply refer to ‘interest in’ or ‘curiosity about’ historicity because the words do not cover the underlying urgency felt and the possible implications considered by believing scholars and lay members when it comes to the question of historicity. For many believers, the core of their faith is at stake. Joseph Smith proclaimed in 1841 that the *Book of Mormon* is “the keystone of our religion.”¹⁸

The LDS prophet Ezra Taft Benson renewed the contemporary LDS emphasis on the *Book of Mormon* at the October 1986 General Conference by returning to the metaphor of the keystone. Literary study of the *Book of Mormon* done in a genetically anxious vein is concerned with grave theological and ultimately soteriological ends. Simple ‘interest’ in the issue does not properly capture this underlying drive. ‘Anxiety’ thus speaks to

¹⁶Damer, *Attacking Faulty Reasoning*, 101.

¹⁷Frye, *Great Code*, 60.

¹⁸B. H. Roberts, ed., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints* vol. 4 (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902), 461.

the concept of *tremendum* discussed in the next chapter on my post-secular approach.

To be clear: This does not mean that genetic questions *cannot* be asked (even legitimately so). However, they cover only a small portion of possible questions. This study, in contrast, is interested in neither the origins of the text nor the debates surrounding constative historicity. It is instead interested in the literary strategies and characteristics of the text and their potential impact on readers.

2.2.2 Genetic Literary Studies

Continuing with religious-genetic studies of the *Book of Mormon*, the first literary question such studies ask is whether literary forms in the English text were placed as a result of conscious effort. This could either have been the authors of the Hebrew or Egyptian original deliberately crafting the text in parallel form or because the ‘author’ of the English text (whether it is Joseph Smith or God as the inspired source of the English text) employed it consciously while producing the English text. These studies are well executed in their close readings of the English text. However, their desire to implicitly or explicitly link ancient and/or heavenly origins to modern value makes them problematic.

Kevin Barney’s analyses are emblematic of this genetic anxiety. He moves towards a purely literary analysis of only the text, but still falls short. He speaks of “close and careful reading of the Book of Mormon text on its own terms.”^{19a} He examines the occurrence of *enallage* in the *Book of Mormon* text. This is “the substitution of one gender, person, number, case, mode, tense, etc. of the same word for another.”^{19b} One particularly interesting passage analysis concerns 2 Nephi 29:6 in the LDS divisions: “*Thou* fool, that shall say, A Bible, *we* have got a Bible, and *we* need no more Bible. Have *ye* obtained a Bible, save it were by the Jews?” (FE, 115, my emphasis).

Barney interprets the shift from the singular *thou* to the plural *ye* as serving the function of “driving home the foolishness of the idea to any-

¹⁹Kevin L. Barney, “Enallage in the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 3, no. 1 (1994): a 145, b 116.

one who would entertain it.”^{20a} Despite these close readings being able to stand on their own, he still pulls genetic questions and therefore religious argumentation back into his analysis. His ultimate conclusion still relates to the question of the linguistic origins of the *Book of Mormon* text: “A fuller comprehension of the phenomenon of enallage in the Book of Mormon may also eventually add to our understanding of the Hebraic origins of that book.”^{20b} This conclusion points to the underlying desire of genetic studies: If the text is established as Semitic in origin, then it has constative theological veracity.

These questions are continued in another article by Barney where he examines word parallelism in the *Book of Mormon* text in the context of ancient Near Eastern and modern Mesoamerican languages. He justifies his search for this particular type of word parallelism with the assumption of a translated Hebraic original. “If the Book of Mormon had as a part of its origin the writings of a Hebrew-speaking people from preexilic Jerusalem, we might expect to find examples of word pairs within its pages.”^{21a} In this article, he also shows a further anxiety over such literary structures. The question is concerning the intentionality of their use in the text, whether Hebrew or English.

Barney opens three possibilities for the presence of these (Semitic) word parallelisms: “[M]ere Coincidence.”^{21b} The word pairs could be “authentic Semitic word pairs [that] were derived indirectly by being coopted from the English of the KJV.” This coopting “could have happened either *intentionally* or *subconsciously*.”^{21c} The third option Barney offers is “that the Book of Mormon is what it claims to be—an ancient text with the roots in seventh century B.C. Jerusalem.”^{21d} He seems to only allow for the word pairs he posits to be significant in the text if they are ‘authentic’ and intentional. This would mean that “various critical applications of word pairs may enhance our understanding of the Book of Mormon text.”^{21e} ‘Inauthentic’ or unintentional word pairs would, by implication, *not* enhance our understanding of the text.

Barney’s analysis shows the tension and anxiety of such studies. Tex-

²⁰Barney, “Enallage in the Book of Mormon,” a 140, b 145.

²¹Kevin L. Barney, “Poetic Diction and Parallel Word Pairs in the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4, no. 2 (1995): a 23, b 25, c 28, d 28–29, e 29.

tual structures need to be genetically explained with the intentional author. Only authentically ancient and intentional structures seem to be granted the privilege of producing (significant) signification. James Duke also examines parallel word pairs and his “conclusion echoes that of Kevin Barney.” The presence of these (intentional) parallelisms “is a further witness of the Hebrew roots of the language of the Book of Mormon and its authenticity as sacred scripture.”²²

The need to first posit the Semitic origins of the text as prerequisite for analysis of certain textual patterns is also seen in Jeff Lindsay’s analysis of *Janus parallelism*.²³ Boyd and W. F. Edwards examine the question of intentionality using statistical analysis. The study concludes that “the likelihood is high that chiasmic structure appeared by design in the Pentateuch and in the Book of Mormon.”²⁴ Carl Cranney is also concerned with the structural consistency (i.e. intentionality) of parallelism and considers whether they are “accidental rather than intentional.” He concludes that these structures are not “randomly strewn across the text of the Book of Mormon.”²⁵

Brant Gardner considers the *Book of Mormon*’s use of intertextuality with the Bible (in the form of the ‘brass plates’ mentioned in the text). Analysis of this phenomenon “has a direct correlation to one’s understanding of the type of translation represented by the Book of Mormon, because they necessarily depend upon the repetition of phrases in English because the original language text is unavailable to us.”²⁶ According to Gardner, the approach to and significance of intertextuality will be different depending on the accepted provenance of the English text. Thus answering genetic questions becomes a prerequisite for even literary analysis, and a side in

²²James T. Duke, “Word Pairs and Distinctive Combinations in the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 12, no. 2 (2003): 41.

²³Jeff Lindsay, “The Possibility of Janus Parallelism in the Book of Mormon,” *Interpreter* 28 (2018): 2.

²⁴Boyd F. Edwards and W. F. Edwards, “Does Chiasmus Appear in the Book of Mormon by Chance?,” *BYU Studies* 43, no. 2 (2004): 123.

²⁵Carl J. Cranney, “The Deliberate Use of Hebrew Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 23 (2014): 146.

²⁶Brant A. Gardner, “Literacy and Orality in the Book of Mormon,” *Interpreter* 9 (2014): 80.

the hermeneutical dualism needs to be chosen.

The question of intentionality and linguistic origins also concerns textual structures which are incorrect in a prescriptive English context. Here the explanation of Semitic origins is provided to justify these instances in the English text.²⁷ Andrew Smith posits that the text is a translation and therefore non-standard structures (such as *deflected agreement*) might be present in English, which is only the target language of an originally Semitic text.²⁸

In contrast to studies seeking to explain errors, others begin examinations of certain terms due to polysemy in Semitic languages. Matthew Bowen uses supposed Semitic origins as a justification for examining the use of the term *oath* in the *Book of Mormon*. He bases the study on the “common Egyptian lexeme *nh*—which as a verb means ‘to live’ and as a noun denotes ‘life’—[it] also denotes ‘to swear’ as a verb and ‘oath.’”²⁹ His analysis is well executed and does not strictly speaking require this assumption of the Egyptian influence.

An analysis by RoseAnn Benson and Stephen Ricks also examines the motif of oaths and treaties in the *Book of Mormon* and is based on “linguistic and semantic similarities within the ancient Near Eastern treaties and covenants in the Book of Mormon.” They argue that “[s]uch similarities stand as further evidence that the historical and spiritual roots of the Book of Mormon lie in the world of the Old Testament and the ancient Near East.”³⁰ David Larsen considers the use of the motif of Christ’s ‘victory over death’ in sermons by Abinadi, Aaron₂, Ammon₂, and Mormon₂ through the lens of the polysemy of the Hebrew *netzach*. He examines the usage of the motif of Christ’s victory and concludes that “these nuances

²⁷For example David Bokovoy, “From Distance to Proximity: A Poetic Function of Enallage in the Hebrew Bible and the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 9, no. 1 (2000): 62.

²⁸Andrew C. Smith, “Deflected Agreement in the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies and Other Restoration Scripture* 21, no. 2 (2012): 54.

²⁹Matthew L. Bowen, “‘Swearing by Their Everlasting Maker’: Some Notes on Paanchi and Giddianhi,” *Interpreter* 28 (2018): 155.

³⁰RoseAnn Benson and Stephen D. Ricks, “Treaties and Covenants: Ancient Near Eastern Legal Terminology in the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 14, no. 1 (2005): 61.

of meaning were somehow known, sensed, and preserved throughout the various stages of the writing, abridgement, and translation of the Book of Mormon.”³¹ His analysis is convincing on its own and does not require recourse to Hebrew or the translated origins of the text. And as with so many literary analyses, he nonetheless includes genetic questions.

Another curious instance of genetic anxiety is an analysis of the literary and theological function of apparel in the *Book of Mormon*. Parrish Brady and Shon Hopkin conclude that the motif of clothing in the narrative of the “poorly adorned Zoramites contrasts powerfully with that of their well-clothed brethren, whose tale ends in complete humiliation and failure steeped in bitter irony, while Mormon demonstrates that in the end the obedient will indeed prosper in the land.”³² Their analysis could very well stand on its own. And yet the authors choose to include images of ancient and contemporary Mesoamerican culture throughout the text. They explicitly historically and culturally situate the narrative, despite the formal, literary nature of their analysis not requiring it.

The shift in the use of historicity in *Book of Mormon* readings can also be seen in how typology has been employed. George Tate still used scriptural-historical typology—e.g. Moses as (historical) type and Christ as (historical) anti-type—as “the belief that such [typological] correspondences are neither accidental nor arbitrary but that they constitute a significant system of intelligible coordinates in the gradual unfolding of God’s historical design.”³³ Since Moses and Christ are assumed to be historical figures, parallels and typological symmetry between them are signs of God’s guiding and shaping hand in the history of humanity. Tate argues that the “exodus pattern” of multiple assumed historical exodus-like events in the *Book of Mormon* helps unify not only the text but shows how God guided (real) Lehite history.

³¹David Larsen, “Death Being Swallowed Up in Netzach in the Bible and the Book of Mormon,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 55, no. 4 (2016): 134.

³²Parrish Brady and Shon Hopkin, “The Zoramites and Costly Apparel: Symbolism and Irony,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies and Other Restoration Scripture* 22, no. 1 (2013): 50.

³³George S. Tate, “The Typology of the Exodus Pattern in the Book of Mormon,” in *Literature of Belief*, ed. Neal E. Lambert (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, 1981): 247.

Tate's use of typology stands in contrast with Northrop Frye's reading of typological narratives, where "[s]ymmetry... always means that historical content is being subordinated to mythical demands of design and form."^{34a} "Mythical" is not used as a pejorative here, but only in the sense of "*mythos*, plot, narrative, or in general the sequential ordering of words."^{34b} Unlike Tate, who interprets symmetry as proof of a real guiding hand, Frye sees narrative symmetry as proving that history (even real history), or rather an *account* of history, has been manipulated after the fact for specific ends. In other words, when history has a clean narrative arc, this order has been created out of the messiness of actual past events.

Joseph Spencer's much more recent study, on the other hand, examines typology as a literary rather than historical device. He compares the different usages of typology by Nephi₁ and Abinadi and how they each "develop their respective notions of typology in dialogue with Isaiah."^{35a} He finds the characters use two different models, "one focused principally on connecting Christ to the world historical unfolding of the Israelite covenant, the other focuses principally on connecting Christ to the everyday life of the individual believer."^{35b}

He develops his analysis from one of the many self-reflexive passages of the *Book of Mormon*, or in his words, he looks "at how the Book of Mormon itself teaches us to read the Book of Mormon."^{35c} And yet, Spencer admits that he "consistently assume[s] the historicity of the Book of Mormon throughout the book," which allows him to "occasionally speculat[e] about authorial motives, historical circumstances behind narrated events, and the like."^{35d} As section 2.6 on *mind reading* will argue, the analysis of literary characters as complex personalities is entirely legitimate without recourse to historicity and thus genetic issues.

Spencer's interest in the *Book of Mormon's* self-reflexive reading instructions is continued in two more studies. He speaks of the "volume's complex self-critical nature" and the text as a "self-aware book."³⁶ In ano-

³⁴Frye, *Great Code*, a 61, b 49.

³⁵Joseph M. Spencer, *An Other Testament: On Typology* (Salem: Salt Press, 2012), a xii, b xiii, c xii, d xiv.

³⁶Joseph M. Spencer, "The Self-Critical Book of Mormon: Notes on an Emergent Literary Approach," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 24 (2015): 188.

ther study, Spencer speaks of the “mainsprings and inner workings of the Book of Mormon” and that other types of readings are able “to allow the Book of Mormon to display not only *what it says* but also *how it works*.”³⁷ This is similar to the approach of my own study.

2.3 Post-Geneticism: Postmodern Studies

The approach of my study will not follow the denominational approaches which assume or require historicity or the truthfulness of Joseph Smith’s claims about the origins of the English text. The last approximately fifteen years have seen an increase in non-historicist studies of the *Book of Mormon* that nonetheless seek to take the text seriously as a literary work. Such studies offer a path to expanding the appeal of the *Book of Mormon* into non-Mormon scholarly (and possibly even wider) spheres. I also pivot to a non-denominational literary approach, which will nonetheless devise a literary methodology geared towards the specific claims of a religious text. It thereby joins the significantly widening field of literary studies of the *Book of Mormon* in past years, which now also includes postmodern, especially post-structuralist, approaches to the text. The *Book of Mormon*’s complexity and self-reflexivity show that reducing the text’s value to constative genetic questions means missing a rich and highly rewarding dimension.

Jacob Bender provides an interesting example of a transitional study between genetic, analytic, decoding concerns and a hermeneutic, performative, literary approach. He examines the text through a deconstructionist lens, and he argues that the “Book of Mormon’s text participates in its own self-deconstruction, systematically undermining the reader’s confidence in the text while also engaging in what Derrida termed ‘freeplay’ with words.”^{38a} He looks at the text’s use of *bricolage* “of genres, such as sermons, prayers, coronation ceremonies, poetry, epistolary, and Hebrew scripture.”^{38b} He posits that the *Book of Mormon* “is interested in deconstructing. . . binaries, thereby liberating us from the tyranny of a structure.”^{38c}

³⁷Joseph M. Spencer, “Christ and Krishna: The Visions of Arjuna and the Brother of Jared,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 23 (2014): 57.

³⁸Jacob Bender, “‘For All Things Must Fail’: A Post-Structural Approach to the Book of Mormon,” *Dialogue* 45, no. 3 (2012): a 138–39, b 144, c 145, d 138.

Bender acknowledges that the text is not post-structuralist in origins and that his approach is purely heuristic.

And unfortunately this admission belies the genetic underpinnings of his otherwise formal study. He speaks of the “1,600 years from Moroni to Derrida.”^{38d} This slip of the pen is unfortunate, since the study is otherwise not reliant on whether the original text is 190 or 1600 years old. That being said, it is most likely only seepage from the believing into the scholarly realm. The admission does not diminish the rigorous literary nature of the study as a whole or its theoretical conclusions. It simply shows how difficult it still is for believing scholars to fully uncouple from the genetic questions of historicity and authorship.

A similarly deconstructionist study is done by Hickman, in which he points out that the *Book of Mormon* not only deconstructs itself but also the Bible’s status. The text deconstructs “that which the literalist hermeneuts of biblicist America were keen to ignore—the contingent human conditions of scripture writing and scripture reading.”^{39a} Alexander Campbell was undoubtedly such a biblicist. Hickman argues that one of the ways the *Book of Mormon* contests the monolithic nature of the Bible and revelation in general is “by featuring admittedly imperfect individuals with exotic names claiming, in the first person, divine knowledge and then soliciting the reader’s assessment of those claims.”^{39b} The text repeatedly emphasizes that fallible humans played a central role in its production. In other words: Scripturalization employs imperfect, mundane means.

By extension, even revealed scripture can be (and most likely is) fallible and therefore contingent and therefore not monolithic or self-evident. “By drawing attention to rather than away from the human medium of scripture, *The Book of Mormon* makes literalist hermeneutics in its particular case and in general a more difficult proposition.”^{39c} This challenge to literalism is not only a challenge to the Bible’s but to all scripture’s possible claims to compatibility with literalism. The *Book of Mormon* “challenges not only the Bible’s monopoly on authority but the notion that any single text—however high and holy its claims and tones—including itself, might

³⁹Jared Hickman, “The *Book of Mormon* as Amerindian Apocalypse,” *American Literature* 86, no. 3 (2014): a 444, b 446, c 447, d 455.

warrant the type of all-in, non-negotiable investment made by the literalist reader.”^{39d} Hickman’s analysis is a critique of any fundamentalist readings of scripture and opens a path for more varied approaches to the text.

The deconstruction of the monolithic Bible via the *Book of Mormon* is echoed by Spencer. He argues that the *Book of Mormon* “seems intent on asserting that the divine Word sounds always and only as an echo within unmistakably human words.”⁴⁰ This deconstructionist (even iconoclastic) element of the *Book of Mormon* is at the center of a study by Fenton. She argues that the *Book of Mormon* “poses a challenge to the very notion of singularity within the sacred canon.” The *Book of Mormon*’s rejection of the idea of closed scriptural canon is “a direct challenge to traditional Protestant reading practices,”^{41a} (such as those followed by people like Campbell). As Fenton puts it: “[A]ddition is tantamount to annihilation.”^{41b} The recognition of this deconstruction of the Bible also helps explain the bile found in Campbell’s critique of the *Book of Mormon*. The text challenged the very basis of his ministry.

Unlike the explosiveness of the annihilating addition of the *Book of Mormon*, the intent of my own study is not to simply reject common reading practices (such as genetic concerns) or to show how they are illegitimate. Instead, the attempt is to expand the legitimate reading practices available to both believers and non-believers in the text or what J. Christopher Thomas, himself a Pentecostal, calls “the standard story of origins.”^{42a} Thomas’ own study is a fine example of ecumenical, religious study of scripture from outside one’s own tradition. The final section of Thomas’ book presents what he calls a “taxonomy of responses to the complications of the standard story.”^{42b} The taxonomy includes the approach exemplified by CoC apostle and scholar Andrew Bolton, who treats the *Book of Mormon* as “Prophetic Parable.” Thomas describes Bolton’s approach as reading the narrative as “an example of the utopian vision literary genre.”^{42c} I return to this and Bolton’s explanation in section 6.2 on the *Book of Mormon*’s microcosmic nature.

⁴⁰Spencer, “Self-Critical,” 187.

⁴¹Fenton, “Open Canons,” a 347, b 352.

⁴²J. Christopher Thomas, *A Pentecostal Reads The Book of Mormon: A Literary and Theological Introduction* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2016), a 442, b 431–43, c 438.

Another ecumenical study is by Francis Clooney, a Catholic priest, as part of his work *Learning Interreligiously*. While his section of the *Book of Mormon* is less stylistically formal than the studies discussed in this review of critical literature (being structured as blog entries), it still shows the productive discourse between different-believers. As Clooney describes it: “[O]ur learning across religious boundaries [...] is a matter of seeking truth where it is to be found, finding God in all things, and without undue fear, welcoming wisdom where I find it.”⁴³ As encouraging as the very existence of these two religious studies by Thomas and Clooney is, I will continue this section with further secular (i.e. not explicitly denominational) studies.

2.4 Americanist Approaches

The edited volume *Americanist Approaches* is a collection of what I will provisionally call “secular” approaches to the text.⁴⁴ By this I mean approaches which either reject the ‘standard story’ and consider the text a product of a nineteenth-century American context, or they at least heuristically ‘bracket’ questions surrounding the standard story. The qualifier ‘Americanist’ refers to the United States (and not ‘the Americas’) in the sense of an Indologist or Sinologist. The volume includes eighteen contributions (including the introduction). I will only examine those directly relevant to my own study.

Samuel Brown examines the *Book of Mormon*’s complex relationship between spoken and written language. He considers how the text internally reflects on this interplay. The *Book of Mormon* is highly aware that it is a text sent through time and that it is going to be read by later recipients. In the text, writing serves many important functions. According to Brown, “writing [in the *Book of Mormon*] prevents apostasy, enables collective memory, creates a textual immortality, allows nonlocal dissemination of

⁴³Francis X. Clooney, *Learning Interreligiously: In the Text, in the World* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2018), 181.

⁴⁴Fenton and Hickman, eds., *Americanist Approaches*.

concepts and ideas, and wields a special authority.”^{45a} I return to the idea of “nonlocal dissemination” in the context of the concept of text used in my own study (3.5).

The *Book of Mormon* also thematizes the difficulty of physically transmitting and preserving a written record. The text admits that it had to be divinely sealed: “Here sealing has the sense of divine protection from the elements and the ravages of time.”^{45b} Brown ultimately argues that the *Book of Mormon* sees the need for prophetic vitalization of a hitherto dead and mute text. This demand for a living reading practice is yet another challenge to orthodox scriptural practice at the time of the text’s publication: “Mormonism’s response to Protestant canon came as an elaboration of its hybrid model of scripture: a written text and a speaking prophet.”^{45c} My own study focuses on another type of such vitalized text through the interplay of written text and experiencing reader.

Of all of the studies examined throughout this chapter, the contribution of John Williams to *American Approaches* runs the most contrary to my own conclusions. Williams examines what it might mean to ‘bracket’ the issue of historicity. He refers specifically to Hardy’s use of the term in his *Understanding the Book of Mormon*, and he argues that “the narrative and structural realities of *The Book of Mormon* ultimately make all such [bracketing] attempts impossible, perhaps even misguided.”^{46a} He concludes that it “should be clear, then, that a historicization of *The Book of Mormon* is, from a literary-critical perspective, a mode of interpretation demanded by the book’s own ‘internal’ (if such an adjective is ever logically appropriate) logic.”^{46b}

The reason for William’s position is that the *Book of Mormon* plays with real nineteenth century historical elements and notions (like the mention of *reformed Egyptian*).^{46c} Because the *Book of Mormon* text and narrative tie in with and refer to their historical context so closely and (playfully) include them in their world, the text and narrative *must* be read in light of a nineteenth century American context, at least according to Williams.

⁴⁵Samuel M. Brown, “‘To Read the Round of Eternity’: *Speech, Text, and Scripture in The Book of Mormon*,” in Fenton; Hickman, *Americanist Approaches*, a 160, b 163, c 178.

⁴⁶R. John Williams, “The Ghost and the Machine: *Plates and Paratext in The Book of Mormon*,” in Fenton; Hickman, *Americanist Approaches*, a 46, b 58, c 58–62.

I argue the exact opposite of Williams' position. The *Book of Mormon* isolates itself from the real, extra-textual world, and 'real' elements and notions are drawn into the world of the narrative (*diegesis*⁴⁷) in order to implicate the reader—rather than the text restricting itself to its provincial origins. As mentioned above, the volume is addressed to “all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people” (FE, 589, 590). Despite our diametric interpretations, both Williams and I draw on Genette's concept of *paratext*.⁴⁸

One issue is that Williams occasionally uses *paratext* in an imprecise and expanded manner, referring to “Moroni_[2]'s (para)textual exhortation.”^{49a} The final chapter of the *Book of Mormon* is definitely transgressive in its use of narrative levels, and it is highly self-reflexive (something I return to in my own study). However, the narrative voice is clearly attributable to a character in the world of the narrative, and it is therefore purely *textual* in status.

Another possible reason for the divergent conclusions may lie in my particular concept of text and literature. Williams speaks of text as a “decipherable message,”^{49b} as opposed to my locus for possible signification (to be established through a given reading). Text as decipherable message would read scripture as what Latour calls “conveying messages,” and such an approach would be looking for “information content,”⁵⁰ something Latour rejects in the context of scripture. A decoding practice thus stands in contrast to my general literary-performative approach.

Moving on to another relevant contribution, Hardy discusses the intertextual relationship between the *Book of Mormon* and the Bible. He examines this relationship through three categories: “quotations, allusions, and echoes.”^{51a} *Quotations* refer mainly to the KJV, with a few exceptions, where, for example, the text quotes extra-biblical prophets. These are often extensive quotations, some covering entire biblical chapters (such as when Nephi₁ extensively quotes Isaiah). And yet these quotations are not perfectly verbatim. The Bible is quoted “sometimes with telling deletions,

⁴⁷ See section 3.6.

⁴⁸ See section 3.5.1.

⁴⁹ Williams, “The Ghost and the Machine,” a 58, b 47.

⁵⁰ Latour, *Rejoicing*, 32.

⁵¹ G. Hardy, “*Book of Mormon* and the Bible,” a 118, b 119, c–d 120.

additions, and alterations.”^{51b}

Allusions, on the other hand, “occur when an author is simply pointing readers toward a pre-existing text.”^{51c} Rather than explicit quotation, the phrasing is nevertheless distinctive and clearly alludes to another passage. This occurs when the text has “borrowed wording from identifiable sources,” and this without attribution.^{51d} One example Hardy gives is when Lehi₁ (in what is now 1 Nephi 1:14 in the LDS divisions) says “Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty!” (FE, 6). This is a clear parallel with Revelation 15:3, where the seven angels cry: “Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty.” The *Book of Mormon* does not say ‘And Lehi, like the angels in John’s vision, cried out these words.’ However, the parallel is obvious. Calling this an allusion to Revelation is still a formal assessment which does not yet consider how this allusion got into the text or how it contributes to the meaning of the passage or the text as a whole.

The last category covers the *echoes* of biblical language. “These phrases are not as complex as the allusions in the previous section, their original contexts matter much less.” These are distinctively ‘biblical’ phrases, more specifically, distinctively KJV phrases. They do not obviously refer to a specific passage but instead are part of “religious vocabulary.”⁵² I draw extensively on intertextuality throughout my own study, but within the *Book of Mormon* itself rather than with the Bible.

My own use relies on allusions and echoes in particular. This occurs when phrasing in a giving passage is distinctively like that in another specific passage in the *Book of Mormon*. Chapter 5 examines this on a narrative level, where the battles at Mulek (FE, 371–74) and Antiparah (383–86) exhibit clear narrative parallels and inversions as well as phrasal intertextuality. I also draw on more subtle allusions in section 7.2.2 when examining the interplay of Mormon₂’s and Alma₂’s narration voices in Alma XV (299–304).

The final contribution in *Americanist Approaches* I wish to briefly discuss is Laura Scales’ examination of how the *Book of Mormon* constitutes text and reading as a revelatory, prophetic practice. As Scales argues: “To

⁵²G. Hardy, “*Book of Mormon* and the Bible,” 123.

be a reader in (and of) *The Book of Mormon* is to be a potential prophet.”^{53a} These readers of the text also include the *Book of Mormon* narrators, especially Mormon₂ and Moroni₂. As Scales describes it: “[T]he prophet-narrators of *The Book of Mormon* foreground the act of writing, they are also acutely aware of, and rather anxious about, their potential readers.”^{53b}

My own study argues that Mormon₂ in particular becomes the model-reader of the *Book of Mormon*. Scales points out that the “great chain of readers” in the *Book of Mormon* is started by Lehi₁ and his vision, which “has at its center an angelic book.”^{53c} I return to this initial reading act as a model. Scales concludes that the text asks readers to become “nearly divine by means of shared revelation, inherited prophecy, creative reading, and reciprocal witnessing”^{53d} through the text’s use of narrator-readers. While this conclusion is still overtly religious, it hews close to the performative approach followed in my own study.

2.5 The Affective Turn

Of special interest for the focus of this study is the growing body of readings of the *Book of Mormon* in the frame of the *affective turn*. Sheldon Pollock describes this theoretical movement as “[e]motion, in literary criticism, philosophical aesthetics, and even social theory. . . staging something of an insurgency. . . promoting new histories of the emotions, new studies of the emotions in history, and new cognitive theories of the emotions.”⁵⁴

Jane Thraikill summarizes the impetus as an attempt to include affectivity in human thought and understanding in general and art in particular: “For if feeling is essential to thinking, then serious criticism must take into account the affective aspects of literary works.”^{55a} As Thraikill argues, “feeling is not opposed to interpretation but is part of it.”^{55b} To read any

⁵³Laura T. Scales, “‘The Writing of the Fruit of Thy Loins’: *Reading, Writing, and Prophecy in The Book of Mormon*,” in Fenton; Hickman, *Americanist Approaches*, a-c 192, d 204.

⁵⁴Sheldon Pollock, *A Rasa Reader: Classical Indian Aesthetics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 45.

⁵⁵Jane F. Thraikill, *Affecting Fictions: Mind, Body, and Emotion in American Literary Realism* (Cambridge, MA., London: Harvard University Press, 2007), a 16, b 4.

text, especially literature, involves some measure of affective response. The reader's response can be examined in this effort. However, the wider *affective turn* in literary studies is also concerned with a work's formal features. The question is how emotions are formally anchored in the literariness of the text and how these formal aspects facilitate emotional engagement on the part of the reader. This theoretical movement therefore does not spiral into pure subjectivity, but includes interpretation of the work in its formal structure.

2.5.1 Theoretical Basis

Turning first to wider narratological and theoretical discussions, Manuel Braun gathers questions of 'textual' emotions under the header *Ebenenproblem*⁵⁶ (the problem of levels). Are literary emotions found at the level of the author, the text, the reader, a combination, or all of the above? What are the qualitative differences of these ontological and epistemological categories? A poet or author will undoubtedly include his or her own emotions and experiences in the text, whether intentionally or unintentionally. However, the poet or author might fail to communicate an intended emotion or experience. Readers could also read the text in a manner that runs counter to such intentions, such as enjoying a tragedy in a comedic way. This can happen when a horror movie or serious melodrama is poorly made and is later enjoyed and appreciated for the earnest attempt falling flat. Braun acknowledges that the levels of author and audience emotion exist and play a role. However, he argues that literary scholars (*Literaturwissenschaftler*) can "nonetheless remain on the level of literary texts."⁵⁷

Turning to such 'textual' emotions, Sandra Poppe speaks of *Emotionalisierungsstrategien* (strategies for emotionalizing) on the plot level, such as the death of the sympathy-carrier (*Sympathieträger*) or antipathy-carrier (*Antipathieträger*), which are "merely offers to the recipient, who can ac-

⁵⁶Manuel Braun, "Trauer als Textphänomen? Zum Ebenenproblem der mediävistischen Emotionsforschung," in *Machtvolle Gefühle*, ed. Ingrid Kasten (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010).

⁵⁷Braun, "Trauer als Textphänomen," 84, my translation: ... des Literaturwissenschaftlers, der dabei immer noch auf der Ebene der literarischen Texte bleiben kann.

cept these but can just as well reject them.”⁵⁸ These strategies are elements of the narrative or of the language of the text which are the structural prerequisites for the text to evoke an emotion. As offers, they can be formally and independently examined, without requiring recourse to the empirical effect on the reader on the part of the strategies and features.

Katja Mellmann, drawing on evolutionary biology, speaks of *Schema-kongruenz*, or the “appropriateness of certain stimuli in starting particular emotional reactions.”^{59a} In literary or film studies, these stimuli are the formal characteristics of the art work. Mellmann calls novels and movies “a mock-up (*Attrappe*), meaning: artificially produced objects which call on instinctive behaviors due to their special property.”^{59b} *Attrappe* refers to any inoperable replica, such as a prop-gun or cheap display jewelry. These look just real enough to be convincing and serve as heuristic stand-ins for the ‘real deal.’

No one will argue that the events and the emotions perceived while reading a novel are somehow qualitatively the same as the emotions experienced due to real events experienced or witnessed first-hand. However, mock-up reality somehow still evokes an empirical emotional response, what John Dewey calls “‘do[ing] the deed that breeds’ the emotion.”⁶⁰ Mellmann’s argument is that the evolution of human emotions allows us as listeners, readers, and viewers to ‘trick’ ourselves into experiencing emotions through a mock-up of real life. And as with any convincing mock-up, the artwork requires certain formal features which enable it to function. These can be described independent of the act of reception.

⁵⁸Sandra Poppe, “Emotionsvermittlung und Emotionalisierung in Literatur und Film – eine Einleitung,” in *Emotionen in Literatur und Film*, ed. Sandra Poppe (Würzburg: Königshausen Neumann, 2012), 10, my translation: Solche und ähnliche Emotionalisierungsstrategien sind jedoch lediglich Angebote an den Rezipienten, die dieser annehmen, aber ebenso gut ablehnen kann.

⁵⁹Katja Mellmann, “Schemakongruenz: Zur emotionalen Auslöserqualität filmischer und literarischer Attrappen,” in Poppe, *Emotionen in Literatur und Film*, a 110, my translation: Die Eignung bestimmter Stimuli für das Ingangsetzen bestimmter emotionaler Reaktionen ist das, was ich als *Schemakongruenz* bezeichnen möchte; b 111: Attrappen, das heißt: künstlich hergestellte Objekte, die aufgrund ihrer besonderen Beschaffenheit instinkthafte Verhaltensweisen bei uns abrufen.

⁶⁰John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Penguin, 2005 [1934]), 70.

The manipulation of emotionalizing strategies and the appeal to emotional *schemas* is also addressed by Hermann Kappelhoff, who argues that *melodrama* is the “fundamental aesthetic mode of the effect of cinema, and, indeed, the culture of Western entertainment in general.” Drawing on films, he defines *melodrama* as the “the calculated nature of the staging in which all the elements of expression in the filmic composition stimulate and modulate the spectator’s process of feeling.”⁶¹ Presenting an artwork geared towards or at least equipped with the formal prerequisites for emotional communication is a particular type of textual *functioning* and not only a type of textual *reception*. Accordingly, melodrama is primarily a *representational* and not a reception mode.

Vera Nünning’s study of textual emotions is especially relevant in the context of my study of the *Book of Mormon*. She speaks of “different typologies of the emotions involved in the reading process.”^{62a} Two of these typologies are of particular interest. First, the “readers’ responses to the characters and the story, such as empathy, sympathy and pity.”^{62b}

Nünning argues that “[t]hese emotions can be regarded as narrative since they are intimately connected to the features of narrative, such as plot, conflict, the characters’ attitudes and their experiences.”^{62c} This echoes Poppe’s mention of the sympathy and antipathy-carriers in a narrative. The other typology relevant here is what Nünning refers to as “aesthetic emotions, i.e. affective responses to aesthetic features such as the style or rhythm of the language.”^{62d} Thus, focusing on the narrative and the formal traits of language shows that the analysis of emotions in literature need not restrict itself to subjective reader-response. As Braun says: We can remain at the level of the text.

⁶¹Hermann Kappelhoff, “Artificial Emotions: Melodramatic Practices of Shared Interiority,” in *Rethinking Emotion: Interiority and Exteriority in Premodern, Modern and Contemporary Thought*, eds. Rüdiger Campe and Julia Weber (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2014), 267.

⁶²Vera Nünning, “The Affective Value of Fiction: Presenting and Evoking Emotions,” in *Writing Emotions: Theoretical Concepts and Selected Case Studies in Literature*, eds. Gudrun Tockner et al. (Bielefeld: transcript-Verlag, 2018), a 39, b 39–40, c–d 40.

2.5.2 The Affective Turn and the *Book of Mormon*

My own study relies on these premises and theories of the ‘affective turn’ as a way of grasping the *Book of Mormon*’s claims to narrativize and perform religious experience. Several studies of the text have already moved in this direction. Michael Call’s study of “reading acts” within the *Book of Mormon* narrative moves in the direction of seeking to understand the text in a manner which accords with its own internal, self-reflexive, affective functioning. As with Spencer’s approach to the text’s self-reflexivity, Call examines how the *Book of Mormon* teaches the reader how to read the *Book of Mormon*. Call draws on *reader-response* theory and examines the “ideal or competent reader,” as presented in the many narratives which deal with interpretation of texts, visions, or events. His conclusion is that “the competent or ideal reader possesses one vital skill—something we might call spiritual sensitivity.”⁶³ For Call, the *Book of Mormon*’s ideal reading practice must include a measure of *reader-response* experiential engagement. This means that the *Book of Mormon* cannot be fully grasped in its self-reflexivity without an affective-experiential component.

This echoes Benjamin McGuire’s reading of the *Book of Mormon*. For him, we as readers must draw from “our own experience and understanding” in order to fully grasp the *Book of Mormon*. However, McGuire’s reading still assumes the problematic notion of the intentional author and his or her experience being translated into a text. The type of experiential reading proposed by McGuire “creates meaning that is somewhere in between the experience of the writer and the experience of the reader.”⁶⁴

The assumption of authorial emotion presents a specific problem in scripture (especially ‘translated’ scripture like the *Book of Mormon*) because doing so would require answering genetic questions concerning the identity of the ‘original’ author of the ‘original’ text whose experiences are translated into text (whether the Nephite record keepers, Mormon₂ as compiler, Joseph Smith as translator, or God as the source of the English text). The assumption would also run afoul of Barthes’ theoretically de-

⁶³Michael J. Call, “Reading Competency in the Book of Mormon: Abish and Other Model Readers,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2017): 59.

⁶⁴Benjamin L. McGuire, “Nephi: A Postmodernist Reading,” *Interpreter* 12 (2014): 50.

clared death author in general—which points to exactly the problematic nature of anchoring a text in an intentional producer of text.⁶⁵

Whatever issues the experience of ‘the writer’ brings with it, McGuire proposes that an essential component of reading the *Book of Mormon* is the experience of the reader. It is not enough to simply rationally decode the text. He says that Nephi₁’s vision “is something that is experienced,” and it thus must be “a personal experience.”^{66a} The reading strategies provided by Nephi₁ in his own vision thus “leave the work open to us as readers.”^{66b} This experiential component of reading invariably leaves the text ‘incomplete,’ since the reader must still execute (or ‘play’⁶⁷) the textual instructions. The challenge is to understand how the text functions internally so as to formally invite such affective-experiential reading.

Gary Ettari proposes an affective approach to the entirety of ‘Mormon’ art (here referring to the LDS cultural sphere). He speaks of “bodily empathy” and the “somatic responses [the body] experiences when exposed to art.”^{68a} For Ettari, art in general is “an expression of human feelings, desires, passions.”^{68b} This echoes Susanne Langer’s definition of art as “the creation of forms symbolic of human feelings.”⁶⁹ Ettari proposes this approach for art in general and not only the *Book of Mormon*. Whatever the wider applicability of his approach, it points in the direction of an affective examination of ‘Mormon’ literature, and there is no text which is more tied up in ‘Mormon’ culture and theology than the *Book of Mormon*.

Several studies have already applied such bodily and empathetic approaches to the *Book of Mormon* text. I use the term *empathetic* in distinction from *sympathetic*. Empathy and sympathy are separated by the type of reaction on the part of the person witnessing the emotion: “[W]hereas sympathy stems from the perspective of an observer who is conscious of

⁶⁵Cf. Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” 142–48.

⁶⁶McGuire, “Nephi,” a 62, b 77.

⁶⁷Cf. Roland Barthes, “Musica Practica,” in *Image, Music, Text*, 154; Roland Barthes, “From Work to Text,” in *Image, Music, Text*, 162.

⁶⁸Gary Ettari, “‘After the Body of My Spirit’: Embodiment, Empathy, and Mormon Aesthetics,” *Dialogue* 48, no. 3 (2015): a 28–29, b 44.

⁶⁹Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1953), 40.

another's feelings, empathy stems from that of a participant who vicariously merges with another's feelings."⁷⁰ The distinction between sympathy and empathy is then between a 'cold' inferential recognition of the state of another (I simply note what is) and the 'hot' feeling of the emotions of another (I feel some form of the emotion myself). The same distinction between cognition and experience is made by Abhinavagupta,⁷¹ one of the South Asian theorists I draw on in chapter 4 on *rasa* aesthetics.

Returning to studies of the *Book of Mormon*, Peter McMurray draws on the many instances of sound being mentioned as part of visions and multiple instances of a character being made deaf-mute by the power of God. For him, part of the challenge for producing "holy writ" is that visions and other sacred experiences are all-encompassing. In translating these experiences into text, "writing alone frequently fails to adequately transmit the powerful, affective orality (and entangled aurality) of divine utterance."^{72a} He explores this difficulty of textual representation through the "key protagonists in the book's writerly obsessions—Nephi and Moroni."^{72b} McMurray finds the placement of the explorations on the part of the two narrators significant because their struggle with the translation from experience to text "bookends the scriptural macro-narrative."^{72c} This placement can be seen as reader instruction built into the text, which introduces readers to the expected reading practice and finally sends them off with a final model for how to react to the text.

McMurray focuses on how the text repeatedly uses aurality and sound in general. He criticizes readers who approach the text from a purely textual (and therefore silent) perspective and argues that "readers who treat the text as a silent attempt to inscribe truth, whether historical, linguistic, or imaginary, have already missed the point."^{72d} McMurray argues that the *Book of Mormon* has "'visceral and sensual' qualities," which are "so oft forgotten in the mute hermeneutics of (so much of) Mormon and religious

⁷⁰Jennifer E. E. Escalas and Barbara B. Stern, "Sympathy and Empathy: Emotional Responses to Advertising Dramas," *Journal of Consumer Research* 29, no. 4 (2003): 567.

⁷¹Raniero Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, 3rd ed. (Varanasi: The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1985), 80–82, esp. 80 n 1.

⁷²Peter McMurray, "A Voice Crying from the Dust: The Book of Mormon as Sound," *Dialogue* 48, no. 4 (2015): a–b 5, c 6, d 37–38, e 38.

studies.” His conclusion is that “[t]o read—to understand—these voices from the dust, perhaps we need to listen more carefully.”^{72c} His analysis shows that to read the *Book of Mormon* as only a didactic text that transmits theological, soteriological, or cosmological information is to miss (out on) an essential component.

Morgan Deane has done a particularly interesting affective study on the experience of soldiers in the *Book of Mormon*. The study focuses “on the overall experience of battle itself” and looks for small indications as to how the text presents the experiences of the common soldier (and not only their commanders). “The Book of Mormon offers a great deal of information that helps us picture what the average soldier would experience before battle. However, in typical readings of the text this information is easily missed.”⁷³ For example, the *Book of Mormon* mentions soldiers’ heat exhaustion (FE, 370) and their boredom with guard duty (379–80). Deane’s assessment also shows that affective reading functions on a subtle and almost sub-textual level and that the affective components must be brought to light through a careful, close reading. He demonstrates how these experiences are anchored in formal components of the text and do not only exist in the subjective experience of the reader.

Marilyn Arnold argues that in literature (and therefore her study of the *Book of Mormon*) “the very soul of a character can be opened, exposing a multitude of buried thoughts and anxieties.”^{74a} She finds this character and soul in the differences between Nephi₁’s and his younger brother Jacob₂’s sermon and the very different experiences of these two characters. She speaks of Jacob₂’s compassion, which “is particularly evident in an emotional sermon he delivers after Nephi_[1]’s death, a sermon quite different in tone and content from the earlier one recorded by Nephi.”^{74b} The character in his personality, but also temperament, can be seen through how the text presents him, here specifically his oratory. The different personalities of Nephi₁ and Jacob₂ are encountered in the differences in their style, their subject matter, etc.

⁷³Morgan Deane, “Experiencing Battle in the Book of Mormon,” *Interpreter* 23 (2017): 238.

⁷⁴Marilyn Arnold, “Unlocking the Sacred Text,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 8, no. 1 (1999): a 52, b 53.

In a similar vein, Mark Thomas performs a study of the narrators as characters with personalities and struggles. He examines how Moroni₂ deals with the difficult task of concluding the *Book of Mormon* as the last Nephite survivor. Most relevant for my own study is his contention that “Moroni is the most self-conscious of the Nephite narrators,” and this self-consciousness (what I am calling *self-reflexivity*) is seen in that “his commentary is usually more than an interpretation of the attached narrative.”^{75a} Moroni₂’s narration, often about the act of narrating, and its accompanying narrator interpretation exceed the immediate constraints of his own narration and do not refer to only the immediately presented narrative. This gives the impression that there is a wider world in which Moroni₂ lives and that his experiences in this opaque expanse influence his reading and narration. For Thomas, Moroni₂’s “commentary is an interpretation of the entire Book of Mormon.”^{75b} This is relevant in the discussion of the book of Ether as a *Book of Mormon* in miniature.

Thomas argues that “salvation is a dramatic narrative event” and therefore “it is best represented by a story and by presence within that story as we read it.”^{75c} Salvation must be experienced and experience requires presence within the events, be they in the life of the reader or the ‘life’ of the character in the text. He describes salvation as a “living, dramatic, and sacred presence” and argues that the *Book of Mormon* invites the reader to experience salvation through the experiences of Moroni₂ and his presence as “the lonely survivor.” Through this “we read and experience Moroni.”^{75d}

Brant Gardner also examines the personalities of *Book of Mormon* narrators as seen through their self-reflexivity. Like McMurray, he considers the placement of Nephi₁ and Mormon₂ as narrators highly significant. Gardner argues that “we can see in their writings glimpses into the personalities and intentions of the two men who stand at the beginning and the end of the Book of Mormon.”^{76a} He sees these personalities through the particular way each narrator deals with his available records on which he bases his narration. For example, “the majority of the text [of 1 Nephi]

⁷⁵Mark D. Thomas, “Moroni: The Final Voice,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 12, no. 1 (2003): a–b 96, c–d 99.

⁷⁶Brant A. Gardner, “Two Authors: Two Approaches in the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 24 (2015): a 259, b 256.

is Nephi_[1]'s summary" as opposed to Lehi₁'s or Mormon₂'s. As narrator, Nephi₁ "insert[s] large quotations that are linked with his explanatory texts, or narrations of the events, which transition to the next quotation."^{76b} All of these notions of experiencing a character, their personality, and their temperament forms the basis of my own study.

This brings us to the monograph that arguably began the current narratological focus on the *Book of Mormon*.⁷⁷ Hardy's *Understanding the Book of Mormon* is a strictly literary study, and it famously 'brackets' genetic questions.⁷⁸ The book examines the *Book of Mormon* narrative from the perspective of its three principal narrators: Nephi₁, Mormon₂, and Moroni₂. The fact that these three are thoroughly characterized narrators is highly significant for Hardy. He posits that the "narrators are a natural focus for making sense of the book as a whole, and their dual function as both characters in the story and tellers of that story make them potentially intriguing from a literary perspective."^{79a}

For Hardy, this literary perspective, which examines the text in both content and narratological form, is valuable because the text presents itself as "a history that is told and edited by participants."^{79b} The narrators are completely bound up in the telling of the narrative, and their involvement cannot be separated from the functioning of the narrative and the text in general. Hardy argues that therefore "the entirety of [the *Book of Mormon*'s] contents and structure—including omissions, juxtapositions, repetitions, and selectivity—can be read as speech acts that reveal the personalities of its narrators."^{79c} The way in which each narrator presents his narration reveals something about him. My own study principally follows Hardy's literary and narratological approach to narrators as characters.

Several studies have applied this personality-focused narratological approach to the experiences of different characters in the context of the events at Ammonihah. Charles Swift examines the emotional portrayal of Amulek. He focuses on "what the reader may *experience* as a result of *how*

⁷⁷ *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 25, no. 1 (2016) is dedicated to reexamining the book's impact.

⁷⁸ Cf. the premise of Williams, "The Ghost and the Machine," 45.

⁷⁹ G. Hardy, *Understanding*, a 11, b-c 25.

the text was *written*.”^{80a} He examines this experience not through the psychology of the reader, but through a formal analysis of the textual content and form which serves as the prerequisite of this experience by the reader. Swift reads the text principally through what it does *not* say. The subtitle of his study mentions the *reticent narrator*. He finds a large amount of emotional signification through what the narrator (here Mormon₂) chooses to leave out of his narration of the events at Ammonihah.

Swift sees the bareness of the narration in this episode as an opening into which the reader can place him- or herself. “[T]he narrator opens up the opportunity for us to imagine the scene by giving us the least amount of information—least amount, perhaps, but also the most powerful.”^{80b} This narratological lacuna enables the affective reading experience: “By not describing this terrible scene of death. . . the narrator creates a much more experiential text for us by leaving such details to our minds and hearts.”^{80c} For Swift, the reticence of the narrator is what shows the emotionality of the moment. My own study draws heavily on the events at Ammonihah, but I take a different emotional approach from that of Swift. He examines the narrative through the experience of Amulek. My own study focuses on the principal narrator, Mormon₂, as the emotional focal character.

Like Hardy, Swift completes a purely literary study and brackets off genetic questions. He legitimates this literary approach by saying that the approach is sufficient (i.e. he does not *need to* include genetic questions) because he is “less concerned. . . with identifying the author and his intent in any given passage, and more interested in the effect these narrative choices have upon us as readers.”^{80d} He thus justifies his literary approach through his analytic intent. While Hardy and Swift do not seek to justify their heuristic from within the text, my own study seeks to legitimate my bracketing of genetic questions from within the *Book of Mormon* itself.⁸¹

Another narratological study of Ammonihah is by Kylie Turley. She focuses primarily on how the events impact and change Alma₂ (whereas Swift examines Amulek). She argues that the way Alma₂ as a character-

⁸⁰Charles Swift, “When Less is More: The Reticent Narrator in the Story of Alma and Amulek,” *Religious Educator: Perspectives on the Restored Gospel* 13, no. 1 (2012): a 91, b 96, c 97, d 91, my emphasis.

⁸¹See section 6.2.

narrator speaks changes from pre- to post-Ammonihah: “Before watching women and children burn in a fire, women appear in lists as an afterthought, as a possession, or not at all. Alma almost forgets women [...] After Ammonihah, Alma recognizes women as agents in their own lives.”^{82a}

Turley also examines how Mormon₂ as Alma₂’s narrator-editor presents the events surrounding the atrocities of Ammonihah. She says that “Mormon’s editorial choices are powerful.”^{82b} This is another central tenet of my own study. Similar to Swift’s reticent narrator, Turley describes Mormon₂’s use of “crushing silence” as a way to “indicate what Ammonihah meant to Alma, perhaps because ultimately words fail to explain what happened.”^{82c} She also refers to “weighty textual silence.”^{82d} Using this narrator-narrated relationship, Turley performs a highly affective analysis of an episode which “should challenge readers both emotionally and spiritually.”^{82e} She concludes that the *Book of Mormon* “can profitably be read with careful and critical analysis of literary features.”^{82f} In other words, the text can be profitably read both affectively and formally *at the same time*. I provide my own affective-formal reading of the events at Ammonihah in section 7.1.2.

2.6 Mind Reading

The focus on the personalities of characters also skirts along genetic issues of the reality of the events and the experiences ‘behind’ the events. Fenton considers Hardy’s examination of the narrators as characters to tacitly assume and require the historicity of these characters, since his narratological approach “creates rhetorical space in which, for all his disavowals, he can talk about Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni as if they are historical figures.”⁸³ This criticism could be leveled against all literary studies which examine *Book of Mormon* characters as people with personalities, emotions, struggles, and concerns (including my own).

⁸²Kylie Turley, “Alma’s Hell: Repentance, Consequence, and the Lake of Fire and Brimstone,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 28 (2019): a 33, b 10, c 37, d 38, e 39, f 40.

⁸³Elizabeth Fenton, “Understanding the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 25 (2016): 48.

However, the criticism that affective reading requires a basis in historicity is invalid. The roots of the ‘Western’ discussion surrounding art and the affectivity of narrative and characters go back to Aristotle, who argues that a playwright’s goal (for a fictional drama) is that a “person who hears the events unfolding trembles and feels pity at what is happening.”^{84a} He also refers to the “pleasure that comes out of pity and terror.”^{84b} In other words, we are meant to be empathetic with the struggles of a fictional character.

In modern philosophy, the concept of encountering and experiencing a complex emotional character, even in a fictional context, goes back to at least Friedrich Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*, wherein he describes Greek drama as “this experience of seeing oneself transformed before one’s eyes and acting as if one had really entered another body, another character.”⁸⁵

A more recent approach stems from neuroscience and examines how readers of narratives are able to empathize with fictional characters and at times even think of them as real people despite their obvious fictional nature. Janine Utell and Lisa Zunshine call this empathetic reader engagement *mind reading* and Suzanne Keen examines the phenomenon under the dual-headers *character identification* and *narrative empathy*.⁸⁶

Utell describes *mind reading* as the process during which we as readers “attempt to understand the working of the minds of characters, as well as the characters’ attempts to understand the working of the minds of the figures around them.”⁸⁷ Zunshine argues that the reader’s act of mind reading is founded on “our ability to invest the flimsy verbal constructions that we generously call ‘characters’ with a potential for a variety of thoughts,

⁸⁴J. Patrick Atherton and John Baxter, eds., *Aristotle’s Poetics: Translated and with a Commentary by George Whalley*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), a 99, b 101.

⁸⁵Friedrich W. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*. trans. Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 43.

⁸⁶Janine Utell, *Engagements with Narrative* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016); Lisa Zunshine, *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006); Suzanne Keen, “A Theory of Narrative Empathy,” *Narrative* 14, no. 3 (2006); Suzanne Keen, “Readers’ Temperaments and Fictional Character,” *New Literary History* 42, no. 2 (2011).

⁸⁷Utell, *Engagements with Narrative*, 60.

feelings, and desires.” The reader has the ability to go beyond the surface text and “to look for the ‘cues’ that would allow us to guess at their feelings and thus predict their actions.”⁸⁸

Literary characters only exist as a few marks on a page. And yet readers are able to peek behind the curtain, so to speak, and encounter a fleshed out personality. Keen also argues that the ability to empathize and identify with such flimsy constructs “appears to require only minimal elements of identity, situation, and feeling, not necessarily complex or realistic characterization.”⁸⁹ She describes this emotional development of literary characters on the part of the reader as “how we flesh out the text’s words into the illusions of persons” or simply the fact that readers “respond to characters as persons.”⁹⁰

The work of these three theorists demonstrates that identificatory reactions to the literary constructs referred to as “characters” is wholly legitimate. The characters with whom the reader is identifying and whom he or she wishes to understand, even beyond what is given in the text, need not be or have been strictly speaking real, living, breathing humans. It does not matter whether Spencer, Arnold, Hardy, Swift, or Turley (or I, for that matter) do or do not believe that Nephi₁, Jacob₂, Mormon₂, or Moroni₂ were ever real people. The analysis of these literary marks, these “flimsy verbal constructions,” as if they were real people is consistent with and supported by modern literary theory. The level of the actual author could, but need not be, included in examination of the *Book of Mormon* characters. This freedom to invest marks on a page with emotions, personality, and experiences forms another pillar on which my own literary study is founded.

2.7 Conclusion: Review of Literature

As should be obvious from this chapter, scholarly (and especially literary) study of the *Book of Mormon* has changed dramatically since Campbell. On the whole, we can say that the dualism has not yet been fully overcome

⁸⁸Zunshine, *Why We Read Fiction*, 10.

⁸⁹Keen, “Theory of Narrative Empathy,” 214.

⁹⁰Keen, “Readers’ Temperaments,” 298–99.

and the division seen by Howe is still mostly intact. That being said, an increasing number of scholars from outside of the religious tradition (including Thomas, Fenton, and Gutjahr⁹¹) has begun serious and productive study of the *Book of Mormon*. Coupled with the impressive postmodern and affective work, this should be sufficient to prove that there is much to be gained from examining the *Book of Mormon* in a non-genetic, non-confessional manner.

Returning to my own study, the introduction and this chapter have shown that my approach (like any scholarly work) is based on critical premises and is therefore contingent. Even seemingly obvious terms like *literature* and *text* need to be defined in order to be useful analytic tools. The next chapter on what can provisionally called Western theory moves through the layers of theory in order to clearly lay out my interpretive arsenal. I begin with my general approach to religion, and the chapter ends with defining the internal divisions of a volume. The chapter provides the tools with which to deconstruct the *Book of Mormon*. The disassembled and labeled components then need to be assembled into a productive interpretive approach. The tools for this synthetic work are taken from South Asian aesthetics. The theory presented in chapter 3 thus dovetails into chapter 4 on *rasa* theory.

⁹¹All three have been active contributors in the *Book of Mormon Studies Association*. Thomas—a non-Mormon ‘gentile’ (as he likes to call himself)—was in fact elected as the president of the association when it was founded in 2018.

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3 “Western” (Post-)Secular Literary Theory

The theoretical framing layer of my study is what is called the *post-secular*. The term was coined by Jürgen Habermas in his acceptance speech for 2001 *Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels*.¹ He creates his concept out a contrast with iconoclastic secularization, which generally seeks to either “tame ecclesiastical authority through secular (*weltlich*) power” or even “replace religious modes of thought and ways of life with rational (*vernünftig*), or in any case superior equivalents.”² In either case, the relationship between ‘pre-modern’ religion and ‘modern’ secularism is seen as a zero sum game. The concept of the post-secular is ultimately phenomenologically derived through the recognition that secularization has not been able to ‘defeat’ religion: A post-secular society therefore “adapts to the continued existence of religious communities in a continuously secularizing environment.”

This continued existence of religion need not simply be seen as a ‘failure’ of secularization. Habermas proposes that a post-secular philosophical approach to religion—which he also refers to as post-metaphysical thinking (*nachmetaphysisches Denken*)—is “simultaneously willing to learn and agnostic.”^{3a} The agnosticism is seen in how a post-secular, post-metaphysical approach “eschews the rationalist pretention to decide for oneself what is reasonable (*vernünftig*) and what is unreasonable (*unvernünftig*) in religious doctrines.”^{3b} Habermas sees religion not as inherently irrational (in the usual pejorative sense) or superstitious.

¹Jürgen Habermas, “Dankesrede: Glauben und Wissen,” in *Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels* (Frankfurt am Main: Börsenverein des Deutsch Buchhandels, 2001).

²Habermas, “Dankesrede,” a 10, my translation: Zähmung der kirchlichen Autorität durch die weltliche Gewalt [...] religiöse Denkweisen und Lebensformen durch vernünftige, jedenfalls überlegene Äquivalente ersetzt; b 10; c 10: eine postsäkular[e] Gesellschaft, die sich auf das Fortbestehen religiöser Gemeinschaften in einer sich fortwährend säkularisierenden Umgebung einstellt.

³Jürgen Habermas, *Zwischen Naturalismus und Religion: Philosophische Aufsätze* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2005), a 149, my translation: lernbereit und agnostisch zugleich; b 149: ...enthält sich aber der rationalistischen Anmaßung, selber zu entscheiden, was in den religiösen Lehren vernünftig und was unvernünftig ist.

Much like Latour,⁴ he sees great social and even political potential for allowing religious contributions to political discourse. However, Habermas adds a condition for the inclusion. If a (post-)secular society is going to legitimize religious discourse, said discourse needs to submit itself to a “translation proviso” (*Übersetzungsvorbehalt*).^{5a} In turn, secular discourse and secular members of society need to be willing to “participate in the efforts to translate relevant contributions from religious language into publicly accessible language.”^{5b} The goal of a post-secular approach is to allow sincerely held belief to stand while enabling non- or different-believers to benefit from religious thought and intuition. The goal is also pursued in self-interest. A post-secular approach seeks to “counteract the creeping entropy of the scarce resource ‘meaning.’”⁶ The goal of my own study is, in the end, an attempt to translate the religious appeal of the *Book of Mormon* into such publically accessible language (i.e. secular literary discourse).

3.1 Religious Plurality as a Source of Conflict

To grasp the explosiveness of Habermas’ proposal, we must understand the roots of the European drive to secularize. His post-secular program can be seen as deliberately reintroducing a deadly virus that had previously barely been contained. Peter Strohschneider explains that the impetus for a specifically European secularization was the many devastating religious wars (‘civil’ or otherwise), for example the German Peasants’ War, the French Wars of Religion, and especially the Thirty Years’ War.⁷ Grant

⁴See, for example, Bruno Latour, “Will non-humans be saved? An argument in ecotheology,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15 no. 3 (2009).

⁵Habermas, *Zwischen Naturalismus*, a 136; b 118: sich an Anstrengungen beteiligen, relevante Beiträge aus der religiösen in eine öffentlich zugängliche Sprache zu übersetzen.

⁶Habermas, “Dankesrede,” 15, my translation: der schleichenden Entropie der knappen Ressource Sinn entgegenzuwirken.

⁷Peter Strohschneider, “Foreigners in Pre-Modernity: On Losses of Negatability and Gains of Unfamiliarity,” trans. Frederik Kleiner. *Journal of Early Modern Studies* 8, no. 2 (2019): 119; For the original, see Peter Strohschneider, “Fremde in der Vormoderne: Über Negierbarkeitsverluste und Unbekanntheits-gewinne,” in *Alterität als Leitkonzept für historisches Interpretieren*, eds. Anja Becker and Jan Mohr (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2012).

Shreve, speaking of secularization in the context of the *Book of Mormon*, explains that European secularization was “a process born out of ecclesiastic infighting, institutional fragmentation, and the rise of political powers independent of a universal spiritual institution.”⁸

A plurality of religions, each with its own absolute truth claims (and therefore claims to political authority), led to millions of deaths and unimaginable suffering. One need only think of the atrocities depicted in Grimmelshausen’s *Simplicius Simplicissimus* (1668) based on the Thirty Years War. Drawing on these destructive wars, the German jurist Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde creates the distinction between a ‘life in truth’ (*Leben in der Wahrheit*) and a ‘life in peace’ (*Leben in Frieden*).⁹ Competing absolutist religions—what Strohschneider refers to as “pluralization of normativities”^{10a}—cannot have both types of life. Competing lives in truth do not lead to lives in peace (quite the opposite). Opening up discursive (much less political) space to ‘religion’ can therefore bring with it feelings of unease and raise past historical trauma.

Societal peace must then be derived as a formal concept in contrast to civil war.^{10b} The road to peace is then pursued through a type of *a*-religiosity, where all sides have to be willing to put aside cherished elements for the sake of non-violent (i.e. ‘peaceful’) co-existence on a densely populated continent. Secularization and the attempt at formal peace despite religious plurality is therefore a pragmatic necessity. At first glance, the easiest solution is to simply get rid of religion altogether (i.e. to secularize).

An imperfect comparison can be found in the modern prohibition of alcohol, where something that frequently leads to objectively tragic, catastrophic results is simply forbidden. Prohibition (much like militant secularization) famously failed. A post-secular approach to the destructive potential of religion is then comparable to pragmatic policies of legaliz-

⁸Grant Shreve, “Nephite Secularization; or, Picking and Choosing in *The Book of Mormon*,” in Fenton; Hickman, *Americanist Approaches*, 211.

⁹Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde, “Die Entstehung des Staates als Vorgang der Säkularisation [1967],” in *Der säkularisierte Staat: Sein Charakter, seine Rechtfertigung und seine Probleme im 21. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Carl Friedrich von Siemens Stiftung, 2007), 57.

¹⁰Strohschneider, “Foreigners in Pre-Modernity,” a 120, b 119.

ing alcohol while simultaneously regulating it. More recently, this stance has also been taken towards drugs. There are forms of religion and types of drugs that can have many positive functions and provide productive resources that can be drawn on once the iconoclastic/prohibitionist stance is abandoned.

The reason I bring up the European trauma and the comparison to dangerous substances is that religious members of society need to understand that secularization derives from very real and legitimate concerns. If secular discourse and secular members of society are to take religion seriously and allow it legitimacy, then the religious side must also be willing to engage in the translation efforts and be willing to allow cherished beliefs to be scrutinized and possibly adapted for the sake of a life in peace. Post-secular engagement must be reciprocal (something I return to later).

Violent religious conflict was not restricted to Europe, and the United States in particular saw civil strife between religious denominations that either fled Europe or were founded in the new world. These conflict groups included the ‘Mormons’ under Joseph Smith and later on the LDS faction under Brigham Young (like Meyer, this section puts aside the particular history of the CoC, which was much less tumultuous on the whole¹¹). Both Smith and Young as religious leaders tried the Puritan model of physically leaving the area of conflict in order to set up a life in truth elsewhere. Joseph Smith moved the church westward from New York, to Ohio, to Missouri, and eventually to the western frontier of the United States in Illinois.^{12a} Brigham Young took the church beyond the borders of the United States into what was then Mexico in order to escape the violent conflicts with different-believers.^{12b}

However, not even the vastness of North America was able to ensure the compatibility of lives in truth and life in peace. Joseph Smith and Brigham Young were confronted with very European conditions of religious plurality and the reality of violent conflict as a result of competing desires

¹¹Cf. Andrew Bolton, et al., *In Pursuit of Peace: Community of Christ’s Journey* (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 2017); Paul M. Edwards, *Our Legacy of Faith: A Brief History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1991.

¹²Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, a 315–19, 723–27; b 727–29.

for a life in truth. The most extreme example of religious persecution was the 1838 Missouri Executive Order 44, also known as the “Extermination Order,” issued by then governor Lilburn Boggs. It reads in part: “The Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated or driven from the state, if necessary, for the public peace.”¹³ In the view of the ruling authority, the ‘Mormon’ desire for a life in truth resulted in a danger to societal peace. This danger could only be countered with state violence. Joseph Smith’s life in truth resulted in his assassination in Carthage, Illinois, in 1844.

The LDS ‘Mormons’ failed in their quest for a life in truth separate from the rest of society due to the political interests of an expanding United States government. The nineteenth century (unlike the seventeenth) had no more political room for independent religious states. As Eduard Meyer puts it: “[I]t was the misfortune of the Mormons that the time where such an independent realm (*Reich*) could be founded had since passed.”¹⁴ Tensions between the LDS church and the federal government¹⁵ culminated (in Meyer’s words) in the “subjugation” (*Unterwerfung*) of the LDS church by the federal government in 1890. The church had to finally fully submit to federal jurisdiction and laws, in particular those that banned polygamy. In much the same way, the LDS church was later pressured by the federal government to give black members access to the priesthood in 1978 (!) as part of the civil rights movement.

Both of these changes in policy regarding polygamy and the priesthood are found in the last two sections of the LDS *Doctrine and Covenants*, each called “Official Declaration.”¹⁶ The canon of LDS scripture thus closes in

¹³Quoted in John P. Greene, *Facts Relative to the Expulsion of the Mormons from the State of Missouri, under the “Exterminating Order”* (Cincinnati: R.P. Brooks, 1839), 26; cf. also Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 318–19.

¹⁴Meyer, *Ursprung und Geschichte der Mormonen*, 225, my translation: Aber das Unglück der Mormonen war, daß die Zeit, wo ein derartiges unabhängiges Reich gegründet werden konnte, inzwischen vorüber war.

¹⁵Meyer, *Ursprung und Geschichte der Mormonen*, 225–51, 264–72; cf. also Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 731.

¹⁶Joseph Smith, *The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints: Containing Revelations given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, with some Additions by his Successors in the Presidency of the Church* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ

1978 after 138 sections and two Official Declarations with the secular subjugation of the church. In contrast, the CoC is still adding to its canonical *Doctrine and Covenants*. The latest addition is section 164 in 2016.¹⁷

The *Book of Mormon* also deals with these religious tensions and examines how (or rather *whether*) “religious liberty, which produces multiple dissenting groups, can coexist with a particular form of orthodox belief.”¹⁸ For example, Nehor the heretic (from the perspective of Alma₂ as high priest) kills a man with whom he is having a religious argument. For this he is executed (FE, 221–23). On a larger scale, the heretical Zoramites break with the Nephites following the failed attempt of Alma₂ and his fellow missionaries at bringing them back to Nephite orthodoxy. The Zoramites almost immediately join with the Lamanites to wage war on the Nephites (340–47). The sectarian wars at the end of the book of Mormon, which culminate in the destruction of the entire Nephite people, have religious differences at their root (517). Thus the *Book of Mormon* ultimately has no definitive solution for religious conflict resulting from religious plurality.¹⁹

3.2 The Secular becomes the Post-Secular

A modern, scientific, and ‘rational’ world then seems to be the next step in the evolution of society. Secularization appears to be the antidote to ‘religion’ and its potential for and reality of violent conflict. A teleological concept of secularization can lead to an outright rejection or even deliberate destruction of ‘the religious’ since religion is impeding ‘progress’ or the ‘thrust of history.’ It is the last remnant of a world we need to leave behind before we can enter a new world order free from such discursive chains (and their resulting conflict). However, Talal Asad argues that the concept of the *secular* is itself a thesis and an ideology and an organization of societal power. The secular “should not be thought of as the space

of Latter-Day Saints, 1979), 291–94.

¹⁷The ongoing nature of canonization means that there are no printed compilations for the most recent sections. The text can be found on the CoC homepage: <https://www.cofchrist.org/doctrine-and-covenants-section-165> (accessed March 10, 2021).

¹⁸Shreve, “Nephite Secularization,” 213.

¹⁹Cf. Shreve, “Nephite Secularization,” 226.

in which *real* human life gradually emancipates itself from the controlling power of ‘religion’ and thus achieves the latter’s relocation.”²⁰ For many people even today, religion is an essential component of their ‘real’ lives.

In fact, secularization can feel like a direct attack on religious identity and group cohesion. A 1993 book review by Louis Midgley of *Our Legacy of Faith*²¹ and other CoC (still RLDS at the time) works is a fine example of this feeling. The books being reviewed all concern developments in RLDS doctrine and ecclesiastical structures. The review itself encapsulates the religious anxiety about ‘secular’ and ‘modern’ reexaminations of ‘traditional’ and ‘religious’ narratives (such as for the ‘standard story’ of Joseph Smith) as a corrosion of ‘faith.’ Midgley concludes by drawing on a study of Jewish history²² as a cautionary tale. I render the end in full, since it is a perfect summary of why many believers are wary of ‘modern’—and that for them means ‘secular’—approaches. They fear that the religious group falls apart when the standard story is challenged:

And when that story was challenged, called into question, or explained away with categories drawn from the secular culture, the Jewish community suffered disintegration and other terrible harms. Yerushalmi’s work thus cautions those tinkering with novel and essentially secularized, naturalistic accounts of the Mormon past, but only if they have eyes to see and a will to learn from the encounter between faith and what professor Marty and I have both called the ‘acids of modernity.’²³ What we seem to be seeing in the books under review is the corrosive effects [!] of secular, naturalistic explanations of the Mormon past on the RLDS community. For these essentially cautionary lessons, though perhaps not intended in exactly that way, we can only thank their authors, even as we wisely [!] prefer to move

²⁰Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003), 191.

²¹See n. 11 above

²²Yosef H. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory, 2nd ed.* (New York: Schocken Books, 1989).

²³Cf. Louis Midgley, “The Acids of Modernity and the Crisis in Mormon Historiography,” in *Faithful History: Essays on Writing Mormon History*, ed. George D. Smith (Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 1992): esp. 192, 219–20 n 27; Martin E. Marty, “Two Integrities: An Address to the Crisis in Mormon Historiography,” in G. Smith, *Faithful History*.

in other directions by preserving, refining, correcting, and enlarging the story that grounds the community of faith and memory.²⁴

From personal experience, I can say that LDS discourse on the issue has not changed all that much in the last three decades. It is this animosity rooted in fear that a post-secular approach must take seriously and seek to address. While Midgley's position is ultimately untenable in its rigidity, the underlying anxiety seeking to maintain religious faith is very real.

This brings us to the theoretical premise of the *post-secular* used in my study. I draw on the particular development of the concept by Burkhard Hasebrink and Peter Strohschneider.²⁵ They argue that 'secularism' has not destroyed religion and that, in fact, religion has seemingly proliferated, if in a more fractured way. Religion's variations and permutations are spread over a wider spectrum than ever before, or as Hasebrink and Strohschneider put it: "[R]eligion is encountered in the plural, so to speak."²⁶ Secularization has not been able to dislodge religion. It has only modified it. If, as Latour claims, we have never been truly 'modern,' we must also admit that we have never been truly *secular*.²⁷

Hasebrink and Strohschneider speak of religion's continued *Wirklichkeitsmächtigkeit*, its power on reality.^{28a} And yet the fractured nature of this power shows that the pre-secular power of religion has in fact changed. Religion, while it has 'survived' secularization, no longer plays, nor can it play, the role it did in earlier centuries. They refer to the combination of power on reality coupled with religions' competition amongst themselves and with secularization as the 'post-secular context' (*postsäkularer Kon-*

²⁴Louis Midgley, "Book Reviews: *Our Legacy of Faith: A Brief History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* by Paul M. Edwards; *The Church through the Years, vols. 1 and 2*, by Richard P. Howard; *Let Contention Cease: The Dynamics of Dissent in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, ed. Roger D. Launius and W. B. 'Pat' Spillman," *BYU Studies Quarterly* 33, no 3 (1993): 604.

²⁵Burkhard Hasebrink and Peter Strohschneider, "Religiöse Schriftkultur und säkulare Textwissenschaft: Germanistische Mediävistik in postsäkularem Kontext," *Poetica* 46 (2014).

²⁶Hasebrink and Strohschneider, "Religiöse Schriftkultur," 279, my translation: Religion [begegnet] stets sozusagen im Plural.

²⁷Cf. Bruno Latour, *We have never been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1993).

²⁸Hasebrink and Strohschneider, "Religiöse Schriftkultur," a–b 279.

text).^{28b} The iconoclastic approach for dealing with the potential for conflict found in religion has failed, and another approach must be found to reconcile the continued desire for a life in truth with the practical need for societal peace.

A post-secular approach is then curious about and interested in the ‘other’ of religion. The fact that it seeks to understand ‘religion’ and does not simply seek to overcome or even destroy it shows a shift in the relationship between the ‘secular’ and the ‘religious.’ Strohschneider explains this type of shift from hostility to interest in an essay in which he draws on Reinhart Koselleck’s concept of *asymmetry*. He defines Koselleck’s use of the term as “mirror-image inequality.”^{29a} The term is aimed at understanding “dualities in the field of societal self- and other-designations, which semantically institutionalize difference as a value slope, even as a value–non-value opposition; but in any case constitute the heterogeneous (*Ungleichartiges*) as the heterovalent (*Ungleichwertiges*).”^{29b} The other (what Strohschneider refers to as *das Fremde*, the foreign) is different and therefore worth a different (usually lesser) amount. Such differences are then established and maintained through charged dichotomies (like proletariat–bourgeoisie, natives–immigrants, or religion–secularism).

Axiological asymmetry as Strohschneider calls it brings with it differences in semantic ‘temperature.’ *Zwillingsformeln* (twin-formulas) can either “remain cool” or be “semantically heated.”^{29c} The twin-formula *secularism-religion* in question here tends to be semantically and axiologically extremely heated. This is where Koselleck’s *asymmetry* comes into play. Koselleck describes such heated twin-formulas as ‘asymmetrical’ and ‘antithetical’ since they “function to deny the reciprocity of mutual recognition.”³⁰ If the inherent structural asymmetry^{31a} between the secular and the religious is heated, then those who describe themselves as ‘secular’ do not recognize the ‘religious’ as an equal, but as a lesser position. Conversely, those who are religious (and especially those who are intensely so) will

²⁹Strohschneider, “Foreigners in Pre-Modernity,” a–b 106, c 104.

³⁰Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 136.

³¹Strohschneider, “Foreigners in Pre-Modernity,” a 107–08, b 116, c 132, emphasis in original.

tend to consider secularism to be an incorrect if not dangerous path. This leads to the impassioned fights between the two ‘sides’ (as exemplified in Midgley’s review and the hermeneutic dualism surrounding the *Book of Mormon*).

Strohschneider sees the most extreme type of asymmetry in pre-modern, especially medieval discourses on the other, in which the other has no value at all, since it does not possess the complete value of one’s own (correct) order.

There only exists this Order and its restoration, if it has been broken. Difference from one’s own position appears under these premises a *deviation* from it and causes *disparagement* (*Abwertung*). Something foreign or unknown can then only exist as a determined negation of Order in general.^{31b}

From this perspective, the presence of the foreign other is a disruption of capital O, **Order** (which just so happens to be one’s own). Everything else is a deviation from and therefore a negation or corruption of Order in general. This negating view of others and their order has the social value of being able to clearly categorize the foreign. One clearly knows how to act towards it. This constellation only requires two options: Either you *join*, or you *fight*.^{31c} The presence of something foreign is evidence that Order has been corrupted or not yet fully established, and it is a challenge to ‘givenness,’ which is why the other cannot simply be ignored. The disrupting order must be eliminated (or at least contained should elimination prove unsuccessful).

This type of hostile axiologically asymmetrical position is examined by Thomas Bauer using the case study of fundamentalist Islam, through which he develops a model of fundamentalist thought that can be applied in other contexts. It must be emphasized that Fundamentalism is *not* unique to Islam (nor is fundamentalism inherently violent). It is an epistemic lens that leads to social and political attitudes (and possibly action). The urge for the restoration of lost religious Order (seen also in Joseph Smith’s movement) is a reaction to the current state of affairs reached through the permutations of tradition (in Scholem’s sense in section 1). “The traditional position is here considered the result of a thousand-year-long period of decline and the

turning away from the ideals of the *ur*-congregation.” The decline and perversion of the traditional position must now be “overcome through a return to the ideals of the early period.”^{32a} The fundamentalist (whether Islamic or ‘Mormon’) yearns for ‘original’ purity and a restoration of Order (such as a restoration of ecclesiastical Order through Joseph Smith). According to Bauer, the fundamentalist reaction ultimately derives from the desire to “create an ambiguity-free ideology,”^{32b} free from the messiness and contradictions of history and pluralistic life. We are thus dealing with a steep value slope, perhaps even the undefined slope of a perfectly vertical line.

Such medieval and fundamentalist relationships with the other are referred to *negating logic* by Strohschneider, because the other is classified as a negation of Order.^{33a} And yet, negating logic can be highly productive and stabilizing by containing the ‘corrosive acid’ that is a foreign discursive other (at least for a while). Strohschneider calls this contained threat the *tremendum*,^{33b} drawing on a term by Rudolf Otto. The religious concept of *tremendum* is here transposed from metaphysical to social discourse to help indicate just how threatening another order can be for those (still^{33c}) using negating logic.

Otto defines the *tremendum* as “the deepest and most fundamental element in all strong and sincerely felt religious emotion.”^{34a} The feeling contains three elements: awfulness, overpoweringness, and urgency. The *tremendum* is based primarily on fear. Otto especially likes the English terms *awe* and *awful*, “which in their deeper and most special sense approximate closely to our meaning.”^{34b} The *tremendum* is also unimaginably powerful. It is capable of overwhelming and crushing. Faced with the *tremendum*, one has “the feeling of one’s own abasement, of being but dust and ashes and nothingness.”^{34c} And finally, it is *urgent*. The *tremendum* is

³²Thomas Bauer, *Die Kultur der Ambiguität: Eine andere Geschichte des Islams* (Berlin: Verlag der Weltreligionen, 2011), a 58–59, my translation: Die traditionelle Position erscheint hier als Ergebnis einer über tausendjährigen Zeit des Niedergangs und der Abwendung von den Idealen der Urgemeinde, die... nun durch eine Rückbesinnung auf die Ideale der Frühzeit überwunden werden muß; b 58: eine Ambiguitätsfreie Ideologie.

³³Strohschneider, “Foreigners in Pre-Modernity,” a 117, 127; b 117; cf. c 119.

³⁴Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*, trans. John W. Harvey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1926), a 12, b 14, c 20, d 24.

“a force that knows not stint nor stay, which is urgent, active, compelling, and alive.”^{34d} One cannot avoid it; one cannot simply run away; it must be dealt with, and *now*. All of this taken together makes this a feeling of *fear in the face of an overwhelming power which one cannot escape*.

The goal of Strohschneider’s study is to develop a structural, axiological, and epistemic position towards the foreign that can deal with the complexities and anxieties of the modern world. The foreign (or foreigners, for that matter) can no longer be pushed aside into a safe corner. The pragmatic constraints of a globalized, pluralistic world no longer allow for cultural or ethnic homogeneity. The modern reality of unavoidable plurality requires a leveling of the asymmetrical value slope in order to expand the available instructions. However, this leveling and the resulting impossibility of full negating bring with them the “loss of determinateness of the foreign.”^{35a} The other now needs to be understood, needs to be determined in its contingency and in its *tremendum*, which invariably uncovers the contingency of Order. The instructions can no longer simply be either ‘join/fight.’ The other must be allowed to produce a “reciprocal-symmetrical irritability” (*reziprok-symmetrische Irritabilität*).^{35b} In other words, a truly symmetrical value slope requires both sides to perform the difficult task of coming to terms with the other and general contingency. Both sides need to participate in the translation efforts for the sake of a societal life in peace.

Strohschneider proposes an ‘interest’ in the foreign. When the foreign “becomes ‘interesting’ . . . it is then no longer a pre-modern but a specifically modern foreign.”^{35c} However, he also hints at the danger of reducing the other to something which is *merely* interesting. Even though the *interesting* still needs to be understood (and one now wishes to do so), this relationship is, as Strohschneider argues, not yet truly symmetrical (assuming that such a thing is even possible).^{35d} He here draws on Dirk Baecker’s description of the scientist interested in the believer praying.³⁶ When only the scientist is interested (perhaps even fascinated) by the believer, only the believer is being irritated in his or her position. The scientist, who is only a smart-aleck (*Neunmalkluger*) from the perspective of the believer, does not risk

³⁵ Strohschneider, “Foreigners in Pre-Modernity,” a 128, b 122, c 132, d 133.

³⁶ Cf. Dirk Baecker, *Wozu Kultur?* (Berlin: Kulturverl. Kadmos, 2000), 167.

all that much in studying something which is merely interesting.

Hasebrink's and Strohschneider's concept of the *post*-secular is therefore an attempt to counteract the animosity created by a steep value slope between 'religion' and 'secularism.' Secularism (or rather *secularization*) sees religion as a pre-modern foreign discourse that is a negation of the Order of the truly secular world. The secular response to religion is to fight it. The supposedly 'modern' ideology of secularization therefore still follows a decidedly pre-modern asymmetrical value slope. Teleological secularization is then, in fact, a mirroring of the fundamentalist reaction: It looks forwards rather than backwards for its Order. The sought Order—the secular order—can only result from overcoming the traditional, messy, contradictory, and ambiguous position of 'real' life still *infected* by fractured religion.

The 'reciprocal irritability' called for by Strohschneider might seem odd for English speakers. The term *irritability* (*Irritabilität*) is weaker in German and does not necessarily refer to a curmudgeon; it nonetheless means being able to be caught off guard or thrown off by something.³⁷ This 'throw-ability' is at the heart of the post-secular. When the scientist can be *merely* interested in the religious (but not actually *threatened* by, cannot be caught off guard or be thrown off by), 'interest' challenges only the certainty of the religious order, leaving the scientist's own certainty untouched. As mentioned above, asymmetrical twin-formulas use the value slope to constitute the 'heterogeneous as the heterovalent.' The interested secular scholar using the dichotomy *religion–secularism* will usually not see religion's foreignness as equal, and religion will usually be seen as subordinate and somehow inferior.

Mere 'interest' contains the foreign other by placing it in a museum vitrine. It is available for study, but it now no longer irritates. It is not a *tremendum* with which one must urgently come to terms, and the scientist or scholar is giving nothing in a purely interest-based relationship. The foreign has been categorized, and further study is pleasant, but ultimately optional. Only when the risk is reciprocal can there be something

³⁷The same goes for being 'irritated' (*irritiert*). All a German speaker is saying when he or she is *irritiert* by something is that it caught him or her off-guard or that it is distracting.

approaching symmetry. This is also why the “axiological temperature” of a given duality (e.g. religion–secularism) is “epistemically significant.”^{38a} Depending on the temperature, different types of knowledge are desirable, necessary, or simply possible.

That being said, religion cannot now smugly demand ‘respect.’ Reciprocity and symmetry still mean that religion must be interrogated, and the post-secular acknowledgement of pluralistic religion and normativities is still a dangerous *tremendum* for the certainly known model of the world^{38b} of the religious believer/knower. Religious knowledge is no longer “self-evident” (*selbstverständlich*).^{39a} Others also believe/know, and this simply fact means that those with “certainty of faith must endure counterfactually in the knowledge that others possess other certainties.”^{39b} If religious knowledge were truly certain and self-evident, then everyone should share it. And yet they obviously do not. Teleological Christianity is very different from cyclical Hinduism, and yet both traditions have devotees who *know* that their soteriological doctrine and cosmological model are constatively true.

A post-secular approach is then not a return to a *pre*-secular, pre-modern monolithic religion (no matter the axiological or epistemic stance taken by the secular ‘side’). A post-secular study of religion does not (and *cannot*), as Midgely suggests, “wisely prefer to move in other directions.”⁴⁰ The religious is granted an inherent right to exist, but the extent to which that existence is permitted (or generally tenable in the context of pluralization) is still in question. This will inevitably mean a loss in pre-secularizing certainty and unambiguity, and the way ‘religion’ now functions is invariably and irreversibly affected by secularization. Even if God is not truly dead, the fact that he has been wounded at all has about the same effect.

³⁸Strohschneider, “Foreigners in Pre-Modernity,” a 111, *see also* 117; b 117.

³⁹Hasebrink and Strohschneider, “Religiöse Schriftkultur,” a 279; b 279, my translation: Wer Glaubensgewissheit hat, muss sie kontrafaktisch durchhalten im Wissen darum, dass andere andere Gewissheiten besitzen.

⁴⁰Midgely, “Book Reviews,” 604.

3.3 Manifoldly Foreign Texts: Scripture as 'Literature'

The reciprocal risk requires changing how a sacred text is approached. Strohschneider, referring to his own field of Medieval German texts, calls such writings “poetic speech which has become manifoldly foreign.”⁴¹ Ricœur speaks of the “strangeness of [the Bible’s] language in relation to that which we speak today.”⁴² The struggle with this problem is seen with how the *Book of Mormon* uses English and how this English is translated. The KJV style—especially the use of Early Modern English grammar—adds to the difficulty for non-Mormon English speakers who did not grow up with KJV English.

A similar problem exists in Spanish, where the current LDS translation uses grammar based on the 1569 *Reina Valera* translation of the Bible. From personal experience, I can say that this frequently makes the text difficult even for native Spanish speakers. In contrast, the current German LDS translation follows the more vernacular *Einheitsübersetzung* of the Bible and not the more Lutheran style of earlier translations. The *Book of Mormon* can therefore be described as a text which has been manifoldly foreign and strange since its publication.

Apart from retranslating a sacred text or updating existing translations, another attempt to deal with the foreignness of scripture and the strangeness of scriptural language is to treat such texts *as literature*. This is done in order to interpret scripture in a non-confessional manner and to deal with scripture in a modern, ‘secular’ context. Reading the *Old and New Testaments*, the *Mahābhārata*, and the *Koran* using secular literary methods in either a confessional or non-confessional context is itself the result of centuries of discursive shifting which now *allows* this approach to be considered valid. Asad addresses the situation when “the Bible is read as art (whether as poetry or myth or philosophy),” and he argues that this change in focus is only possible “because a complicated historical development of

⁴¹Strohschneider, “Über mediävistische,” 74, my translation: vielfältig fremd gewordene poetische Rede.

⁴²Ricœur, “Experience and Language,” 136.

disciplines and sensibilities has made it possible to do so.”⁴³

The competing desires to examine the *Book of Mormon* in a literary context while nonetheless maintaining a non-secular religious knowledge is evident in studies of the *Book of Mormon* where genetic questions still creep in or the issue of historicity and its possible implications cannot be excised. Frankly, the question is still open on whether such separation is even possible, desirable, or productive. My study affirms that yes, literary study separate from constative genetic or historical questions is possible, desirable, and very productive.

The modern freedom to apply literary analysis to scripture also harbors the danger of doing violence to the texts themselves. Examining scripture, other sacred writings, and pre-modern texts in general using the modern concept of *literature* is highly problematic, and indiscriminate use of the modern concept “runs the risk of anachronistic rejections from the level of analysis to the level of the object of literary studies.”^{44a} Literary treatment deprives the merely interesting foreign object (scripture) of its unique functioning. The fact that these manifoldly foreign texts are read at all shows at least modern *interest*, but it does not guarantee axiological symmetry. *Treating* these texts like modern literature can cause the reader to consider these texts to *be* like modern literature. The level of analysis has then been built into the object itself, thus explaining scripture in terms of and reducing it to secular notions of textual functioning.

It cannot be said that the object of literary study (sacred scripture or any pre-modern texts) possess the same characteristics as and functioning of modern fictional, literary works. Believers also read the texts very differently compared to secular ‘literature.’ The reduction to literature is thus a form of negating the disruptive other of sacred texts. Hasebrink and Strohschneider explain the strangeness of such texts by pointing to the fact that they do not presume the same categories of polysemy, fictionality, or creative originality as used in contemporary literary analysis or the modern concept of *literature*.^{44b} Strohschneider argues that these categories are not

⁴³Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 9.

⁴⁴Hasebrink and Strohschneider, “Religiöse Schriftkultur,” a 285, my translation: [Die moderne Kategorie *Literatur*] steht...stets in der Gefahr anachronistischer Reprojektionen von der Analyse- auf die Objektebene der Literaturwissenschaft; b 285.

sufficient to define 'literature' at all.⁴⁵

Hasebrink and Strohschneider speak of the problem of dividing the religious into the aesthetic on the one hand and the functional on the other. A post-secular study of sacred texts instead "examines the sacred and non-sacred in its (*sic*) irresolvable entanglements."⁴⁶ These two elements can only be divided by doing violence to the text and the religious in general and by cutting away elements which are essential to the identity of the text.

While my study seeks to open up non-denominational, non-historicist, non-constative space for the *Book of Mormon*, the conclusion that the text allows affective-experiential access to the *Book of Mormon's* conception of God is still part of traditionally 'religious' discourse. Focusing on what can be grasped using literary analysis of the bound volume does not seek to remove the religious. Quite the opposite: The goal is to demonstrate the religious appeal using 'secular' literary tools and how this religious character can function separate from denominational religion. However, elements that I leave out (like constative historicity) could be seen as essential to the religious aspect of the text. My study must leave open the question of how much of the 'religious' element can be separated without doing violence to the text.

My approach is to allow the manifoldly foreign text some measure of autonomy and grant it the right to reciprocal irritation of modern concepts, and I use post-secular methodological freedom to bring back the element of the *object* to the level of *analysis*. That being said, restricting my analysis to the bound volume is itself a form of separating the text from its religious functioning within a religious denomination. The analysis thus postulates the object as the bound volume and then proceeds to base further analysis on the spatially and discursively reduced object.

I then allow the postulated object to guide the method of analysis. I look at the *Book of Mormon* as a bound volume of scripture (the level of the object) as it presents itself in its content and structure and the demands the text makes of its reader, be they explicit or implicit. I base my method

⁴⁵Strohschneider, "Über mediävistische," 75.

⁴⁶Hasebrink and Strohschneider, "Religiöse Schriftkultur," 289, my translation: eine Textwissenschaft, die Sakrales und Nichtsakrales in seinen (*sic*) unauflöflichen Verschränkungen untersucht.

(the level of analysis) on these demands and also seek to legitimize my method through the self-reflexive self-understanding of the text.

The goal is to deal with the *Book of Mormon* as revealed scripture with claims to divine origins and divine access in a manner that allows religious belief in God, revelation, priesthood power, miracles, etc. to exist without seeking to either prove or disprove such religious claims. Religious belief is also not required, and the reader need not believe in Joseph Smith as prophet and ecclesiastical restorer, God as a real entity that can directly intervene in human lives, or in direct revelation from God as such a separate entity. The goal is to provide an understanding of the *Book of Mormon* as revealed and revealing scripture that is accessible and acceptable for both believer and non-believer.

Paul Ricœur calls such an approach “interconfessional, interreligious hospitality, comparable to the linguistic hospitality that presides over the work of translating one tongue into another.”⁴⁷ Hospitality is admittedly difficult and requires engagement with the *tremendum*. Derrida explains:

Hospitality is not merely receiving that which we are able to receive [...] Welcoming beyond my capacity to welcome means receiving precisely when I cannot receive, when the coming of the other overwhelms me, seems bigger than my house, and I can’t know beforehand if he or she will behave well.⁴⁸

Hospitality is always a risk and a leap of faith into the disruptive and potentially dangerous foreign. To be hospitable to something foreign, to a different order, is to put my own order at risk. I do not yet know whether my order can cope with this hospitality. The guest who bursts forth ‘overwhelms’ me and my order. For one to be a true host, one must be willing to allow the *tremendum*. Perhaps this is the lesson of the story of the nativity. Those who turned away Mary and Joseph were not willing to engage in such dangerous and perhaps reckless hospitality. As a result of this, they were denied the privilege and blessing of hosting their Messiah. Achieving this desired ecumenical traction requires many interpretive and analytic

⁴⁷Ricœur, “Experience and Language,” 132.

⁴⁸Derrida, “Certain Impossible,” 451.

choices on my part, and the rest of the chapter lays out the theoretical and terminological threads used in this study.

3.4 Questioning the Concept of 'Literature'

Speaking for German Medieval philology (which is a study of 'now foreign texts'), Strohschneider calls for approach to that no longer takes them "as given" (*als selbstverständlich*).⁴⁹ Pre-modern texts (especially religious ones) are complex and are part of a now foreign discourse, with its own rules and functioning. The discourse must be understood on its own terms—according to its proprietary rules and assumptions—if asymmetrical negation is to be avoided.

In order to grasp the conventions and 'rules' of the *Book of Mormon* and to interrogate the object itself, I follow Strohschneider and turn to the particular pragmatic approach proposed by Fotis Jannidis, Gerhard Lauer, and Simone Winko.⁵⁰ They seek to break from defining literature using only "specific characteristics of the text or purely semiotic operations."^{51a} Instead, they focus on the pragmatic element of texts and turn their attention to "functions, situative contexts, or practices in which the texts are used."^{51b} The intent is to understand "the assumptions about author, text, and reader on which [the texts] are based."^{51c}

Jannidis, Lauer, and Winko propose examining texts from two perspectives (*intrinsic* and *extrinsic*) in order to understand these underlying assumptions. The intrinsic covers two functions: poeticity (*Poetizität*) and fictionality (*Fiktionalität*). These exist irrespective of the interpreting subject. The extrinsic principally covers two functions: the individual (*indi-*

⁴⁹Strohschneider, "Über mediävistische," 74.

⁵⁰Fotis Jannidis, Gerhard Lauer, and Simone Winko, "Radikal historisiert: Für einen pragmatischen Literaturbegriff," in *Grenzen der Literatur: Zu Begriff und Phänomen des Literarischen*, eds. Simone Winko, Fotis Jannidis and Gerhard Lauer (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009).

⁵¹Jannidis, Lauer, and Winko, "Radikal historisiert," a 11, my translation: spezifische Textigenschaften oder rein semiotische Operationen; b 11: Funktionen, situative Kontexte oder Praktiken, in denen die Texte verwendet werden; c 11: die ihnen zugrunde liegenden Annahmen über Autor, Text und Leser; d 26; e 17: besondere sprachliche Merkmale literarischer Texte.

viduelle Funktionen) and the collective-social functions (*kollektiv-soziale Funktionen*). In addition to the two intrinsic and two extrinsic functions, they also include a fifth and liminal category, which is part of both the text itself and its use: the aesthetic-formal functions (*ästhetisch-formale Funktionen*). These cover *how* the text as a whole produces signification, but also the formal basis for this functioning. Thus while an interpreting subject is expected to perceive the text as a system, this system is based on a stable text. Hence the functions exist both intrinsically on the level of the object and extrinsically on the level of the reader. Below, I examine each function in turn.

The *extrinsic functions* are the broadest category, and they deal with the role, status, and potential of literature and other texts in the world outside of these texts. The role beyond the individual includes ritual, religion, ideology, collective memory, and social distinction.^{51d} These functions are gathered under the header of *collective-social* functions, which are especially defining for scripture as part of its tradition and scripturalization. Scripture is, as stated in the introduction, a pragmatic category, where a text receives this designation by being treated as such. Common collective-social questions that scripture must endure as part of its continued transmission are: What is the place of scripture in a secular world? Is belief, even fundamentalist belief, permitted? Which translations should be read? Should scripture be rewritten in a modern vernacular in order to be more accessible to a wider audience? In the context of this study, these functions are conceptualized through to my post-secular approach.

The intrinsic function of *poeticity* is defined as “the special linguistic traits of literary texts.”^{51e} This includes metaphor, parallelism, meter, and other elements which exist anterior to and independent of interpretation and which have a stable existence within the text. Whatever the interpretation of a metaphor, it can be formally identified *as* metaphor. The type of narrator can be identified without assigning meaning to this structural characteristic. Poeticity (which could also be called ‘literariness’) also includes what would conventionally be called the ‘beauty’ of a text or evidence of deliberate craftsmanship on the part of the author. Poetry with a syllabic rhythm and rhyming is quite different from the neutral style of a news report.

The benefit of the term *poeticity* is that it is not a value-judgment. It exists on the level of the object as formal structures. The simple existence of these features does not make a text inherently ‘better.’ Langer compares formal features and poetic ‘beautification’ to sugar. These features “could no more be inserted into a poem for their own sakes than an extra pound of sugar could happily be poured into a cake batter just because sugar is so nice.”⁵² *Poeticity* is thus a category of structural classification. I use the term ‘poeticity’ to cover all formal elements of language, in their existence and absence. A lack of syntactic complexity, for example, is nonetheless a characteristic of the text. The use or avoidance of such elements provides the basic form of the text. In the same manner as there is no contextless text, there is no text without form.

3.4.1 (Non) Time and Space: The Utopic Method

The most controversial aspect of the *Book of Mormon* falls under what Jannidis, Lauer, and Winko call the function of *fictionality*. They define the term as “a certain mode of representation in relation to extra-textual reality, or rather a mode of communication which is based on this mode of representation.”⁵³ The question of fictionality is therefore not binary. Different texts and different types of texts employ different relationships to extra-textual reality. Are science-fiction and historical fiction equally ‘fictitious’? A given text needs to be examined as to the relationship between extra-textual reality it employs and which it asks its readers to consider.

In looking at the *Book of Mormon*’s relationship to extra-textual reality, one must consider what Hans-Jürgen Krysmanski calls the *utopic method*.⁵⁴ Andrew Bolton calls the *Book of Mormon* a “utopian vision” and an example of “utopian imagination” which “can help us envision

⁵²Langer, *Feeling and Form*, 284.

⁵³Jannidis, Lauer and Winko, “Radikal historisiert,” 17, my translation: eine bestimmte Darstellungsweise in Relation zur außertextuellen Wirklichkeit bzw. ein auf dieser Darstellungsweise basierender Modus der Kommunikation.

⁵⁴Hans-Jürgen Krysmanski, “Die Eigenart des utopischen Romans,” in *Der utopische Roman*, eds. Rudolf Villgrader and Friedrich Krey (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973).

new, more just, less violent, and sustainable ways of living.”⁵⁵ The utopic method is most clearly seen in how the *Book of Mormon* plays with its geography and chronology and how it draws the reader into its story world. Krysmsanski emphasizes the etymological meaning of the term *utopia*. Dorothy Lane explains that *utopia* “means not ‘paradise’ but ‘no place.’”⁵⁶ It is the non-place (*Nichtort*).⁵⁷ A utopic narrative is not primarily defined by its fictitious nature (in the common sense of the word), given that a vision of a perfect world needs to be fictional since no such place exists.

Instead, a utopic text uses *techniques* of fiction in order to serve a larger philosophical and social-critical function. Utopic narratives use “a series of ‘tricks’ which can never fully hide the playfulness of the combinations.” These tricks ensure that “the literary utopia gives the appearance of reality.”⁵⁸ A utopic narrative seeks to create a world in miniature, or at least a slice of world small enough to be examined over the course of a few hundred pages. Hans Freyer argues that a utopic narrative “wants to be a closed, coherent, convincing, and (as it were) livable world, an order whose structure exists in equilibrium, an image which, even though it is not real, nevertheless could be real.”⁵⁹ The world of the utopia must feel like the reader can simply slip right into it, since it exists in an equilibrium which seems to exist outside and independent of the reader’s imagination.

Believers in the *Book of Mormon* will also no doubt take issue with my

⁵⁵ Andrew Bolton, “Utopian Vision and Prophetic Imagination: Reading the Book of Mormon in a Nineteenth-century Context,” in *Restoration Studies: Theology And Culture In The Community Of Christ And The Latter Day Saint Movement* vol. X, ed. Peter A. Judd (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 2009): 151.

⁵⁶ Dorothy F. Lane, *The Island as a Site of Resistance: Examination of Caribbean and New Zealand Texts* (New York: Lang, 1995), 10.

⁵⁷ Rita Falke, “Utopie - Logische Konstruktion und Chimère: Ein Begriffswandel,” in Villgrader; Krey, *Der utopische Roman*, 1.

⁵⁸ Krysmsanski, “Eigenart des utopischen Romans,” 274, my translation: ... die literarische Utopie gibt sich den Anschein der Wirklichkeit durch eine Reihe von ‚Tricks‘, die die Spielhaftigkeit der Kombinationen nie ganz verbergen können.

⁵⁹ Hans Freyer, *Die politische Insel: Eine Geschichte der Utopien von Platon bis zur Gegenwart*, 2nd ed. (Vienna, Leipzig: Karolinger, 2000 [1936]), 22–23, my translation: [Die Utopie] will eine geschloßne (*sic*), in sich stimmige, überzeugende und sozusagen lebensfähige Welt sein, eine Ordnung, die ihren Bau im Gleichgewicht hat, ein Gebilde, das, wenn es schon nicht wirklich ist, doch wirklich sein könnte.

reference to *wenn es schon nicht wirklich*, which I translate as *even though it is not real*. Freyer is referring to unequivocally fictitious (i.e. invented, constatively *false*, not real) narratives. Whatever one's thoughts and feelings concerning the historicity of the *Book of Mormon* narrative, one must admit that (historical or not), the *Book of Mormon* succeeds in painting the picture of a possibly real world. The intense discussions concerning the plausibility of the Lehite and Jaredite world(s) show how successful the text is in achieving this believability.

It is therefore a testament to the *Book of Mormon*'s narrative complexity that so many people can easily imagine the Lehite and Jaredite worlds and the many characters found therein to be real. Krysmanski calls such believability the "immanent coherence" (*immanente Schlüssigkeit*) of the presented world.⁶⁰ The question of whether the world or its inhabitants were 'actually' real is not important in the context of this study. When the utopic author is successful in his or her presentation of this convincing and coherent world (what Freyer refers to as the utopia being "made concrete using literary art"), "we have before us a land and a people which could actually exist."⁶¹ The *Book of Mormon* presents a land, a people, and a time cut off from the land and time of the reader. And yet the text is so tantalizingly close to the real that it surely must have been. It is not hard to imagine that Nephi₁ and Mormon₂ were real people. This imagination (or *mind reading*) is the basis of the last quarter of my study.

These literary 'tricks' of utopia narratives are employed as tools rather than as ends. Krysmanski sees utopic narratives in general and utopic novels in particular, such as Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, as "a manifestation of an instrumental form of thought."^{62a} A utopic narrative creates

⁶⁰Krysmanski, "Eigenart des utopischen Romans," 274.

⁶¹Freyer, *Die politische Insel*, 122, my translation: ...das Ganze [wird] mit literarischer Kunst so anschaulich gemacht, daß wir im guten Fall ein Land und ein Volk vor uns haben, das es wirklich geben könnte.

⁶²Krysmanski, "Eigenart des utopischen Romans," a 271, my translation: die Erscheinungsform einer instrumentalen Denkform; b 271; c 279: ...weil er etwas zu sagen hat, daß er nur in Form einer Utopie denken und sagen kann; d 277–78: [D]en konkreten Utopien liegt [...] eine Methode zugrunde, die Vorstellungen aus einer gemeinsamen Vorstellungswelt herausnimmt, sie in einem Denkmodell manipuliert, erweitert und bewahrt, und von dieser Position einer ‚separate reality‘ aus auf die gemeinsamen Vorstellungen in und

a fictional world not for the pleasurable reading of a complex world with complex characters, but as a means to an extra-textual function. This function requires what he calls “literary concretization (*literarische Konkretisierung*).”^{62b} The author of a utopic ‘fiction’ is not simply an escapist who spins a tale of fancy to enter a better world. The author writes “because he has something to say which he can only think and say in the form of a utopia.”^{62c} The utopic narrative is the philosophical and critical instrument through which the author’s thoughts are to be communicated.

Krysmanski defines the general *utopic method* as a method “that takes notions from out of a collective noetic world, manipulates, expands, and preserves them in a thought model, and from this position of a ‘separate reality’, acts on and controls the collective notions in and of reality.”^{62d} A well-constructed utopia draws on elements, motifs, concepts, etc. familiar to the reader. The utopic novel is “the literary manifestation of the playful synopsis of individual, society, and history in a variable, pictorial thought model of spatial-temporal autonomy which enables the exploration of possibilities disengaged from social reality, and yet with reference to it.”^{62e}

The most obvious way the *Book of Mormon* achieves this disengaged reference is through its placement on an *isle of the sea*. Islands play an important role in literature. Freyer argues that the first, “very formal characteristic” of all utopic narratives is that they “lie on an island in the middle of the great ocean” and that they “detach themselves from the continent of the historical cultures. No sound from the rest of the world effectively penetrates its realm.”⁶³ Literary islands are “a locus with its own distinct identity.”⁶⁴

Jürgen Kramer calls literary islands “a kind of laboratory environment

von der Wirklichkeit kontrollierend einwirkt; e 278: ... ist die literarische Erscheinungsform der spielerischen Zusammenschau von Mensch, Gesellschaft und Geschichte in einem variablen, bildhaften Denkmodell von raum-zeitlicher Autonomie, dass die Erkundung von Möglichkeiten losgelöst von der sozialen Wirklichkeit, jedoch mit Bezug auf sie, erlaubt.

⁶³Freyer, *Die politische Insel*, 25, my translation: Jedenfalls haben wir damit ein erstes gemeinsames, wenn auch sehr formales Merkmal gefunden. Alle Utopien liegen auf einer Insel mitten im großen Ozean oder sie sind sonst durch Natur oder Gesetz „geschlossene Handelsstaaten“. Sie sind unzugänglich, es sei denn, einer verschreibe sich ihnen ganz [...] Kein Laut der übrigen Welt dringt wirksam in ihren Bereich.

⁶⁴Lane, *Island*, 10.

where certain elements of social organisation can be analysed, where new catalysts can be found, and where processes of societal transformation can be tested.”⁶⁵ This echoes what Krysmanski says of the utopic ‘state novel’ (such as Plato’s *Republic*). Such texts are “an experimental apparatus with which possibility for action is practiced.”⁶⁶ On these islands and within these societal thought experiments, human nature and social bonds can be left to ‘play out’ without affecting (and potentially damaging or *infecting*) the outside world.

Another important component of the utopic method has to do with chronology. The chronological equivalent of the geographical isolation of the *utopia* is the *uchronia*. The term was coined by Charles Renouvier in his 1876 novel *Uchronie*.⁶⁷ Since a *u-topia* is a lack of *topos*, a *u-chronia* is the lack of *chronos*. Hence, the *uchronia* is *no time*, a *non-time*, a period unmoored from real, historical time. Literature employs a wide variety of techniques to establish a uchronic chronology, the most common of which is *once upon a time*. The phrase implies that the story is in some manner part of our own universe and reality. They are only lost to the fog of history and myth. Krysmanski argues that most utopic novels are set in the future for much the same reason. This ‘future’ setting (he explicitly places the term in single quotes) “is thanks to the thorough exploration of our globe, which no longer has space for ‘political islands.’” The ‘future’ is “less an extension of the present into a real tomorrow. It is rather a means which enables a displacement from reality.”⁶⁸ The *Book of Mormon* similarly uses its chronology to both place and displace itself in extra-textual reality.

⁶⁵ Jürgen Kramer, “Islands,” in *Insular Mentalities: Mental Maps of Britain*, eds. Jürgen Kamm and Gerold Sedlmayr (Passau: Verlag Karl Stutz, 2007), 18.

⁶⁶ Krysmanski, “Eigenart des utopischen Romans,” 273, my translation: ein Experimentalapparat, an dem Handlungsmöglichkeit erprobt wird.

⁶⁷ Charles Renouvier, *Uchronie: L’Utopie dans l’histoire (1876)*, ed. Hubert Grenier (Paris: Fayard, 1988).

⁶⁸ Krysmanski, “Eigenart des utopischen Romans,” 278, my translation: ... ihre ‚Zukunft‘ ist weniger eine Verlängerung der Gegenwart in ein reales morgen als vielmehr eines der Mittel, die eine Verschiebung aus der Wirklichkeit ermöglichen.

3.4.2 The Individual and Aesthetic Functions

Returning to Jannidis, Lauer, and Winko, the individual functions of their pragmatic concept of literature include “functions which are assigned to reading and composing of literature in reference to the individual.”^{69a} I focus on the functions assigned to the *reading* of the text. The issue of production has been put aside here, as it requires considerations with regard to a delivered text (section 3.5) that diverge from the literary approach of my study. Using the pragmatic approach proposed by Jannis, Lauer, and Winko, I do not examine the text in light of contemporary or even historical reading practices. Instead, I interrogate the text and its structures as to the expected reading practice(s) and the results promised to the reader.

Scriptural texts in particular carry with them implicit or explicit demands and promises. The promised results of texts in general are not in relation “to any empirically accessible effect”, but are part of the individual reader *function*, which “instead refers to the *potential* of bringing about an empirically demonstrable effect.”^{69b} The promised results are functions and *potentialities* built into the text and inherent in the expected reading practice and therefore the individual function. They are offers to the reader which can be accepted or rejected. The implicit (and at times explicit) contract is that if readers engage with the text in the expected manner (fulfill the *felicity conditions*), they can hope for a certain effect.

The text is thus a focal site for *possible* results. The transaction between text and reader takes on the form of collaboration between reader and text. The expected function demanded by the text should here be clearly differentiated from the individual function applied by a social group. When the believer asks the non-believer to adopt certain premises before reading scripture, this is an individual reader function applied externally from the realm of the collective-social rather than requested internally by the text. I only consider the demands as articulated in the text itself.

⁶⁹ Jannidis, Lauer, and Winko, “Radikal historisiert,” a 22, my translation: Funktionen, die dem Lesen oder auch Verfassen von Literatur mit Bezug auf den Einzelnen zugeschrieben werden; b 22: Im Unterschied zum Begriff der Wirkung bezieht sich ›Funktion‹ auf keinen empirisch erhebbaren Effekt, sondern auf das Potential, eine empirisch nachweisbare Wirkung hervorzubringen...

3.4.3 Playing the Text: The Individual Functions

Roland Barthes speaks of the reader *playing* “with the Text in the musical sense of the term.”^{70a} Rather than only consuming a passive object, the reader actively engages with the work. At the same time, the reader is not simply the passive receptacle into which an author pours content through the medium of text. Musical notes on a page, in their fixed structure, are only the *potentiality* for music. They require collaboration on the part of the musicians. Likewise, the text is only marks on a page which need to be ‘played’ by the reader in order to unfold their power. One of the reasons why Barthes declares the death of the author is that authors only “*give to do*.”^{70b} The text is never complete and is never exhausted. The text is an instruction manual rather than a finite consumable.

The reader becomes the interpreter of the text, in all of the term’s polysemy. Günther Müller also draws on the image of music for his explanation of a text’s unfolding: “[E]very reading of a composition, every narrating speaking of a story is thus an interpretation.”⁷¹ Müller’s *interpretation* must here be understood in the polysemy of the French *l’interprète*. The *interprète* is both the person who translates one language into another and the person who performs a musical piece. In the same manner as the art interpreter brings the dead marks to life, the reader breathes life into inert text and gives it a living soul (cf. Genesis 2:7).

Without the interpretation through the reader, the text is only dead matter. Müller calls this dead state the text’s “atemporal, non-present incorporeality.”^{72a} In religious imagery, the word of God had to be made *flesh* in order to dwell among us. It not only required materiality, but corporeality. A narrative has not unfolded itself unless it is given body by readers, either

⁷⁰Roland Barthes, “Musica Practica,” in *Image, Music, Text*, a 154; b 154, see also Roland Barthes, “From Work to Text,” in *Image, Music, Text*, 162.

⁷¹Günther Müller, “Erzählzeit und erzählte Zeit,” in *Morphologische Poetik: Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968), 275, my translation: [J]edes Lesen einer Dichtung, jedes erzählende Sprechen eines Erzählwerks [ist] also...ein Interpretieren.

⁷²Müller, “Erzählzeit und erzählte Zeit,” a 275, my translation: von zeitlicher, ungewöhnlicher Körperlosigkeit; b 276: zur Verleiblichung des Werks fast wie ein Blutspender beiträgt.

in their minds or through their voices. Müller's reader enacts the "embodiment of the work" and injects his or her being into the text, "almost like a blood donor."^{72b}

The reader requires instructions for how to play (with) the text. In the context of scripture in particular, the 'right' reading practice is a central concern. Mireille Schnyder (who, like Strohschneider, focuses her analysis on German Medieval writings) examines the types of reading practice expected of explicitly religious texts, in contrast to what we would anachronistically call worldly 'literature.' Understanding how to read medieval religious texts is fairly straightforward, since many written extra-textual manuals exist. These texts contain "explicit reading prescription and reading instructions."^{73a} Schnyder mentions the reading manuals by Augustine, the Benedictine Rules, and Hugo of St. Victor.^{73b} In the Early Modern Period, Matthias Flacius Illyricus, a colleague of Martin Luther, wrote an entire treatise on how to (correctly) interpret scripture.⁷⁴ All of these manuals are very clear as to *which* texts to read, *how* to read them, and *what* one should gain by such reading.

The difficulty Schnyder finds for non-religious 'literature' such as Minnesang and courtly poetry is that these usually do not contain such explicit didactic instructions. Instead, the reading concepts demanded by and required for these texts are only "implicitly graspable" (*implizit fassbar*) from within the texts. Schnyder proposes an analysis of passages "where reading scenes are thematized, where the reading process is itself is brought up, where the audience (also the reading audience) is established, or where the narrator brings himself into play."^{75a} In other words, self-reflexive pas-

⁷³Mireille Schnyder, "Kunst der Vergegenwärtigung und gefährliche Präsenz: Zum Verhältnis von religiösen und weltlichen Lesekonzepten," in *Literarische und religiöse Kommunikation in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit: DFG-Symposium 2006*, ed. Peter Strohschneider (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), a 431, my translation: explizit[e] Lesevorschriften und Lektüeranleitungen; b 430.

⁷⁴For an English translation of an excerpt from his *Clavis Scripturae Sacrae* (1567), see Matthias Flacius Illyricus, *How to Understand the Sacred Scriptures: From Clavis Scripturae Sacrae*, trans. Wade R. Johnston (Saginaw, MI.: Magdeburg Press, 2011).

⁷⁵Schnyder, "Kunst der Vergegenwärtigung;" a 431, my translation: ... wo Lektüreszenen thematisiert werden, da, wo der Lesevorgang selber zur Sprache gebracht wird, da, wo das Publikum (auch als Lesepublikum) konstituiert wird, oder da, wo der Erzähler selber sich

sages are examined as to how the texts create and posit their own expected reading practices from within themselves.

Schnyder gives the example of the thirteenth-century epic *Diu Crône* by Heinrichs von dem Türlin, which uses an authorial narrator who has read the story in the original French (*Als ich ez en franzois hân gelesen*) and is presenting the reader a German translation. Schnyder uses a word play on the German distinction between reading quietly (*lesen*) and reading aloud to others (*vorlesen*, lit. in-front reading) and shifts the meaning of the spatial prefix of *vor-lesen* to its temporal meaning. The narrator is a reader of the narrative who has read *before* the reader arrives at a later time. The reader can only access the narrative through the intermediary and example of the pre-reader, i.e. the narrator. The “secondary recipient” (*sekundärer Rezipient*) (i.e. the reader) therefore “imitates the pre-reader” (*den Vor-Leser nachahmt*).^{75b}

Such Medieval “worldly” (*weltlich*) texts do not rely on extra-textual instructions. The “ritualizing, regulating, and institutionalizing of the text” (i.e. their collective-social and individual functions) “are brought into the text itself.” Since these texts “want to establish and secure extra-textual mechanisms of reading guidance and conception immanently in the text, they must force these [mechanisms].”^{75c} The ability of these texts to model their expected reading practice within themselves causes them to become independent of the wider extra-textual realm. For Schnyder, this “independence from the world” is one of the central characteristics of the “worldly literary” as opposed to religious text.

This independence means that a worldly text “establishes its own quasi-sacred reception space.”^{75d} The *Book of Mormon* is interesting in that it is an explicitly religious text that seeks to establish not only a *quasi*-religious but a fully religious reception space alongside the Bible. And yet the *Book*

als Leser ins Spiel bringt; **b** 431; **c** 451–52: ...beim weltlichen Text in ihm selber enthalten. Damit wird die Ritualisierung, Regulierung und Institutionalisierung des Textes in den Text selber hereingeholt. Das heißt aber auch, dass diese Texte, grade weil sie außertextuelle Mechanismen der Lektüreleitung und Lesekonzeption textimmanent konstituieren und sichern wollen, diese forcieren müssen; **d** 452: Der weltliche literarische Text ist damit grade der von der Welt unabhängige Text, der sich seinen quasi-sakralen Rezeptionsraum selber konstituiert.

of *Mormon* is not explicitly didactic in its approach for teaching the reader how to read it. The premise of the last quarter of this study is that *Mormon*₂ as narrator and “pre-reader” models affective reading by bringing himself into play in the events. These “reading scenes” allow for the reading instructions to be implicitly grasped from within the text itself.

3.4.4 The Cardiovascular System: The Aesthetic Functions

The reader’s ‘correct’ approach to reading leads to Müller’s image of lending blood and corporeality, and it ‘awakens’ the contents and structure (the *aesthetic functions*) of the text.⁷⁶ In the same way as the reader is not a passive receptacle for the text’s contents, the text is not only a random collection of microforms. The recipient of a blood transfusion has a definite and structured cardiovascular system. The donor’s blood circulates through paths which existed before the transfusion took place. In like manner, the marks on the page form a structured system. While the system is non-operational without the metaphorical blood of the reader, the logistical hierarchy can be charted independent of (re)vitalization. The aesthetic functions become the structural prerequisite for interpretive engagement which the individual function must then execute. The aesthetic functions are the musical score which is given and which the reader function must execute, as one would execute a computer program.

The aesthetic functions cover *how* the text produces signification. While *poeticity* can be identified in isolation, these functions require examining the whole text as an articulated system. All of the text’s components work together in order to provide the system through which the reader’s ‘blood’ may circulate. A text as it presents itself to interpretation is a what Emil Angehrn calls a “network of semantic-textual dependencies” (*Netzwerk semantisch-textueller Dependenzen*).⁷⁷ No element is self-sufficient and each is only able to be interpreted as part of the entire textual network. As in structuralist analysis, only the specific constellation of elements can

⁷⁶Cf. Jannidis, Lauer, and Winko, “Radikal historisiert,” 27.

⁷⁷Emil Angehrn, “Konstellationen und Grenzen des Textes aus philosophisch-hermeneutischer Perspektive,” in *Die Bibel als Text*, eds. Oda Wischmeyer and Stefan Scholz (Tübingen, Basel: A. Francke Verlag, 2008), 256.

yield meaning.

Ricœur speaks of “the long detour through a structural explication of the forms.”⁷⁸ There are no shortcuts to a text’s meaning via individual passages or single elements. The unique characteristics of microstructures (their poeticity) must be placed into a structural whole. Only cataloging the structural elements of poeticity does not yet produce meaning. Poeticity is the *structural prerequisite* for the aesthetic function, and the *aesthetic functions* are the structural prerequisite for signification produced through the individual reader function. We might therefore call these functions the *signifying* function of the text.

3.5 *Überlieferungstext*: Text on Delivery

The aesthetic-formal functions of a text require a finite, defined space within which to be executed. Hasebrink and Strohschneider’s post-secular approach to sacred texts shifts to the concept of ‘text’ as developed by Konrad Ehlich. His conceptualization is developed from the act of the messenger taking a communiqué (whether memorized or written) to another place and person.⁷⁹ The messenger takes the ephemeral spoken word and records it either in his or her mind or by means of a written document.

The message can then travel far beyond the physical range of the human voice and the temporal restriction of the immediate present. This communiqué is then delivered. Ehlich speaks of the *Überlieferungstext*, lit. the across-delivery text. The *Überlieferungstext* becomes the *delivered text*. For the *Book of Mormon*, this means focusing on the text as delivered (i.e. as published and still extant) and not speculating about the one hundred and sixteen missing pages.⁸⁰ They were sent into the world but never reached us today.

⁷⁸Ricœur, “Philosophy and Religious Language,” *The Journal of Religion* 54, no. 1 (1974): 78.

⁷⁹Konrad Ehlich, “Text und sprachliches Handeln: Die Entstehung von Texten aus dem Bedürfnis nach Überlieferung,” in *Schrift und Gedächtnis: Beiträge zur Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation*, eds. Aleida Assmann, Jan Assmann and Christof Hardmeier (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1983), 31.

⁸⁰See p. 26 in this study.

Ehlich's *delivered text* is a speech-act that has been stabilized to such a degree as to be *able* to be 'consumed' in another speech act via transmission. He defines a text as "speech acts which are extracted from the immediate communicative situation and which are saved for a second communicative situation. . . In this notion, texts are thus characterized by their *stability to outlast the communicative situation*."⁸¹ Rather than having to be 'consumed' in the moment, the text can be 'sent-across' to a non-immediate speech act, providing the potential for a later consumption. Whether the trans-*mission* ever becomes a trans-*delivery* does not affect the stabilized nature of the text. Stabilization means that a text is capable of being used repeatedly. Strohschneider calls Ehlich's concept of text *Wiedergebrauchrede*, lit. again-use-speech.⁸²

Since the text has been extracted from its immediate communicative context of sender and immediate receiver, it can be placed into ever new contexts, including ones that were not intended by the author of the initial message. Emil Angehrn describes this as the fact that the text's "message and validity are independent of context and reception." The text "exists in definite form and is unbound by time."⁸³ The potential for transmission and recontextualization is the defining characteristic of Ehlich's *delivered text*.

Ehlich's text no longer has a correct audience, and a transmitted text cannot be guaranteed to only be received by the intended recipients. For example, a military missive may be intercepted and fall into the hands of the enemy. The reader or hearer of Ehlich's text does not enjoy the privilege of forming part of the sender's intended audience. Referring to written texts in general, Ricœur speaks of the "unprivileged addressee of the discourse."⁸⁴

⁸¹Ehlich, "Text," 32, my translation: ...aus ihrer primären unmittelbaren Sprechsituation herausgelöste Sprechhandlung, die für eine zweite Sprechsituation gespeichert wird. . . Nach dieser Auffassung sind Texte also durch ihre *sprechsituationsüberdauernde Stabilität* gekennzeichnet (emphasis in original).

⁸²Strohschneider, *Höfische Textgeschichten*, 15.

⁸³Angehrn, "Konstellationen," 254, my translation: idealiter kontext- und rezeptionsunabhängig, in definitiver Fassung vorliegend, zeitungebunden in seiner Aussage und Gültigkeit in definitiver Fassung vorliegend, zeitungebunden.

⁸⁴Paul Ricœur, "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text," *New Literary History* 5, no. 1 (1973): 97.

Rather than the birth right of the intended recipient of a communiqué, the unprivileged reader intercepts the text. Since the text is stable, it can be continually intercepted, and the sender might even *want* this to occur. The author of a novel hopes that as many unprivileged as possible stumble upon, purchase, and read the text. For the purposes of this study, the delivered text is an *utterance that has been stabilized in a manner that it can be extracted from its immediate communicative situation and can become part of new communicative contexts*.

Examining a delivered text also entails studying a finite temporally and spatially stable object. For a text to be sufficiently stable for interception, the text must contain definite form and dimensions which exist independent of reception. A text is then what Mechthild Habermann refers to as a “closed unit which requires interpretation”⁸⁵ Any circumscription of meaning provided by immediate contextualization of the original utterance or inscription has been lost, and the unit’s possibilities (while still bound within the constraints of the work) are greatly expanded. The unit can no longer be said to ‘mean’ any one thing. Since communication and its accompanying meaning always require a specific context, the infinite permutations of recontextualization and re-recontextualization enable an unlimited number of possible meanings. However, each individual interpretation is still bound within the text and the specific parameters of the new speech act.

The concept of delivered text also brackets off issues examined in historical and textual criticism, which seek to answer questions surrounding provenance. These types of inquiries are grouped under the heading of “legitimacy of delivery” (*Überlieferungslegitimität*).⁸⁶ In the case of accretion scripture as old as the *Mahābhārata*, which was transmitted orally for much of its history, the issue of core text and later additions by priests and story tellers is one aspect of historical criticism. Rather than trying to sift through millennia of accretion, a delivery textual approach gives these additions a place within the final work and reads them as part of the whole, as given today. Annette Mangels speaks of the *Mahābhārata* text “as it

⁸⁵Mechthild Habermann, “Was ist ein ‘Supertext’? Eine textlinguistische Definition der Bibel,” in Wischmeyer; Scholz, *Die Bibel als Text*, 67, my translation: eine geschlossene Einheit, die der Auslegung bedarf.

⁸⁶Ehlich, “Text,” 39.

presents itself for reception.” This text is “taken seriously” and the “interpolations are not primarily demoted to insertions, but are understood as expansions included with specific intentions.”^{87a}

Historical accretions are appreciated for what they are and what they represent. Appreciation “makes the deletion of the respective passages with an analytic quill not appear worthwhile [or sensible] (*nicht sinnvoll*).”^{87b} The literary scholar should therefore study the delivered text ‘as is’—as it exists today in a specific form—including the exuberant (but nonetheless well-intentioned) additions that the text has accreted over the centuries, if not millennia. Conversely, a literary study cannot consider missing content, such as is the case of the one hundred and sixteen *Book of Mormon* manuscript pages. The explicit lack can play a role as a signal to the reader on how the volume should be read on the whole (the canon of scripture is incomplete, and you only have this much for now), but missing pages cannot play the role of positive, expressible content that modifies the meaning of a given passage.

3.5.1 Of Peri and Text: Internal Boundaries

The spatial limits of the given textual structures then need to be defined, which I do with the term *paratext*, taken from Genette. He states that “text is rarely presented in an unadorned state, unreinforced and unaccompanied by a certain number of verbal or other productions,” which he calls *paratext*.^{88a} These accoutrements are the outer-most level of interpretation. The French title of Genette’s work is *Seuil* (threshold). The subtitle of the English translation is *Thresholds of Interpretation*.

Before interpretation can begin, the threshold of the paratextual must be passed. Even disregarding paratext entirely is itself a manner of engaging with it and therefore a type of interpretation. *Paratexts* “surround [the text]

⁸⁷Annette Mangels, *Zur Erzähltechnik im Mahābhārata* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 1994), a 148, my translation: Wird das [Mahābhārata] als Text, wie er sich der Rezeption stellt, ernst genommen, d.h. vor allem: werden die Interpolation nicht primär zu Einfügungen degradiert, sondern als mit bestimmten Absichten verbundene Erweiterungen verstanden. . . ; b 148: [lässt] die die Streichung der einschlägigen Stelle mit analytischer Feder nicht sinnvoll erscheinen.

⁸⁸Genette, *Paratexts*, a–b 1, c 344, d 3, e 344, f 4–5

and extend it, precisely in order to *present* it, in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: to make present, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its 'reception' and consumption."^{88b} The way a given interpreter or interpretive discipline treats *paratext* establishes the basis for interpretation. For example, what is *paratextual* in a literary setting (e.g. the date of publication) is *textual* in a legal setting and essential for understanding the document's legal 'meaning.'

Genette distinguishes *paratext* into two spatial categories. The *epitext* includes elements that surround the work in the wider social realm. It includes all elements that are "anywhere outside the book", meaning they "are not materially appended to the text within the same volume" but are part of the social discourse about the text.^{88c} Genette gives the examples of reviews, interviews with the author, and word of mouth recommendations.^{88d} Most works come with a reputation or expectation. A new work by a known author begins with different reading or interpretive expectations. *Epitext* is also not a rigid category and elements can be included in later editions.^{88e} For example, a newspaper review can be taken up in a blurb.

In the scholarly study of texts, the most common form of epitext is secondary literature. The manuals on reading scripture mentioned earlier are another example. Elements that are part of epitext are not physically appended, but they form a threshold to interpretation which has to be crossed. Any choice to include or exclude a given volume or article or even rejecting secondary literature entirely already passes this threshold and affects the virtual form of the text. Choices regarding epitext do not affect the physical volume. However, these choices change the interpretive possibility space of the text.

In moving from the virtual to the physical, the text is never given in a 'raw' form. Genette calls elements that form part of the physical object *peritext*.^{88f} Since I am only considering the physically delineated work, only the *peritext* plays a role in immediate interpretation, since it gives the text its final, circumscribed form. The epitext will play a role mostly in the use of secondary literature. Literary readings (unlike critical work such as that done by Skousen) cannot uncouple the function of the *peritext* from the signification of the text. The *peritext* includes all written elements not part of the core text, for example, copyright or bibliographical information. It

also includes the materiality inherent in a written text, such as the biblical binding of the FE of the *Book of Mormon*.⁸⁹ Even different thicknesses of paper will affect the reception of the text. The filigree paper of many Bible editions, while mostly a practical choice, cannot avoid projecting a particular reading instruction: *This contains fragile and precious things. Handle with care!*

A finished work is usually bound and formatted in some fashion. I include the presence or absence of columns and versification as part of the peritext since this is one of the central differences between *Book of Mormon* editions. In most cases, the reader is not presented with only a string of words. And even if this were the case, as with the Original Manuscript of the *Book of Mormon*, this lack of overt formatting is nonetheless peritext which signals something to the reader. An ‘unadorned’, unedited manuscript of a novel on simple printer paper still has *peritext* through a lack of further processing. A reader who comes across this manuscript knows that this text should not be considered a ‘completed’ work and that the lack of formatting is not part of the intentional ‘message.’

Even when considering only the interplay of *peritext* and *text*, the division between the two is not always straightforward. Genette gives an intentionally broad definition of *text* as “a more or less long sequence of verbal statements that are more or less endowed with significance.”⁹⁰ Taking Genette’s work on narratology⁹¹ as a guide, the working definition for the purposes of my study is the following. *Text* (as opposed to *peritext*) consists of verbal statements that fulfill at least one of three criteria:

1. they are attributable to characters in the story world
2. they contribute to the narration and presentation of the story world
3. they are referenced by statements attributable to characters in the story world

Since peritext will often consist of verbal statements (title, preface, etc.), the definition used here can then be derived *ex negativo*: Peritextual ver-

⁸⁹See p. 21 in this study.

⁹⁰Genette, *Paratexts*, 1.

⁹¹Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980).

bal statements fulfill none of the three criteria. Untangling *peritext* from *text* can thus be an act of interpretation in itself. A foreword by someone other than the author is usually *epitext* written on behest of the author or the publisher and included in the *peritext* of the published work. Such signed forewords make the division between *peritext* and *text* clear and allow the readers to add this distinction in their interpretation. A foreword may also be invented by the author and included for effect, as framing for the narrative, making it textual.

There might also be *epi*-textual indications on the part of the author (such as interviews or letters) as to how he or she thinks these elements should be read (whether as *text* or *peritext*). This distinction is important in the context of this study, since Joseph Smith claimed that the title page of the *Book of Mormon* is specifically *text*, meaning it is attributable to a character in the story world:

The title page of the Book of Mormon is a literal translation, taken from the very last leaf, on the left hand side of the collection or book of plates [...] [S]aid title page is not by any means a modern composition, either of mine, or any other man who has lived or does live in this generation.⁹²

I do not consider this epitextual claim in my interpretation. I only include the finite delivered text of the first published volume to make the determination of whether a passage is peritext or whether it is part of the text itself. This includes putting aside questions of whether Joseph Smith, the scribe-author, chose the formatting, or whether it was added by the typesetter. In chapter 6, I argue that the title page is, in fact, text and not peritext.⁹³

These interpretive issues are subsumed in my choice of edition. Examining only the delivered text makes it possible to not require engaging in what Genette calls an “inspection to verify.”⁹⁴ The peritext and its implicit

⁹²B. H. Roberts, ed., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints* vol. 1 (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902), 71; also quoted in G. Hardy, *The Book of Mormon*, 1 n1; G. Hardy, *Reader's Edition*, 1 n1.

⁹³See pp. 189f.

⁹⁴Genette, *Paratexts*, 40.

and explicit claims are taken at face value. The text need not be second-guessed and the production history of the text need not be tracked down as to who actually put pen to paper (or engraving tool to gold) or decided on a given peritextual element. The epitext is pushed into the background in favor of peritextual and textual criticism of the delivered text.

The coherence of the aesthetic, signifying function in the delivered text can be summarized as the text's implied author. Rather than the real man or woman behind the text, the implied author is "the implicit image of an author in the text, taken to be standing behind the scenes and to be responsible for its design and for the values and cultural norms it adheres to."⁹⁵ The implied author is the organizing principle tying the entire together and founding its coherence as a stable unit. Wayne Booth, who coined the term, describes the implied author as the instance which "chooses, consciously or unconsciously, what we read."^{96a}

The implied author is the sum of the text's articulated contingency (i.e. the author's and editor's choices) as it now exists. Other choices and articulations could have been made and could be made in the future, such as in later editions. However, a given interpretation must work with a peritextually delineated delivered text. This distinction is important, since it allows Booth to differentiate between the sincerity of the text and the supposed or real insincerity of a historical author. The text is not held liable for fraud committed by its producer. The *Book of Mormon* as text and narrative is not responsible for any supposed or real fraudulent intent on the part of Joseph Smith. The interpreter of a text only uses the work as "evidence for the only kind of sincerity that concerns us: Is the implied author in harmony with himself."^{96b}

The work in its internal aesthetic function is all that has to interest us. In literary analysis, a text can be sincere irrespective of the insincerity of the real author. As Booth puts it: "For all we know, the only sincere moments of [the author's] life may have been lived as he wrote his novel."^{96c} The text should not be condemned for the sins of its father or mother. For

⁹⁵Gerald Prince, *A Dictionary of Narratology*, rev. ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 42.

⁹⁶Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed. (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1983), a 74, b–c 75.

all we know, the real author or scriptor truly did act sincerely during the production of the text and any insincerity came later. At the same time, the delivered text is not automatically granted the right to truth. Instead, the only down-payment required on the part of the reader or analyst is the initial assumption of sincerity on the part of the text.

3.6 Narratology

The final group of Western literary theory concerns the narratological structure of the *Book of Mormon*. For this we must begin with the narrators themselves. As Hardy argues, the “narrators are a natural focus for making sense of the book as a whole.”⁹⁷ The most important and obvious narrators are Nephi₁, Mormon₂, and Moroni₂. There are also approximately a dozen other narrators shifting throughout the entire narrative. Untangling this thicket requires precise terminology. This is taken from Genette’s work *Narrative Discourse*.

3.6.1 Narration Speed

The most important structural characteristic of any narrative is what is told and in how much detail. The span of time covered over the course of a narrative is the narrative’s *story time*.⁹⁸ The narrative’s *discourse time* is the number of pages over which the span of time is presented.⁹⁹ Günther Müller, who coined the German terms on which these are based (*erzählte Zeit* and *Erzählzeit*, respectively), describes their relationship as nothing less than the “forming hand of the poet” which must “select, leave out, and order.”¹⁰⁰

From all possible events which *could* be narrated, a given narrative must select *some* of them and decide in which order and with what level of detail to tell them. The *story time* is time as measured with a clock or with

⁹⁷G. Hardy, *Understanding*, 11.

⁹⁸Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 33; Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 94.

⁹⁹Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 33; Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 21.

¹⁰⁰Müller, *Morphologische Poetik*, 273, my translation: die gestaltende Hand des Dichters[, die] auszuwählen, auszuscheiden und zu ordnen hat.

a calendar. *Discourse time* can be measured with the number of printed pages over which the narrative or a given episode is told. The relationship between these two concepts falls under the header *narrative speed*.¹⁰¹

Genette's four basic narrative speeds are, from fastest to slowest: *ellipsis*, *scene*, *summary*, and *pause*.¹⁰² An *ellipsis* is a period of time which passes without being narrated (receives no discourse time), such as when a narrative jumps forward in time with no mention of the events of the intervening years. The next category is the scene, by far the most common. The text covers a period of time in some amount of detail. This is in contrast to the *summary* where very little discourse time is devoted to the events of a long(er) period of time. As with all analytic tools, the exact cut off between a scene and a summary will ultimately depend on the conventions of a given narrative.

The slowest of the four narrative speeds is the narrative *pause*. Some amount of discourse time is used, and yet the events of the story do not progress (there is no movement in story time). A pause will most commonly occur during *commentary* or *description* on the part of the narrator.¹⁰³ Mormon₂'s frequent commentary is usually introduced with the phrase *and thus we see*. A description is found, for example, in his explanation of geography and the lines of control between Nephites and Lamanites in Alma XIII (FE, 287–88).

3.6.2 Placing the Narrators in their World

This brings us to the position of narrators within the world they are narrating. None of the narrator voices in the *Book of Mormon* are aloof or completely detached from events, much less ontologically distinct from the events they are presenting. As Hardy puts it: “[T]he Book of Mormon represents itself as a history that is told and edited by participants.”¹⁰⁴ They are all active participants within the world of the narrative, the *diegesis*,

¹⁰¹Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 87–88; Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 91.

¹⁰²Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 93–95; cf. Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 25, 85, 95–96, 71, respectively.

¹⁰³Cf. Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 14, 19, respectively.

¹⁰⁴G. Hardy, *Understanding*, 11.

or “[t]he (fictional) world in which the situations and events narrated occur.”¹⁰⁵ They are each a *homodiegetic* narrator (= same), a narrator who is “present as a character in the story he tells.” This is opposed to disembodied and neutral authorial voices, which Genette calls *heterodiegetic*.¹⁰⁶

All of the *Book of Mormon* narrators are homodiegetic, because all of them “lived” within the chronological and geographical confines of the events they are presenting and because they are all characters who explicitly choose what to present to the reader. They perform narratological *actions*. As Richard Walsh asks concerning narrators: “And what is action but the illustration of character?”¹⁰⁷ By choosing, by acting, they become identifiable characters within the diegesis. Mormon₂’s narration in the book of Mormon is even *autodiegetic*. This is when the narrator is also the star of the narrative.^{108a} Mormon₂ is, in fact, the only narrator with a shift of narratological posture. The shift from homodiegetic to autodiegetic is the effect of what Genette calls *final convergence*, where “the very length of the story gradually lessens the interval separating [the story] from the moment of the narrating.”^{108b} First he tells the story of others, and when the timeline has caught up with him, he narrates his own life.

This brings up the issue of narration levels. All narratives have at least two: the *diegetic* level of the narrative and the *extradiegetic* level of the (main) narrator who is narrating the events, usually after the fact.^{108c} In the *Book of Mormon*, this position is held by Mormon₂. The *Book of Mormon* also has narrators at the *intradiegetic* level. The distinction between the levels defines from where the voices of the narrators speak. The *intradiegetic* level is “inside th[e] first [i.e. main] narrative.”^{108d} Embedded narrators are inside (intra) this narrative world (diegesis), and they are subordinate to the functioning of the *extradiegetic* level. Genette proposes the term *metadiegetic* in order to distinguish this from the main narrative and in order to avoid the term intra-intradiegetic.^{108e} The *intradiegetic* narrator then

¹⁰⁵Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 20.

¹⁰⁶Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 244.

¹⁰⁷Richard Walsh, “Who is the Narrator?” *Poetics Today* 18, no. 4 (1997): 498.

¹⁰⁸Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, a 245, b 221, c 229, d 228, e 228 n41. His usage of the prefix *meta-* means “the transition to the second degree.” Therefore *metanarrative* means a narrative within the narrative.

speaks about the *metadiegesis*. The levels are also a matter of narratological power, and the discourse time granted to the intradiegetic narrator and the discourse's placement in the main narrative is up to the *extradiegetic* narrator. This will become relevant in the section on narratological structure of the battle for Antiparah.¹⁰⁹

The abundance of narrators in a narrative like the *Book of Mormon* also requires frequent transitions between the various levels. Such transitions “can in principle be achieved only by the narrating, the act that consists precisely of introducing into one situation, by means of a discourse, the knowledge of another situation.”^{110a} The narrating voice must (or at least *should*) introduce a narratological transition to the reader. And yet not all transitions between levels are discursively introduced. Non-discursive transitions are, “if not always impossible, at any rate always transgressive.”^{110b} Genette calls such transgressive transitions *metalepsis*.^{110c} Mormon₂ as narrator is frequently involved in such transgressive shifts.¹¹¹

3.7 Conclusion: Literary Theory

This concludes the discussion of the Western literary theory used throughout my study. The function of this chapter was to lay out the broad theoretical approach to interpretation to delineate the parameters of the object of study. The definitions of this chapter's most important terms are summarized below on pages 111–12. Chapter 4 will deal with the specific poetic theory used to grasp the affective reading instructions of the *Book of Mormon* and how Mormon₂ serves as a model reader. The chapter moves from the ‘West’ to the ‘East’ in order to find a poetic theory that offers concepts for understanding the functioning of the *Book of Mormon*. While the post-secular approach developed up to now raises important questions and provides a lens through which to identify significant structures (like Schynder's focus on the model pre-reader), we still need a theory that allows us to make sense of what we find. The post-secular literary approach

¹⁰⁹See section 5.3 and figure 5.1.

¹¹⁰Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, a–b 234, c 235.

¹¹¹Cf. sections 5.3, 6.1.1, 7.1.1, and 7.2.1.

is an analytic breakdown of the system, and the next chapter presents the synthetic approach to how the identified elements can be assembled into a significant and signifying whole.

3.7.1 Important Terminology: Literary Theory

Autodiegetic A narrator's first person account of his or her own life

Delivered text A stabilized utterance that can be recontextualized

Diegesis The world of the narrative

Discourse time The amount of narration (measured in pages)

Ellipsis A period of time that is mentioned but not narrated

Epitext A verbal statement that is part of the social discourse surrounding a text but not physically appended to the volume

Extradiegetic The outer narration level of the principal narrator

Fictionality A mode of representation in relation to extra-textual reality

Heterodiegetic A narration voice that is not part of the story world

Homodiegetic A narrator who is part of and takes part in the narrative

Implied author The sum of all choices made in creating the text and peritext

(Intra)diegetic The level presented by the principal narrator

Metadiegetic The level presented by an intradiegetic narrator (who is part of the narrative presented by the principal narrator)

Metalepsis A transition between narration levels that is not introduced discursively

Narrative speed The ratio between story time and discourse time

Pause Narration that does not move the events of the narrative forward

Peritext The material characteristics and formatting of a volume
Verbal statements that fulfill none of the three criteria for text

Poeticity The formal traits of language (present and absent)

Scene The usual narration speed

Story time The amount of time covered in a narrative (measured in calendar time)

Summary Condensed narration of a period of time

Tremendum The feeling of fear in the face of an overwhelming power which one cannot escape

Text Statements that fulfill at least one of three criteria:

1. attributable to a character in the story world
2. contribute to the narration and presentation of the story world
3. referenced by statements attributable to characters in the story world

Utopic method A microcosmic world as an experimental apparatus in order to comment on extra-textual reality

4 Passage to South Asia: *Rasa* Poetics

The basis for the specific poetic theory used in this study comes from the South Asian works *Dhvanyāloka* (dwan-YA-lo-ka) by Rājānaka Ānandavardhana and the *Locana* (LOH-tcha-na) by Abhinavagupta.¹ The works are part of the South Asian aesthetic tradition called *rasa* theory. Many contemporary writers use the cultural adjective “Indian” theory, but I deliberately use the term *South Asian*. This is a matter of historical, political, and geographical accuracy.

Many of the most important theorists, including Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, lived in Kashmir, especially in the Vale of Kashmir, a valley in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. The region is still (often violently) contested between India and Pakistan, and Ānandavardhana (ninth century CE) and Abhinavagupta (tenth century CE) lived long before British or even Mughal India. Other theorists lived in parts of South Asia which fall outside of what is modern India, such as the Bengali Rūpa Goswāmin.²

Rasa theory is a complex system of theater theory for creating emotional mock-ups that employ what Poppe calls *Emotionalisierungsstrategien* (strategies for emotionalizing)³ as offers to the reader or audience. The drama or narrative shows elements which would induce specific emotion in the audience. *Rasa* analysis is not a purely subjective cataloging of who felt what and where. It is, above all else, a formal artistic system. Given the *Book of Mormon*'s call for affective reading, I turn to this theory as a promising concept and tool with which to approach the self-reflexive demands of the scriptural text. *Rasa* theory offers what Pollock calls “ready-to-hand concepts,” and he argues that *rasa* theory “and its history may have

¹Ingalls, Masson and Patwardhan, *Dhvanyāloka and Locana*; see also K. Krishnamoorthy, *Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana: Critically Edited*, 2nd ed. (Delhi, Varansi, Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1982).

²For his primary text, see David Haberman, ed. *The Bhaktirasāsmṛtasindhu of Rūpa Goswāmin: translated and with an introduction and notes by David L. Haberman* (Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and Motilal Banarsidass, 2003).

³Cf. section 2.5.1.

some role to play” in the affective turn.⁴

Rasa and its analytic tools exhibit a sophistication and maturity in analyzing affective representation and reception not available in Western aesthetics, ancient or modern.⁵ Aspects of *rasa* theory are found scattered in Western theory, as many of the sources cited in this study show. However, no Western theory has yet unified them into a coherent poetics, much less a full aesthetic theory. *Rasa* comprises millennia of analysis on the process of making emotions formally available and of the effect of these strategies on the experience of the audience.

Pollock’s ideal scenario for interest in *rasa* is the type of disruptive foreign other proposed by Strohschneider: “In the best of cases [*rasa*] may even help us unlearn old modes of reading while gaining new ones, to better understand what it means to experience art and hence to be a full human being.”⁶ Studying and applying *rasa* can demonstrate that previous Western modes of dealing with art—and texts in particular—are highly contingent.

A secondary goal of this study is to show how inter-cultural, inter-discursive, analytic hospitality is not only possible but productive. Dinesh Mathur speaks of “the exhilaration of bridging the alleged gulf between the ‘mystic’ East and the ‘scientific’ West.”⁷ While this study will not be able to create a complete bridge, it is hopefully one more rope across the chasm.

However, the application of *rasa* theory done in this study is not a matter of slavish devotion to the theories as presented in the primary texts of the tradition. I base my theoretical frame on *rasa* but in a modified form. My modifications go beyond the changes inherent in application, and they involve adapting concepts and terms. The modifications I make can be summarized as forming part of my ‘porting’ process from South Asian philosophy to Western literary theory and my own analytic needs. I take

⁴Pollock, *Rasa Reader*, 44–45; cf. the discussion in section 2.5.

⁵Pollock, *Rasa Reader*, 3; Ingalls, Masson and Patwardhan, *Dhvanyāloka and Locana*, 38.

⁶Pollock, *Rasa Reader*, 45; cf. p. 78 in this study.

⁷Dinesh C. Mathur, “Abhinavagupta and Dewey on Art and Its Relation to Morality: Comparisons and Evaluations,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 42, no. 2 (1981): 228.

the term “porting” in the computational sense used by Adam Miller, where software is ported to a new operating system.⁸ The version of *rasa* that I present here is thus ultimately my own. It is custom-built, so to speak, for the specific purposes of literary analysis of the *Book of Mormon*.

4.1 Introduction to Rasa Theory

Rasa theory’s foundational work is the *Nāṭyaśāstra*⁹ (nat-ya-SHAS-tra). Its title is a compound of *nāṭya*, “dancing, mimic representation, dramatic art” and *śāstra*, “any instrument of teaching, any manual or compendium of rules, any book or treatise.”¹⁰ The title roughly translates to *Treatise on Dramatic Art*, and it develops its theory from out of South Asian theater. In terms of age and influence, it is comparable to Aristotle’s *Poetics*.¹¹

While the exact authorship and time of composition are a matter of debate, it is usually attributed to Bharata-Muni. Its current form is dated somewhere between the third and fifth centuries CE, but the core of the text is probably centuries older, going back at least to the fifth century BCE.¹² Like the *Mahābhārata* (hereafter as MhBh), it is a work of accretion, where the distinction between ‘original’ and ‘interpolation’ is difficult to establish.

⁸Adam Miller, *Speculative Grace: Bruno Latour and Object-Oriented Theology* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 4–5.

⁹For a complete translation, see Manomohan Ghosh, *The Nāṭyaśāstra, ascribed to Bharata-Muni: A Treatise on Hindu Dramaturgy and Histrionics* Vol. 1, Chapters I–XXVII (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1951); Manomohan Ghosh, *The Nāṭyaśāstra, ascribed to Bharata-Muni: A Treatise on Hindu Dramaturgy and Histrionics*. Vol. 2, Chapters XXXVIII–XXXVI (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1961). For a translation of the core section on *rasa*, see Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson and M. V. Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture: The Rasādhyāya of the Nāṭyaśāstra* Vol. 1, Text (Poona: Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute, 1970).

¹⁰Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary: Etymologically and Philologically Arranged*, Revised 2008 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899), 534, 1069. Hereafter as MW with in-text citation.

¹¹Atherton and Baxter, *Aristotle’s Poetics*.

¹²Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, xiv; Masson and Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture*, 1; V. K. Chari, *Sanskrit Criticism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993), xi.

The principal concern of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is how to formally compose a drama in order to enable it to produce an emotion. V. K. Chari explains that “the [*rasa*] poem arouses certain feelings in the reader because it is itself the concrete objectification of those feelings.”¹³ In the same way as the ephemeral sacred is anchored in the text of scripture, the objective art work turns the ephemeral of the emotional into an artwork. According to *rasa* theory, *art is emotion made flesh*. This is echoed by Langer’s definition of art quoted earlier: Art consists of “forms symbolic of human feelings.”¹⁴ Pollock points out that “[o]ne of the aims of the [*Nāṭyaśāstra*] is accordingly to break down the phenomenological unity of the drama into its constituent parts.”¹⁵ The *Nāṭyaśāstra* is (in)famous for its exhaustive analysis of the most minute details of performance. For example, it has an entire chapter dedicated to the positioning of the hands and fingers.¹⁶

Turning to *rasa* theory itself, the most important term to be understood is the eponymous ‘*rasa*.’ The foundational metaphor of the theory is a complex curry and its *masala* (spice mixture). The word *rasa* has both a literal and metaphorical-theoretical meaning. Its literal meaning derives from the culinary realm and refers to “the sap or juice of plants. . . the best or finest or prime part of anything, essence, marrow. . . taste, flavour” (MW, 869). The culinary meaning ‘flavor’ also refers to the basic flavors of food, those detectable on the tongue or in the mouth. For traditional South Asian cuisine, these are sweet, sour, salty, spicy, bitter, and astringent (the property of certain fruits such as blackthorns, quinces, or banana skins to make the mouth constrict and the lips to pucker) (MW, 869).

The theoretical meaning of *rasa* then concerns the emotional ‘flavor’ of an artwork as a work’s essence. The culinary flavor focuses the theory on the art object. Pollock points out that the Sanskrit concept of taste or flavor differs considerably from the English usage: “Whereas the English term ‘taste’ is always applied to the capacity of the social subject, the Sanskrit term is typically tied to the aesthetic object.”¹⁷ Flavor is therefore

¹³Chari, *Sanskrit Criticism*, 12.

¹⁴Langer, *Feeling and Form*, 40.

¹⁵Pollock, *Rasa Reader*, 7.

¹⁶Ghosh, *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 1:170–90.

¹⁷Pollock, *Rasa Reader*, 44.

a structural property independent of a ‘taster.’ *Rasa* theory avoids what Chari calls “the personal and genetic heresies.”¹⁸ The emotional flavor is not only to be found in the audience, and the origins of the text (i.e. the author and his or her experiences) are not the final explanation for a work.

Emotional flavor of an artwork is ontologically distinct from the personal epistemic act of consumption or the artistic act of production. Like with the idea of a literary function as potential,¹⁹ the formal elements of a work provide the *potential* of the *act* of tasting and have a stable existence of their own. Formal *rasa* analysis is therefore an examination of a text’s formal signifying function as it exists in an offered artistic mock-up.

The formal aspects of *rasa* theory are intended to facilitate performative *emotional communication*, and the culinary metaphor subsequently does direct analytic attention to reception. The prepared curry is intended to be eaten and enjoyed through bodily contact (eating with the bare hand). The culinary and metaphorical artistic curry should not only be abstractly understood. Humans do not cook for cooking’s sake, and the flavors of food are wasted if the food is not consumed. Hence the theory also covers audience psychology. The most famous treatise of reception psychology is Abhinavagupta’s *Abhinavabhāratī* (ah-bi-na-wa-BAH-ra-tee), a commentary on the *Nāṭyaśāstra*.²⁰ However, to reduce *rasa* theory to art reception or reader response theory overlooks the detailed analysis developed over the centuries. That being said, reader response is not part of my own analytic approach.

Next to *rasa*’s foundational metaphor of a curry’s flavor, the most important term is the *sthāyibhāva*, which is translated in a variety of ways. In no particular order: “lasting or durable state of mind or “feeling”; “state”; “permanent emotion”; “abiding emotion”; “fundamental feeling, instinct, emotion or mental state”; “abiding emotion, basic emotion”; “stable emotion”; or “foundational emotions.”²¹ The term I use in this study is *emo-*

¹⁸Chari, *Sanskrit Criticism*, 16.

¹⁹Jannidis, Lauer, and Winko, “Radikal historisiert,” 22.

²⁰See Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, which is a partial translation of the much longer work.

²¹In order: MW, 1264; Ghosh, *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 1:100; Masson and Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture*, 44; Krishnamoorthy, *Dhvanyāloka*, 394; Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, xv; Ingalls, Masson and Patwardhan, *Dhvanyāloka and Locana*, 825; Pollock, *Rasa Reader*, 327; Haber-

tional mode. The *sthāyibhāva* is often considered the common or ‘mundane’ emotion, while the *rasa* is some aesthetic form or ‘version’ of this mundane emotion. Gary Tubb is particularly adamant about this distinction,²² which juxtaposes the reception of the emotions portrayed in the artwork with the exact processes occurring in the audience. This relates to literature’s *Ebenenproblem* (problem of levels) of emotions in texts.²³

A notable detractor from the modern epistemic view of the two terms is the translator K. Krishnamoorthy. Speaking of the use of the two terms in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, he explains that “a historical approach to the concept of *rasa* and [*sthāyi*]bhāva must admit that these two words describe the aesthetic situation, the art object outside, more than the subjective state of the critic.”²⁴ Chari agrees and argues that “Sanskrit poetics... was predominantly an empirical, rhetorical tradition... it addressed its inquiry to the finished product.”²⁵ Pollock is also a contemporary proponent of the formalist view.^{26a} *Rasa* analysis must not be reduced to subjectivist and relativist analysis of emotion in some general sense, but as a rigorous analysis of the formal basis of emotional artistic expression. The earliest concern for *rasa* theory was emotion “as something generated by the formal features of the drama.”^{26b} As with Kappelhoff’s analysis of melodrama,²⁷ *rasa* is a representational mode that includes analysis of audience reception.

The development of an ontological and epistemological distinction between text and audience emotion is therefore a matter of historical development through a long tradition of *rasa* theorists. This is acknowledged by the translators of Ānandavardhana’s *Dhvanyāloka* and Abhinavagupta’s *Locana*, which is a commentary on the *Dhvanyāloka*. I will hereafter refer

man, *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, xxxvi.

²²Gary A. Tubb, “Śāntarasa in the Mahābhārata,” in *Essays on the Mahābhārata*, ed. Arvind Sharma (Leiden: Brill, 1991): 193.

²³Braun, “Trauer als Textphänomen”; cf. section 2.5.1 in this study.

²⁴K. Krishnamoorthy, “Traditional Indian Aesthetics in Theory and Practice: A Restatement with Special Reference to Nāṭyaśāstra and the Graphic Arts,” in *Indian Aesthetics and Art Activity: Proceedings of a seminar*, ed. Niharranjan Ray (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, 1968), 45.

²⁵Chari, *Sanskrit Criticism*, 16.

²⁶Pollock, *Rasa Reader*, a 9, b 7.

²⁷Kappelhoff, “Artificial Emotions,” 267.

to the theorists as *Ānanda* and *Abhinva*, as is commonly done.²⁸ In one passage, *Ānanda* refers to both *rasa* and (*sthāyi*)*bhava* being found within a character in the text. According to the strict modern epistemic view espoused by theorists like Tubb, this would be a confusion of levels.

However, the translators note that the reference to both *rasa* and *sthāyi-bhāva* in the text is the result of *Ānanda* “using *rasa* in its old sense of a particularly vivid emotion (*bhāva*)...not in the new sense established by *Abhinava*, of aesthetic delight.”^{29a} *Abhinava*, who wrote a century after *Ānanda*, is one of the principal theorists who developed the explicitly epistemological distinction between the emotion of the text and the aesthetic emotion experienced by the reader, but the *Locana* is still principally interested in the formal artwork. It is the *Abhinavabhāratī* that places much more emphasis on the psychological aspect, and even it discusses formal representation.

Since *rasa* theory was developed over centuries and across the South Asian subcontinent, there are many schools and movements within the wider theory. One attempt to extend the methods developed in theater in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* to the realm of literature is the theory of *dhvani* (suggestion). I focus on the *dhvani* school developed by *Ānanda* and *Abhinava*. As mentioned above, both men lived in the Vale of Kashmir. *Ānanda* lived in the ninth century CE and wrote the *Dhvanyāloka* (dwan-YA-lo-ka), or *Light on the Doctrine of Suggestion*. *Abhinava* lived in the tenth century CE and wrote a commentary on the *Dhvanyāloka*, the *Locana* (LOH-tcha-na), or *The Eye*.^{29b} While these two theorists lived more than a millennium ago, their theories and their works were highly influential within subsequent *rasa* theory. Even though there were other South Asian schools of poetic analysis (for example, ones that focused on metaphor or style), *dhvani* theory proved to be the most enduring, and the *Dhvanyāloka* and *Locana* are the most important works within the *dhvani* school.³⁰

I base the rest of my discussion of *rasa* principally on the single vol-

²⁸For example, Krishnamoorthy, *Dhvanyāloka*; Ingalls, Masson and Patwardhan, *Dhvanyāloka and Locana*.

²⁹Ingalls, Masson and Patwardhan, *Dhvanyāloka and Locana*, a 413 n1, b 1.

³⁰Chari, *Sanskrit Criticism*, 12; M. Hiriyanna, *Art Experience* (Mysore: Kavyalaya Publishers, 1954), 72.

ume Harvard translation of both the *Dhvanyāloka* and the *Locana* done by Daniel Ingalls, Jeffrey Masson, and M.V. Patwardhan.³¹ I also draw on Krishnamoorty's translation of just the *Dhvanyāloka*.³²

4.2 Is it Spicy or is it Sweet? Emotional Modes

As mentioned above, *rasa* basically refers to the flavors of food. The basic flavors detectable on the tongue or in the mouth (as opposed to the finer notes that require a sense of smell) form the foundation of the taste of food in general and meals in particular. Different dishes can be roughly divided according to which flavor predominates. For example, *sweet* is the nominal framework within which desserts tend to exist. Fudge, apple pie, and tiramisu are all 'built' within the *sweet* 'frame,' and yet they have distinct constellations of elements and are quite different in how they taste. Culinary 'frames' can also be mixed, such as in *agro dolce* (Italian for *sour-sweet*). Even in mixtures, one of the included frames is usually considered predominant. For example, sweet and spicy can produce either Mexican chili candy or Thai sweet chili sauce. The former would not be served with an entrée, and the latter would not put on ice cream. Both use the same basic frames to produce vastly different culinary compositions; neither frame is inherently predominant.

In like manner, *rasa* generally organizes aesthetic experiences around nine foundational emotional states—the *sthāyibhāvas*—with their accom-

³¹The Harvard text of the interwoven translations is divided into three sections, four if one includes the translator's notes. It marks each author separately using letters, which cover three parts: The *Kārikās* (**K**), succinct summaries of each section, which serve as quick 'reference material' for the poet or playwright using the *Dhvanyāloka* as a composition guide; Ānanda's central work (**A**), which expands on the *Kārikās*; and Abhinava's *Locana* (**L**), a commentary on Ānanda's work.

The interwoven formatting can cause confusion. At times, the page numbers are not sufficient to know which of the three parts is being referenced: Ānanda or Abhinava (I do not quote from the *Kārikās*). Rather than always having to note whether I am quoting Ānanda or Abhinava, I append the letter **A** or **L** to the page reference. In order to shorten the citation, I use in-text citation with the abbreviation **DhvL**. An in-text citation of Abhinava's *Locana* follows the model **DhvL**, 100 **L**.

³²Hereafter as KDhv with in-text citation.

panying *rasas*. The *Nāṭya-śāstra* actually only covers eight types of *rasa*, the ninth (*śānta*) being added by later theorists (most notably Abhinava). When the term *rasa* is translated into English in a technical context rather than simply using the Sanskrit term, it is usually rendered *sentiment*.³³ Since my own study is not concerned with epistemological questions, I refer to the *sentiments* produced within *emotional modes*.

One limitation of the culinary metaphor is that it can be too static to describe the flow emotions in a narrative. While different courses in a meal have a fixed sequence, different components of a dish will use different culinary frames that can be consumed in no particular order. Unlike a meal and its component dishes, music and literature are based on fixed written texts that are to be executed in a predetermined sequential order. The order of the emotional modes and the transitions can therefore be clearly defined.

4.2.1 The *sthāyibhāva*: Emotional Mode

My use of the term *emotional mode* is based on musical modes, which—similar to the different *sthāyibhāvas*—are used to classify and group musical compositions. Rather than writing music with all of the endless possibilities of sound, most music uses some form of constraint in a given composition.³⁴ I must point out that my use of ‘mode’ is not without musicological issues, since there are historical and theoretical distinctions between terms like *mode*, *scale*, *key*, and *tonality*. The use of the term *mode* and the phenomena it covers also differed through time and between cultures.³⁵

Musicological issues aside, associating musical modes with emotions was, in fact, common in both Western and South Asian music. The various ancient Greek modes were considered to have some form of emotional or temperamental tone.³⁶ Clear musical-affective associations are also found in Heinrich Schütz’s Baroque composition manual, which con-

³³ See, for example, Ghosh, *Nāṭyaśāstra* 1:1; KDhv, 9.

³⁴ Cf. M. L. West, *Ancient Greek Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 160.

³⁵ Cf. Harold S. Powers, “Mode,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 12 Meares—Mutis, ed. Stanley Sadie, 6th ed. (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1980).

³⁶ West, *Ancient Greek Music*, 164ff.

tains the chapter “Von der Zahl und Ordnung derer Modorum musicorum und von ihren Affectionibus.”³⁷ The *Nāṭyaśāstra* also assigns various *jātis* (a rough equivalent to musical modes) to different *sthāyibhāvas*.³⁸ In all of these traditions, certain musical modes were thought to suit and therefore produce a certain emotion or mood better than others and should consequently be employed to reinforce the emotions portrayed through the musical or dramatic artwork.

A composer can also fluidly transition between musical modes. This is called *modulation*, “the changing from one key to another by evolutionary musical means (not just by stopping and starting anew in another key).”³⁹ The composition changes during the flow of the music, usually over a few measures, but at times suddenly between chords. The emotions portrayed in text can likewise modulate to a different mode (sometimes suddenly between lines, like in poetry). A given composition’s use of modulation does not automatically mean that the piece functions in two co-equal modes. One of them is usually still considered the grounding harmonic or compositional frame for which the other provides some form of contrast. Just like sweet and spicy are not inherently contradictory, the other musical mode or modes therefore do not ‘ruin’ the structure provided by the dominant one.

Another benefit of the metaphor of musical modes is that it draws attention to how even the use of sound frequency is contingent. For example, ancient Greek musicology did not conceive of modes and scales in octaves that could be continued above or below and repeat the ‘same’ notes.^{40a} Some ancient Greek modes also used *microtones*, approximately quarter-tone steps,^{40b} which sound ‘wrong’ to our modern ears. There are different tuning systems.⁴¹

Individual musicians will also sing the ‘same’ note at slightly differ-

³⁷Joseph Müller-Blattau, *Die Kompositionslehre Heinrich Schützens in der Fassung seines Schülers Christoph Bernhard* (Kassel, Basel, Paris, London, New York: Bärenreiter, 1963), 92f.

³⁸Powers, “Mode,” 429; Ghosh, *Nāṭyaśāstra* 2:1–49.

³⁹Tim Rutherford-Johnson, Michael Kennedy and Joyce B. Kennedy, *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 6th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 563.

⁴⁰West, *Ancient Greek Music*, a 172–73, b 162.

⁴¹Bruce Haynes, *A History of Performing Pitch: The story of “A”* (Lanham, Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2002).

ent frequencies.⁴² The same cultural and technical variations also apply to the portrayal of emotions. As with musical modes, artistic representation within emotional modes is fully bound up in a given cultural discourse, and the particular way that sadness or anger, for example, are portrayed will differ. As Pollock points out for the poetry analyzed by Ānanda and Abhinava, the emotions the two see in a given passage often depends on social conventions, like knowing that a thicket of trees by the river frequently indicates a place for an illicit love affair.⁴³

Cultural contingency of emotional representation aside, the *dhvani* theorists explored the interplay of different emotional flavors in relation to an overall emotional mode. Larger works will contain different emotions, be it in succession or in the same episode. Speaking of the predominant sentiment of a work, Ānanda opens the question of multiple emotions being included and this inclusion's effect on and possible disruption of the overall emotional content: "But how can the predominance of a single *rasa* not be obstructed when a work contains many other *rasas*, all fully developed?" (DhvL, 503 A). The mixing and shifting between emotions does not prohibit one mode from being predominant. Ānanda argues that one emotion must be developed throughout by repeatedly coming back to it. When it is fully established in this way, the presence of other emotions will not undermine the predominant one:

When a sentiment happens to be intended as primary in a work and is kept up constant by being delineated again and again, its importance cannot be marred at all by the inclusion of other passing sentiments since it underlies all the rest... (KDhv, 175).

Including different musical modes in the same piece adds richness to the overall musical composition. In the same way, the inclusion of different emotional modes adds richness to the dramatic or literary work. The distinction between *sthāyibhāva* and *rasa* becomes the distinction between *mode* as compositional framework and *sentiment* as specific musical com-

⁴²Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 170.

⁴³Sheldon Pollock, "The Social Aesthetic and Sanskrit Literary Theory," in *Abhinavagupta: Reconsiderations*, eds. Makarand Paranjape and Debabrata B. Sensharma (Delhi: Samvad India Foundation, 2006): esp. 385–88, 393.

position working within a given mode. My use of *emotional mode* is therefore structural rather than epistemological. The musical mode is a conventionalized restriction on the infinite number of possible notes in order to have a manageable framework for composition. The final musical piece is a unique series of notes, either note by note or in chords, which realizes the theoretical frame in a playable and enjoyable musical composition. The emotional mode is the *nominal, social, and discursive frame in which a specific constellation of representational elements are arranged in such a way as to represent and produce a specific and localized emotional state.*

4.2.2 The *āśraya* and the *bhāvas*: Core Terminology

Rasa theory uses several core terms for how to portray or ‘suggest’ an emotion within an emotional compositional frame. Abhinava speaks of rendering an emotion “perceptible.”⁴⁴ Turning to *rasadhvani* in particular, the requirement for a suggested emotion is that the emotion be situated in a character. The issue of the locus of emotions also occurs in the psychology of William James: In ‘real’ life, “[a] purely disembodied human emotion is a nonentity.”⁴⁵ The *dhvani* theorists then apply this fact to literature. ‘Real’ and literary emotions must have the constraining definition of the experiencing person.

Since a character in a narrative is not sentient and does not actually experience the emotion, Ānanda and Abhinava use a special term for the locus of the aesthetic emotion: *āśraya*. This is variously translated as *substratum*, *base*, and *locus*.⁴⁶ Outside of this technical poetic context, the term means “that to which anything is annexed or with which anything is closely connected or on which anything depends or rests, a recipient, the person or thing in which any quality or article is inherent or retained or received” (MW, 158). The aesthetic emotion found in art is therefore anchored in a character, and the emotion portrayed is not simply present in a nebulous, essential sense.

⁴⁴Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 35.

⁴⁵William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1890), 2:452.

⁴⁶In order: KDhv, 387; DhvL, 516 A; Tubb, “Śāntarasa,” 188.

This relatively narrow definition of the locus of emotion does bring with it implications for certain types of poetry, such as when there is only a ‘lyrical I,’ or poetry that cannot be said to involve a ‘character.’ Tubb examines how different *rasa* theorists dealt with this difficulty.⁴⁷ The specifics are not of interest in the context of the *Book of Mormon*, the text being so riddled with characters and highly characterized narrators. The *dhvani* system in particular deals with emotions in their concrete contextualization of the specific experiences of a character. I therefore use the English term *experiencing character* for the Sanskrit *āśraya*.

Abhinava argues that a dramatic performance “makes the spectator enter into the life of a character different from himself.”⁴⁸ The empathizing faculty of the reader or audience allows them to ‘slip into the character’s shoes,’ as it were. The locus of emotion in a character allows for the *rasa* meaning of a narrative to be specified even further.

In the *Abhinavabhāratī*, Abhinava argues that the “meaning that constitutes drama is (in the end) a particular stable psychological state belonging to a particular subject, who is called the protagonist [*nāyaka*].”⁴⁹ The protagonist serves as the experiencing character of the dominant *sentiment* developed through a narrative (based on the dominant *emotional mode*). Ānanda describes this as “the hero of the story” being “the base of heroism” (DhvL, 516 A).⁵⁰

As with a musical composition’s modulations, the protagonist will undergo different experiences and modulate through different emotional modes. Some experiences will be tragic, others comedic, and yet others enraging. All of these contribute to the overall, dominant emotional mode in which the narrative unfolds. Other episodes with other characters will add contrast to the emotional development of the story. Most importantly, each emotion in each episode is situated in a character. The dominant senti-

⁴⁷Tubb, “Śāntarasa,” 188–191.

⁴⁸Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 97. Compare this to Atherton and Baxter, *Aristotle’s Poetics*, 99, 101; Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy*, 43; Keen, “A Theory of Narrative Empathy”; Keen, “Readers’ Temperaments and Fictional Character”; Utell, *Engagements with Narrative*; Zunshine, *Why We Read Fiction*.

⁴⁹Translation according to Tubb, “Śāntarasa,” 188. Gnoli’s partial translation does not cover this passage.

⁵⁰Cf. KDhv, 180 line 7: *āśraya*

ment, which functions as the emotional meaning of the narrative, is then to be found in the protagonist. Ānanda says that a *sentiment* “may belong to the hero of the story, or to his rival” (DhvL, 412 A). The Sanskrit term for protagonist (*nāyaka*) used here by Ānanda and by Abhinava in the passage above from *Abhinavabhāratī* means “guide, leader, chief, lord” (MW, 536). Abhinava explains the term in the *Locana*: “The hero of the story, called the *nāyaka* (leader) because he leads the story in the sense of subordinating it to his own activity, is he who enjoys the reward at the conclusion” (DhvL, 413 L). The protagonist therefore has two defining characteristics.

First, the protagonist is the character who enjoys the resolution of the narrative. Abhinava’s use of ‘enjoys the rewards’ should be expanded to *experiences the final resolution*. In a tragedy, the protagonist does not receive any enjoyable rewards. If the protagonist needs to receive pleasant rewards or an emotionally satisfying resolution, Oedipus or Hamlet could not be considered the protagonists of their narratives. The protagonist of the *Rāmāyaṇa* (rah-mah-YA-na), Rāma, is a tragic hero. The epic ends with “Rāma’s final, irreversible separation from Sīta [his lover]” (DhvL, 690 A).

Abhinava certainly did not intend such a narrow definition of ‘protagonist.’ The broader definition that also includes the tragic hero or heroine is required for the purposes of this study and South Asian literature in general. For example, the sixteenth-century *Padmavat* ends with the hero being killed and the heroine and her attendants committing *jauhar*, mass suicide by immolation. The second defining characteristic of Abhinava’s protagonist is that he or she *acts*, that is, ‘subordinates the story to his or her own activity.’ “[H]is success depends on his own efforts” (DhvL, 438 L). He or she propels the plot forward by acting, rather than *reacting*. Events ultimately happen because he or she makes choices.

In the *dhvani* system, protagonists can be distinguished by different temperaments. Abhinava lists five different types of “bravery.” The hero is brave and also exhibits a further modifying characteristic. He can also be noble, arrogant, amorous, or “spiritually calm” (413 L). The noble hero requires no further explanation. The arrogant hero is characterized by “fury” and can even exhibit cruelty (ibid; 507 L). This can be summarized as the anti-hero. The amorous hero would include characters like Casanova or

Don Juan, who are famous for their sexual exploits. The brave and spiritually calm hero (*dhīraprasānta*) is the most interesting temperament for this study (413 L). The term *sānta* means “appeased, pacified, tranquil, calm, free from passions, undisturbed [...] purified, cleansed [...] tranquillity, contentment” (MW, 1064). In the cosmology and soteriology of Ānanda and Abhinava, *sānta* is the state that leads to what can be called salvation (more specifically to *mokṣa*, release from the cycle of rebirth). In the context of the *Book of Mormon*, I call this type of character the *converted hero*.

The emotional experience of a character and the protagonist in particular is then created by a mix of fundamental components. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* gives examples of elements which could be used by a playwright in order to create a specific emotional composition that shows a given emotion. All of these terms are forms of the Sanskrit *bhāva* (*vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, etc.). The word itself derives from the Sanskrit root *bhu*, which means “becoming, being, existing, produced” (MW, 759). In the context of the term *bhāva*, it is used “in an instrumental sense[,] meaning *bhāva* as an instrument of causation [...] So [*bhāva*] means to cause to pervade.”⁵¹ The various *bhāvas* make an emotion ‘pervade’ the text, and they are therefore the textual elements which facilitate the portrayal and communication of the emotion found in the text.

To illustrate this, I turn to the *Nāṭyaśāstra*’s examination of fear. Here the external elements (*uddīpana vibhāvas*) can include “ghastly noises, seeing supernatural beings (ghosts), fear and panic due to the (cries) of owls (or the howling of) jackals, going to an empty house or to a forest, hearing about, speaking about, or seeing the imprisonment or murder of one’s relatives.”⁵² These are all elements which are experienced by characters and are external to them. The characters cannot avoid hearing the cry of owls or the howling of jackals. These sounds occur on their own and *act on the characters*. I call these the *interacting objects*.

Fear is often also a fear of something. Many emotions have an *ālambana*

⁵¹Manjul Gupta, *A Study of Abhinavabhāratī on Bharata’s Nāṭyaśāstra and Avaloka on Dhananjaya’s Daśarūpaka Dramaturgical Principles* (New Delhi: Gian Publishing House, 2010), 217.

⁵²Masson and Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture*, 54.

vibhāva, the “object toward which the emotion is felt.”⁵³ The character can be afraid of the dark, the dangerous animals in the woods, or possible robbers lying in wait. If a character is afraid of something small, like a mouse or an insect, it is a different emotion than fear of a charging elephant. William James’ psychology draws heavily on the concept of the directed emotion. He argues that the directional object of the emotion can either be “physically present or . . . merely thought of.”⁵⁴ These objects can be animate (human or animal) or inanimate (terrain, weather, the dark, etc.). I refer to these as the *intentional objects*.

The drama shows the reactions of the character to these external elements (*anubhāvas*). A courageous character will not exhibit signs of fear in the face of frightening elements. On their own, the interacting objects are insufficient for showing fear. In order to portray a fearful character, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* explains that an actor can employ a “trembling of the hands and feet” or “darting motions of the eyes” or “stuttering.”^{55a} A fearful character might run away, cower, or exhibit other fearful or cowardly actions. In order to distinguish these from the other reactions which are part of the *rasa* system and to avoid the Skinnerian determinist association of *stimulus-response*, I refer to these behavioral reactions as *consequences*.

In South Asian drama, the bodily reactions (*sāttvika bhāva*) are essential for portraying an emotion. The actor needs to be skilled enough to be able to produce these effects on command. In the portrayal of fear, the reactions include “sweating . . . horripilation [goosebumps], trembling, change of color.”^{55b} I follow William James and refer to such bodily reactions as *feelings*.⁵⁶ The character can also experience momentary flashes of other psychic-emotional states (*vyabhicāribhāva*). In the case of fear, these include “paralysis . . . a break in the voice . . . anxiety, confusion, depression, panic, rashness, [or] lifelessness.”⁵⁷ I call these *acute states*.

⁵³Tubb, “Śāntarasa,” 187.

⁵⁴James, *Principles of Psychology*, 2:443.

⁵⁵Masson and Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture*, a–b 54.

⁵⁶John Deigh, “Concepts of Emotions in Modern Philosophy and Psychology,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, ed. Peter Goldie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 20.

⁵⁷Masson and Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture*, 54.

4.2.3 The *bhāvas* as Composition

These *bhāva* terms can be visualized as the basic notes that constitute a musical mode. This is presented in figure 4.1. The upper system is a musical mode from the sixteenth century,⁵⁸ which has six notes between the octaves (from C to C). The mode also includes two flats (b), meaning it also uses two black keys on a piano. In a similar manner, the different *rasa* components are the representational framework for a dramatic or literary work. The ascending order of the ‘emotional notes’ is only a matter of visualization and should not be considered significant.

Dorian mode (16th c.)

exp. character interacting obj. feeling intentional obj. acute state consequence

Figure 4.1: Building blocks of a musical and an emotional mode

An emotional composition will employ a mixture and succession of the various building blocks in order to produce the particular emotional instance (*rasa* or sentiment). A compact example with all of these elements is a poem which Abhinava provides as an illustration for *rasadhvani*. I perform a more standard *rasa* analysis of the *Book of Mormon* in chapter 5, where I discuss two battles from the war chapters. The poem used by Abhinava relates the quarrel between a couple. The scene will be familiar to anyone in a long-term relationship:

They lay upon the bed each turned aside
and suffering in silence;
though love still dwelt within their hearts

⁵⁸Rutherford-Johnson, Kennedy, and Kennedy, *Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 563.

each feared a loss of pride.
 But then from out the corner of their eyes
 the sidelong glances met
 and the quarrel broke in laughter as they turned
 and clasped each other's neck
 (DhvL, 107 L).

Each partner is an *experiencing character* in whom the complex love of the vignette is anchored. Each partner's stubborn behavior and the occasional side-long glances are the *interacting objects* for the other. These interactions cause the initial emotion and the later transition (modulation). The *acute states* are suffering and pride. The frustration and subsequent reaffirmation of love are felt towards the other partner, the *intentional object*. The involuntary laughter, perhaps muffled by a failed attempt to suppress it, is the *feeling*. The embrace is the *consequence*. These elements and the basic progression of the scene are summarized in figure 4.2.

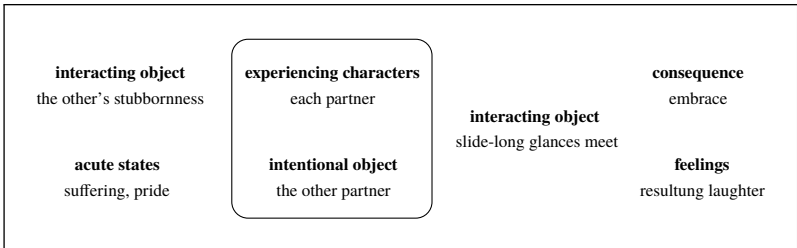


Figure 4.2: A scene depicting love

This short scene shows the love of the couple. Their love is a complex (and perhaps more mature) form of love through the inclusion of an emotional modulation. The vignette begins with the emotional mode of anger, here in the form of frustration and annoyance with the other partner. This anger suddenly modulates back into the mode of love (lines five and six). The vignette ends with a relieved and joyful reaffirmation of love. The inclusion of the frustration does not diminish the love portrayed, but in fact

shows a deep love, since the situation is defused with only the tentative side-glances of checking whether the other is finally willing to own up to whatever caused the dispute or to apologize or whatever else. When each catches the other's spying, they realize how childish and stubborn they have been and put aside the inconsequential quarrel. The fact that the side-long glances are sufficient shows that the couple still loves each other and that this was only a momentary spat. The situation modulates back to the dominant mode of their relationship: love.

Like music, these representational 'notes' are not everything which makes up a final composition. Even a musical composition which employs only one mode will have its own musical texture (*poeticity* in the terminology of this study). In music, this includes tempo (including *ritardando*, *accelerando*, and *fermata*), rhythm (principally the length of notes), volume (including *crescendo* and *decrescendo*), unison in contrast with harmony (including deliberate dissonance), and even how notes are sung or played (such as *staccato* as opposed to *legato*). And this is only a small sampling of the techniques available. All of these can be formally indicated on the page by the composer, and they do not only exist once the composition is performed. As with Poppe's *Emotionalisierungsstrategien*, the conductor or musicians (*l'interprètes*) can ignore or modify these suggestions, but they are formal features of a written musical text nonetheless.

In like manner, *rasadhvani* is "concerned with exploiting the beauty of every element in the medium of language...to serve the ultimate artistic end of *rasa*" (KDhv, xxxi). The *dhvani* system proposed by Ānanda provides a wide range of suggestions for how a poet or author can go about using language to present emotions in a text. Many of these specifics are predicated on the particulars of Sanskrit. Listing the suggestions found in the Dhvanyāloka only serves to demonstrate how detailed Ānanda's analysis is. He proposes phonemes (DhvL, 390 A); morphology (452); pronouns (471); single words (392); figures of speech (289); tense (470); syntax (401); the type of narrator (414); the plot (437); and any other element or technique the poet can think of, as long as it serves to suggest an emotion (471). My own *rasadhvani* analysis draws on Ānanda's suggestions, especially the argument that the narrator plays a role in the emotional development of a text.

4.3 *Dhvani* and the *Mahābhārata* as Literature

The formal analysis of *rasadhvani* offers many tools useful for grasping the specifically scriptural demands of the *Book of Mormon*. Section 4.5 of the two *dhvani* works⁵⁹ covers the theorists' analysis of *rasa* in scripture, especially in the *Mahābhārata* (as a refresher: ma-ha-BAH-ra-ta, hereafter as *MhBh*) in relation to doctrinal content. Most notably, the *MhBh* has many narratological parallels with the *Book of Mormon*, both in structure and narrative content. The *Book of Mormon*, like the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *MhBh*, is "canonized sacred history."⁶⁰

Ānanda's and Abhinava's treatment of the *MhBh* is of particular interest due to the narratological parallels with the *Book of Mormon*. For example, Mangels describes the *MhBh*'s narratological structure as a "frame and box structure" (*Rahmen- und Schachtelstruktur*).⁶¹ I call the *Book of Mormon*'s structure an *accordion structure*.⁶² The *MhBh* is epic scripture attributed to the *rishi* (seer) Dvaipāyana,⁶³ and the *Book of Mormon* is attributed to the prophet-archivist Mormon₂. Similar to the *Book of Mormon*, the *MhBh* covers nineteen *parvas* (books), each of which is subdivided into chapters.

The *MhBh* contains multiple doctrinal discourses, the most famous of which is the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the theophany of Kṛṣṇa (Krishna) to the prince Arjuna.⁶⁴ The *Book of Mormon* contains many sermons, for example Benjamin's final sermon to his people (FE, 154–67). The long corporeal theophany of Jesus Christ is the narrative peak (476–508). Since the *MhBh* is an extensive collection of narratives and elements, Dvaipāyana is often given the title *vyāsa*, "arranger, compiler," and he is often referred to by this name.⁶⁵ I will also refer to him by this title. While Mormon₂'s name does not refer to his role as archivist, he is the attributed arranger and compiler

⁵⁹DhvL, 690–702; KDhv 273–83

⁶⁰G. Hardy, *Understanding*, vii–viii.

⁶¹Mangels, *Erzähltechnik*, 42.

⁶²See section 6.1 and figure 6.1.

⁶³S. Sörensen, *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata: With Short Explanations and Concordance*, Reprint (1963) (Delhi, Varansi, Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1901), 758.

⁶⁴Roy and Ganguli, *Bhishma Parva*, 44–143.

⁶⁵MW, 1035; Sörensen, *Index to the Names*, 425.

of the work, as will be shown in section 6.1.

Like the *Book of Mormon*, the MhBh is a tragedy. The central narrative is the Kurukṣetra War, in which the two great cousin clans, the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, fight each other and are almost annihilated. It has “a conclusion that dismays our hearts by the miserable end” of the characters (DhvL, 690 A). Looking for such dismal conclusion in the *Book of Mormon*, we find it at Camorah. At least 250,000 if not a million Nephites (including women and children) are slaughtered at the final battle. The *Book of Mormon* culminates with Mormon₂'s anguished apostrophe to the dead of his people after the final devastating battle (FE, 529–30).

The war which forms the core of the MhBh narrative is described again and again, and most of the work covers battle scenes. Masson explains: “In the *Mahābhārata* the more battles are described, the more distasteful war becomes and the more firmly grounded becomes our feeling of detachment, of world weariness (*vairāgya*)” (DhvL, 694 n2). The sheer volume of the descriptions wearies the reader and shows the futility of war and by extension human conflict and the struggle of life. This is similar to the effect of the prevalent battles throughout the *Book of Mormon*, for example in the ‘war chapters,’ which are the basis for the *rasa* analysis in the next chapter.

In the MhBh, only ten people remain after the war: three of the Kauravas and seven of the Pāṇḍavas. The aftermath of the war sees the deicide of Kṛṣṇa “by means of a hunter.” The last of the Pāṇḍavas die on “the great pilgrimage” (696 L). This is the “*mahāpatha*, lit. ‘great road’...the pilgrimage of self-destruction. One walks north into the Himālaya until one perishes” (700 L n1). The Pāṇḍavas survive their Pāṇḍava brethren after killing their Kaurava kin only to commit a slow suicide by exposure. On a similar note in the *Book of Mormon*, the final battle ends with only about two dozen Nephite survivors, and the narrative ends with Moroni₂ as the lone, wandering survivor after even those few survivors eventually die or are killed, including his father, Mormon₂.

The narrative and structural parallels between the MhBh and the *Book of Mormon* continue in the genealogy of the narrators. In the MhBh narrative, Vyāsa is the grandfather of the Kaurava and Pāṇḍava princes.⁶⁶ In

⁶⁶Sörensen, *Index to the Names*, 438, 534, 758

this way, Vyāsa compiled the narrative of the destruction of his own descendants at the hands of each other. Abhinava laconically summarizes the MhBh narrative: “[E]veryone comes to a miserable end” (DhvL, 696 L). Mormon₂ chronicles the centuries of conflict between his ancestors and ultimately must relate his failure to save his people. All of these structural and narrative parallels demonstrate that the MhBh is an appropriate point of reference for the *Book of Mormon*, and analytic tools developed for the MhBh should therefore prove useful for the *Book of Mormon*.

The horrified reaction to the MhBh narrative is perhaps best summarized by Janamejaya, the character to whom most of the narrative is recited. Janamejaya cries out to Vyāsa in anguish:

O Brahmana, thou hast seen with thy own eyes the acts of the Kurus [*the Kauravas*] and the Pandavas. I am desirous of hearing thee recite their history! What was the cause of the disunion amongst them of extraordinary deeds? Why also did that great war which was the death of countless creatures occur between all my grand-fathers—their clear sense over-clouded by fate? O excellent of Brahmanas, tell me all this in full, as everything had happened!⁶⁷

The horror of the narrative is how men and some women of exemplary physical and moral stature could fall into slaughtering one another on the battlefield. How could close kin fight each other to the complete destruction of both clans? What could possibly have been the cause of this “disunion”? How could the “clear-sense” of these men and women be so clouded that they were unwilling or unable to turn away from the slaughter? The desire to understand these questions is what drives Janamejaya to wish to hear the narrative recounted. His cry is not an analytic interest. He wishes to feel and grasp the horror of the events.

Turning again to the *rasadhvani* reading of scripture, Ānanda creates a distinction between two methods of scriptural engagement: reading the work as either *śāstranaye* or *kāvyanaye*. Scripture therefore contains two complementary meanings: one doctrinal and one poetic. “[T]he *Mahābhārata* as a work of doctrine (*śāstranaye*) considers the one supreme goal of

⁶⁷Roy and Ganguli, *Adi Parva*, 163

man to be *mokṣa* and as a work of poetry (*kāvyaṇaye*) intends the *rasa* of peace” (DhvL, 692 A). The Harvard translation’s use of ‘*as*’ seems to point to an essentialist premise, that the work *is* somehow doctrinal *and* poetic.

Other translations of the same passage make it clear that Ānanda is here speaking of ways of engaging with the text rather than static attribution of essential characteristics. The work can be “*regarded* as a scripture” or “*regarded* as a poem” (KDhv, 279, my emphasis). My preferred translation of the two terms comes from Tubb: The MhBh can be examined “from the didactic *point of view*” or “from the poetic *point of view*.”⁶⁸

The two meanings—the doctrinal and the poetic *rasa* meaning—are not in contradiction or competition. They derive from different ways of reading the text, and the text can be considered from different *points of view*. The doctrinal point of view seeks to access a propositional meaning of precepts and commands. Abhinava defines ‘didactic works’ as texts “which consist in commands, like those of a master, to do this or that” (DhvL, 437 L). *What is salvation? How must I act and what must I do in order to gain salvation?* The text is used as part of catechism, as a didactic aid. Abhinava expands on the doctrinal reading: “**As a work of doctrine:** Insofar as one seeks in it the aims of man without being concerned with aesthetic taste” (697 L). The aims of man he is referring to are the four *puruṣārthas* of Hinduism: *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*. The first three refer to daily life in the world. They are commonly translated as duty, wealth, and pleasure, respectively. The finer points of each are not of concern here.⁶⁹ In Christian terms, *mokṣa* means ‘salvation.’ In Hindu cosmology this means “release from worldly existence or transmigration, final or eternal emancipation” (MW, 835). According to Ānanda, the MhBh explains that “the one supreme goal of man” is *mokṣa*, the release from the cycle of rebirth (DhvL, 692, A). Doctrinal readings are therefore pragmatic in that they are conducted as means to a moral and soteriological end.

The narrative content of the MhBh makes it seem like “all worldly activity appears now as a preliminary goal to be rejected” (ibid.). The devotee must follow the doctrine that the three worldly *puruṣārthas* must ultimately

⁶⁸Tubb, “Śāntarasa,” 199, my emphasis

⁶⁹For short summaries of each, see W. J. Johnson, *A Dictionary of Hinduism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 102–04, 27, 166, 204, respectively.

be rejected in order to achieve release from rebirth, at least according to Ānanda's particular view of *māyā*. In Ānanda's view of *māyā*, "beings will inevitably continue to suffer, die, and be reborn as result of their actions (karma)." ⁷⁰ The MhBh narrative thus shows that 'righteous' actions, while valuable, ultimately do not prevent suffering (DhvL, 696–97 L).

Ānanda's and Abinava's *rasadhvani* system then instrumentalizes aesthetic readings for religious ends. Abhinava summarizes the role of *rasa* within doctrinal instruction: "Delight and instruction are not different in nature, for they occupy a single realm" (437 L). The doctrinal approach (*śāstranaye*) must rely on representational language and its inherent shortcomings and limitations in order to relate to the devotee what *māyā*, *mokṣa*, and *saṃsāra* are. The devotee can at best be given a rational schematic and pale copy of what these concepts entail.

In the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, for example, Kṛṣṇa lays out how to escape *māyā* and *saṃsāra*. ⁷¹ The difficulty of and for the rational doctrinal aspect is that it cannot communicate the complexity, weight, and urgency which doctrine brings with it. As much as scripture pleads with the reader, a purely logocentric approach will not fulfil the salvific function of scripture. A P. Lal explains: "You cannot explain *māyā*; it's an experience [...] It cannot be communicated. It can only be felt." ⁷² The contrast between logocentric doctrine and the need for emotional communication becomes clear in an account given by Rudolf Otto.

He recounts a conversation he had with a Buddhist monk concerning *nirvāṇa*, the Buddhist development of Hindu *mokṣa*.

I recall vividly a conversation I had with a Buddhist monk. He had been putting before me *methodically* and *pertinaciously* the arguments for the Buddhist theology of negation, the doctrine of Anātman and entire emptiness. When he had made an end, I asked him, what then Nirvana itself is; and after a long pause came at last the single answer, low and restrained: Bliss – unspeakable. And the hushed re-

⁷⁰Johnson, *Dictionary of Hinduism*, 204.

⁷¹Roy and Ganguli, *Bhishma Parva*, 129.

⁷²P. Lal, "The Hindu Experience: An Examination of Folklore and Sacred Texts," in Lambert, *Literature of Belief*, 98.

straint of that answer, the solemnity of his voice, demeanour, and gesture, *made more clear what was meant than the words themselves.*^{73a}

Otto grasped what *nirvāṇa* is, its significance, and why it is desirable not through the methodical exposition of arguments, but through an emotionally charged four-element phrase: a long pause and two words connected by a second pause. The weight was not communicated through the words. Without the pauses and the manner of delivery, they are only more logical exposition. The negative space of the pauses and the special character of the speech are what communicate what the concept *is* and its implications for human life, in its weight and majesty. Otto posits this logical ineffability as the core of his concept of the ‘Holy.’ Speaking of communicating the incommunicable, he says that “our X cannot, strictly speaking, be taught, it can only be *evoked*, awakened in the mind; as everything that comes of the spirit must be *awakened*.”^{73b} The holiness of the transcendent, the depth of *nirvāṇa*, the cruelty of *māyā*, can only be experientially called forth and felt if they are to be truly grasped.

4.3.1 *kāvyanaye*: Affective Engagement and Doctrine

This is where the poetic aspect (*kāvyanaye*) of scripture unfolds its power. In the *dhvani* system, scripture from a poetic point of view is concerned with the emotional communication of *rasa*. In a secular world, pleasure and religious doctrine might seem diametrically opposed, putting the poetic and the doctrinal of scripture at odds. However, opposing pleasure and doctrine requires a reductive view. The doctrine proposed in the MhBh needs to overcome the desire for pleasure (*kāma*), and the central *aporia* of the doctrine of *mokṣa* is that it is still desirable. As the monk said: *Nirvāṇa* is bliss. The difference between it and the earthly pleasure of the three worldly aims of man is that the bliss of *mokṣa* and *nirvāṇa* is eternally sustainable and dependable. The emotional communication of *rasa* aids in bringing across desirability of the matter communicated, despite the hardships required to achieve *mokṣa*. The doctrinal instruction of scripture is thus reinforced by the aesthetic experience.

⁷³Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, a 39, b 7, my emphasis.

As mentioned above, a given poetic work, whether secular or sacred, has a predominant emotional flavor that ties together all the smaller emotional experiences found in a drama or a narrative. This is especially important for a narrative as long and complex as the MhBh. “[O]ne primary *rasa*, being woven into a work, gives it special meaning and extra beauty [...] As in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*...” (DhvL, 690 A). The overall emotional-poetic content woven into the MhBh is “the *rasa* of peace” (691 A); “This *rasa* is predominant” (696–7 L). This is *śānta*, the ninth *rasa*, which was added to the original eight of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. The tranquil, passionless state it refers to is the state of enlightenment, the requisite state for achieving *mokṣa*, or even state of *mokṣa* itself.

Returning to the *dhvani* analysis of the MhBh, we can now better understand the relationship between doctrinal and poetic readings of the text. According to Ānanda, disillusionment with the world of sense (*māyā*) is the feeling or state which leads to the rejection of the other three aims of man in favor of *mokṣa*. Abhinava calls this disillusionment “the indifference (*nirveda*) to worldly things which arises from knowledge of their true nature” (696–97 L). According to the *dhvani* theorists, the doctrinal proposition of the MhBh is that only *mokṣa* is desirable and that the world of sense must be rejected in favor of the transcendent and dependable. Devotees must achieve *nirveda* if they wish to attain release from rebirth (i.e. salvation). This doctrinal content clearly dovetails into the poetic.

Like each of the original eight *rasas*, *śānta* is based on a *sthāyibhāva* (*emotional mode*). Abhinava summarizes Ānanda’s doctrinal analysis of world weariness and argues that *śānta*’s *sthāyibhāva* is the state of *nirveda*. However, Ānanda argues that *śānta*’s mode is *vairāgya* (692 A), or “freedom from all worldly desires, indifference to worldly objects and to life, asceticism” (MW 1025). The terminological disagreement between the two theorists as to the *sthāyibhāva* of *śānta* is not in contradiction, and it actually shows that they are in agreement: Both *nirveda* and *vairāgya* express weariness with the world and its vicissitudes. Abhinava explains the relationship between the mode *nirveda* and the sentiment *śānta*. The text in bold are passages from Ānanda’s text which Abhinava is commenting on:

These things, although they are regarded as valuable, still, in whatever way (one meets them), that is, in gaining, preserving, or losing them, (they prove to be) **insubstantial** and empty as a mirage. **Go wrong:** that is, turn out to the contrary. He means that there can be no thought of their being substantial. In all these ways **will disenchantment with them**, viz., with the world's affairs, **grow**. By the author's [Ānanda] here suggesting the indifference (*nirveda*) to worldly things which arises from knowledge of their true nature and which is the persisting emotion (*sthāyibhāva*) of the *rasa* of peace, and by this stating the insubstantiality of all else, he has made clear that this *rasa* is predominant (DhvL, 696–97 L).

“[T]he cosmic swindle of life” or “the divine comedy”⁷⁴ is that the three other *puruṣārthas* inevitably fail to free the devotee from *saṃ-sāra* (the cycle of rebirths). One will become disillusioned by their inefficacy, and this will lead to a rejection of righteous pursuits in the world of sense, which is the path to *mokṣa* (salvation).

Passionless *śānta* and its detachment from human strivings is therefore a particular iteration of the larger emotional-experiential frame of world-weariness, and it is only one of many forms it can take. Religious conversion in Hinduism, especially in Brahmanism, results in asceticism as a path towards *mokṣa*: “[T]he *rasa* of peace [*śānta*] leads to *mokṣa*, which is the highest aim of man. . .” (DhvL, 525 L). However, the weariness at the base of *śānta* need not necessarily lead to asceticism and eventually to a converted, salvific state. It could also lead to chronic depression, addiction, or some other pathological state.

The fact that ‘conversion’ is formed within the larger (potentially pathological) frame might seem strange from a Christian or ‘Western’ perspective. However, it is how Ānanda and Abhinava and their particular religious tradition conceive of the experience of conversion and the path to salvation. According to the *rasadhvani* school, *nirveda-vairagya* is the predominant emotional mode in which the MhBh text functions. The predominant sentiment—*śānta*, the experience of salvation—is then the specific emotional composition within the emotional frame.

⁷⁴Lal, “The Hindu Experience, 105.

No matter one's thoughts regarding the specific theology espoused here, the poetic analysis is clear. The elements of the plot, the characters in their settings, and the form of the text construct a specific instance of the overall mode. Other emotional modes (such as love or heroism) do not denigrate the primacy of *śānta* as an instance of *nirveda-vairagya*. If anything, the failure of the positive experiences only intensifies the feeling of disillusionment. All of this means that the emotional content of a *rasa* poetic meaning is the *emotional state tied to the logical doctrine espoused in the scriptural text*.

The doctrinal reading presents the steps, and the affective-poetic reading presents what these steps mean in all of their *tremendum* and what state is required to achieve this doctrinal end. The *dhvani* school integrates the two ways of engaging with scripture into one salvific practice, and reading the text from a poetic point of view emotionally complements the doctrinal reading. The doctrinal understands, and the poetic communicates. Perhaps true understanding cannot be achieved without the emotional.

4.3.2 The *āśraya* of *śānta*

The difficulty which arises with the dominant emotional mode of the MhBh is that Abhinava's model requires that the emotional state developed within a narrative be situated in an experiencing character. As established, this is *nirveda-vairagya* in the case of the MhBh, a weariness with and rejection of the world of sense. The issue is now where to place this state. A possible solution is to situate it in the author-character of Vyāsa. While he is not a narrator per-se, this duty being spread across multiple other characters in the work, he is present in his 'own' work.

He is presented as the "narrated character 'author'"^{75a} who is an "acting character taking part in the main plot."^{75b} He is the father of the patriarchs Pāṇḍu und Dhṛtarāṣṭra and therefore also the grandfather of the warring Kaurava and Pāṇḍava princes.⁷⁶ He chronicles the rise and subsequent destruction of his grandchildren at the hands of each other.

⁷⁵Mangels, *Erzähltechnik*, a 43, my translation: erzählte Figur 'Autor'; b 1, an der Haupthandlung teilnehmende Figur.

⁷⁶Sörensen, *Index to the Names*, 438, 534, 758; Mangels, *Erzähltechnik*, 1–2.

If there ever were events that lead to weariness with the world and its cruelties, writing of the demise of one's own family in this manner would tower above them all. Tubb opens the possibility of Vyāsa acting as the experiencing character of the dominant emotional mode of *nirveda-vairagya*, since “one could find no better example of the outlook of disillusionment with the world than the verse from the MhBh that Ānandavardhana quotes earlier in the *Dhvanyāloka* recording the ominous words addressed by Vyāsa to his mother after the death of Pāṇḍu.”^{77a} However, Tubb ultimately rejects Vyāsa as the experiencing character of *nirveda-vairagya*. He posits a few other possibilities, such as Janamejaya, “to whom the whole *Mahābhārata* story is told within the poem” and whose “reactions to what he hears are reported here and there.” He also rejects this possibility.^{77b}

Tubb argues that looking only at Vyāsa through his direct narration contribution is not sufficient for understanding him as the site of the dominant emotional mode, since “he is surely too much in the background to perform this role.”^{77c} Vyāsa hardly ever speaks, and he never personally narrates. We only know that he must have narrated in the past, since the principal narrator of the MhBh, Vaiśampāyana, heard the MhBh directly from his teacher, Vyāsa.⁷⁸ However, we never hear from this *ur*-narration by Vyāsa himself, what Mangels refers to as narration level (*Ebene*) 3. It is not that we do not hear from other narration levels (hence why she calls the MhBh a frame and box structure). The outermost level (E1) is Ugrāśrava's narrating the text's origin narrative and the narration of Vaiśampāyana (E2) to a group of sages.⁷⁹ The main narrative of the MhBh is level 4, and Mangels points out that the *ur*-narration (E3) is nowhere to be found and is only ever hinted at.⁸⁰

I propose that it is in precisely this *lack* of direct narrative presence and the fact that the *ur*-narration is missing that one sees Vyāsa as the experiencing character of the predominant emotional mode. Tubb comes close to this argument when he distinguishes between Vyāsa's roles as “a character

⁷⁷Tubb, “Śāntarasa,” a–c 192.

⁷⁸Cf. Mangels, *Erzähltechnik*, 43.

⁷⁹Roy and Ganguli, *Adi Parva*, 1–2.

⁸⁰Cf. Mangels, *Erzähltechnik*, 42–43.

within the poem, as opposed to his function as author.”^{81a} Vyāsa appears in certain episodes, and he does interact with other characters, like when Janamejaya directs his plea to him. He is thus both a character in the narrative and its attributed author (something we will also see with Mormon₂ and Joseph Smith in the *Book of Mormon*). Tubb’s rejection of Vyāsa as the experiencing character of the dominant sentiment of *śānta* stems from a non-narratological approach, and his ultimate solution^{81b} is beyond the scope of my own study.

Vyāsa’s lack of narration as author-character is noteworthy for the lengths he goes to in order to avoid having to narrate his own composition. J. L. Mehta says of him: “[H]e is never present to the reader, never speaks directly to him, but always as reported, by virtue of his authority, by someone else.”⁸² The indirectness is not an accident, but it is willed by Vyāsa as a character in his narrative. When Janamejaya cries out that he wishes to hear the tale of destruction, he addresses his plea to Vyāsa, who does not accede to Janamejaya’s request. Instead, he pawns off narration duties to his disciple Vaiśampāyana.⁸³ In fact, Vyāsa repeatedly finds ways to get out of narration duties.

In one episode, Vyāsa is asked by Dhṛtarāṣṭra to tell him about the great battle of the Kurukṣetra War. Vyāsa instead compels the messenger Sanjaya (Saṃjaya in Mangel’s transliteration) to narrate by literally forcing the divine eye (*divyacakṣus*) on him: “Endued, king, with celestial vision, Sanjaya will narrate the battle to thee.”⁸⁴ Mangels adds this important aside about Sanjaya: “who, by the way, has not asked for [the *divyacakṣus*].” Sanjaya thus forcibly receives the requisite knowledge of events for narrating events he has no direct knowledge of. Vyāsa forces him to do this “in order to yet again squirm free from having to narrate his own work.”⁸⁵

⁸¹ Tubb, “Śāntarasa,” a 192, b 192–202.

⁸² J. L. Mehta, “Dvaipāyana: Poet of Being and Becoming,” in *The Mahābhārata Revisited: Papers presented at the International Seminar on the Mahābhārata organized by the Sahitya Akademi at New Delhi on February 17–20, 1987*, ed. R. N. Dandekar (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1990), 106.

⁸³ Roy and Ganguli, *Adi Parva*, 163f.

⁸⁴ Roy and Ganguli, *Bhishma Parva*, 5.

⁸⁵ Mangels, *Erzähltechnik*, 98, my translation: der ihn übrigens nicht darum gebeten hat [...] um sich auf diese Weise ein weiteres Mal aus der Situation herauszuwinden, sein eigenes

It just so happens that Sanjaya must narrate the most intense fighting of the MhBh. Vyāsa is aware of this: “Great will the slaughter be...in this battle.”⁸⁶

When one’s work covers the killing of one’s descendants at the hands of each other, it is understandable that Vyāsa is repeatedly trying to squirm free of the narration duty despite being repeatedly asked to do so. Vyāsa is in the background because he *chooses* to be. He performs essential narratological and narrative actions, such as determining who (has to) narrate which passages and fathering the respective patriarchs of the warring clans. “Like a post-modern author” he is not only the (attributed) composer of the work. “[H]e then proceeds to intervene at various crucial points in his own narrative.”⁸⁷

By being a narrator with narrative agency who performs narratological and some direct narrative actions, Vyāsa is an identifiable character who the reader can seek to understand and identify with. He is not invisible for lack of activity, but *because of* it. His “true home is the realm of silence and withdrawn meditation,” and he “is most reticent about what he needs most to say.”^{88a}

Through his willing and unwilling narrators, Vyāsa plays an important role in communicating the doctrinal and emotional vision of the narrative. He indirectly communicates with other characters and therefore with the reader by going to great lengths to maintain this indirectness. He communicates the detachment of *nirveda-vairagya* by repeatedly ensuring he is present *in* and yet detached *from* his own narrative. Mehta summarizes the seemingly contradictory narratological nature of Vyāsa:

What kind of an author is this Dvaipāyana [Vyāsa], island-like, unattached but compassionate, who feels obligated to console, pacify, and advise the characters created by himself [...] as if he owes it to them to explain that he is not just playing with them, that despite their tribulations, everything will be alright in the end?^{88b}

Werk...erzählen zu müssen; cf. Roy and Ganguli, *Bhishma Parva*, 4–5

⁸⁶Roy and Ganguli, *Bhishma Parva*, 5.

⁸⁷Johnson, *Dictionary of Hinduism*, 355.

⁸⁸Mehta, “Dvaipāyana,” a 111, b 106.

How does one remain compassionately unattached? How does one communicate that everything is going to be alright in the end when one does not directly communicate? Vyāsa's reticence and the amount of effort expended to have others communicate his vision seems very much like Abhinava's concept of the protagonist, who subordinates the narrative to his own activity. Causing others to continue the narrative on his behalf is perhaps the greatest power a character can have within a narrative.

Perhaps the emptiness and depth of *nirveda-vairagya* and its required detachment can only be communicated by a narrator who is both deeply emotionally entwined with the narrative and yet narratologically distant. As with the explanation of *nirvāṇa* by the Buddhist monk in Otto's example, *nirveda-vairagya* can only be communicated through the negative. Viewed from this angle, Vyāsa becomes not only an author-character, but an author-character-narrator, charged with the sentiment the work seeks to communicate. He is the text's *dhīraprasānta*, its *converted hero* (in the Christian sense of a personal religious transformation that leads to salvation).

4.4 Conclusion: *rasadhvani*

This concludes the presentation of *rasadhvani* as the poetic theory used in my study. The most important terms are summarized in section 4.4.1 on page 146. Now that the analytic tools (Western and Eastern) have been introduced, the rest of the study finally fully turns to the *Book of Mormon* as the object of study. The next chapter demonstrates a more straight-forward *rasa* analysis of the *Book of Mormon* on the level of the main narrative as a way to both illustrate how *rasadhvani* can be applied to the *Book of Mormon* and to open up analytic and narratological issues that will be addressed in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 6 examines the self-reflexive affective demands of the *Book of Mormon* and how my literary and *rasadhvani* approaches can be legitimized further. The chapter also demonstrates how Mormon₂ is the narrator-protagonist in whom the principal sentiment is situated. Chapter 7 examines several sections of the *Book of Mormon* where Mormon₂ can

be read as the affective ‘converted hero,’ culminating in his anguish after the final battle. The final chapter demonstrates how the *Book of Mormon* uses affectivity to teach an overarching doctrine, namely the implication of agency.

4.4.1 Important Terminology: *rasadhvani*

Acute state (*vyabhicāribhāva*) An intense, temporary psychic-emotional state (e.g. panic)

Consequence (*anubhāva*) A character's reaction to events

Converted hero (*dhīraprasānta*) A protagonist whose emotional state coincides with the state tied to a given soteriological doctrine

Doctrinal point of view (*śāstranaye*) Reading scripture for religious instructions

Emotional mode (*sthāyibhāva*) The compositional and nominal frame for a literary emotion

Experiencing character (*āśraya*) The character in whom the represented emotion is anchored

Feeling (*sāttvika bhāva*) A bodily reaction (e.g. sweating)

Intentional object (*ālabhana vibhāva*) The person or object towards which an emotion is directed

Interacting object (*uddīpana vibhāva*) A person or object that externally acts on a character

Modulation A gradual shift between emotional modes

Poetic point of view (*kāvyanaye*) Reading or analyzing scripture in terms of affectivity

Protagonist (*nāyaka*) The character who subordinates the narrative to his or her activity

Sentiment (*rasa*) A particular emotional composition realized within an emotional mode

5 “And they took courage”: The War Chapters

I begin a more standard *rasadhvani* analysis¹ of narrative before delving into my more radical application to Mormon₂ as narrator-protagonist. My modifications for Mormon₂ are then easier to understand. The chapter also raises narratological questions that lead into the next chapter on structure and self-reflexivity. The two narratives discussed here are taken from the ‘war chapters’ of the book of Alma, which cover the final third of the book (chapters XX–XXIX). They cover Moroni₁’s service as supreme Nephite commander and principally concern the large war begun by the Nephite traitor Amalickiah, but also the earlier battle at Sidon, which was Moroni₁’s first battle as commander.

This chapter covers two different battles within the larger war: the retaking of the city of Mulek under Moroni₁, Teancum, and Lehi₃ (which is an extradiegetic narration by Mormon₂) and the retaking of the city of Antiparah under Antipus and Helaman₂ (which is an intradiegetic first person narration by Helaman₂). The events of each battle are very similar, and each account uses the same narrative building blocks. However, the emotional flavor is very different because the specific constellations of elements result in distinct emotional modes.

5.1 Intertextuality

The two accounts are most obviously linked by their plot. Each battle can be broadly summarized as: *A small Nephite force lures Lamanites out of their stronghold. The Lamanites realize the trap but are eventually surrounded by the smaller force and the main Nephite army. An intense battle ensues, and the Nephites finally triumph.* The larger maneuvers of the two battles, while taking place on two different fronts of the Lamanite two-front war, are also linked by Teancum’s assassination mission on the eastern front. In a nighttime incursion into the enemy camp, he assassinates Amalickiah, a Nephite dissenter who had placed himself as the new

¹Based on my 2017 paper at the first Book of Mormon Studies Association conference.

Lamanite king (FE, 370). This causes Amalickiah's brother and successor, Ammoron, to change strategy from aggressive expansion to a defensive strategy intended to consolidate the Lamanite's territorial gains. Mormon₂ explains: "And it came to pass that [Ammoron] did command that his people should maintain those cities, which they had taken by the shedding of blood; for they had not taken any cities save they had lost much blood" (370–71). Ammoron sees that his brother had overextended the Lamanite forces and had put himself in danger by being camped in a forward operating base. This had only been necessary to compel the Lamanites to continue their expansion into Nephite holdings and to get the Lamanites to attack cities directly (360, 368).

Fortunately for Antipus and Helaman₂ fighting on the western front, this change in Lamanite strategy also preserves their weakened forces from being overrun, since Ammoron's defensive orders call off further Lamanite attacks against Nephite strongholds. As Helaman₂ explains to Moroni₁ concerning the experiences of the Nephite forces under Antipus and Helaman₂: "[The Lamanites] were compelled by the orders of Ammoron to not come against the city of Judea, or against us, to battle" (383). Had Amalickiah still been alive at this point, his more aggressive strategy would probably have caused Antipus' position to be overrun. Ammoron's caution is thus actually detrimental to the immediate Lamanite war effort, since it does not press the advantage of Lamanite momentum. The halt in Lamanite advance also saves Antipus and Helaman₂. "And thus were we favored of the Lord; for had they come upon us in this our weakness they might have perhaps destroyed our little army; but thus were we preserved" (ibid.). The text thus causally connects the two fronts of the war, since the events on the one front directly impact the other.

Unfortunately, Teancum's actions and the change in Lamanite strategy also cause new problems for the Nephites, who had previously been able to count on costly Lamanite frontal assaults on their fortifications or had otherwise been able to engage the Lamanites in open battle. The defensive strategy now means that the *Nephites* are the ones who must find a way to dislodge an opponent (371). Unlike Amalickiah, Teancum rejects a frontal assault, seeing as the Lamanites are too well entrenched and too numerous (372). Teancum then joins Moroni₁'s strategy meeting ("council of war"),

where it is decided that the city of Mulek should be taken by a ruse rather than by a direct assault.

This meeting shows that Mormon₂ inserts Helaman₂'s account into Moroni₁'s narrative, further strengthening the connection between the two. Mormon₂ explains that Moroni₁'s council occurs at the "*commencement of the twenty and eighth year*" (372, my emphasis). This year sees several Nephite victories, including the retaking of Mulek. Mormon₂ as narrator and editor then inserts Helaman₂'s recruitment of the young Ammonites into the account of Moroni₁'s twenty-eighth year. He introduces this sudden shift by saying: "And now behold, I have somewhat to say concerning the people of Ammon. . ." (375).

He recounts the negotiations among the people of Ammon² concerning their contributions to the war effort despite their previous strict vow of non-violence. The people resolve the dilemma by allowing 2000 of their young men to march with Helaman₂ (376–77). After the interlude, Mormon₂'s narration adds a seemingly normal timestamp at the end of chapter XXIV: "And thus ended the twenty and *eighth* year of the reign of the judges" (377, my emphasis).

However, Helaman₂'s letter to Moroni₁ contradicts this timestamp. His missive to Moroni₁ is included in chapter XXVI, where Helaman₂ explains that "in the twenty and *sixth* year, I Helaman, did march at the head of these two thousand young men" (383, my emphasis). This means that the timestamp of 'end of the twenty-eighth year' given by Mormon₂ at the very end of chapter XXIV does not relate to Helaman₂'s negotiations, but instead to Moroni₁'s efforts surrounding the city of Mulek. Mormon₂ as extradiegetic narrator appears to have inserted Helaman₂'s metadiegetic narrative into Moroni₁'s intradiegetic one.

The final timestamp (twenty-eighth year) is then the last piece of Mormon₂'s extradiegetic narration of Moroni₁ tacked onto the end of the chapter, almost like a German separable prefix 'kicked' to the end of the predicate, thereby bracketing of the chapter in its entirety. The chronological insertion of the recruitment of the 2000 young soldiers (which took place

²Referring to Ammon₂ and the Lamanites converted by the preaching of Ammon₂ and his brothers, the sons of king Mosiah₂.

in the twenty-sixth year) is analytically seen by the incorrect timestamp (even if a casual reader might not notice it). This further strengthens the connection between the two narratives by having a portion of one inserted into the other.

On top of this, the two narratives are very similar in their phrasing. These ‘phrasal borrowings’ often occur in the *Book of Mormon* to link different accounts and events. As Heather Hardy explains in the context of the *Book of Mormon*: “[C]omparisons are most frequently suggested either by a cluster of similar narrative elements or, again, by phrasal borrowings between the two accounts. Mormon also suggests possible spiritual insights by alluding to the larger context of parallel borrowings.”³ This is reminiscent of Grant Hardy’s intertextual allusions and echoes, where two passages are phrasally linked without explicit reference.⁴

There is a trifecta of verbs that most clearly shows that the two narratives should be read intertextually: *retreat* – *take courage* – *pursue*. The battle for Mulek includes a ruse on the part of Teancum and his men. After the main army under Moroni₁ had seemingly left the field, the small force lures the Lamanites out of the city. Mormon₂ explains: “And as Teancum saw the armies of the Lamanites coming out against him, he began to *retreat* down by the seashore, northward. And it came to pass that when the Lamanites saw that he began to flee, they *took courage* and *pursued* them with vigor” (FE, 373, my emphasis).

Compare this with a scene at the height of Helaman₂’s account, where the main Nephite army under Antipus had engaged the enemy after days of forced march: “[T]herefore the men of Antipus being confused, because of the fall of their leaders, began to *give way* before the Lamanites. And it came to pass that the Lamanites *took courage*, and began to *pursue* them” (385, my emphasis). These two passages share two characteristics: First, each uses a pattern of *cause* – *emotion* – *consequence*. Teancum seemingly retreats (*cause*); the Lamanites feel courage and excitement (*emotion*); and as a result they pursue Teancum and his men (*consequence*). The men of Antipus begin to *actually* retreat (more specifically, they are routed)

³Heather Hardy, “Another Testament of Jesus Christ: Mormon’s Poetics,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 16, no. 2 (2007): 26–27.

⁴G. Hardy, “*Book of Mormon* and the Bible,” 120, 123.

(*cause*); the Lamanites' will to fight is strengthened (*emotion*); and as a result, they pursue the routing Nephites (*consequence*).

There are many other smaller phrases that indicate an intertextual relationship between the two battles. In Moroni₁'s case, the Lamanite army was "one of the greatest" (FE, 375). Helaman₂ describes his opponent army as "one of the strongest" and "the most numerous" and "the most powerful" (384). Both accounts involve a party "supposing" they can "overpower" the other side (373, 383). Moroni₁'s men "*did not* give way before the Lamanites" (374, my emphasis). The exhausted army of Antipus "began to give way before the Lamanites" (385). Both accounts have armies being "weary" due to a "long march" (373, 385). This is only a short sample of phrasal borrowings between the two narratives. There is a more detailed (but by no means exhaustive) comparative list of phrasal and narrative borrowings in Appendix B. The short list given here should suffice to show that these two accounts are even linked on the phrasal level. They are additionally linked by their emotional coherence.

The following analysis will focus on what I call *rasa* units in the text in order to follow the emotional modulations of the battles. While the narrative beats and phrasal building blocks of each battle are very similar, the exact composition of elements produces diverging emotional flavors. Each of the 'units' examined in this chapter is composed of most if not all of the six core terms of *rasa* theory. Each is centered on a specific constellation of the *bhāva* factors and thereby shows a particular instance of an emotion. I continue my examination of Mormon₂'s account of the battle for Mulek starting from when Teancum's forces have lured away the main body of the Lamanite garrison and Moroni₁'s hidden forces have been able to take the city. The Lamanites pursuing Teancum are lured into a trap and are met with another, rested army under the command of Lehi₃, who⁵ became fa-

⁵A note on the subscript: There is the question of whether this Lehi is the same character as Lehi₂, the son of Zoram₂, who took part in the rescue of the survivors of Ammonihah (also at the river Sidon) (FE, 267; cf. MSE, 639). When the Lehi fighting at Mulek is first introduced by Mormon₂ as an officer fighting alongside Moroni₁, it is as "*a man* whose name was Lehi" (FE, 343, my emphasis). Had this been the same Lehi from seventeen years earlier, Mormon₂ should not refer to Lehi as *a man*, but as someone more definite, since the reader would have heard of the character before. It is therefore plausible that the Lehi at Mulek is

mous and feared among the Lamanites during the battle at the river Sidon against the Lamanite forces led by another Nephite traitor (343–47).

5.2 The Battle for Mulek: Heroism

Now at Mulek, Mormon₂ continues: “[T]he Lamanites did pursue Teancum until they came near the city Bountiful, and then they were met by Lehi and a small army, which had been left to protect the city Bountiful” (373). The experiencing characters are the Lamanite army and they are ‘acted on’ by the interacting object of Lehi₃ and his men, who here also act as the intentional object. It is not only that there is a rested army facing the Lamanites. It is also commanded by someone with a reputation for bravery and cunning. Any other force would also have caused fear in the Lamanites, but the presence of this commander in particular makes the Lamanites’ fear much more urgent. They finally realize that they have been duped by a feigned retreat. The consequence is that they wheel around in order to return to Mulek, which they suppose is still held by allied forces. Their fearful retreat also includes the acute state of “much confusion” and the bodily feeling of being “wearied because of their march.” This is contrasted with the rested, “fresh” state of Lehi₃ and his men (*ibid.*).

Relevant for this particular unit’s emotional tone is Mormon₂’s addendum that the Lamanites are up to then unaware that Moroni₁ and his men are at their rear. Moroni₁’s troops are therefore not yet consciously interacting with the Lamanites (the text does not mention how Mormon₂ knows this). The Lamanites’ fear thus does not yet include Moroni₁. This dramatic irony increases the pathos of the moment since the Lamanites are not only tired and terrified. Mormon₂ and the reader know that they are also trapped and that their situation is about to go from bad to worse. When the reader sees this scene in an empathetic light, the Lamanites and their confused fear become quite tragic, and the reader might even begin to ache with these Lamanites, who had previously been (over)eager to engage Teancum and his men. Mormon₂’s inclusion of the ironic addendum makes it seem like he too feels saddened by what is about to happen.

actually Lehi₃ and *not* Lehi₂ (again illustrating the confusing nature of the names).

Finally, the second phase of Moroni₁'s plan is in full effect, and the Lamanites who are retreating back towards Mulek are met by his forces in the front and Lehi₃'s men in the rear. Mormon₂ explains that "before the Lamanites had retreated far they were surrounded by the Nephites" (ibid.). The Lamanites are caught in Moroni₁'s trap almost immediately after wheeling around towards Mulek and are therefore still in their fearful and confused state. The narrator again emphasizes that the Lamanites are "wearied because of their long march" whereas Moroni₁'s and Lehi₃'s men are "fresh and full of strength" (ibid.). The different feelings play an important role in the emotional constellation surrounding the Lamanites. Their swift march in pursuit of a smaller force had expended their strength, meaning they had exerted themselves for nothing and had put themselves in danger because of it. They seem like a perfect example of the prophet Isaiah's lament: "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain" (54). The Lamanites have chased a mirage and are now punished for their overeager blindness.

Moroni₁, however, overplays his hand and fully surrounds the Lamanite forces. He does not count on the disposition of the Lamanite commander, Jacob₃, who possesses "an unconquerable spirit" (373). The Lamanites under Jacob₃ (a Nephite dissenter, specifically a Zoramite) are desperate and frightened and now turn especially deadly in their cornered state. It is not sufficient to know that the Lamanites are surrounded by Nephites (the interacting object). It is also relevant on *whom* this situation acts. The experiencing character, Jacob₃, brings with him a particular disposition, which must be taken into account in order to understand the emotional constellation.

Moroni₁ also makes a crucial miscalculation when compared to the battle at the river Sidon. Here on the field between Mulek and Bountiful, he surrounds his opponents and immediately "commanded his men that they should fall upon them until they had given up their weapons of war" (373). At Sidon, he and Lehi₃ also surrounded a Lamanite force, which was "struck with terror." Moroni₁, seeing that terror, "commanded his men that they should stop shedding their blood" (345). Moroni₁ then offered terms and only commanded his men to attack once the Lamanite commander, who significantly was also a Zoramite like Jacob₃, had re-

jected his terms. The Lamanites at Sidon only gave up their weapons after more intense fighting, and it seems that the lesson Moroni₁ took from that battle was to not bother offering a Zoramite-led army any terms and to attack a surrounded army immediately. The text here presents Moroni₁ with a very different disposition from that displayed at Sidon. He seems to have become harder, and this hardness leads him to set off a powderkeg.

The Lamanites' will to fight is not broken despite being surrounded, and Jacob₃ leads "the Lamanites forth to battle with exceeding fury against Moroni" (373). The new constellation brings out a desperate fight in the beleaguered Lamanites. Jacob₃, having nothing to lose, is "determined to slay [the Nephites], and cut his way through to the city of Mulek" (374). The acute state of grim determination is very dangerous for the Nephites. The use of the verb *cut* also suggests the butchery of literally hacking through enemy lines, man by man. Since Moroni₁ has not offered terms, Jacob₃ knows that he will most likely lose many men either way, so he should immediately attempt to break through his enemy's line.

Amazingly, Moroni₁ and his men (who are in the Lamanite's direct path back to Mulek) are able to withstand Jacob₃'s desperate surge forward. The text shifts now from the Lamanites under Jacob₃ back to the Nephites as the experiencing characters. Mormon₂ describes it as "Moroni and his men" being "more powerful; therefore they did not give way before the Lamanites" (374). It is telling that the text uses the comparative 'more powerful.' This means that Mormon₂ considers the Lamanites to be some measure of *powerful*.

The Lamanite attack does not fail out of weakness, but only because they are met with an even more skilled and especially a more rested opponent. The Lamanites are not to blame and are nowhere accused of cowardice, and Mormon₂ shows a measure of respect for the tenacity of their fight. The fact that Moroni₁ and his men are able to break the assault (the consequence), considering how desperate the Lamanites are, shows the skill and heroism of the Nephite soldiers. At the same time, the passage makes the reader wonder what would have happened had both sides met on equal footing, being both rested. Perhaps not even Nephite skill and bravery would have been sufficient.

The Nephite success also comes at a steep cost. Since the Lamanites

are also powerful, they are able to kill many of their opponents, despite their exhausted state (feeling). “And it came to pass that they fought on *both hands* with exceeding fury; and there were many slain on *both sides*; yea, and Moroni was wounded and Jacob was killed” (ibid., my emphasis). Here the text erases these distinctions in the equalizing effect of desperate combat. The text expands its experiencing characters to cover both sides of the conflict. For the first time in the battle for Mulek, the narrative does not emphasize the emotions of one side (Nephite or Lamanite) and instead states that the fighting continued on “both hands” and many are killed on “both sides.” The reader feels the mess of emotions raging on the entire battlefield and experiences *both sides* not as sides but as desperate souls similarly engaged in the same terrifying maelstrom. The experiencing characters are no longer defined by military allegiance, but by shared experience.

The Lamanites did not expect to have to fight a major battle that day, and Moroni₁ seems to have underestimated his opponent’s will to fight. Both sides are now part of a conflict they did not want. There are no glorious, brave warriors. This scene is an example of anger, terror, and sorrow over the death of a comrade channeled into a desperate push for survival. In this fight, there are no –ites (something that is encountered again in 4 Nephi). The division of friend and foe is meaningless, since death is spread equally. There is only death or survival. Here, the experiencing characters are not based on partisanship, but on universal humanity. This pulls the reader’s view ‘up’ out of mundane and petty concerns. The divisions of human conflict are shown to be arbitrary and even dangerous.

Here we have a Zoramite (a former member of the larger Nephite group) leading a group of Lamanites (who have no personal stake in this war and are only following orders and fighting for what they think is their rights and their country) against Nephites who are only involved in a war because a seditious Nephite (Amalickiah) had usurped the Lamanite throne and had begun an unprovoked and unjustified war. In this moment, there are no victors and losers. Each side loses in this senseless fight. In Ānanda’s model of cruel *māyā*, these events would probably serve as a lesson to induce world-weariness.

After a while, the determination of the Lamanites wears off, and the

Nephite forces begin to have the upper hand. “And Lehi pressed upon their rear with such fury” (the interacting object) that the “Lamanites in the rear” (the experiencing characters) “delivered up their weapons of war” (consequence) (374). This group of Lamanites finally gives up, overcome by fear and by the futility of it all and because they want to survive the war. Their fear mixes with the resignation of their capitulation. The rest of the army, “the remainder of them,” is confused even more (acute state) and “knew not whether to go or to strike” (ibid.). Again, Mormon₂ seems to feel sorry for the Lamanites, who have to suffer so much because of the hubris of others. The ambiguity of the *whether* is also seen in the FE text when Alma₂ as high priest is asked *whether* to go and intercept the Lamanites who had abducted the survivors of the attack on Ammonihah.⁶

Does this passage mean that the Lamanites want to fight but do not *where* to attack next? Or does it mean that they are having an internal debate over whether to continue fighting at all? The ambiguity makes this passage emotionally intriguing, even if we put it off as a scribal or typesetting error. Skousen rejects the FE *whether* in favor of *whither* in both cases (YE, 764; 774).

Moroni₁, here as experiencing character, seizes on this lull in the battle. “[S]eeing [the Lamanites’] confusion,” he does not use this advantage to finish off his opponents, but instead offers belated terms, stating that if the Lamanites give up their weapons, the Nephites would “forbear shedding [the Lamanites’] blood” (374). Moroni₁ might be harder than he was at Sidon, but he is not a warmonger. His forbearance (the consequence) shows that he is not only a commander going through the cold calculus of war. He has the opportunity to fully eliminate a large Lamanite army and save on the resources of guarding and caring for prisoners of war, something Helaman₂ also has to grapple with and which causes Helaman₂ great losses in both provisions and men (378–88).

Moroni₁, like Helaman₂, decides against committing a war crime and takes the Lamanite survivors as prisoners of war, despite the real disadvantages this mercy brings with it. Here we have an example of reckless,

⁶See section 7.1.3.

open hospitality that comes at great risk and cost for the host.⁷ This magnanimous capture concludes the battle for Mulek. Moroni₁, Teancum, and Lehi₃ regroup and finally secure the city. This brings us to the much more desperate sister-battle at Antiparah.

5.3 The Battle for Antiparah: Love and Terror

As mentioned above, the account of the battle for Antiparah is a first person narration by Helaman₂ in the form of a military missive to Moroni₁ concerning the war effort on the western front. The letter is then included in the main narrative by Mormon₂ as part of his extradiegetic abridgement. Helaman₂ is thus permitted to speak in his own voice, but only within the world presented by Mormon₂ and by the grace of Mormon₂. This means that the narration of the battle for Antiparah occurs at a level *within* the main narrative (hence an *intradiegetic* narration of a *metadiegetic* narrative). In chapter XXVI, Helaman₂ narrates most of the events (except for a notable exception, *see below*). This is summarized in figure 5.1.

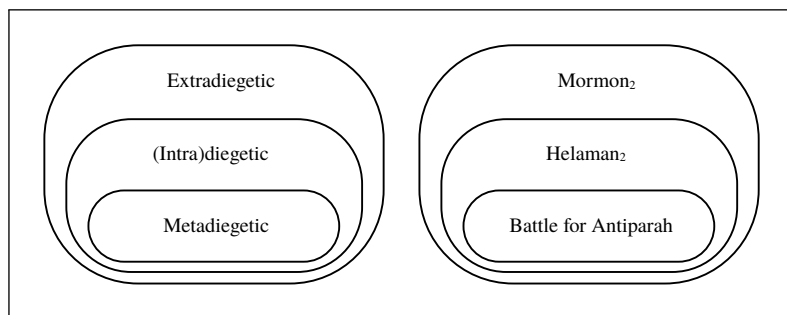


Figure 5.1: Diegetic levels – Terms for Mormon₂ and Helaman₂

Unlike the complex plan of Moroni₁, Helaman₂'s and Antipus' plan is far less elegant. The narrative is still full of the heroic emotional mode, but in this case it is counter-balanced by terror and simultaneously tempered

⁷Cf. Derrida, "Certain Impossible," 451.

with love and selfless concern for others. Moroni₁ had positioned Lehi₃ at Bountiful in order to allow Teancum and his men to rest from their feigned retreat and to allow a fresh army to take up the actual fighting. Antipus' and Helaman₂'s plan is missing the crucial component of a third Nephite army. All they have are Helaman₂'s decoy force (Teancum's role) and Antipus' pursuing main army (Moroni₁'s role). The lack of the role fulfilled by Lehi₃'s men is what makes the battle for Antiparah such a desperate affair when compared to the battle for Mulek. The lack of this single element of the plot thus completely changes the emotional tone.

The plan begins similarly enough to that at Mulek, and Helaman₂ explains the start of the maneuver. The Lamanites are lured from their fortification in Antiparah and sally forth to engage Helaman₂'s small force: "And thus we [Helaman and his troops] did lead away the most powerful army of the Lamanites." Antipus gives chase, but is discovered immediately. The Lamanites (the experiencing characters) see "the army of Antipus pursuing them, with their mights (*sic*)" (the interacting object), and as a result "they did not turn to the right nor to the left, but pursued their march in a straight course after us" (the consequence) (384).

Unlike at Mulek, there is no fresh army waiting for them after a long pursuit; there is no famous and feared war hero facing the Lamanites. Unlike the Lamanites between Mulek and Bountiful, the Lamanites outside of Antiparah also have all of the relevant tactical information: They know that there is a large army in the rear and a small force in front. They only have to catch and defeat Helaman₂'s troops and then focus on the main army in the rear. The cool-headedness of this Lamanite army is all the more impressive when compared with the panic of the other Lamanite army upon seeing Lehi₃ and his men, and especially once they realize they had been followed by Moroni₁.

Antipus, the experiencing character of the next unit, sees that the Lamanites have chosen to fight smart, and he realizes that there is a problem: "And now Antipus, beholding our danger, did speed the march of his army" (384). He initially experiences a shock because a lengthy pursuit has not been part of the plan. The assumption seems to have been that the Lamanites would be surrounded and subsequently surrender. In contrast, Lehi₃ had been able to calmly pursue the Lamanites as part of a well-thought-out

stratagem. Antipus has no such certainty. If the Lamanites catch up with Helaman₂'s novice recruits, Helaman₂ and his force will likely be wiped out. However, this shock does not make him falter, and he drives his men to speed up their march to ensure they keep up with the Lamanite forces should they engage Helaman₂. Antipus' shock is overcome by his care for Helaman₂ (the emotional mode of love) and his drive to engage the enemy (the heroic mode).

In the morning, Helaman₂ and his young men (the experiencing characters) see that the Lamanites are still pursuing them (interacting object), and they realize that they are "not sufficiently strong to contend with them" (feeling). Helaman₂ also does not want to "suffer that [his] little sons should fall into their hands" (acute state) (384–85). He cares too much for them (mode of love). As a result, his troops continue their march (385). Helaman₂ experiences terror due to his love for the young men under his command. He is not the calm, calculating Teancum who "began to retreat" in a feint. Helaman₂ literally flees for his life, and so do his young men.

The narrative does not forget the Lamanites. Helaman₂ again mentions the discipline of the Lamanites, who "durst not turn to the right nor to the left, lest they should be surrounded" (385). The Lamanites (the experiencing characters) are also concerned for their lives, but in a much calmer manner. They assess the situation, and they come to a rational tactical choice: catch up and defeat the small novice force, then wheel and engage the main army. Interestingly, Helaman₂ does not mention who is commanding this Lamanite army. They are presented as a disciplined unified force. Moroni₁'s earlier narrative had his men be the calm troops, while the Lamanites were the terrified force. In Helaman₂'s battle, these roles are reversed.

The experience of Helaman₂'s dread and terror can be seen immediately after again mentioning the disciplined Lamanites. He recounts that he and his troops also "would [not] turn to the right or to the left." They do this because Helaman₂ fears that the Lamanites would overrun his force if they are allowed to catch them (385). Coming immediately after the same tactical decision on the part of the Lamanites, his decision has a much more desperate tone. The Lamanites choose to not alter their marching directions out of a rational assessment, whereas Helaman₂ makes the same choice out

of desperation.

Helaman₂'s force is then again pursued all day, sleeps for a few hours, and continues its desperate retreat at first light. The next morning, a 'fleeing' unit is repeated. Repeating the same unit centered on terror three times in slight variation intensifies the experience of Helaman₂'s terror to the point that it can almost be tasted. This is an existential dread, made all the more intense by contrasting it with the Lamanites' unyielding determination to catch and kill them (not turning to the right or the left). It is not difficult to imagine a desperate Helaman₂ searching for a way out (by not turning to the right or the left). This had not been part of the plan. Perhaps he does not even know what the plan actually was beyond 'lure them out and fight them.'

The next morning, Helaman₂ and his men are not pursued very far before the Lamanites halt. Helaman₂ explains that he and his young men "knew not" why the Lamanites had stopped, and they do not know whether it is a trap (the interacting object) (ibid.). It could be that Antipus and his men have caught with the Lamanites, meaning that Helaman₂ is faced with the rearguard; it could also be that Antipus has since given up the field. In that case, Helaman₂ would be faced with the Lamanites' main battle line waiting for his novice soldiers to engage. An attack on the main line would likely be suicide. Despite his own inexperience as a commander, Helaman₂ can recognize a potential trap. He is aware of this tactical uncertainty, and he tells the young men under his command as much: "Behold we know not but they have halted for the purpose that we should come against them" (ibid.). Helaman₂ asks his 2000 soldiers whether they want to engage the enemy despite this uncertainty. Amazingly, they want to go and fight on the *possibility* that Antipus is in danger. This is the emotional highlight of this battle: the calm heroism of these young men due to their love of God and their fellow man despite their exhausted state. This is very different from the chaotic fury of Jacob₃ and his men.

The heroism of the young men is heightened through contrast with the calm Lamanites and the professional soldiers in Moroni₁'s army. "[T]hey never had fought." And yet in the face of a disciplined and powerful enemy, "they did not fear death; and they did think more upon the liberty of their fathers, than they did upon their lives" (ibid.). The young men exhibit great

energy and a drive forward despite their exhaustion in the face of a real risk to their lives. This determination to fight has a different flavor than Jacob₃ having an “unconquerable spirit.” The spirit of the young men lets Abhinava’s ninth sentiment—*śānta* (conversion)—appear. In the face of what seems like certain death should their gamble turn out to be a mistake, these young men do not shirk their duty and are willing to sacrifice their lives for the sake of others as they believe Antipus and his men have continued to do for them by not slackening their pursuit.

The source of this transcendence of mortal fear has been brought from home. Helaman₂ explains that the young men “had been taught by their mothers” to trust in God. This faith was strengthened by trust in their mothers: “We do not doubt our mothers knew it” (ibid.). They had been taught (interacting object), and they therefore do not doubt (the consequence). The love towards and trust in their mothers exhibited by these young men stands in stark contrast to the individually-minded Lamanites under Jacob₃. Those Lamanites fought bravely out of fear and anger at their enemies. These young men are brave due to a loving relationship with their mothers and towards all others.

This love even extends to the Lamanite army opposite them. The young men declare that they are only fighting in the war, because the Nephites and their allies had been attacked: “[W]e would not slay our brethren, if they would let us alone” (ibid.). And the 2000 cannot abandon the field knowing that Antipus is (most likely) still in pursuit and perhaps in grave danger. As they say: “[T]herefore let us go, lest they should overpower the army of Antipus” (ibid.). Both their love of and conversion to God cause the small army to attack an overwhelming force. Helaman₂’s narration makes it easy to imagine him letting the young men’s answer sink in with downcast eyes, turning away from them towards their opponents, raising his gaze, and then calling a charge with him at the head: “I did return with my two thousand, against these Lamanites” (ibid.). Conversion causes the young men to exhibit great courage and heroism, and Helaman₂’s love for them causes him to lead them towards their possible deaths. This is felt as the converted mode, the experience of transcendence. Helaman₂ and his recruits are acting as *dhīrapraśāntas*, brave and converted heroes.

Fortunately, it had not been a trap, and Antipus had in fact caught

up with and engaged the Lamanites (interacting object) despite the exhausted state (feeling) of his men (the experiencing characters) from the long, forced march (another part of the interacting objects). Unfortunately, this engagement in an exhausted state results in the death of the Nephite officers. Antipus “and many of his leaders. . . had fallen by the sword” (ibid.). Here it is the Nephites (instead of the Lamanites as in the previous narrative) who have lost their commander and their officers. The loss of the Nephite command structure adds confusion (acute state) to the present difficulty of fighting after days of forced march.

The fighting is even more intense, since Antipus and his men wanted the Lamanite force to solely focus on them and to not engage Helaman₂'s novices. They therefore have to engage in such a way as to attract the attention of the entire Lamanite army, despite their own exhaustion. As a consequence of exhaustion and confusion, the men of Antipus “were about to fall into the hands of the Lamanites” and even “began to give way” (ibid.). This is one of the most heart-wrenching passages in these two chapters, as the great heroic energy shown by these men and their willingness to push themselves to the limit for the sake of Helaman₂ and his young soldiers are finally overcome, resulting in a rout.

After the Nephite *rasa* units, the text returns to two Lamanite units in a row. Helaman₂'s contingent falls upon the rear of the Lamanites who had begun pursuing the survivors of Antipus' army. The Lamanite army is taken aback (acute state), since they did not expect to be attacked by the novice force. As a consequence, the Lamanites wheel towards Helaman₂ (386). Their astonishment is still tempered with discipline since the “whole army” halts and turns and not just the rear-guard.

It is fortunate that Helaman₂'s troops decide to attack. Helaman₂ explains that had he not attacked, the entirety of the main Nephite army would have been killed: “[H]ad I not returned with my two thousand, [the Lamanites] would have obtained their purpose” (385). This sets up one of the most striking instances of metalepsis in the *Book of Mormon*. The initiation of the charge is narrated in first person, but when the two forces finally engage, the narration suddenly shifts to third person. The Lamanite pursuit of the routed main army is halted when “*Helaman* came upon their rear with *his* two thousand, and began to slay them exceedingly.” As a result,

“the whole army of the Lamanites halted and turned upon *Helaman*” (386, my emphasis).

The narrating voice, which previously had been established to be Helaman₂, had last identified itself by speaking with the first person (*I* and *my*). Here the text suddenly speaks of *Helaman* and *his* army. Once the Nephite regain the upper hand, the narration shifts back to Helaman₂ as narrator, seen in the reversion to first person: “And now it came to pass that *we*, the people of Nephi, the people of Antipus, and *I* with *my* two thousand, did surround the Lamanites, and did slay them” (ibid., my emphasis). The epistle then finishes in the first person.

The shifts are between the *intradiegetic* voice of Helaman₂ and the *extradiegetic* voice of Mormon₂. Since the story is already told in past tense, the shift is only seen by a change in grammatical person. This type of metalepsis is a “shift in grammatical person to designate the same character.”⁸ The first person singular *I* and *my* on the one hand and the name *Helaman* and the third-person possessive *his* on the other refer to the same character, Helaman₂. Neither the shift to Mormon₂ nor the shift back to Helaman₂ is narrated, or rather, overtly acknowledged.

I examine two more instances of metalepsis (between Mormon₂ and Alma₂) in chapter 7. The first of the two relies on grammatical number and the other employs grammatical tense. I propose grouping the type of metalepsis seen here between Mormon₂ and Helaman₂ and the metalepsis between Mormon₂ and Alma₂ examined in that chapter under the heading of morpho-syntactic metalepsis. This is in order to differentiate the type from the obvious structural metalepsis found between the book of Omni and Words of Mormon.

The surprising change in the fortune of battle is therefore marked by a transgressive shift in narrators. Back on the battlefield, the shift in momentum forces the Lamanite’s to regroup, offering the fleeing men of Antipus (experiencing characters) a choice. They see that the Lamanites have turned to engage Helaman₂’s army. They can either abandon the field and their comrades and save themselves, or they can return and fight.

The Nephite main army decides to rally and start a counter-offensive.

⁸Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 246.

They “gathered together their men, and came again upon the rear of the Lamanites” (386). In light of their previous rout, this rally shows their uncompromising dedication to supporting Helaman₂’s troops. They reject cowardice and self-interest and immediately seize upon the shift of the Lamanites, who probably did not expect the Nephites to rally so quickly, if at all. The men of Antipus exhibit courage, endurance, and great selflessness towards Helaman₂’s force—conversion (*śānta*) mixed with love.

The Lamanites are finally surrounded and the fight begins anew. The Lamanites are awed and frightened by the “mighty power” of Helaman₂’s young men. The battle turns against the Lamanites, and as a consequence “they were compelled to deliver up their weapons of war, and also themselves as prisoners of war” (*ibid.*). These Lamanites never exhibited the ferocity of the army faced by Moroni₁. Their heroism was overcome by the unexpected two-fronted assault of Helaman₂’s troops and the remainder of Antipus’ army. The Lamanites see the futility of fighting on and dying for a cause they have no personal stake in. They still offer a fight, but not the maelstrom seen at the battle for Mulek.

While Moroni₁’s fight ended with many dead on both sides, Helaman₂’s army is spared those atrocities. Helaman₂ describes his 2000 as having “fought as if with the strength of God” (*ibid.*). This stands in contrast to the furious Lamanites under Jacob₃, but also the Lamanites at the river Sidon who fought “like dragons” (344). As a result of fighting with the strength of God, “not one soul of them [had] fallen to the earth” (386). The emotional tone at the end of the fighting at Antiparah is strength based on conversion and Helaman₂’s marvel. The young men are filled with faith in God, which results in them fighting with the strength of God, leading to their preservation.

It is Antipus’ main army that bears the brunt of Nephite casualties. Helaman₂ seems to acknowledge this by not mentioning the death-toll among the main army after the battle. It is true that God preserves those that believe in him (that is, except when he does not). For whatever reason, the loyalty and love towards the 2000 shown by Antipus and his men are not repaid in this life. This emotional and theological ambiguity also contributes to the mixed emotional tone of the battle for Antiparah.

Once the fighting is over, the surviving Lamanites are taken captive.

Helaman₂'s deliberations concerning the prisoners only add to the ambiguity of the battle for Antiparah. Sparing the enemy has real human and material costs. For example, the prisoners later start a riot that needs to be beaten down, costing more Nephite lives (387). Helaman₂ summarizes the logistical and moral problem: "[T]herefore it became expedient for us, that we should put an end to their lives" or send them to prison camps since the Nephites barely had enough provisions for themselves (387–88). Part of the calculus of war is weighing pragmatic war crimes against preserving one's humanity (especially when trying to do so only results in more death). The text leaves open whether Helaman₂'s humane, hospitable choice to spare the prisoners was worth it.

5.4 Discussion: War Chapters

The two war accounts are quite similar in their emotional content, both focusing on facets of the heroic mode. They even include the Lamanites in the exploration of heroism. However, there are striking differences between the battles. Moroni₁ executes a more straight-forward well-orchestrated military operation which (like any plan) does not quite survive contact with the enemy, but on the whole works out as planned. The Lamanites, while still granted a measure of respect and sympathy from Mormon₂, are the confused and overwhelmed force, and the Nephites are the calm professionals. Helaman₂'s account is much more emotionally confused and ambiguous.

The stratagem for retaking Antiparah falls apart almost immediately, since the plan was never a multi-day forced march. At Antiparah, it is the Nephites who are thrown into confusion and have to adapt to an unexpected turn of events. While Moroni₁ and his men take heavy casualties, they also inflict great losses on the Lamanites. In contrast, Antipus' force is almost wiped out and is quickly routed in its exhausted condition. Helaman₂'s account is therefore much more loaded with terror. However, this contrasts with the emphasis on the love and conversion of those involved in the fighting.

Moroni₁'s, Teancum's, and Lehi₃'s men are also never described as anything other than soldiers competently executing orders. When Moroni₁

and his men march behind Jacob₃ and his force, the text does not present this as anything but military professionalism. In contrast, the events at Antiparah are much more explicitly charged with the emotional relationship between the Nephite forces. Antipus sees the danger and pushes his men ever harder to keep up. This leads to him engaging the Lamanites in an exhausted state.

The fact that Antipus and many of his officers are killed also suggests that they fought at the front rather than only encouraging and coordinating their men from behind the front-line. Foolish, perhaps, but it shows how personally and emotionally Antipus was concerned for Helaman₂'s young soldiers. When Lehi₃'s men engage the confused and wheeling Lamanites, it is again part of a well-thought-out plan. When the 2000 charge the organized Lamanite battle-line, it could have been a suicide mission (in a way it still was, given the inexperience of the 2000 young men). And yet they risk their lives to perhaps save someone who could have already abandoned them.

The two accounts of the battles also show that the role of the narrator must be included in an affective analysis. The first person narration by Helaman₂ makes his account much more personal and the flavor more intimate, whereas Mormon₂'s narration of Moroni₁ is more detached and admiring. This then points in the direction of the main thrust of the rest of this study. Mormon₂ as narrator is not a neutral observer; he is instead bound up in the events. His word choice is often too loaded to allow the reader to see him as only a dispassionate chronicler of historical events, and his use of elements like dramatic irony and the verb *cut* all show that he is very much personally and emotionally involved in the narration of the events of the *Book of Mormon*.

The narrative of Helaman₂ at Antiparah also includes a metalepsis between Helaman₂'s first person narration of his own battle and Mormon₂ as the editor who included his letter in the larger *Book of Mormon*. Mormon₂ as editor also placed the recruitment of the 2000 into the account of Moroni₁'s war effort. He is thus the shaping hand that presents the text to the reader.

The standard *rasa* model thus needs to be adapted slightly to function for a compiler-narrator-protagonist like Mormon₂. The experiencing char-

acter is Mormon₂ himself. The interacting object is the records transmitted to him, which he is molding into the abridgement that is the completed *Book of Mormon*. His intentional objects vary, and they include specific characters, his own experiences, and human existence in general. The consequence is the narration in its final form as presented to the reader. The categories of feeling and acute states are here modified to cover the specific poeticity of his narrations, whether, for example, they are complex, even confusing, or whether they are terse and he appears as a reticent narrator. His particular word choice is also often emotionally charged, but it can also become entirely neutral and distant. This too falls under the dual category of acute states/feelings.

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6 “The record which I have been making”: Structure and Self-Reflexivity

The purpose of this chapter is to understand the *Book of Mormon* as text, as opposed to the introduction of this book, which considered the peritext of the written document in its historical variation. The aim is now to understand how the work functions internally. The chapter also seeks to legitimize the analytic tools presented in chapters 3 and 4. The order will be as follows:

1. Section 6.1 covers the *Book of Mormon* as a coherent whole subordinate to Mormon₂ as implied author personified and God as implied author deified. The argument is principally that Mormon₂ is the protagonist who subordinates the narrative to his own activity.
2. Section 6.2 posits that the *Book of Mormon* establishes itself as a microcosmic utopia. The section includes the issue of constative truthfulness and how the text draws the reader into its diegesis.
3. And finally, section 6.3 examines the *Book of Mormon*'s self-reflexive call for an experiential apparatus. This includes readings of Lehi₁'s first visions as reader instruction and Alma₂'s call to experiment upon the word.

These three topics lead into chapter 7, which covers several case studies that show how Mormon₂ models the expected affective reading practice.

6.1 Mormon₂ as the Shaping Hand

To understand Mormon₂'s narratological role and power, we have to begin with the first portion of the *Book of Mormon* from 1 Nephi to the end of the book of Omni. The first narrator, Nephi₁, seems like a straightforward example of an extradiegetic narrator. The long introductory headnote for 1 Nephi begins with introducing the main characters of 1 Nephi: “An account of Lehi and his wife Sariah, and his four Sons, being called, (beginning at the eldest,) Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi” (FE, 5). The headnote then

proceeds to summarize (and therefore ‘spoil’) the plot of all of 1 Nephi. The text is its own paragraph separated by a gap, and it is also in italics. Thus it might appear to be peritext.

However, the last sentence of the headnote establishes that it is, in fact, textual since it fulfills two of the three criteria for textual statements. The sentence is attributable to a character in the story world, and it contributes to the narration and presentation of the story world: “This is according to the account of Nephi; or, in other words, I Nephi wrote this record” (ibid.). This means that the preceding headnote is also attributable to Nephi₁, who then formally introduces himself and proceeds to narrate the first visions of his father.

It must be noted that Mormon₂ is not yet present as narrator or compiler. The reader is only introduced to Nephi₁, who seems like a straightforward example of an extradiegetic or ‘conventional’ narrator. At the end of 2 Nephi, he adds a final address to future readers and ends with “for what I seal on earth, shall be brought against you at the judgment bar; for thus hath the Lord commanded me, and I must obey. Amen” (122). The book of Jacob opens with a narrative pause in which Jacob₂ introduces himself as the new narrator commanded to continue writing the Nephite records. He also chronologically situates his narration by giving a timestamp based on the Lehite exodus from Jerusalem:

For behold, it came to pass that fifty and five years had passed away, from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem; wherefore, Nephi *gave me*, Jacob, a *commandment* concerning the small plates, upon which these things are engraven. And he *gave me*, Jacob, a *commandment* that I should *write* upon these plates. . . (123, my emphasis).

Jacob₂ ends his book by bidding farewell and introducing the next record-keeper and narrator, his son Enos. He explains: “And I, Jacob, saw that I must soon go down to my grave; wherefore, I said unto my son Enos, Take these plates. And I told him the things which my brother Nephi had commanded me” (143). This type of handing off of recordkeeping and narration duties then continues to the end of the book of Omni, concluding with Amaleki₁. The text thus seems to have a large number of extradiegetic narrators and no particular organizing principle other than the continual

command to write.

It is here, at the transition from the book of Omni to Words of Mormon, that the *Book of Mormon* completely recontextualizes the preceding narrators, narration, and records. Amaleki₁ finishes his narration (151), setting up another proper transition between narrator instances practiced since the beginning of the *Book of Mormon*. Amaleki₁ had previously said that he was going to give the plates to the Nephite king Benjamin (150). The recordkeeper lineage followed since Jacob₂ thus ends, and the Nephite records pass into a new lineage.

6.1.1 “I chose these things”: Mormon₂ as Protagonist

In the first line of Words of Mormon, Mormon₂ then throws back the curtain, so to speak, and reveals himself by means of a jarring metalepsis. Given Amaleki₁'s explanation that he will give the records (and therefore the narration duty) to Benjamin, the reader can rightly expect that the next narrator will say something along the lines of ‘And now I, Benjamin, having received these plates from Amaleki, do proceed with the account of the dealings of this my people, the Nephites.’ However, the voice introduces itself as *I, Mormon*, not *I, Benjamin*: “And now I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have been making into the hands of my son Moroni” (151). In a vacuum, this explanation sounds like yet another taciturn Chemish encountered in the book of Omni (148–49), who only continued the line of succession and does not relate any events. The jarring nature of the metalepsis is only exacerbated by the rough timestamp given by this new narrator.

Even though the exact time of Amaleki₁'s narration is uncertain (something I return to later in section 6.2.4), Christ has not yet appeared to the Nephites. Given the number of narrators since the last timestamp—three hundred and twenty years since the Lehites left Jerusalem (148)—, Nephite history is still at least one hundred years away from the year 1 A.D. However, Mormon₂ as new narrator explains that his time of narration is far later than that: “[B]ehold I have witnessed almost all the destruction of my people, the Nephites,” and he is speaking from “many hundred years after the coming of Christ” (151). Not only is this narrator voice not called

Benjamin, the narrative has also performed a highly transgressive jump forward in time to events which occur long after the next events of the main narrative, what Genette calls *prolepsis*.¹

Even after this transgressive introduction, Mormon₂ never acknowledges the fact that he has essentially hijacked the narration away from Benjamin. He simply proceeds to explain his project:

[...] I searched among the records which had been *delivered* (!) into my hands, and I found these plates, which contained this small account of the Prophets, from Jacob, down to the reign of this king Benjamin; and also, many of the words of Nephi [...] wherefore, I *chose* these things, to finish my record upon them, which remainder of my record I shall *take* from the plates of Nephi; and I cannot write a hundredth part of the things of my people. But behold, I shall *take* these plates, which contain these prophecyings and revelations, and *put them* with the remainder of my record (151–52, my emphasis).

The narration and records included up to that point were thus placed there and quoted by Mormon₂. The previous section's narratological level abruptly crashes down one order since the change in level is transgressive to the point of occurring *up* to a previously undisclosed level. Mormon₂ also explains that he has to be quite selective about how much he includes. Even though he has been in the background up to now (similar to Vyāsa in the MhBh), he has nonetheless been the shaping hand of the text. The previous narration has been under the purview of Mormon₂'s narratological actions, and all of the previous narrators (Nephi₁ through Amaleki₁) were only granted the privilege of having their entire writings quoted verbatim because Mormon₂ as compiler *allowed* it and *chose* to remain unseen. The previous narrators are therefore *intradiegetic* narrators.

These many intradiegetic narrators serve an important function in the *Book of Mormon*. Even though some, like Chemish, only say a few sentences, their presence guarantees the line of succession and transmission of the records later delivered to Mormon₂. The chain of succession was maintained over these centuries, and the plates were never lost to the recordkeepers. Mormon₂ can trust that the record of Nephi₁ is transmitted correctly

¹Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 40; see also Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 79.

and completely because there was an uninterrupted and clearly traceable line of transmission² of a physical original from Nephi₁ through Amaleki₁ and eventually Ammaron and finally to Mormon₂. The final archive thus contains an accurate copy of Nephi₁'s record, in the sense that they are the words that Nephi₁ (diegetically) wrote. Mormon₂ can include these minor intradiegetic narrators as proof of legitimacy of delivery (*Überlieferungslegitimität*) and a seal of authenticity for the included initial portion. Furthermore, this reinforces the appropriateness of Ehlich's concept of delivered text, since Mormon₂ literally describes the archive in this way.

Apart from legitimizing the concept of delivered text, the jarring metalepsis of Mormon₂'s introduction fulfills a significant structural role in the *Book of Mormon*. It establishes Mormon₂ as the implied author personified. Like the seer Dvaipāyana, he is the scripture's *vyāsa*, "arranger, compiler" (MW, 1035). Before the metalepsis between the book of Omni and Words of Mormon, there was not yet a visible organizing principle for the *Book of Mormon*. Each narrating voice only took responsibility for its own section. Nephi₁ even admits to not knowing an overall plan for the text (FE, 21). Once Mormon₂ reveals himself as the organizing hand behind the structure of the text, he positions himself as the instance responsible for what Prince calls the text's design and the values it adheres to.³

Had Mormon₂ not hijacked the narration and thereby shown his narratological power, his claims to being the organizing principle would ring hollow. The literary strategy is showing that Mormon₂ is capable of intervening at any time to any degree he chooses. The text thereby demonstrates that the entire structure, from the placement of narratives to their extent, is at Mormon₂'s discretion and under the control of a (diegetic) agent. The concept of the implied author is therefore not a projection *down*, but a justification *up* from within the object itself.

I do not wish to overstate the argument that Mormon₂ is the implied author personified. The *Book of Mormon* invariably includes the actual theoretical implied author organizing Mormon₂ himself. Mormon₂ shows himself to be a character with flaws and limitations. For example, he oc-

²Cf. the genealogy of recordkeepers.

³Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 42.

asionally becomes emotionally caught up in the events, limiting his full control over the narration. This is the premise for chapter 7. However, by presenting him as such a narratologically powerful character, the text makes it clear that the entire structure of the text is significant and nothing is incidental or accidental. Mormon₂'s introduction of his project demonstrates that the text must be read as a coherent whole and the extent and placement of events are deliberate choices.

6.1.2 God as Implied Author Deified

However, even if Mormon₂ is too flawed or limited to be considered the personification of the principle of the implied author, the role of the true implied author guiding Mormon₂ is nonetheless signified (or rather, *deified*) in the *Book of Mormon* through the presence of God as the final guarantor of the text. The God of the *Book of Mormon* is explicitly homodiegetic. He is a participant within the world and even directly speaks to the people after the destruction in 3 Nephi leading up to the theophany (472–74). God also fulfils the narratological role of the final principle of coherence of the text.

Mormon₂ and Moroni₂ are still under the veto power of God when it comes to their narration. It is true that Mormon₂ makes his own decisions for most of the text, and he is the principal shaping hand of the narrative that chooses what should be narrated where, by whom, and in how much detail. However, he receives two narratological vetoes in close proximity in 3 Nephi. The first veto occurs when Mormon₂ wants to include more of the teachings of the visiting Christ, but he is halted in his work: “Behold I were about to write them all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, *but the Lord forbid it*” (506, my emphasis).

He later wishes to write the names of the three disciples who had chosen to remain on earth and who would not die. The text makes it sound as if he was leaning over his plates and receives the veto just as he was going to touch his engraving tool to the metal sheet: “Behold, I were *about* to write the names of those who were never to taste of death; *but the Lord forbade*, therefore I write them not” (511, my emphasis). God intervenes in the writing process in ‘real time’ as it were. Mormon₂ modifies his approach

to these passages and instead restricts his narration to the approved content.

Such an injunction against writing something the extradiegetic narrator wishes to include is also found in the microcosmic book of Ether.⁴ Moroni₂ wishes to include more of Ether's prophecies but also receives a divine veto: "And I was about to write more, but I am forbidden" (567). These few instances of a divine narratological veto show that the rest of Mormon₂ and Moroni₂'s narration carries a seal of divine approval. All editorial choices of both narrators are part of a divinely ordained textual order, and everything included by the shaping hand of Mormon₂ as implied author personified can be read as significant in both structure and content and in accordance with the overall design and values of the text.

God also plays the role as final guarantor of the delivered text, even beyond the verified line of succession. When Christ appears to the Nephites, he asks them to bring the records they had written up to that point. "And when Nephi had brought forth the records, and laid them before him, he cast his eyes upon them..." (503), and he notices an important gap. For some reason the Nephites had not written down the fulfillment of the prophecies of Samuel the Lamanite. He calmly criticizes this oversight: "And Jesus saith unto them, How be it that ye have not written this thing, that many saints did arise and appear unto many, and did minister unto them?" (ibid.). Nephi₃ then remedies this lacuna.

This is the only instance where a gap in the delivered text is filled through divine intervention. And yet the presence of this literary strategy legitimizes Mormon₂ and Moroni₂'s work, since they can be certain that they have everything they need for their task. God, here acting through Christ, would have ensured that any significant lacunae are filled in the record to ensure a complete state as delivered text.

Both the vetoes and the filling of the textual gap show how God is the final narratological and textual guarantor. Everything that is included received divine approval, and anything that might be missing is not important, since God did not intervene to ensure its inclusion. Mormon₂ is still the narrative instance that makes the narratological choices. He is only divinely supported and supervised in his task. As he says in Words of Mor-

⁴See section 6.2.1.

mon, he makes the narrative “according to the knowledge and the understanding which God hath given me” (152). God is ‘only’ the narratological final and highest control instance.

I give this level the term supradiegetic, if only for terminological completeness. All of this points to an idea I return to in the final chapter of this study: God can be seen as the true Abhinava’ian protagonist, since Mormon₂’s narratological will is still superseded by that of God as final guarantor. God is the character who subordinates the plot to himself, both as the omnipotent and the supradiegetic instance. God is the organizing principle holding the text together and which the reader can come to know.

A broad summary of these narratological structures is given in figure 6.1 on page 177. The diagram is not complete or to scale in terms of discourse time. It also does not cover all narrators, much less all voices found in the text, although it does include God as the homodiegetic supradiegetic implied author deified tying the whole work together. The diagram also includes further examples of multi-level narration, such as when Nephi₁ quotes Isaiah (which technically makes Isaiah a metadiegetic narrator). The diagram does not include the long sermons, such as those by Benjamin and Samuel, or more complex narratological functions like Abinadi’s sermon only being diegetically available because Alma₁ wrote it down from memory.

The diagram focuses on the frequent changes in narrator and narrator level that occur over the course of the *Book of Mormon*. I call this structure of frequent narrator changes the text’s ‘accordion’ structure. The most interesting feature is Mormon₂’s many positions. He is the homodiegetic extradiegetic narrator of the first portion, the autodiegetic extradiegetic narrator of his own book, and an autodiegetic intradiegetic narrator when quoted by Moroni₂ in the book of Moroni. These intradiegetic chapters are significant for being included against Mormon₂’s will, as it were (something I return to later).

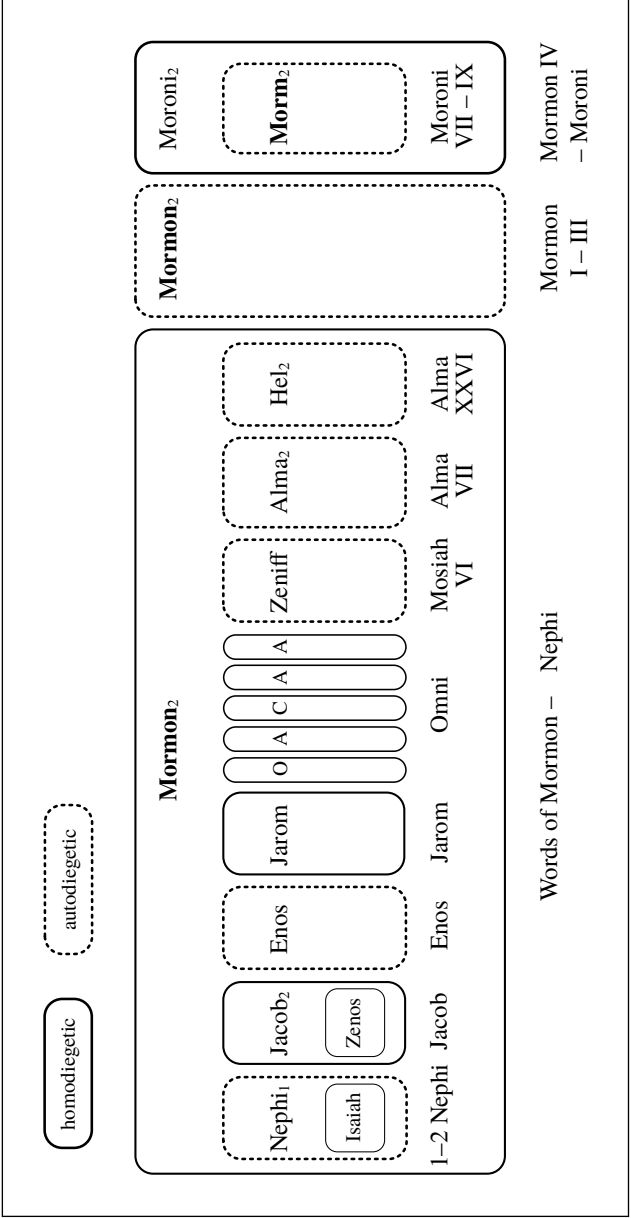


Figure 6.1: 'Accordion structure' of the Book of Mormon

6.1.3 Mormon₂ as *āśraya*

Having now established the structure of the *Book of Mormon*'s narration and Mormon₂'s role in it, I propose that Mormon₂ is the protagonist of the *Book of Mormon*. Of all the narrative voices, he is the one with the most control over discourse and story time. He is the forming hand which selects, leaves out, and orders.⁵ Expressed this way, the argument seems obvious, almost tautological.

While Mormon₂ is certainly the 'hero' of his own subbook, it might nonetheless seem strange to call him the protagonist of the entire work. This is where *rasa*'s definition of the protagonist becomes valuable: the character "who leads the story in the sense of subordinating it to his own activity" and "who enjoys the reward at the conclusion" (DhvL, 413 L). I previously also included the tragic hero, the character who experiences the resolution of the plot.⁶

No character in the *Book of Mormon* better fulfills these criteria than Mormon₂. His son certainly feels the aftermath of the resolution and is tasked with writing a final eulogy and conclusion, but Mormon₂ is the one in whom all of the previous narrative threads collide and crescendo in the final battle. He experiences the unloading of all of the spiritual highs and lows and the seeds of conflict laid over centuries. He is the prophet-commander who has to witness centuries-old prophecy be fulfilled.

The battle at Camorah⁷ is the conclusion of the main narrative of both the *Book of Mormon* and the book of Mormon. Moroni₂'s portion of the text is still an essential component of the overall structure. However, in terms of overarching narrative, it is not a final culmination, but instead a denouement. In terms of experiencing of resolution of the plot, Mormon₂ is thus the tragic hero. He is the one who must come to terms with the weight of the doctrine of agency. Like the seer Dvaipāyana (Vyāsa), he is the narrative's *dhīraprasānta*, its *converted hero*.

If we accept Mormon₂'s role as the protagonist of the overall text, the emotional *rasa* meaning of the work finally becomes clear. The emotional

⁵Cf. Müller, *Morphologische Poetik*, 273.

⁶See section 4.2.2.

⁷Changed to *Cumorah* as of the SE (558; cf. also YE, 660, 784).

meaning of a work in *rasa* was defined as “a particular stable psychological state belonging to a particular subject, who is called the protagonist.”⁸ The emotional state, or rather the emotional development and emotional journey of the protagonist, is the emotional meaning of a narrative. Mormon₂ is therefore the *āśraya* of the predominant emotional mode. Chapter 7 demonstrates that this is the sorrowful mode.

Genette’s theory also points in the direction of an affective narrator when he says that “[t]he narrator’s orientation toward himself, finally, brings about a function [...] accounting for the part the narrator as such takes in the story he tells, the relationship he maintains with it—an affective relationship.”⁹ This does not mean that *all* narrators have an affective relationship with the stories they tell, only that such a relationship is possible. The emotional *rasa* meaning of the *Book of Mormon* is then the emotional development of Mormon₂, the narrator-protagonist.

This assertion is strengthened by Grant Hardy’s description of the work as a whole, in which he says that the *Book of Mormon* in “the entirety of its contents and structure [...] can be read as speech acts that reveal the personalities of its narrators.”¹⁰ In this study I am radicalizing this statement to argue that the *Book of Mormon* in the entirety of its contents and structure can be read at speech acts that reveal *the emotional development of its narrator-hero Mormon₂*.

6.2 Narrative as Microcosm

Having now legitimized the concepts of delivered text, implied author, and Mormon₂ as the protagonist-experiencing character, the next step is to legitimize my bracketing of constative and genetic issues. I begin the discussion with the book of Ether, which is the *Book of Mormon* in miniature. It therefore shows how the text sees itself. The book is narrated by Moroni₂, who is charged by his father, Mormon₂, to do so. Thus while Moroni₂’s narratological actions are his own, he is still under the aegis of his father.

⁸Tubb, “Śāntarasa,” 188.

⁹Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 256.

¹⁰G. Hardy, *Understanding*, 25.

The choice to include the book of Ether was also mandated by Mormon₂.

The principal narrative of the *Book of Mormon* relates the 1000-year rise and fall of the Lehitese over the course of over five hundred pages. The 1000 years can be established from internal chronology. The history of the Jaredites is covered in only the thirty-four pages of the book of Ether, but the exact extent of narrated time cannot be established from within the text of the subbook or even the *Book of Mormon*. In many respects, the book of Ether is a final summation and review of the most important lessons of the previous Lehitese narrative. As Samuel Brown says: “*The Book of Mormon* repeatedly presents the Book of Ether as a type for the whole.”¹¹ It is both structurally and thematically the previous Lehitese narrative in condensed form and in miniature. I examine this premise in the following section.

6.2.1 The book of Ether and (or as) the *Book of Mormon*

book of Mormon At first glance, the book of Ether seems to be an *A.D. hoc* addition by Moroni₂, who concludes his own task as recordkeeper in the last chapters of the book of Mormon. He tells the reader that he will finish the text and then bury the records, adding that this metal record no longer has space for more text: “Behold, my father hath made this record, and he hath written the intent thereof. And behold, I would write it also *if I had room upon the plates*, but I have not; and ore I have none, for I am alone” (FE, 532, my emphasis). Not only are the plates he is in possession of full or almost full, he also has no way of producing more plates. This revelation makes all of the final content of these final chapters significant, since this is what he considers vital to squeeze within the last space available to him.

Briefly jumping to the beginning of the book of Moroni, Moroni₂ makes a rather dry observation after having finished narrating the book of Ether: “Now I, Moroni₂, after having made an end of abridging the account of the people of Jared, I had supposed not to have written more, but I have not as yet perished” (574). In essence: ‘I might as well write, since I am not yet dead.’ Moroni₂ could well have felt the same way about the book of Ether, considering his admission of a lack of space at the end of the book

¹¹Brown, “Read the Round,” 165.

of Mormon. However, his opening to the book of Ether does not contain the same resignation found at the beginning of the book of Moroni:

And now I, Moroni, proceed to give an account of those ancient inhabitants which were destroyed by the hand of the Lord upon the face of this north country. And I take mine account from the twenty and four plates which were found by the people of Limhi, which is called the Book of Ether (538).

This straightforward introduction suggests that the end of the book of Mormon was only the end to his own work and that the book of Ether continues his assigned task. Moroni₂ explains his project and his source, but he does not give the justification of 'I might as well' found at the beginning of the next book.

The narrative of the Jaredites is mentioned several times in the *Book of Mormon*. The first mention is by Amaleki₁. Here the people of Zarahemla encounter the last survivor of the Jaredites, and they also find a large stone that contains another record of that civilization (150). The stone record is translated by Mosiah₁, the grandfather of Mosiah₂, who in turn translates the gold records of the Jaredites at the end of the book of Mosiah. Two different Mosiahs therefore translate two different records of the same people. A few chapters after the book of Omni (Mosiah V), the metal records of the Jaredites are first mentioned (172).

At the end of the book of Mosiah, when the golden record is finally also translated, Mormon₂ promises that this account will be included at some later point: "And this account shall be written hereafter: for behold, it is expedient that all people should know the things which are written in this account" (216). Mormon₂ has access to all of these records, since they are handed down the continual chain of recordkeepers and are finally delivered to him. He is not promising something that he cannot provide.

The book of Ether is so central to Mormon₂'s abridgment that it fulfills a promise which he does not fulfill himself. The repeating motif of the book of Ether is the destruction which secret combinations and a general lust for power can cause. This motif also becomes prominent towards the end of the Lehite narrative. Secret combinations first appear in the first chapter of the book of Helaman. The most prominent group is called *Gadianton*

Robbers. Soon after the first machinations of this secret society, Mormon₂ foreshadows that such groups will prove to be the downfall of the Nephites at the end of the book of Mormon. As narrator and compiler, Mormon₂ makes an explicit promise.

And behold, in the end of this book, ye shall see that this Gadianton did prove the overthrow, yea, almost the entire destruction of the people of Nephi.—Behold I do not mean the end of the Book of Helaman, but I mean the end of the Book of Nephi, from which I have taken all the account which I have written (411).

Mormon₂ does not only say that these examples will come up at a later point in the subbook, but he makes it absolutely clear that he is referring to the end of his entire compilation. With this passage, different peritexts become relevant again. The LDS editions split Helaman I (FE, 407–11) into two smaller chapters. Chapter 1 contains thirty-four verses and chapter two consists of fourteen verses (L13, 368–72).

This creates a division between the account of the political upheavals in the book of Helaman by way of political infighting from the first genocide (or rather judicide) in Lehite history. In the FE, all of these events are in a single chapter and are read as belonging together. The FE therefore places political intrigue and an assassination together with Mormon₂'s promise that the end of his abridgement will show how such secret combinations will prove the downfall of the entire people. This places political infighting and assassinations into the same category. The thesis is clear: This will be the downfall of the people.

However, the book of Mormon does not mention any instances of political infighting and assassination. The Gadianton Robbers are a persistent military threat, but they are not mentioned in the context of the final battle. Mormon₂ accompanies the slow downfall of his people, but he never shows how the secret combinations introduced in the book of Helaman caused this eventual downfall. Whatever the explanation for this oversight given by a historical reading, the fact remains that the promise in the first chapter of the book of Helaman is never fulfilled by Mormon₂ himself. However, it is fulfilled by proxy through his son.

Alma₂, speaking to Helaman₂, says that the value of the twenty-four

plates of the Jaredites is precisely in showing the effect of secret combinations.

And now, I will speak unto you concerning those twenty-four plates, that ye keep them, that the mysteries and the works of darkness, and their secret works, or the secret works of those people who have been destroyed, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, all their murders, and robbings, and their plunderings, and all their wickedness and abominations, may be made manifest unto this people (328).

According to Alma₂, the emphasis of the narrative of the Jaredite record is on the secret combinations and the murders and other crimes committed by them. Nowhere in the instructions to his son does Alma₂ mention any archaeological or anthropological value. The value is didactic in that the narrative dramatizes its subject matter.

He lays out the duty that now rests on Helaman₂ as the next record-keeper and prophet. He is to teach that the Jaredites “were destroyed on account of their wickedness and abominations and their murders” (ibid.). In other words, the primary purpose of the translated Jaredite records is showing how secret combinations, political infighting, assassinations, etc. lead to the downfall of an entire people. This text can therefore fulfill the promise of Mormon₂ given in Helaman I. The promise is simply fulfilled using a different people as an example.

This brings us to how the book of Ether is the Lehite narrative in microcosm. Both the longer text produced by Mormon₂ and the shorter book of Ether produced by Moroni₂, are called ‘accounts’ (i, 539). The title page of the *Book of Mormon* calls both the shorter book of Ether and the larger *Book of Mormon* narrative ‘abridgements’ (i). The creation of these abridged accounts even follows the pattern begun by Nephi₁, who first makes “an abridgment of the record of” Lehi₁ before coming to his own life (7). The book of Ether therefore follows the pattern set down by both Nephi₁ and Mormon₂ in their own accounts and abridgements.

As with the larger *Book of Mormon*, the record of the Jaredites from which Moroni₂ produces the book of Ether comes from found manuscripts in the form of plates (538). These plates contain the complete record produced by the last Jaredite prophet, Ether, who hid them after the events

of the narrative and after he had finished his own writings (573). These plates are found when Limhi's scouts are searching for a way through the wilderness back to the land of Zarahemla but get lost and instead find the bone-strewn battlefield of the final conflict of the Jaredites (172).

In like manner, Moroni₂ also hides the records after he finishes the book of Moroni and concludes the *Book of Mormon* (529, 532, 585). The author's preface claims that Moroni₂'s plates are later found by Joseph Smith (iv). The events of a prophet finishing metal records and hiding them so that they are later unearthed is therefore found on both the scale of the entire text and on the scale of a single narrative within the text.

Not only are both narratives based on found manuscripts in the form of plates, both are also translated by inspiration, since the original language was unintelligible to those who found the records. Limhi, speaking to Ammon₁, wants to know whether there is a way to translate the foreign language of the plates that his scouts have found into the language of the Nephites. "Knowest thou of any one that can translate? for I am desirous that these records should be translated into our language" (172). Ammon₁ explains that the current Nephite king in Zarahemla (Mosiah₂) is capable of translating, since he is a seer in possession of seer stones.

Once the people of Limhi finally returns to the land of Zarahemla, they give the plates to Mosiah₂, who translates them by virtue of his gift as a seer and his two seer stones. The definition of a seer is not only one who can translate languages, but is specifically defined as a person who is in possession of seer stones: "[A]nd whosoever has these things, is called seer, after the manner of old times" (216). Since Joseph Smith is described as a seer (64), the converse of this explanation is that Joseph Smith also used seer stones as part of his translation. Joseph Smith, in fact, makes this claim epitextually.¹²

Mosiah₂ also dictates the text to a scribe. The translation is "caused to be written" (FE, 216). This is significant since the FE preface uses this phrase to describe Joseph Smith's translation process. "I translated, by the gift and power of God, and *caused to be written* one hundred and sixteen pages" (iii, my emphasis). Joseph Smith as seer-translator thus entirely fol-

¹²Roberts, *History of the Church*, 1:18–23.

lows the example set by seer-king Mosiah₂. The narrative of the production history of the Jaredite account therefore coincides with the way the *Book of Mormon* describes its own transition from hidden metal record to English text.

In addition, the internal narratological structures of the *Book of Mormon* and the book of Ether are also strikingly parallel. All three principal narrators, Nephi₁, Mormon₂, and Moroni₂, are intrusive¹³ and self-reflexive and guide the reader through the narrative. Moroni₂, like the others, repeatedly stops the flow of the narrative in order to explain something, speak to the reader, or reflect on his own project. For example, he interrupts the narrative of the many wars in order to begin a discourse on faith (563). He proceeds to illustrate how faith functions not only with elements of the Jaredite narrative, but he also uses episodes from the Lehite narrative. This discourse takes up the rest of that chapter (563–66). He also mentions his divine veto (567). All of these strategies again cause the book of Ether to act as the *Book of Mormon* in condensed form.

While the structural similarities between the larger text and the book of Ether can be succinctly summarized, the content parallels are far too many to enumerate all of them in detail within the confines of this study. I here mention only a few parallels. The Lehite narrative starts at the biblical Jerusalem, and the emigrants are spared the destruction of the city at the hands of the Babylonians. The Jaredites are also spared a biblical calamity, the confusion of languages at the Tower of Babel (FE, 539). In the same way as the beginning of the *Book of Mormon* grounds its narrative in the biblical story of the destruction of Jerusalem, the beginning of the Jaredite narrative likewise grounds itself in a well-known biblical story.

The Jaredites travel through the desert, and they are led by superhuman means (541). This parallels the story of Lehi₁ and his people being guided by the compass called the Liahona (39). Both groups reach the ocean after their travels through the desert, and each group is commanded to build one or more ships in order to cross the ocean to the Promised Land.¹⁴ Soon

¹³Cf. Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 46–47.

¹⁴FE, 42f; 542f.

after their arrival in the Promised Land, each group desires a king.¹⁵ Each narrative warns of the dangers of a corrupt king and includes examples of the effects of such kings.

This is repeatedly shown in the narrative of the Jaredites; the main example of a corrupt king in the Lehite narrative is Noah₃. Both narratives warn of the evils of excessive taxes levied by corrupt kings.¹⁶ The Lehite narrative includes multiple episodes of groups wanting to overthrow the government in order to establish their own king (such as the supporters of Amlici in Alma I and the king-men in Alma XXIII). The first Jaredite coup is carried out by the son of the first king (550–51). Many more such coups are mentioned later, including the first conspiracy by a secret society (553–55).

Both narratives include multiple prophets that prophesy the destruction of the people, and both include times when the warnings are accepted and those when the prophets are rejected and even killed.¹⁷ The narratives also contain smaller parallel stories. Both narratives have groups which are warned by God to flee before they are attacked.¹⁸ Each account contains a drought being used to bring the people to repent.¹⁹

Whereas the story of the Lehighes *begins* with the beheading of Laban at the hands of Nephi, the Jaredite narrative *ends* with the beheading of one warlord at the hands of the other as the last act of the final battle.²⁰ Both narratives include the founding of secret combinations that are established in order to gain wealth and power.²¹ Each account ends with a final annihilating war in which hundreds of thousands die. In the case of the Jaredites, it is not only one clan that is destroyed, but the entire people except for one last man, Coriantumr.²²

All of the parallels occur over the course of less than a tenth of the

¹⁵FE, 72; 550.

¹⁶FE, 178–79; 558.

¹⁷FE, 153, 450, 467; 552, 557–561.

¹⁸FE, 149, 194, 300; 555.

¹⁹FE, 436–37; 557–58.

²⁰FE, 13; 573.

²¹FE, 410–11; 553.

²²FE, 150; 572–73.

Lehite narrative. This high density of parallels shows that the Jaredite narrative found in Ether should be read as the final summation of the most important elements of the previous narrative. In both structure and content, the macro of the entire *Book of Mormon* text and the micro of the book of Ether coincide. This allows the book of Ether to be plumbed for clues in order to understand the *Book of Mormon*. With this analytic tool now fully established, I begin my discussion of the *Book of Mormon*'s text-internal examination of the pragmatic concept of literature. I start with the text's treatment of its fictionality (its relationship with extra-textual reality^{23a}) and how it implicates its readers in its diegesis.

6.2.2 “As if ye were present”: The Epidiegetic Reader

I previously argued that the *Book of Mormon* must be understood through what Krysmanski calls the *utopic method*.^{23b} The *Book of Mormon* principally follows this method through biblical elements like Jerusalem, the Law of Moses, and the Tower of Babel. The narrative also uses biblical chronology, thus creating a separate reality within the biblical world known to and accepted by the reader, something Nietzsche calls “religiously acknowledged reality sanctioned by myth and cult.”²⁴

In fact, the Bible is alluded to multiple times throughout the *Book of Mormon* and in one passage is mentioned ten times by name in the space of two paragraphs: “And because my words shall hiss forth, many of the Gentiles shall say, A Bible, a Bible, we have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible” (115). This section is the only location where the term *Bible* is used in the *Book of Mormon*. This explicit use unambiguously refers to the reality of the reader, since none of the *Book of Mormon* characters ever refer to the writings from which they take Isaiah and other prophetic texts by that name. They instead speak of *Plates of Brass*, which are first mentioned by Nephi₁ (9). Mormon₂ mentions them the last time in 3 Nephi (475). Only God uses the modern term *Bible*. All of these elements signal to the reader that the *Book of Mormon*'s world is not in

²³ See section 3.4.1.

²⁴ Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy*, 39.

an alternate fictional world, but in the biblical world the reader is familiar with.

At the same time, the *Book of Mormon* isolates itself from the biblical world and even the Bible text. The text seemingly plagiarizes entire chapters from the Bible (especially from Isaiah). However, this ‘plagiarism’ (with some modification²⁵) allows the text to not have to require extra-textual biblical knowledge from the reader. All biblical elements required to understand the biblical message are found within the delivered text itself. For example, when Abinadi teaches about the Ten Commandments (FE, 183–84), he does not say to the priests: ‘Ye know what they say, wherefore I will only explain what they mean.’ The *Book of Mormon* provides the relevant Exodus passage, allowing the text to be both in reference to and independent of the Bible.

Coming from the CoC perspective, Andrew Bolton calls for moving away from “conservative and liberal preoccupations with origins of the Book of Mormon” and to instead take it seriously “in terms of its evangelistic proclamation of Christ, and its teachings on faithful discipleship and radical social justice,” examining how the text “gives accounts of religiously inspired utopia.”²⁶ While I do not share his inherently optimistic utopian reading, the *Book of Mormon* is not a dystopia. The narrative is too varied for such a value-judgment.

Krysmanski even argues that the distinction between utopias and dystopias has little to do with the text itself, but instead comes from extra-textual value-judgments.²⁷ However, I follow Bolton in calling for seeing the text not as historiographic, but instead as a microcosmic narrative set in the past for the literary function of simultaneously anchoring itself in and isolating itself from the extra-textual reality of the reader.

The playfulness of the elements of extra-textual reality can be most clearly seen in the *Book of Mormon*’s use of peritext. Here the diegesis of the text and the actual world of the reader collide and blur together. At first glance, the FE begins with different *peritextual* elements. Joseph Smith

²⁵G. Hardy, “*Book of Mormon* and the Bible,” 119.

²⁶Bolton, “Utopian Vision,” 144.

²⁷Krysmanski, “Eigenart des utopischen Romans,” 279.

signed the FE title page as “Author and Proprietor,” leading to Campbell’s supposed ‘gotcha moment.’²⁸ The entire text of the title page is also included in the copyright statement on the next page (FE, ii).

All of this makes it seem like these elements were included by Joseph Smith the scriptor to prepare the audience for the text he had produced. In other words, these printed passages would act as peritext. However, Joseph Smith not only appears as the ‘author,’ but also as a character in the narrative. He is mentioned in an address of Lehi₁ to his son Joseph₂. Lehi₁ quotes from what the *Book of Mormon* claims is a prophecy of the biblical Joseph₁ (the great-grandson of Abraham). This is the Joseph “which was carried captive into Egypt” (66).

This Joseph’s prophecy speaks of a seer who will bring forth a book, written by the descendants of Joseph₁. These descendants are the descendants of Lehi₁, who is himself “a descendant of Joseph; yea, even that Joseph which was the son of Jacob, which was sold into Egypt” (15). The supposed prophecy even mentions the name of the seer who will bring forth this book by Joseph₁’s descendants. However, it never says the name outright. “And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father” (67). The title page of the *Book of Mormon* is signed by Joseph Smith, *Junior*. This means that Joseph Smith’s father was also called Joseph Smith (which in fact he was).

The text stops just short of explicitly saying that this Joseph mentioned in the text is Joseph Smith the author and proprietor. And yet, the inclusion of the *Junior* identifies him as the seer mentioned in Joseph₁’s prophecy. Using the subscript system, Joseph Smith Jr. should actually be Joseph₄: Joseph₁ – the Old Testament patriarch; Joseph₂ – the *Book of Mormon* character; Joseph₃ – Joseph Smith Senior; and Joseph₄ – Joseph Smith Jr., the scriptor of the *Book of Mormon*. The fact that Joseph Smith Jr. also exists as Joseph₄ calls into question the purely peritextual status of the title page.

Joseph₄ is also addressed directly by the final narrator, Moroni₂. Speaking directly to the translator of the work, who was established at the beginning of the *Book of Mormon* as Joseph Smith Jr. (i.e. Joseph₄), Moroni₂

²⁸Campbell, *Delusions*, 13; cf. section 2.1 in this study.

promises three witnesses who will corroborate Joseph₄'s claims:

And behold, ye may be privileged that ye may shew the plates unto those who shall assist to bring forth this work; and unto three shall they be shewn by the power of God; wherefore, they shall know of a surety that these things are true. And in the mouth of three witnesses shall these things be established; and the testimony of three, and this work, in the which shall be shewn forth the power of God, and also his word (548).

Joseph₄ the “Author and Proprietor” is thus himself a character in the narrative, and anything attributed to “Joseph Smith Junior” must be attributed to the translator-character Joseph₄.

The *Book of Mormon* thus plays with its thresholds and turns them from lines to be crossed, to gradients to be traversed in order to enter and then leave the narrative. Moroni₂'s address and mention of three witnesses changes the peritextual status of the Testimony of the Three Witnesses and to some extent the Testimony of the Eight Witnesses. The two testimonies seem to be two ‘reviews,’ i.e. epitext added as peritext. However, the situation is more complicated. For one, the Testimony of the Three Witnesses is also prophesied by Nephi₁.

The completed record of Nephi₁'s people will be “hid from the eyes of the world, that the eyes of none shall behold it” and only the prophet-translator will have access to the plates. The only exception will be “three witnesses” who “shall behold it, by the power of God.” The function of these three is to “testify to the truth of the book, and the things therein” (110). This testimonial function is precisely what the three witnesses fulfill:

[W]e, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record [...] the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we *bear testimony* of these things... (589, my emphasis).

Nephi₁'s prophecy also leaves open the possibility of even more witnesses: “Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to bring forth the words of the

book; and in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good, will he establish his word” (110–11). Even though this does not contain a specific number like the prophecy of the three, it nonetheless implies that the Testimony of the Eight Witnesses is also the fulfillment of diegetic prophecy.

Since the Testimony of Three Witnesses is explicitly mentioned by Nephi₁ and directly promised to Joseph₄ by Moroni₂, it ceases to be peritextual by fulfilling the third criterion for text (referenced by statements attributable to characters in the story world).²⁹ Nephi₁’s prophecy is in the first portion of the text. Moroni₂’s address to the translator comes close to the end of the narrative in the book of Ether, reinforcing the earlier prophecy and ensuring that readers remember that a testimony of three was promised when they reach the end of the *Book of Mormon* approximately forty pages later.

Once they reach the end of the narrative proper and turn the page, they find the page titled “The Testimony of Three Witnesses.” This text takes on a different meaning than simply a ‘review’ or ‘endorsement’ appended as an afterword. This section itself becomes fulfillment of prophecy. It was diegetically foreseen 2400 and 1400 years earlier by two prophets of God, and here this vision is fulfilled. The extra-textual reality of the historical reader from 1830 and onward is thus forced onto the diegesis of the narrative. The two worlds, the textual and the extra-textual, are made to collide by Joseph₁, Nephi₁, and Moroni₂ and their respective prophecies concerning Joseph₄.

The introductory and closing peritextual elements of the title page and the Testimony of Three Witnesses therefore exist in a liminal space between peritext and text. Even the Testimony of the Eight is nudging up against the liminal status by being an instance of the possibility of additional witnesses. This means that only copyright is truly peritextual in the FE, since it is not promised anywhere in the *Book of Mormon* or attributable to a character in the diegesis. Unlike the two testimonies, it does not fulfill the third criterion for text posited earlier, since it is not referenced by statements attributable to characters in the diegesis.³⁰

²⁹Cf. the end of section 3.5.1.

³⁰Cf. sections 3.5.1 and 3.7.1

Thus rather than speaking of these passages as peritext, I propose the term *liminal text*. The FE then begins with the liminal text of the title page and the peritext of the copyright. Having the copyright page include the text of the title page again emphasizes that the liminal text and text exist in the real world of 1830 New York State, since the copyright deals with real laws of a real country. From the beginning, extra-textual reality is therefore implicated within the diegesis of the narrative, and this implication is then reaffirmed at the end of the volume.

The *Book of Mormon* continues its inclusion of extra-textual elements into a utopic narrative by repeatedly addressing the reader. In the first chapter of the text, Nephi₁ introduces a portion of his narration by saying: “Therefore, I would that *ye* should know...” (FE, 7, my emphasis). The *ye* here refers not to characters in the diegesis but to the readers of the text. The *Book of Mormon* repeatedly uses this kind of address, culminating with Moroni₂. In the chapter where he takes over the narration from his father, he has an extensive address to the reader. He explains: “Behold, I speak unto you as if *ye* were present, and yet *ye* are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shewn you unto me, and I know your doing” (534).

He uses this heavenly knowledge of the future to speak to the supposed conditions which will exist at the time of the *Book of Mormon*’s publishing. This address is part of a multi-page paragraph that comprises almost the entire chapter (531–38). Only the last half page contains a normal-sized one. The intensity of Moroni₂’s accusations makes it worth rendering a large portion of the chapter:

O *ye wicked*, and *perverse*, and *stiffnecked* people, why have *ye* built up churches unto yourselves to get gain? Why have *ye* transfigured the holy word of God, that *ye* might bring *damnation* upon your souls? Behold, look *ye* unto the revelations of God. For behold, the time cometh at that day when all these things must be fulfilled. Behold, the Lord hath shewn unto me great and marvellous things concerning that which must shortly come at that day when these things shall come forth among you. Behold, I speak unto you as if *ye* were present, and yet *ye* are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shewn you unto me, and I know your doing; and I know that *ye* do walk in the

pride of your hearts; and there are *none*, save a few only, which do not lift themselves up in the *pride* of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto *envying*, and *strifes*, and *malice*, and *persecutions*, and all manner of *iniquities*; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the *pride* of your hearts. For behold, ye do *love money*, and your substances, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted. O ye *pollutions*, ye *hypocrites*, ye *teachers*, which *sell yourselves* for that which will canker, why have ye *polluted* the holy church of God? Why are ye *ashamed* to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness, than that misery which never dies, because of the praise of the world? Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick, and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not? Yea, why do ye build up your *secret abominations* to get gain, and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord; and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads? Behold, *the sword of vengeance hangeth over you*. . . (534–35, my emphasis).

The extent and sheer audacity of this passage approaches libel of the readers. Anyone would be forgiven for being insulted by the presumptuousness of this tirade (I personally find the insult of *ye teachers!* the most galling). However, reacting to claims about the reality of the reader draws the reader into the diegesis. Why feel personally attacked, if you are not the addressee? Whether or not Moroni₂ is justified in thus attacking the reader, the readers and their behavior are explicitly part of the world in which the *Book of Mormon* exists. By personally and emotionally reacting to a text for its attack on his or her moral integrity, by feeling directly addressed by a character in the world, the world of the reader becomes implicated in the world of the text. Rather than historicizing itself, the text textualizes the actual reader and his or her world.

All of these literary techniques (what Krysmanski would call tricks) pull the worlds of the text and of the readers together. In the *Book of Mormon*, the real world becomes another level of the diegesis. I propose the

term *epidiegesis*, following Genette's use of the *epi*-text as text belonging to the work but not being physically appended to it. The world of the reader is drawn into the diegesis of the narrative, becoming an integral part which is not confined to the pages of the work and the textual diegesis presented there.

The *epidiegesis* of the readers surrounds the world of the textual diegesis of the narrative, allowing the text complete access to this epidiegetic world. This also allows immediate access to the reader and his or her emotions and reactions. Reacting to the text then occurs epidiegetically and not simply extra-textually. The addition requires a modification of the *Book of Mormon*'s narratological levels. The new level is summarized in figure 6.2, which also includes the *supradiegetic* level of God created by the interventions in the books of 3 Nephi and Ether.

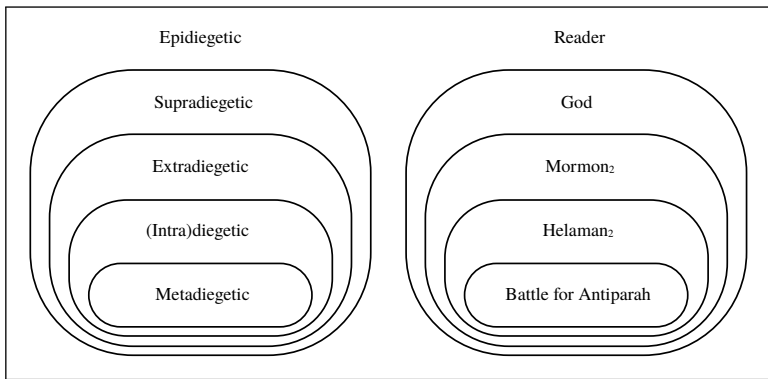


Figure 6.2: *Supradiegetic* and *epidiegetic* levels

6.2.3 The Utopic Method and the *Book of Mormon*

The argument of sections 6.2.3 and 6.2.4 is that the *Book of Mormon* itself brackets questions of constative historicity through its playful use of geography and chronology. It establishes an insular non-place and non-time in

order to create what Krysmanski calls an “experimental apparatus” (*Experimentalapparat*).³¹ I propose a word play. The utopic and uchronic Book of Mormon world becomes an isolated experiential apparatus.

The experimental apparatus of the *Book of Mormon* is a type of literary black site: used for dangerous (and possibly illicit) activities. The *Book of Mormon*’s experiment can be summarized as testing a daring research question: *Can a people fully reject their God?* The answer is finally: *Yes, not even God can force them to repent.* The success of this experiment brings with it the destruction of most of the test subjects. Such an experiment is too risky to perform in the topic or chronic. It must be isolated. At the same time, in order to have something to say about its laboratory results, the experiment must be situated in the world of the reader. The world and the experiment of the *Book of Mormon* is within the world of the reader, but safely sealed away by time and space.

The only way to access the world of the *Book of Mormon* is to willingly engage with it. It cannot be reached by conventional exploratory means of archaeology or travel. As Freyer says of the utopias of literature: “They are inaccessible except one fully dedicates oneself to them.”³² The only actual access to the world of the *Book of Mormon* is through the *Book of Mormon*. The utopic, uchronic, microcosmic nature of the narrative then invites the reader into affective reading in an experiential apparatus.

Even though the text repeatedly situates itself within the reality of the reader and emotionally draws the reader into its diegesis, the text’s specific use of geography and chronology is almost entirely utopic and uchronic in the literal sense. Even though the narrative takes place within the biblical world, the exact coordinates within biblical reality are intentionally and thoroughly obscured, and the narrative can be said to play with its internal geography and chronology rather than treating it in a deliberate, constative manner.

The deliberate isolation begins with the Lehite exodus and the party’s journey to the Promised Land. By the end of 1 Nephi, the Lehiters are fully disengaged from the ancient biblical world by moving beyond its bound-

³¹Krysmanski, “Eigenart des utopischen Romans,” 273.

³²Freyer, *Die politische Insel*, 25, my translation: Sie sind unzugänglich, es sei denn, einer verschreibe sich ihnen ganz.

aries. Jacob₂ says of his family's travels: "[F]or the Lord has made the sea our path, and we are upon an *isle of the sea*" (85, my emphasis). In fact, the *Book of Mormon* goes to great lengths to geographically isolate its narrative. After grounding the narrative in the biblical, the text immediately geographically absconds with it. The text uses multiple liminal phases, each of which obliterates the precise geographical placement of the events. This liminality consists primarily of the desert and the crossing of the ocean, but to a lesser extent also the swaths of 'wilderness' between pockets of civilization found in the Promised Land.

The Lehite exodus moves further and further away from the familiar geography of walled Jerusalem and the Red Sea (7–8). By virtue of the non-specificity of a dry and craggy desert, the reader begins to lose track of the exact location a given episode takes place in. After a few chapters of at least cardinal directions and days of travel being given, the narrative completely enters the topographically liminal. "And we did sojourn for the space of many years, yea, even eight years in the wilderness" (42). After eight years of travel, the reader has no idea as to where in the vast Arabian deserts the party is supposed to be. The narrative finally arrives in the non-place of the threshold to the ocean (*ibid.*), eliminating all initial topographical traces.

By setting up their camp on a threshold, the first liminal phase and the first round of disengagement from extra-textual reality is now complete. Like the Jaredites, Nephi₁ is tasked with building a ship to allow the group to cross the ocean. The ocean has even fewer defining contours than the previous desert the group crossed. This begins the next liminal phase and a second round of disengagement. Using the ship, the group travels across the waters to their Promised Land (47–49). These techniques are akin to spies using different maneuvers to ensure they are not being followed or to shake off someone tailing them.

As mentioned above, Jacob₂ refers to their Promised Land as an *isle of the sea*, no matter the 'actual' dimensions of this *terra firma*. Nephi₁ prophesies that at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, a sign of "the three days of darkness" is to be given "unto them who should inhabit the isles of the sea" (51). This sign is given to the Lehtes (471–72). Nephi₁ also explains that the Lehtes are not the only people thus separated and

now living on islands:

[T]here are many which are already lost from the knowledge of they which are at Jerusalem. Yea, the more part of all the tribes have been led away; and they are scattered to and fro upon the *isles of the sea*: and whither they are, none of us knoweth, save that we know that they have been led away (56, my emphasis).

Jacob₂ repeats Nephi₁'s characterization of the scattering of Israel to many *isles*. "But great is the promises of the Lord unto they which are upon the isles of the sea; wherefore, as it sayeth isles, there must needs be more than this; and they are inhabited also by our brethren" (85).

The exact location of their *isle* was kept secret, and its location would only be revealed in the far future of the narrative's characters (i.e. when the Nephite record, the *Book of Mormon*, is finally published). Nephi₁ says that "it is wisdom that this land should be kept as yet from the knowledge of other nations" (60). Mormon₂, speaking of Lehi₁'s exodus from Jerusalem, adds that "no one knew it save it were himself and those which he brought out of that land" (464). Christ explains to the gathered people that their ancestors and by extension they themselves "were separated from among them [the people of Palestine] because of their iniquity; therefore it is because of their iniquity, that they know not of you" (486). The divinely orchestrated isolation through an 'isle of the sea' thus adds to the non-place established by the travels across the desert and the ocean.

This phrasing of an *isle of the sea* and the fact that the Lehites, Jaredites, and the people of Zarahemla reached it via ship is significant, since it ties in with the common utopic character of ships as miniature islands in literature. Elmar Schenkel argues that in literature ships themselves often represent microcosmic social orders.³³

The conflict between Nephi₁ and his brothers on the ship is a microcosm of the later, grander conflicts between Nephites and Lamanites. Once the ship has been successfully launched, Laman₁, Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael₁ and their spouses "began to make themselves merry, inasmuch

³³Elmar Schenkel, "Die verkehrte Insel: The Tempest und H.G. Wells' The Island of Dr Moreau," *Anglia* 111 (1993): 44.

that they began to dance, and to sing, and to speak with much rudeness” (48). Nephi₁’s misgivings come from him seeing this behavior as a sign that they “did forget by what power they had been brought thither” (ibid.). Thus it is not so much debauchery, but revelry as a sign of forgetfulness. This early in the narrative, characters have already fallen into the trap of forgetting the divine power by which they were spared.

The later *Book of Mormon* narrative contains many examples of the differences between those relying on their own strength and those relying on the strength of God, most notably in the contrast between the righteous Zeniff and his wicked son Noah₃ (175, 179). The *Book of Mormon* repeatedly shows that only those that rely on the strength of God, or rather, that only those who recognize that their strength derives from God, are truly powerful. According to the *Book of Mormon*, this is the only way to have long-term peace and prosperity.

Once the prophet, here Nephi₁, calls the forgetful revelers to repentance, they are angry with him. They do not wish to be ruled by a younger brother, who rules by virtue of his ecclesiastical calling and not by virtue of right of birth (48). Relying on one’s own strength combined with feeling cheated is later found in Mosiah VI. Zeniff as intradiegetic narrator gives the Nephite version of why the Lamanites hate the Nephites. He says of the Lamanites that they “knew nothing concerning the Lord, nor the strength of the Lord; therefore, they depended upon their own strength” (176).

Coming from the Nephite perspective, he that explains the generations-long animosity between the groups stems from the Lamanites’ sense of their forefathers (Laman₁ and Lemuel) being repeatedly wronged by Lehi₁ and Nephi₁ (as when they had to leave their riches and comfortable life behind), when Nephi₁ reprimanded them on the ship, when he set himself up as high priest (as opposed to allowing Laman₁ to rule), and finally because Nephi₁ took the Plates of Brass with him when the Nephites emigrated to avoid further conflicts (176–77). Nephite defectors (for example Ammoron) later use the Lamanites’ claim to power as a means for justifying war (378).

Back on the ship, the angry revelers bind Nephi₁ “with cords” (48). The motif of physically binding someone occurs repeatedly in the later narrative. Most of these instances include a bound person being brought before a

ruling authority to be interrogated. This occurs in both the negative senses of innocents being mistakenly bound, as with Ammon₁ (169) and the five men sent to investigate the murder of the chief judge (432), or prophets being bound to stop them from preaching, as with Abinadi (181) and Samuel (450), but also in the positive sense by criminals being brought to justice, as with Nehor (222). The *Book of Mormon* also includes the motif of being metaphorically bound, either positively to God or negatively to false traditions or to Satan by sin. For example, Alma₂ preaches at Ammonihah: “[M]ay the Lord grant unto you repentance, that ye may not bring down his wrath upon you, that ye may not be bound down by the chains of hell” (261, my emphasis).

Back on the ship, the rebellion against the chosen prophet of God causes the Liahona, which had been their guidance through the desert and across the ocean, to “cease to work” (48). The party loses the guidance of the transcendent and loses its way. “Wherefore, they knew not whither they should steer the ship” (*ibid.*). The motif of losing one’s way after rejecting the spirit of God is also found in Lehi₁’s dream.³⁴ Those that do not hold to the rod and those who are ashamed of partaking of the fruit either “wandered off” or “fell away into forbidden paths,” resulting in both groups becoming “lost” (20). The Lehite ship gets caught in a tempest, and without the guidance of the compass, Laman₁ and the revelers do not know where to steer in the strong wind and the waves.

Laman₁ and the others are still not convinced to loosen the prophet, even though they are being thrown about by a tempest. It is only when *they are* “about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea” that they see the error of their ways (48). The image suggested by the phrase “about to be” is that of a ship not only pitching in the waves, but already taking on water. They are no longer in danger of going under. They *are* going under; they are on the very brink of death, perhaps only minutes away. Only this imminent destruction is finally enough to shake them from their pride.

The moment of peril in the face of death foreshadows an event towards the end of the text in 3 Nephi. Faced with the overwhelming might of the Gadianton Robbers, “the Nephites were threatened with utter destruction

³⁴ See section 6.4.

[...] and the sword of destruction did hang over them, insomuch that they were *about to* be smitten down by it, and this because of their iniquity” (456, my emphasis). The Nephites are on the very brink of complete destruction, and it is only this imminent threat that causes the people to repent and avert disaster.

The motif of wind coupled with a lack of spiritual guidance and the resulting disorientation and imminent destruction is also repeated by Mormon₂ in the book of Mormon:

For behold, the spirit of the Lord hath already ceased to strive with their fathers, and they are without Christ and God in the world, and they are *driven about* as chaff before the *wind* [...] But now, behold they are led about by satan, even as chaff is *driven before* the *wind*, or as a *vessel* is tossed about upon the *waves*, without *sail* or *anchor*, or without any thing wherewith to *steer* her; and even as she is, so are they (528, my emphasis).

As with the Lehi vessel, the Nephites under Mormon₂ have rejected the spiritual guidance of God and are therefore metaphorically driven and tossed about by the wind. They are unable to steer their lives, and the people continue to only rely on their own strength rather than repenting and calling upon the strength of God. They instead “did struggle for their lives, without calling upon that Being who had created them” (526). Mormon₂ indicates that because the people refuse to repent, even in the face of imminent death, they are destroyed. Like the literal ship sinking, their metaphorical ship is finally destroyed in the events of the book of Mormon.

Having reached the Promised Land, the physical isolation of the literal utopia is also strengthened by the repeated mentions of *wilderness*. While the wilderness at the beginning of the narrative is the dry deserts of Palestine and Arabia, the wilderness of the Promised Land is dense jungle. Entire armies can get lost in the wilderness or hide from the enemy. This is most clear in the war chapters.

At the battle for Mulek, Moroni₁ takes his army into the fringes of the wilderness to hide and wait for the Lamanite army to be led away. His army must be close enough to immediately take the city (372). During a similar stratagem, Helaman₂ and his allied generals set up a trap where

two armies are hid in the wilderness “on the right” and “on the left” so that the Lamanite army can march between the two armies, without the other armies being discovered (391).

These scenes seem absurd if one imagines an army crouching on the edge of a desert, even a mountainous one. In a dry desert, an army would kick up dust and be discovered by the enemy. This issue would be compounded with two flanking armies. The wilderness of the second Promised Land thus seems to be dense jungle or at least dense forest.³⁵

This wilderness is even dense and intractable enough to not allow for spontaneous or accidental discovery of other pockets of people living in the wilderness. Many of the events play out as if occurring on individual islands, and entire peoples live next to one another for centuries without being aware of the other. The Nephites only discover the people of Zarahemla (who had left Jerusalem only a few years after the Lehiters) centuries later; the last survivor of the Jaredites, Coriantumr, comes across the people of Zarahemla after the final war, in which millions are killed, and yet the people of Zarahemla were not aware of a war close enough for a severely wounded man to reach them (150). Each group lives within its own island, bound by the liminal space of the wilderness.

This all demonstrates the great lengths the *Book of Mormon* goes to in order to establish that the narrative takes place in a non-place within the biblical world. This suggests that the events of the narrative are not primarily intended to be read as historical accounts, but through the microcosmic nature of utopic islands. While the Lehit narrative is more detailed in its internal geography than the Jaredite narrative, both narratives emphasize that the exact geography and the exact placement of individual events is not as important as the events themselves.

While geographically situating the narrative is not impossible (given certain geographic clues like the isthmus between the north and south), the desire to do so is not supported by the inner workings of the text. Situating the narrative must be done against the grain of what the text is working to

³⁵A similar use can be found in later writings by Joseph Smith. For example, section 128 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* speaks of “the wilderness between Harmony, Susquehanna county, and Colesville, Broome county, on the Susquehanna river” (262). That area is hilly and heavily forested.

achieve. The *Book of Mormon* similarly plays with its temporal data, and it employs a complex relationship between narrative and extra-textual reality.

6.2.4 “As it were unto us a dream”: Uchronic Time

Having examined the use of utopia and microcosm, I come to the *Book of Mormon*'s use of chronology in creating a non-place within its epidegetic biblical world.³⁶ While the geographic location within the biblical world is very vague, the *Book of Mormon* does not truly exist in a non-time. There are clear and deliberate correlations with historical biblical, Gregorian time, and the narrative allows some measure of chronological placement in Old and New Testament timelines.

The far biblical past of the narrative makes the undiscovered nature of this narrative by the rest of the biblical world plausible. The nineteenth century of the text's publication already saw the entire globe practically explored, save the Arctic and Antarctic regions. There were no *isles of the sea* left where a battle at Camorah with its hundreds of thousands of casualties could believably be set in the social reality of even the nineteenth-century American reader (much less the modern global reader). As Krysmanski argues,³⁷ the chronological placement of the utopic narrative—usually in the ‘future’—serves to displace the narrative from reality. If there is no geographic space for microcosmic islands in the world of today, then the text must create a scenario which allows for them.

The *Book of Mormon* sets the narrative so far in the past that it is conceivable that there existed an unknown portion of the world, or rather, that a portion of the world which is known to the nineteenth-century reader, was as yet unknown to the old world inhabitants of the time in which the narrative is set. Then, when an entire people is destroyed, the text can cover its tracks by arguing that all traces were erased through the entropy of history and that only the faintest echo, a metal record, survives the people.

The historical shifting allows the narrative to draw on collective notions surrounding the Bible, the Americas as a promised land, and Chris-

³⁶This section is based on my submission for the 2019 Book of Mormon Studies Association conference.

³⁷Krysmanski, “Eigenart des utopischen Romans,” 278; cf. section 3.4.1 in this study.

tian apostasy within a comparatively short time after the ministry of Christ. At the same time, the shift displaces the narrative from the social reality of the actual reader. As Bolton argues: “The Book of Mormon, whilst set in the past like a historical novel, is not about ancient history.”³⁸

The *Book of Mormon* not only places its overall narrative in the far past; it deliberately blurs the chronological placement of entire crucial narratives, even within internal chronology. These then truly exist in a uchronia, a non-time, because their chronological placement cannot be determined at all, except as defined by ‘somewhere between then and then.’ An important indication that the *Book of Mormon* has a non-historicizing approach to time comes from Jacob₂. He says of his people’s experience of time: “[T]he time passed away with us, and also our lives passed away, like as it were unto us a dream, we being a lonesome and a solemn people, wanderers cast out from Jerusalem” (FE, 142).

A dream is an isolated instance of human experience where it is usually not important *how much* time has passed. And if time passes, it is often in a distorted way. Jacob₂ describes time as being something they *wander* through, as if sleepwalking. The exact chronological contours and placement of this wandering is of secondary importance at best.

The motif of the wandering dream is found most prominently in Lehi₁’s vision in 1 Nephi II (18–20). The vision has him wandering through a timeless, trackless dream-desert. The wandering dream-vision fulfils all of the requirements of the utopic method. It draws on concepts from Lehi₁’s diegetic social (specifically familial) reality, since his vision involves his wife and children. The vision is self-contained and hermetically sealed and yet it nonetheless has reference to the wider realm within which it is embedded. His dream is a separate reality which draws on elements of the utopic narrative’s social reality so as to comment on them, and he interprets the dream as providing insight into the moral standing of his family members, especially Laman₁ and Lemuel (18).

When Jacob₂ describes the Nephite experience of time as a dream, this same microcosmic nature is activated (the text is silent as to how the Lamanites experience time). The *Book of Mormon* narrative’s timelessness (in

³⁸Bolton, “Utopian Vision,” 147.

the sense of *non-time*) can be most clearly seen with the Jaredite narrative. The chronological length and placement of the Jaredite narrative cannot be established using the *Book of Mormon* text.

Whereas the chronological start and end points of the Lehite narrative can be determined quite precisely, the text does not allow for even a rough approximation of extent or duration of Jaredite history. This ambiguity is even more pronounced when examining the peritext of the L81 and L13, which always lists the year or span of years when events (supposedly) take place. This peritext is at the bottom of every page (in the L81) and in the peritextual chapter headings of each chapter (in the L13).³⁹

The desire to chronologically situate every chapter of the LDS *Book of Mormon* reaches its limit with the book of Ether. The L13 headnote for Ether 1 does not contain a timestamp, nor do any of the other fourteen chapters of this edition (487–516), and none of the L81 pages contain timestamps at the bottom of the pages (487–517). And yet, as soon as the book of Ether is finished and Moroni₂ returns to the Lehite timeline, the headnotes and footnotes again give timestamps. The book of Moroni chapter 1 is dated to “About A.D. 401–21” (L13, 518), and the first page of the book is dated at “Between A.D. 400 and 421” (L81, 518).

The fact that every other chapter in the *Book of Mormon* has a timestamp appended to its headnote in the L13 and to every page in the L81 makes the timestamps of the book of Ether conspicuous by their absence. The editors of these editions felt confident to give at least a range of dates for every chapter and page previous and following the book of Ether. However, they chose to avoid giving even an approximate dating in this book.

The RE does not give a footnote timestamp for the book of Ether as it does for the Lehite narrative and only dates the Jaredite narrative in an appendix. It dates the book of Ether 1 and parts of 6 to “Mid-third millennium B.C.” and the rest of chapter 6 to chapter 11 to “second – first millennia B.C.” (RE, 675). Hardy does not give any dating at all for the last chapters of the book. The MSE does not touch on Jaredite chronology anywhere, not even in the appendices.

The end of the Jaredite narrative (their great war and Coriantumr’s en-

³⁹See Appendix C for a complete timeline based on the L13 headnotes.

counter with the people of Zarahemla) is also shrouded in pre-Lehite history. The book of Omni does not say whether Coriantumr met and stayed with the people of Zarahemla a few years or even decades earlier. This encounter simply occurred ‘before the Nephites arrived in Zarahemla.’

Even the internal length of Jaredite history is opaque. A rough indication is the thirty generations listed in Ether I (FE, 539). In contrast, Nephi₁ mentions that his father found his genealogy on the Plates of Brass (and that his father was a descendant of the biblical Joseph₁), but he does not list the actual names in between (15). In the Jaredite genealogical list, the last prophet, Ether, is twenty-nine generations removed from Jared. And even this number is never stated in the text, and is only arrived at by counting the names. The text does not give a number of the generations such as is done at the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew, where the genealogy of Jesus is given and summarized as consisting of three blocks of “fourteen generations” each (1:17).

The FE also does not give a stacked genealogy which can be examined from top to bottom. Instead, the many instances of the Old Testament-like “was the son of” are part of a normal paragraph. This formatting is also followed in the SE (568–69) and ThE (524). All that is important in the early editions of the *Book of Mormon* is that the coming narrative takes place over the course of a very long genealogy and that this narrative therefore covers centuries at least.

The main reason why it is impossible to accurately gauge the number of years covered by the Jaredite narrative is that many of the kings father their successors at an advanced age, and this age is not always given. For example, the successor to the first king is not the first born, but one of his last children (FE, 550). This means that no calculated length for a generation can stand on solid ground, nor can one use any common estimate of the length of a generation. There is no identifiable length of a generation, which makes it impossible to date the beginning and end of the narrative accurately.

The book of Ether is clearly not concerned with the dates for when events take place. An entire people is destroyed ‘at some point.’ The exact placement of that point is not important. It is only important that it occurred. The event was prophesied, and the prophecy was fulfilled. All of

the events of the Jaredite narrative, from the Tower of Babel to the very end, occur in the large span of time of the nebulous history of the pre-exodus Old Testament. The Jaredites thus lived and died ‘some time before the present’ of the Lehite narrative.

The Jaredites exist in a timeline of the Other, and they not only exist in a utopia, but also in a *uchronia*, a non-time. As has been established, the book of Ether is a microcosm of the *Book of Mormon*, and the same uchronic nature should then be applied to the Lehite narrative. The few chronological clues should not (or at least need not) be used to situate the events in the real history of the reader.

Turning to the Lehite narrative itself, it begins in the first year of the reign of Zedekiah. Leaving aside issues of when (or whether) this actually happened in real, extra-textual reality in a constative sense, the *Book of Mormon* places this royal ascension 600 years before the coming of Christ. Heuristically, we can follow the common B.C.–A.D. distinction where Jesus Christ is born in 1 A.D. and say that the narrative begins in 600 B.C. Nephi repeatedly gives the prophecy that Jesus Christ, whom he refers to as *the Messiah*, would come “six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem” (22, *also* 51, 105). This dating is repeated at the time the birth of Jesus Christ occurs (452). However, the specific dating of 600 B.C. only comes several chapters into the text. Before this revelation by Nephi₁, the reader only knows that it is the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, which only places the narrative at some point in the Old Testament.

This means that for most of 1 Nephi the reader does not know in which year the events are supposed to be taking place. The initial Christian anchor is immediately dropped in favor of a time scale relative to the Lehite exodus. The first clue as to the dating of the events comes at the end of 1 Nephi through the geography-obliterating passage of eight years of travel in the desert (42). This exodus-based dating system sets up the pattern the *Book of Mormon* follows for three quarters of the text. The reader can only easily follow the Christian year of events once the text finally begins to use Christian dating starting in 3 Nephi I. Before this point, the reader has to subtract the years that have passed from the 600 B.C. mentioned at the beginning of the text. In a literary, as opposed to analytic reading, the reader will not repeatedly stop in order to perform this calculation. This causes

most readers to swiftly lose track of the exact dating.

While the destruction of Jerusalem is prophesied at the beginning of the text, the dating of the event is also left vague. The only chronological anchor before the vision confirming that the event took place is the mention of the eight-year travel to the coast. Lehi₁ learns of the destruction of the city through a vision in 2 Nephi I (60). The next chronological marker is a few chapters later in 2 Nephi IV, saying that “thirty years had passed away from the time we left Jerusalem” (73). Since the interval between the vision and this second timestamp is unclear, the date of the fall of Jerusalem, according to the *Book of Mormon*, cannot be established.

Lehi₁ need not have received the vision the day of the final battle. Even if he did, the text does not relate where in the interval between 600 and 570 B.C. the vision occurred. As with the destruction of the Jaredites fulfilling prophecy, this biblical event exists in a hazy chronology. The exact dating is less important than the fact that the warnings of the prophets had come true.

The transition from the book of Omni through the book of Mosiah to the book of Alma is the clearest indication that the *Book of Mormon* is not interested in giving a clear chronology. This portion of the text contains the most complex and most confusing timekeeping in the entire text. Going from Omni to Alma I, the text plays with four different time keeping systems: the time since the exodus, years since the sign of the coming of Christ, and two different systems based on the reign of individual kings. On top of these four systems, the text is also often unclear as to the exact chronology of the events. This includes ambiguity as to when different events occur in relation to one another and even the story time covered by the narration. This ambiguity begins at the start of the book of Omni.

At the start of Omni, the text is still using the dating system of counting from the time that the exodus group left Jerusalem. Omni, the first narrator of the book, writes of decades of war between the Nephites and Lamanites: “And it came to pass that two hundred and seventy and six years had passed away, and we had *many seasons* of peace; and we had *many seasons* of *serious* war and bloodshed” (148, my emphasis). The discourse time of Omni’s narration leaves much to be desired. The fact that he speaks of *seasons*, plural, of *serious* war and bloodshed suggests that the events could

warrant a more detailed account. And yet he summarizes them in only the most succinct manner.

His son, Amaron, continues the account of the Nephites and writes of forty-four years of war: “Behold, it came to pass that *three hundred and twenty* years had passed away, and the more wicked *part* of the Nephites were destroyed” (148, my emphasis). Fifty years of war, slaughter, and an entire segment of the population is destroyed. These events all blur together in their dream-time. Time passes. Their dreams have a chronological length, but the details of the events are extremely hazy. The only thing preventing Omni and Amaron from being completely historically useless is that they give the last (helpful) timestamps the reader will encounter for quite some time.

The book continues for three more pages and includes three more narrators. The three final narrators of the book of Omni are Chemish, who is Amaron’s brother; Abinadom, the son of Chemish; and Amaleki₁, the son of Abinadom. None of these other three narrators ever gives another timestamp. They simply narrate their events. Time passes. The last narrator, Amaleki₁, speaks for two pages, in which he covers many events within the Lehite narrative. These include yet another large-scale exodus on the part of the Nephites from the Land of Nephi to the Land of Zarahemla.

This exodus is significant, since it establishes the clear division of spheres of influence between Nephites and Lamanites, which is the basis of conflict for the people of Zeniff and the strategic basis for all of the Lamanite invasions in the book of Alma. And yet Amaleki₁ never mentions the period of time he is covering. The last thing he mentions in his narration sets up the later narrative from Zeniff to Limhi (151). He never mentions *when* the smaller return exodus back to the Land of Nephi took place. He only mentions that it happened somewhere, sometime in the Lehite dream-time. The book of Omni then ends on uncertainty and ambiguity.

Mormon₂ then introduces himself using the metalepsis discussed in section 6.1.1. Before even reaching this point, the reader has gone through several pages since last being grounded in chronology. The text does give a timestamp in Mormon₂’s narration, but it sows even more confusion: “And it is many hundred years *after* the coming of Christ” (151, my emphasis). This revelation will blind-side a careful reader who has been trying to keep

up with the B.C. chronology of the previous narrative by subtracting the years since the exodus from 600. Suddenly the reader finds him- or herself confronted not only with the coming of Christ, but a time centuries *after* this event. This means that the narrative has jumped three hundred or more years.

Mormon₂, apparently not in a very accommodating mood, never specifies the year beyond his vague statement. Ultimately, it does not matter just how many centuries the text jumps. The fact that it is a large prolepsis will disorient the reader. As an added bonus, Mormon₂ also ‘spoils’ the rest of the *Book of Mormon*’s plot. The reader now knows that Nephi₁’s vision of the destruction of the Nephites (28, 35) will come true. Dramatic tension over *whether* the Nephites are finally destroyed has been dissipated by Mormon₂.

After establishing himself as the shaping hand of the text, Mormon₂ does not re-situate the reader and instead continues with the narrative as if nothing odd and disruptive had just occurred in the transition from Amaleki₁.

And now I, Mormon, proceed to finish out my record, which I take from the plates of Nephi; and I make it according to the knowledge and the understanding which God hath given me. Wherefore, it came to pass that after Amaleki had delivered up these plates into the hands of king Benjamin, he took them and put them with the other plates (152).

He sets up his editorial project and returns to the principal narrative, albeit without even a courtesy timestamp as an apology for disrupting the narrative. The reader will now be even more taken out of the flow of the narrative. Even if he or she had been capable of keeping the last timestamp given by Amaron at the beginning of the book of Omni in his or her head, the first section of Words of Mormon finally obliterates any specific positioning within the chronology, unless the reader manually goes back and recalculates the dating. And even doing this will prove difficult, since the reader will need to remember who from among the five narrators in the book of Omni last gave a timestamp and then has to find that name among the text.

The first chapters of the book of Mosiah contain a long sermon by Ben-

jamin. The first timestamp back in the exodus chronology is only given once the sermon is over. “And Mosiah began to reign in his father’s stead. And he began to reign in the thirtieth year of his age, making in the whole, about four hundred and seventy-six years from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem” (168). The entire first section of the book has therefore been moving within an unclear chronology, unless the reader breaks with his or her reading flow and goes back to the beginning of the book of Omni. And even this will not guarantee he or she knows the placement in the chronology, since that book covers so many events after its only timestamp. This textual ambiguity causes the sermon of Benjamin to exist within a temporal liminal space, the temporal ambiguity of which is only resolved retroactively.

The L81 attempts to remedy the chronological ambiguity of the first chapters by adding a footnote in Mosiah 1. “Therefore, *he [King Benjamin] had Mosiah brought before him.” The asterisk points to the footnote “About 124 B.C.” (146). The fact that the editors must admit to only an *about* and even break with their usual pattern of adding such markers only when the text gives internal timestamps show both the ambiguity of the text and the desire to historically situate a narrative which is actively working against such placement. This footnote has been removed for the L13 (146).

In the chapter after the textual timestamp, a scouting expedition comes across the emigrant group last mentioned at the end of the book of Omni. The chapter introduces Limhi and the survivors of the previous conflicts. After this introduction, the text employs the narrated shift in narrators discussed earlier and jumps back in time to the beginning of the emigration. As narrator, Zeniff never gives a timestamp for the beginning of his narrative. Once he finally does give two chronological markers, they are based on yet another internal and relative chronology, here his reign as king. (FE, 174, 175). The reader has no way of knowing when all of these events take place, since the last section of the book of Omni never mentions in what year Zeniff’s group left. Zeniff also never gives a dating using the established system. Even once he finishes his own narration and these duties return to Mormon₂, the text never gives a dating using the system based on the Lehite exodus.

This means that the chronological placement of the events surround-

ing Noah₃, Abinadi, and Alma₁ and his own small group also cannot be accurately established. For example, the text is unclear whether Zeniff immediately hands off the kingship after the second large battle thirty-five years into his reign.⁴⁰

Mormon₂ likewise never specifies how long Noah₃ was king before Abinadi began his ministry. Sometime between becoming king and the appearance of Abinadi, Noah₃ plants vineyards and makes sufficient wine for himself and his people to become ‘wine bibbers’ (179). This presumably does not happen over the course of one year. The king’s armies also drive back the Lamanites “for a time” (*ibid.*). The text later says that Limhi and his people had peace “for the space of two years” (196). The exact placement is not relevant. All that matters is that there was a *period of* peace. And it was quite short. After the hostilities and the start of people’s vassal status, there is some period of time before Ammon₁ and his companions arrive. There is “no more disturbance between the Lamanites and the people of Limhi, even until the time that Ammon and his brethren came into the land” (200). Their servitude lasts for a period of time (which is too much time in any case).

There is ultimately no way of situating any of these events in the overarching timeline of the *Book of Mormon* narrative, since the text is simply too opaque. This opacity continues until the very end of the book of Mosiah and shrouds the experiences of several groups. The reader cannot situate the account of the people of Alma₁, the people’s eventual return and reintegration into the population of that land, the rebellion of Alma₂ and the sons of Mosiah₂ and their fight against the established church, or their subsequent conversion by means of an angel. This ambiguity is seen in the floundering of the L81 footnotes.

The period after the return of the descendants of Zeniff’s exodus sees a rise in religious and social conflicts. Many of the Nephites who were children at the time of Benjamin’s sermon (and the resulting mass conversion), rebel against the religious traditions of their fathers. The text calls these now adult Nephites the “rising generation” (FE, 209). Alma₂’s rebellion

⁴⁰The first battle is in the thirteenth year of Limhi’s reign, after which there are twenty-two years of peace until the new Lamanite king attacks (FE, 175–76).

also takes place during this period and is recounted in the same FE chapter (212–14).⁴¹ The L81 footnotes for this section are given as “Probably between 120 and 100 B.C.” at the bottom of two pages (197–98). The next pages change to “Probably between 100 and 92 B.C.” (199–201). However, there is no textual basis for these dates or the change to the timestamps.

As with the pivotal exodus of the Nephites under Mosiah₁, all of these events are an important turning point in the *Book of Mormon* narrative. The conversion of Alma₂ and the sons of Mosiah₂ leads to the missionary expedition of the princes to the Lamanites, necessitating a change in government. Since all of the sons of Mosiah₂, including the rightful heir, wish to share the joy and relief they felt through their repentance and begin a ministry to the Lamanites, there is no successor to the throne.

After warning the people of the dangers of a wicked king, drawing on the experiences of the people of Zeniff under Noah₃, Mosiah₂ suggests implementing a system of elected judges as the new form of government. Somewhere before the end of the book of Mosiah, he also translates the records which the people of Limhi had brought with them. And yet, none of these crucial events are situated within the internal chronology of the narrative.

Only once this sea change has been decided on and implemented does the text give a final timestamp for the book of Mosiah. “And it came to pass that Mosiah died also, in the thirty and third year of his reign, being sixty and three years old; making in the whole, five hundred and nine years from the time Lehi left Jerusalem” (FE, 221). The passage even uses two different chronologies: the time since the Lehite exodus and the length of the king’s reign. The previous timestamp at the beginning of the book mentioned that Mosiah₂ began his reign “four hundred and seventy-six years from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem” (168).

If the reader chooses to check this timestamp, it turns out that the chronological indications line up. The calculations would be: 1) 600 B.C. – 509 years since the exodus = 91 B.C. and 2) 600 B.C. – 476 years since the exodus – 33 years of the king’s reign = 91 B.C. This confirms that the chronology has now finally come around to the initial timeline and method

⁴¹The FE misprints page 212 as 112.

of calculation.

Once the reader has been finally resettled within the established chronology, which had been elusive ever since the middle of the book of Omni, the *Book of Mormon* completes another narratological move to lose the reader. From the beginning of the book of Alma to the beginning of 3 Nephi, the text uses yet another chronology. As had been done so often up to this point, the text uses another internal reference. Here it is the start of the new form of government, the reign of the judges. In the same way as Zeniff calculated the chronology of the events of his people based on the beginning of his reign as their king, the *Book of Mormon* narrative from then on follows a chronology based on the beginning of a new governmental order.

Thus even if the reader had thought to calculate which B.C. year the end of the book of Mosiah takes place in (91 B.C.), the text changes its chronology yet again, almost as if to say: *You might as well not try. This isn't important.* And even reaching the end of the book of Mosiah has been a chronological ordeal. A reader who wants to keep up with the chronology from the book of Omni to the beginning of the book of Alma has to undergo a grueling regime of centuries-long jumps forwards and backwards, the establishment of another internal chronology, and the simple lack of timestamps for dozens of pages.

Even if the reader is able to keep up and his or her calculations are confirmed at the end of the book of Mosiah, the text, almost as if taunting the reader, switches to an entirely new chronology, which is then continued for dozens of pages more. And even the book of Alma, while chronologically simpler at first glance, includes a jarring jump when Alma₂ finally meets up with the sons of Mosiah₂ (269), jumping back to the beginning of their mission, which was the reason for the establishment of the reign of the judges.

The ambiguity of the timestamps and the events between them are summarized in figure 6.3 on page 214. There are very few textual timestamps over a story time of more than two centuries. This means that many events are bunched together in the expanse between the chronological anchors.

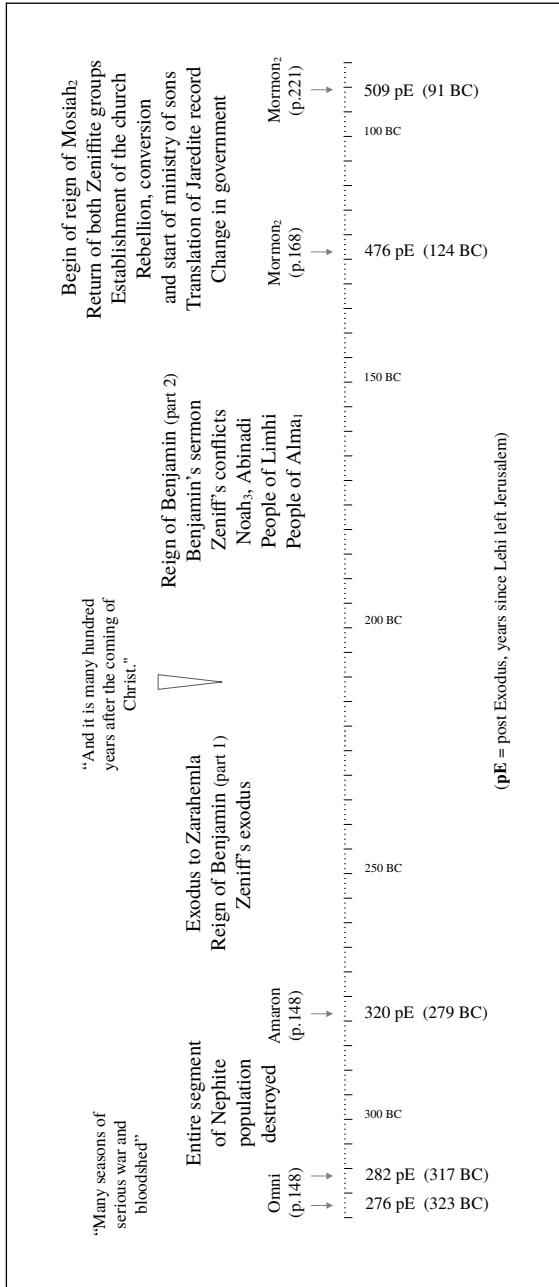


Figure 6.3: Timestamps between the book of Omni and the end of the book of Mosiah

6.3 "I would that ye should": Reader Instructions

The section from the middle of the book of Omni through the end of the book of Mosiah and from the book of Alma onwards employs a strategy of attrition in order to grind down the reader and repeatedly emphasize that it is not important when all of the events take place. The occasional timestamps mostly serve to emphasize that time has passed. It is as if the text is trying to shake off any reader pursuing the internal chronology by giving them whiplash.⁴² A reader who is following the narrative as he or she would any other literary text, not repeatedly analytically going back and making sure that internal chronology is not lost track of, will eventually give *up* and *in* and let the narrative flow.

The events are read as existing in a *uchronia*, a non-time, a time removed from time, a dream in which the narrative jumps forwards and backwards and sideways and every other which way it can think of going. The chronological relationship of these events with the principal narrative is quite tenuous and again demonstrates how the narrative goes to great lengths to separate its smaller narratives and even the entire narrative from diegetic and especially extra-textual reality. The large Lehite dream is a self-contained unit stabilized in a text. Its exact temporal (and geographical) contours are not its defining features. The chronological and geographical space is a virtual one, both within and without the extra-textual reality of the reader. Even if the events presented are analytically read as having an independent, extra-textual existence, reading them as found within the text does not require understanding them with reference to extra-textual reality, but only as existing within a narrative.

Christopher Thomas summarizes Bolton's utopic reading as the view that "to treat [the Book of Mormon] as needing archaeological and historical affirmation is to misunderstand the nature of the Book of Mormon itself at a very deep level."⁴³ The *Book of Mormon* is a microcosmic, utopic world stabilized in text. It repeatedly demonstrates through its utopic use of geography and uchronic use of chronology that it does not *want* to be

⁴²Cf. C. Thomas, *Pentecostal Reads*, 67.

⁴³C. Thomas, *Pentecostal Reads*, 441.

found. It goes to great lengths to seal itself away in order to perform its religious-social experiment.

Having established that bracketing questions of constative historicity accords with the text's strategic use of narratological devices, I now turn to justifying my use of *rasadhvani* poetics from within the *Book of Mormon*. In this section, I argue that *rasadhvani* is highly suitable for understanding the reading practice demanded by the text's self-reflexivity. The title of this section refers to the frequent *Book of Mormon* phrase with which characters introduce their intent towards others or requests made of others. Characters often say *I would that ye should* followed by a verb.

For example, Ammaron introduces his command to Mormon₂ as the next recordkeeper with this phrase: "I would that ye should remember the things that ye have observed concerning this people..." (FE, 518). The epidegetic reader is also occasionally addressed in this manner, including in the passage quoted above, in which Nephi₁ uses *ye* to refer to the actual reader (7). Mormon₂ also addresses his readership in such a manner: "Now I would that ye should understand that..." (238). This seems to be the phrase used by characters when giving explicit instructions. This section is focused on the many implicit reading instructions but also includes some of the more blatantly didactic passages.

These reading instructions are geared towards an affective-experiential practice. The *Book of Mormon* ends up forcing its own reception space alongside the Bible, which helps explain the hostile reactions on the part of clergy like Alexander Campbell. The *Book of Mormon* is not only seeking to establish a theology, but even its own experiential-revelatory reception space (which posed yet another challenge to Campbell's and his fellow fundamentalists' view of a closed revelatory canon).

The search for text-immanent implicit reading instructions must again begin with the book of Ether. Limhi's scouts encounter the record of a destroyed civilization. The people only have access to the text and no survivors of the Jaredite people. Coriantumr, the last Jaredite, has long since died. The only other possible source of information is archaeological in the form of the battlefield encountered by the scouts sent by Limhi. In fact, the scouts bring back a few archaeological findings: swords, shields, and the golden record prepared by Ether (FE, 172). The Nephites later even

expand their holdings into that region (412). However, neither the battlefield nor the artefacts are mentioned again, and only the gold plates receive repeated mentions.

Even though archaeological and empirical evidence of this destroyed people is available, it is of less interest than their written record. Limhi is eager to understand the writings found on the metal record. Again, the material history of the *Book of Mormon* is not important, and only the book matters. Limhi says of the contents of the metal record: “Doubtless, a great mystery is contained within these plates” (173). Speaking with Ammon₁, their rescuer, Limhi expresses what he hopes to find in the text once it is translated.

For, perhaps [these plates] will give us a knowledge of a remnant of the people which have been destroyed, from whence these records came; or, perhaps they will give us a knowledge of this very people which hath been destroyed; and I am desirous to know the cause of their destruction (172).

He wishes to understand how “a people, which were as numerous as the hosts of Israel” could be completely destroyed (ibid.). This is akin to Janamejaya’s plea to Vyāsa in the *Mahābhārata*.⁴⁴ Limhi and Janamejaya wish to understand why a particular people was destroyed and therefore how they can avoid the same fate.

Later on, the large battlefield and other archaeological remains are of no further interest. The modern reader does not know whether there is archaeological evidence left of the Lehiters (much less the Jaredites) or where to begin searching should it exist. The narrow neck of land (FE, 288) has led to the LDS Mesoamerican theory.

The text’s own disinterest in archaeological evidence suggests a model for the modern reader, namely that the text and its contents are of far greater importance than having access through archaeology. As Bolton puts it: “Nowhere does the Book of Mormon say to dig in archeological sites to find the truth of its message.”⁴⁵ The main interest for reading the record of

⁴⁴Roy and Ganguli, *Adi Parva*, 163.

⁴⁵Bolton, “Utopian Vision,” 152.

a destroyed people is to understand the cause of that people's destruction. Coupled with the text's repeated obfuscation of chronology and geography, this interest of understanding the causality of destruction through text further legitimizes reading the *Book of Mormon* narrative severed from its extra-textual reality.

6.3.1 “They were filled with sorrow”: Narrative and Emotions

We can continue with the record of Ether as a model for how the reader of the *Book of Mormon* should engage with the text. Once the twenty-four gold plates are translated by Mosiah₂ and the contents are read to the people, the text mentions their reaction. This reaction consists of two components: one informational and the other emotional.

Now this account did cause the people of Mosiah to *mourn* exceedingly; yea, they were filled with *sorrow*; nevertheless it gave them much *knowledge*, in the which they did *rejoice*. And this account shall be written hereafter: for behold, it is expedient that all people should know the things which are written in this account (FE, 216, my emphasis).

On the one hand, the people learn of another people (information). The book of Ether later covers Jaredite history and genealogy. Since the book of Ether is an abridgement, it is unclear what else this complete record included and what information was left out by Moroni₂. Whatever this information, it was most of the available text, since the book of Ether is based on twenty-four plates and the final narrative in the *Book of Mormon* is only a few dozen pages. The provided information will also include the ability to understand *why* this people was destroyed. On the other hand, even this knowledge causes an emotional reaction, namely rejoicing. Studying these records and gaining the knowledge therein causes joy, notwithstanding the tragic contents. The text suggests that even interpretive reading still involves a component of enjoyment once the text is understood.

Even more tellingly, the tragic narrative causes the people “to mourn exceedingly; yea, they were filled with sorrow.” Even if a few of the people of Zarahemla who had encountered Coriantumr were still alive (which

seems unlikely given the previous discussion) and therefore had at least a somewhat personal connection with this destroyed people, most of the people present heard about a people they never knew and with whom they share no kinship. A narrative with which they were not personally involved caused an intense emotional reaction. They are not indifferently examining from the outside. The only access they had to this affecting narrative was text, either in written or orally presented form. They did not experience sorrow only once they came to the corpse-strewn battlefield and witnessed first-hand the effects of the destruction of the people. And yet reading and hearing a narrative of a long-gone people was sufficient for an emotional, empathetic reaction.

In analogy, if we extend the reason for the book of Ether—understanding why a people was destroyed—to the *Book of Mormon* as a whole, this understanding should come through reading and experiencing the text and not through archaeological expeditions. The *Book of Mormon* sees itself as a delivered text which has been preserved and come into the hands of the prophet-translator Joseph⁴. The text must be read *as text* and as narrative, and this reading must involve emotional engagement. The reader will not have a personal or even general kinship relationship⁴⁶ with the destroyed people whose narrative is found in the text. Any yet, the reader is still expected to react to the tragedy of the narrative and become deeply affected by it. Reading the text in a decoding-analytic manner loses sight of the model set up by the Nephites' reaction to the record of the Jaredites.

The book of Ether itself offers a discussion concerning affective reading. Moroni₂ establishes the contrast between spoken and written language. He fears that “the Gentiles will mock at these things, because of our weakness in writing” (564). This perceived weakness is not as simple as a lack narrative clarity or rhetorical prowess, but it strikes at the emotional core of language. He laments to God: “[F]or Lord, thou hast made us mighty in word by faith, whereunto thou hast not made us mighty in writing: for thou hast made all this people that they could speak much, because of the Holy Ghost which thou hast given them” (ibid.).

⁴⁶I should include the caveat that many North and South American believers of indigenous descent see the *Book of Mormon* as an account of their progenitors.

Moroni₂ feels that Nephite cultural discourse is powerful in the spoken word, but somehow lacking once written. The Spirit enables the prophets to speak much and powerfully. Conversely, this suggests that the Nephites were not enabled to *write* much. Moroni₂ sees the reason for writing “but little” in “the awkwardness of our hands” (ibid.). He never elaborates on this phrase, but its inclusion suggests a contrast between being able to speak freely and feeling limited in one’s ability to write and translate religious feeling into text, in the move from the level of the author to the level of emotional text.

This limitation has in large part to do with the emotional power of language. In contrast with Moroni₂’s perceived limitations, the writings of the brother of Jared (whose own name is never given) “were mighty even as thou [God] art, unto the overpowering of man to read them” (ibid.). It is not that the Nephite words are not powerful, only that Moroni₂ feels that only their *spoken* word is comparably powerful. “Thou hast also made our words powerful and great, even that we cannot write them; wherefore, when we write, we behold our weakness, and stumble because of the placing of our words” (ibid.). The difficulty is not in producing powerful utterances, but translating powerful utterances into text. Moroni₂ feels he is unable to perform this translation, not because he is unable to physically transcribe the words, but because he feels he is not able to replicate the words’ emotional performativity.

And yet Moroni₂ quotes almost none of the brother of Jared’s writings directly. It is as if he also feels uncomfortable transforming (i.e. translating) Mosiah₂’s translation of these powerful written words into his own written records. Something would be lost were a translation of the translation to be attempted by Moroni₂. He can only mourn the fact that he is unable to write as powerfully as the brother of Jared. Interestingly, God never contradicts Moroni₂’s assessment of his writing ability. “And when I had said this, the Lord spake unto me, saying, Fools mock, but they shall mourn; and my grace is sufficient for the meek, that they shall take no advantage of your weakness” (ibid.). God does not assure Moroni₂ that his writings are also as powerful as those of the brother of Jared and that Moroni₂ is only selling his own ability short. The only promise is that no one will be able “take advantage of” this acknowledged weakness.

There is some indication that Moroni₂'s weakness in writing is to be overcome by Joseph₄. Joseph₁ quotes God concerning the prophecy of Joseph₄: "I will give judgment unto him in writing. Yet I will not loose his tongue, that he shall speak much: for I will not make him mighty in speaking" (67). If Joseph₄ is not mighty in speaking (the opposite limitation of Moroni₂), he must be mighty in writing. This suggests that the English translation of Moroni₂'s 'awkward' text is again powerful like the writings of the brother of Jared by the inspired translation power of the prophet-seer Joseph₄.

The book of Ether in English and its desired power are in a sense a translation in the fourth degree: The experiences of the brother of Jared are translated into text in his own record; Mosiah₂ translates the record into the Lehite language; Moroni₂ translates the translation into an abridgement; and finally, Joseph₄ translates Moroni₂'s text into English. Whatever the real or supposed weakness of Moroni₂'s writings, the desire is for a text which is performative *unto the overpowering of men to read them*.

Reading the *Book of Mormon* 'correctly' is not only a matter of exegesis. Reading it according to its internal rules requires yet another translation: from text into experience. When the book of Ether is read this way, the experience is a translation in the fifth degree.⁴⁷

The Jaredite overpowering element of written text can be seen in the first events of the entire *Book of Mormon* narrative. To understand the demands that text places on the reader, one must turn to the first chapters of the text with Lehi₁'s experience. Michael Call points out that "it is a reading act that initiates the long sequence of events composing the Book of Mormon narrative."⁴⁸ This initial reading act provides the foundation for the *Book of Mormon*'s expected reader engagement. After introducing himself as the narrator, Nephi₁ begins relating his father's experiences as a visionary prophet. Being prompted by the prophesying of the other prophets in Jerusalem at that time, Lehi₁ begins to pray. During his prayer, he receives a vision. "[T]here came a pillar of fire and dwelt upon a rock

⁴⁷The *Book of Mormon* in other languages would already be a translation in the fifth degree, and therefore experiential reading of the non-English text of brother of Jared's vision becomes a translation in the sixth (!) degree.

⁴⁸Call, "Reading Competency," 61.

before him; and he saw and heard much; and because of the things which he saw and heard, he did quake and tremble exceedingly” (FE, 6). He does not objectively watch a scene; instead, he is a central participant who experiences somatic reactions.

The overwhelming character of the vision continues after it is finished. When Lehi₁ returns to his home, “he cast himself upon his bed, being overcome with the spirit and the things which he had seen” (ibid.). In this state, he receives yet another vision. A messenger approaches him and hands him a book and tells him “that he should read” (ibid.). Lehi₁ obeys and reads from the book. Nephi₁ says that “*as he read*, [Lehi] was filled with the Spirit of the Lord” (ibid., my emphasis). Being filled with the Spirit does not happen once the act of reading is complete. This experience occurs *during* the reading process and is an effect of reading this special type of text in this visionary context. After reading and after the vision has closed, Lehi₁ begins to prophesy himself. The vision and the reading change him and cause a particular emotional and spiritual state. Nephi₁ says that “[Lehi’s] soul did rejoice, and his whole heart was filled” (ibid.).

These transformative experiences begin with the intent of contacting the transcendent through prayer. The experience is personal, direct, bodily, and overwhelming. In every sense, it is Otto’s *tremendum*. Reading from a text causes an intense spiritual-emotional experience for Lehi₁. The events are the first part of the *Book of Mormon* narrative. Before anything else has happened, Nephi₁ speaks of his father’s intense, bodily contact with the (textual) transcendent. That the *Book of Mormon* chooses to open with such a scene about visions and visionary diegetic text should be considered essential for understanding the demands the actual text places on its actual readers.

Lehi₁ is a participant in his visions, not only an observer. The reader, too, must therefore become an emotional participant in the narrative. None of the events presented in his vision are to be understood in a materialist-positivist sense. If they occurred, they did so on a spiritual level or within a spiritual plane, in a utopic, uchronic microcosm. A vision’s relationship to extra-visionary reality is removed from that of representational historiography. In like manner, the *Book of Mormon* narrative should be placed on a spiritual, removed, utopic plane. The visions are narrative, yes, but

they also occur in the non-place and non-time of a vision. The *Book of Mormon* text must likewise be *experienced* in a non-time and non-place. It is an experiential apparatus.

The first major narrative event in the *Book of Mormon* is Nephi₁ and his brothers being commanded to return to Jerusalem in order to retrieve a book of scripture. After finally succeeding in obtaining these plates, the brothers return to their family in the desert. Lehi₁ then inspects this volume. “And after that they had given thanks unto the God of Israel, my father Lehi took the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, and he did search them from the beginning” (15).

This passage might seem incidental. However, it contains an important clue as to what the text expects of its readers. Lehi₁ does not only skim the contents. He searches them “from the beginning.” Nephi₁ as narrator gives a list of all of the contents of this volume. These include the five books of Moses, the history of Israel, prophetic books, including the book of Jeremiah, as well as Lehi₁’s (and by extension Nephi₁’s) genealogy (ibid.). In other words, the brothers retrieved a form of the Old Testament.

Despite this amount of content, the verb ‘search’ suggests a careful and intent approach. This results in him again having a spiritual experience. “And now when my father saw all these things, he was filled with the spirit, and began to prophesy concerning his seed” (ibid.). His reading contains informational content, specifically his genealogy. The passage says that he “saw” these things and that he had started “from the beginning.” This suggests that he read everything. Only after he had seen and gone through the entire text did he have this experience. Whereas his first experience occurred while reading, or “as he read,” this textual experience comes only after reading the entire text. Lehi₁’s visions in the first chapter of the *Book of Mormon* therefore set up two broad experiential reading practices: experience *during* the act of reading and experience *after* finishing the text.

Both models are important for the final chapter of the *Book of Mormon* (585–88). Lehi₁’s reading experiences open the narrative and model the expected reading practice; Moroni₂ ends the text asking the reader to follow this model. Moroni₂ thus invites the reader to have a spiritual experience with the text, akin to the ones at the beginning.

The first revelations to Lehi₁ are diegetic. The final invitation spills

over into the epideictic. The text addresses the reader who had previously been repeatedly drawn into the world of the text, in no small part by Moroni₂'s long and libelous accusations of the modern reader only 50 pages earlier. Thus by this point the reader will be accustomed to the text addressing him or her. In this final chapter, the narrator is not only speaking to the reader, but also invites him or her to act. This action involves an interaction with both the text and the transcendent. Moroni₂ first asks the reader to read the text of the *Book of Mormon*. "Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things..." (585). The first requirement is to read the actual text. It is not sufficient to only have the text as a talisman and to pray on it as an abstract object without first engaging with its contents.

Moroni₂'s final invitation is not clear as to which of the two models is required. The use of 'when ye shall read' can be understood as 'when you have read', or rather, 'after you have read.' It can also be understood as 'when you are reading', or rather, 'while you are reading.' This ambiguity allows for both practices to be valid. Or more intriguingly: Both are required in conjunction with one another. This final invitation to the reader makes it clear that reading the *Book of Mormon* requires the price of admission of spiritual and experiential reading and not only superficial or analytic reading.

This invitation for an intense emotional reading practice is explicated by Moroni₂'s second requirement. He invites his future readers to "ponder it in your hearts" (586). This invitation does not call for rationally picking apart and analyzing every last component of the text. The readers are encouraged to closely engage with the text, yes, but emotionally and spiritually. This final invitation is not about information that must be gleaned from the text; it is about experiential engagement, which is another part of the price of admission. The readers are invited to "ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ" (ibid.). In other words, the readers are expected to engage with the transcendent. And as with the expected reading practice, the *Book of Mormon* text gives a clear condition as to the way this engagement has to occur.

The readers must "ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ" (ibid.). These conditions are interesting even if one leaves out

the secularly problematic literal meaning of “faith in Christ.” The other two conditions are the *sincere heart* and the *real intent*. Abhinava would refer to this as giving *consent of the heart*, which Gnoli calls the audience’s “aesthetic sensibility.”⁴⁹ The first condition can again be understood using Lehi₁’s example. Nephi₁ says of his father that he prayed “even with all his heart” (6). Thus not only is sincerity required, but also an emotionally intense involvement. Engaging with the text and prayer half-heartedly does not fulfill Moroni₂’s conditions.

The second condition, real intent, can be understood with the other four occurrences of this phrase in the rest of the *Book of Mormon* text. Two instances involve repentance and the ‘real intent’ to seek forgiveness. Nephi₁ invites his own people to baptism: “I know that if ye shall follow the Son, with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with *real intent*, repenting of your sins” (119, my emphasis). Moroni₂ speaks of the continual offer of repentance: “[B]ut as oft as they repented, and sought forgiveness, with *real intent*, they were forgiven” (576, my emphasis). The third instance involves Mormon₂’s teachings on offering a gift. The true gift must be given with real intent. This is contrasted with giving it ‘grudgingly’, in which case it is as if the gift was never given: “For behold, if a man being evil, giveth a gift, he doeth it grudgingly; wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had retained the gift” (577).

The last example of *real intent* comes immediately after equating a grudging gift with a lack of real intent. Praying without real intent is ineffectual: “[I]f he shall pray, and not with real intent of heart; yea, and it profiteth him nothing” (ibid.). Prayer without real intent is not real, productive prayer. *Real intent* therefore involves sincerity and willingness. One must not only be forced to repent or to give a gift, but must do so or give it willingly. One must also not only feign repentance, but must be willing to actually change. This, coupled with the sincere heart, shows that the engagement required by Moroni₂ must be sincere and come from one’s own desire and not be forced. Real intent therefore involves willing surrender and not grudging submission. The reader must provide *consent of the*

⁴⁹Cf. Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 40, 63, 81, 96 n1.

heart.

If the readers fulfill the requirements of reading the entire text with emotional engagement and emotional surrender, Moroni₂ promises a manifestation of the Spirit. He promises that God “will manifest the truth of [the text] unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost” (586). The power of this manifestation by the Holy Ghost is also employed as a general epistemological principle: “[A]nd by the power of the Holy Ghost, ye may know the truth of all things” (ibid.). Here one of the most important functions of revelations through the Holy Spirit is the confirmation of truth. It is not only that a manifestation is an end unto itself, but this manifestation functions as a confirmation of principles learned elsewhere.

This complex interconnection between the Spirit, revelation, and general access to the transcendent with the word *manifest* can be seen in the *Book of Mormon*’s treatment of this word elsewhere in the text. For example, secrets and prophecies are “made manifest unto” prophets in order to teach the people (56); the “Holy Spirit. . . maketh manifest unto the children of men, according to their faith” (146); and the second coming means that Christ “shall manifest himself unto all nations” (32); in the future, the records of the Lehites will “be made manifest” through the power of God (i.e. an inspired translation) (546).⁵⁰

Moroni₂’s invitation is then specifically to have close contact with the power of the transcendent as a way of receiving a confirmation of the truthfulness of the text. The use of the term *the truth* of the text is in itself interesting, but is not something which can be covered as part of this study. For the purposes of this study, the important component of the invitation is that the reader is to have something *manifested* to him or her, and having something be made *manifest* is a revelatory experience.

In a post-secular context this means that the text invites a personal experience with the text. The text is therefore presented as performative rather than constative, and truth (whatever the exact definition) is established performatively rather than constatively. The text must be allowed to be a *tremendum*, an overwhelming Other, an inconvenient guest, an irritation. The reader is not only expected to analyze and decode the instructions

⁵⁰See Appendix D for a more detailed discussion of *manifest*.

and precepts found in the text. The central component of the required reading practice of the *Book of Mormon* is an intense personal experience. It must be read both ‘as scripture’ and ‘as poetry.’

The connection of this experience with the verb *to manifest* and its divine connotation and denotation ties in with Abhinava’s claim in the *Abhinavabhāratī* that the aesthetic experience of *rasa* “is similar to the tasting (*āsvāda*) of the supreme *brahman*.”⁵¹ A post-secular reader cannot be expected to interpret this experience in the same way as a religious reader. It is precisely for this reason that this study draws on Abhinava’s *rasadhvani*.

Whatever the truthfulness or transcendental significance of the experience promised in the *Book of Mormon*, the text nonetheless invites and even requires willing engagement with a *tremendum* that can lead to unexpected results. It is here that *rasa* theory is valuable for understanding this essentially religious experience in a post-secular context. There is no way around this final invitation of the text. It must be taken seriously on its own terms, and I propose that this can be accomplished through the theory of *rasa*.

6.4 The Fruit of the Word: Lehi₁ and Alma₂

Returning to Lehi₁ and his visionary experiences, we come to one of the most detailed visions in the entire *Book of Mormon* text. Lehi₁ recounts his vision of the tree of life to his sons in the form of a first person narration (18–20). After the mission of Lehi₁’s sons in recovering the plates has been recounted by Nephi₁, the vision is the next narrative element. It is part of only the second FE chapter. This early placement of the vision within the larger *Book of Mormon* text is significant for understanding the *Book of Mormon*,⁵² as the vision models the expected experiential reading practice first suggested in Lehi₁’s initial visions. The model is then reinforced by Moroni₂’s final invitation to the reader.

⁵¹Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 48.

⁵²Cf. Charles Swift, “Lehi’s Vision of the Tree of Life: Understanding the Dream as Visionary Literature,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 14, no. 2 (2005): 63.

6.4.1 Partake of the Fruit: Lehi₁ as Model Reader

Lehi₁, as a model for the reader, does not only *see* a vision. He is an active, emotional, gustatory participant. Lehi₁'s vision includes fourteen forms of *partake of fruit*. The participatory, experiential components of the dream-vision are in line with both the bodily, overwhelming character of the visions in the first chapter of the *Book of Mormon* and *rasa*'s foundational metaphor of enjoyable eating.

The vision is real in an experiential sense. His body and mind undergo emotions that can later be recalled and recounted as memories. However, Lehi₁'s experience is not literally real in a material sense, even within the diegesis. The experience is instead virtual, in the sense of 'virtual reality.' The signifiers that form the basis of the experience are perceptible, but they are not physically tangible. The non-material and yet experiential reality of the events in Lehi₁'s virtual dream can be seen through the change in how he speaks of his visionary experience. He initially says that "me thought (*sic*) I saw a dark and dreary wilderness" (FE, 18). His later narration changes in a crucial way. After following his guide for several hours, he says: "I beheld myself that I *was* in a dark and dreary waste" (19, my emphasis). He is completely absorbed in the vision by this point. Initially he only *thought* he was in a wilderness; as the vision progressed, he *was* there.

During the course of the vision, Lehi₁ is not aware of its ultimately virtual nature of the experience. It is real as an experience in which he is a full participatory member, and the 'non-real' nature does not diminish its experiential nature. His participation is so real that he experiences fear and loneliness during the dream. The dream thus does not require a constative truthfulness or a representational relationship with a material 'extra-textual' referent to nonetheless enable an experience. Lehi₁'s intense emotions can be seen after he has been abandoned by his messenger companion and he has to travel onward alone: "And after that I had travelled for the space of many hours in darkness, I began to pray unto the Lord, that he would have mercy on me, according to the multitude of his tender mercies" (19). The feelings are therefore so acute that he has the urge to pray, even within a vision. Lehi₁ is the perfect embodiment of

Abhinava's required audience participation, where *rasa* "is perceived [not] with indifference, from the outside."⁵³ He is right in the middle of events.

It is also significant that Lehi₁'s visionary experience occurs within a dream. The text draws attention to the fact that his vision is a dream and that these two terms are synonymous. "Behold, I have dreamed a dream; or, in other words, I have seen a vision" (FE, 18). 'Dreaming a dream' seems tautological, but it serves to make absolutely clear that unlike Lehi₁'s visions at the beginning of the *Book of Mormon*, this is a *sleeping* and not a waking vision. His experience is within a world apart from his actual world and not only in the parallel vision dimension which Nephi₁ enters later.

The intensely private nature of a dream space suggests a further model for the reader. Marielle Schnyder argues that personal reading (as opposed to collective listening to a text being read aloud) creates an intimate *text space*. Individual, quiet reading creates a virtual space, "in which the body of the reader disengages itself from the context of society."^{54a} Few things, if any, are as personal, intimate, and removed from the larger context of society as a dream.

This intimate and disengaged virtual space allows for intense interactions between reader and text. The existence of this space makes the modelling of Lehi₁'s experience even more relevant as it shows that the experiential engagement should or perhaps even simply will not occur in public, but only in the intensely private. Schnyder speaks of the medieval reading practice of *attentio*, "complete surrender of mental and sensory powers to the text."^{54b} In this regard, affective reading can be likened to a vivid dream. The intensity of Lehi₁'s concentration and mental and sensory involvement within his vision is seen in a subtle criticism on the part of Nephi₁.

Laman₁ and Lemuel (and presumably Sam) wish to understand the vision and ask about the fountain of filthy water which Nephi₁ describes in his own vision. The text implies that Lehi₁ saw this fountain (i.e. spring) of water, but that he did not pay close attention to it. Nephi₁ says that "so

⁵³Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 87.

⁵⁴Schnyder, "Kunst der Vergegenwärtigung," a 434, my translation: in dem sich der Körper des Lesenden aus dem Kontext der Gesellschaft löst; b 432: totale Hingabe der Geistes- und Sinneskräfte an den Text.

much was [Lehi₁'s] mind swallowed up in other things, that he beheld not the filthiness of the water" (FE, 37).

Lehi₁ thus models an intense *attentio*. His mental and sensory involvement was not a calm perusal of a diorama or vignette. His mind was "swallowed up" in concentration. This type of concentration is then expected of the reader as well. The experiential involvement of being "swallowed up" in the vision also contains a positive note: The reader does not need to parse every element of the narrative. Lehi₁ was fixated on some details which were of particular interest to him, and yet the performative component of the vision was not impeded.

The reader does not need to catalog every single detail about setting and 'plot.' Instead, the emotional experience is at the forefront of a Lehi reading. In the words of Latour, as long as the text transforms, it is performatively 'true.'⁵⁵ The virtual, non-material, but nonetheless affecting nature of Lehi₁'s vision also reinforces that reading the *Book of Mormon* in a performative manner does not require the constative historicity of the events presented in the narrative. Even should the text 'lie' in terms of its fictionality, it can be performatively true.

Lehi₁'s vision of the tree of life is for the most part analogous to that of Nephi₁. Here the imprecision of English word *same* becomes a problem, since we can say that Nephi₁ has the 'same' vision. In modern virtual reality, two people perceiving the 'same' thing are usually not doing so with the identical, exact same, or selfsame object (in the sense of German *dasselbe Objekt*).⁵⁶ In other words, the two are usually not sitting in the selfsame room and are not looking at the selfsame pixels on the selfsame screen.

Even if another person later goes through a virtual reality experience using the selfsame disk or file in the selfsame room with the exact same screen, we cannot say that the signifiers that form the basis of the two experiences are truly identical. This means that Nephi₁ does not see the selfsame (*denselben*) materially identical, locationally stable tree of his father's vision, even though we can colloquially say that he has the 'same' vision

⁵⁵Bruno Latour, *Rejoicing*, 32; cf. p. 10. in this study.

⁵⁶While more rare, the English *selfsame* is a parallel of the German 'dasselbe Ding,' i.e. the self thing.

in terms of the signifiers. He only has an equivalent vision (in the sense of German *die gleiche Vision*).⁵⁷ Nephi₁ only perceives the equivalent (*die gleichen*) visual signifiers that were present in his father's dream.

The differences between the equivalent visions of these two early *Book of Mormon* prophets is less one of subject matter, as one of perspective (the text is unclear as to whether Lehi₁ also had the extensive vision Nephi₁ had after seeing the vision of the tree). The distinction of the two visions is between eating and seeing, bodily consumption and separated observation. Lehi₁'s vision in chapter II is experiential and in first person; Nephi₁'s vision in chapter III is observational and in third person.

Nephi₁'s account is filled with forms of *Look! And I looked*. McGuire explains that Nephi₁ "tells us 'I looked' sixteen times, and 'I saw' thirty-five times."⁵⁸ Nephi₁ thus has a very different type of engagement compared to that of his father. Lehi₁ is experiential; Nephi₁ is analytic and interpretational. When the vision begins, Nephi₁ asks the angel for the same vision as his father, but with the crucial difference that he seeks to "know the *interpretation* thereof" (FE, 24, my emphasis). The angel does not put Nephi₁ into the position of a participant, but of a decoding observer instead. Nephi₁ is looking for the vision's *significations*. The angel repeatedly tells Nephi₁ to *Look!* The angel then gives an allegorical interpretation of the elements Nephi₁ is instructed to observe. Each is explained as the "representation of" something. Whereas Lehi had a 'direct' experience of the vision, Nephi₁ is another hermeneut. Lehi₁ is one of the *participants* in the vision while Nephi is an outside *observer*.

The distinction between consuming and observing does not mean that an analytic or interpretative-observational form of reading is entirely illegitimate. These episodes only show that a detached, analytic approach is not the only valid method of engaging with the text, and it should be complemented with affective reading. The element of the emotional, the bodily, and the experiential in first person must also be taken into account. This experiential method of reading is again brought up by Moroni₂'s promise of a manifestation by the Spirit in relation to the *Book of Mormon*.

⁵⁷To put the words in a German sentence: Nephi₁ sieht nicht *denselben* Baum wie sein Vater, sondern nur den *gleichen*.

⁵⁸McGuire, "Nephi," 60.

That being said, Nephi₁, the quintessential exegete who immediately wants the metaphorical meaning of every element of the text, still insists on the emotional power of scripture and inspired language. When he is commanded to construct the ship with which the family will cross the ocean his brothers Laman₁ and Lemuel refuse to assist him. The older brothers also complain about the hardships they and their families had suffered since leaving Jerusalem, and they criticize Nephi₁ and their father (43). They do not believe the prophecies of their father and brother, even though they have repeatedly been shown the power of God.

Nephi₁ criticizes them for precisely this forgetfulness, which is also the basis for the ordeal on the ship when the brothers and their families forget “by what power they had been brought thither” (48).⁵⁹ Back when the ship is being built, Nephi₁ reminds his older brothers that they have seen and heard from an angel who told them that their brother and their father were commanded by God. Nephi₁ points to his brothers’ lack of spiritual sensitivity: “[Y]e were *past feeling*, that ye could *not feel* [the angel’s] words” (46, my emphasis). According to Nephi₁, the reason his brothers are unable to accept the inspired nature of Nephi₁ and Lehi₁ is that they lack the requisite sensitivity and willingness to be lastingly affected and changed by the inspired word. This criticism suggests that such sensitivity to inspired words is required of the reader of the *Book of Mormon*. Michael Call describes this “spiritual sensitivity” as the “one vital skill” required for reading the *Book of Mormon*.⁶⁰ The ability to feel and be affected by text and not only understand it analytically is therefore the central requirement for the *Book of Mormon*’s expected reading practice.

The requirement of spiritual sensitivity is reiterated in Nephi₁’s reflections on his own writings and the scriptures in general. These reflections are part of what is often described as his psalm.⁶¹ He says that his own record keeping is not only a matter of neutral, passionless historiography. His writings are highly personal and highly emotional, and he calls his

⁵⁹Cf. section 6.2.3.

⁶⁰Call, “Reading Competency,” 59.

⁶¹For example RE; G. Hardy, *Understanding*; Matthew Nickerson, “Nephi’s Psalm: 2 Nephi 4:16–35 in the Light of Form-Critical Analysis,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 6, no. 2 (1997).

account “the things of my soul” (FE, 69). Nephi₁ also speaks about his inclusions of biblical scripture in his record: “For my soul deliteth (*sic*) in the Scriptures; and my heart pondereth them” (ibid.). Reading scripture is a matter of the soul and of delight. Delight in something involves pleasure and enjoyment.

Reading scripture is not (or at least should not be) only a matter of information transfer. Even though Nephi₁ previously wanted the interpretation of a vision, he here describes his general approach to scripture as one of deep enjoyment. It is not sufficient to only read the scriptures in a decoding manner; the heart must be involved. The reader must avoid what Nephi₁ criticizes in his brothers, namely the inability to *feel* words. We can confidently say that the *Book of Mormon* requires, above all else, the ability to be sensitive, since even the exegete Nephi₁ describes reading scripture as an emotional experience of the heart and soul. The text thus calls for a *rasadhvani* combination of scriptural *and* poetic-emotional reading.

6.4.2 “Experiment upon the word”: Alma₂'s Sermon

We can see this combination later in the *Book of Mormon* in the book of Alma when Alma₂ is preaching to the Zoramite poor. He issues a challenge to his listeners to engage with the scriptures with their heart and soul: “[A]wake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words” (315). This experiment is tied not only to Alma₂'s immediate sermon, but also to the scriptures in general. He quotes two extra-biblical prophets, Zenos and Zenock, in order to answer his interlocutors' questions about God and Christ. He introduces his quotations by asking: “Do ye believe those Scriptures which have been *written* by them of old? [...] Now behold, my brethren, I would ask, if ye have *read* the Scriptures?” (317, my emphasis). Alma₂ draws attention to specifically written scriptural records that are to be read (and not only listened to in the synagogue). After quoting from these two prophets, he creates a link back to his previous sermon on the seed that represents the truthfulness of the scriptures. “And now my brethren, I desire that ye should plant this word [i.e. the seed] in your hearts, and as it beginneth to swell, even so *nourish* it by your faith” (318, my emphasis).

The seed his listeners are to plant is not only his own sermon but the written scriptures available to them. This seed will nourish them if it is cared for properly. Alma₂ also details what such care entails earlier in the sermon. Once Alma₂ finishes, Amulek takes over and reinforces Alma₂'s call for an experiment: “[Y]ea, and [Alma₂] hath exhorted you unto faith, and to patience; yea, even that ye would have so much faith as even to plant the word in your hearts, that ye may try the *experiment* of its goodness” (319, my emphasis). This is the crux of my entire study. The text, by its own admission, is an *experiential-experimental apparatus*. To experiment upon the word is to *experience* the word.

Any experiment is a step into uncertainty. An experiment is ultimately an encounter with a *tremendum*. Alma₂'s and Amulek's interlocutors, and by extension the readers of the *Book of Mormon*, are asked to take a risk. At the same time, Amulek's call to try the experiment is also a *willing* and *conscious* step into this uncertainty. Alma₂ gives his further requirements for this experiment: “Now if ye give place, that a seed may be planted in your heart” and “if ye do not cast it out by your unbelief, that ye will resist the spirit of the Lord” (315). He is asking his listeners to engage with the text on an emotional and spiritual level by allowing the words to have a place in their hearts. They must willingly open their heart to the text.

In the words of Abhinava, the missionaries are inviting them to give *consent of the heart* to the text.⁶² The listeners are asked to not resist, or in other words, to *consent*. This also acknowledges that reading a text on its own terms is a risk on the part of the reader. The reader has to be willing to give up complete control, at least for the duration of the reading. This spirit that the readers should not resist is closely tied to the experience of reading the *Book of Mormon* text, since Moroni₂ promises a manifestation by and of the Spirit of God.

The text here creates a subtle connection with Lehi₁'s visionary engagement of partaking of fruit (rather than Nephi₁'s exegetical approach). Alma₂ describes the results of the successful experiment as *fruit*. The experiment involves planting the metaphorical seed of the word. If done correctly, the seed will ‘sprout’ and grow into a tree. This promised tree will,

⁶²Cf. Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 40, 63, 81, 96 n1.

if it is continually nourished, bring forth fruit (316). This fruit is described using two particular adjectives: it is “sweet above all that is sweet” and “white above all that is white” (ibid.). The only other instance of the words *sweet* and *white* being used together is in Lehi₁'s vision of the tree of life.

Lehi₁ says that the fruit he partook of was “most *sweet*, above all that I ever had before tasted. Yea, and I beheld that the fruit thereof was *white*, to exceed all the whiteness that I had ever seen. And as I partook of the fruit thereof, it filled my soul with exceeding great joy” (19, my emphasis). These two descriptions of their respective fruit clearly tie together these instances of engaging with inspired text. The risky experiment here proposed by Alma₂ is an experiential reading. The text leads to fruit, which can be tasted, resulting in joy.

Alma₂ promises his listeners that once they partake of this metaphorical fruit they will say: “It must needs be that this is a good seed, or that the word is good, for it beginneth to enlarge *my soul*; yea, it beginneth to enlighten my understanding; yea, and it beginneth to be *delicious* to me” (315, my emphasis). This ties back to both Lehi₁'s soul being filled with joy upon eating the fruit and Nephi₁'s description of reading the scriptures as his soul delighting in them. The use of the adjective ‘delicious’ is also significant. This word always refers to taste. The fruit promised as part of the experiment upon the word is therefore white, sweet, soul-enlarging, and delicious. Years after the *Book of Mormon*'s publication, Joseph Smith came back to the image of tasting doctrine and judging its value and truthfulness by its sweetness.⁶³

All of these gustatory descriptions form a striking analogy with *rasa*'s central metaphor of food and the pleasurable consumption thereof. All of these connections suggest that this aesthetic theory of affective textual reception is highly suitable for grasping the *Book of Mormon*'s requirements of the reader and the text's internal functioning. It is highly appropriate to read the *Book of Mormon* at the intersection of *śāstranaye* and *kāvyanaye*—scripture as *both* doctrine and affective literature.

The text should be treated as an experiential-experimental apparatus

⁶³This is part of what is commonly called the ‘King Follett Discourse’ given at a funeral. See Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1976), 355.

enabling a manifestation. We can then turn our focus back to Mormon₂ as extradiegetic narrator. The next chapter examines how he, as model-reader, brings himself emotionally into play as a model of experiential reading of the *Book of Mormon*.⁶⁴

⁶⁴Schnyder, "Kunst der Vergegenwärtigung," 431; cf. pp. 96f. in this study,

7

There he is! Finding Mormon₂ as Affective Narrator

The experiential-experimental reading practice modelled by Lehi₁ and explicitly called for by Alma₂ on the intradiegetic levels can also be found on the extradiegetic through Mormon₂ as model pre-reader. Throughout his narration, he demonstrates an affective relationship with his own narrative. This chapter relies on the complex narratological structures and functions of the *Book of Mormon* as presented in sections 6.1.1 through 6.1.3. The definitions of terms are found in the terminological summary in section 3.7.1.

As a brief refresher, Mormon₂ is the extradiegetic principal narrator who frequently interrupts and intervenes in his own narration and, more importantly, in the narration of other characters. This was prominently seen in connection with Helaman₂ at the battle for Antiparah, where Mormon₂ uses a metalepsis (a transgressive shift between levels) to briefly take over the narration.¹ The nested narration structure with, for the most part, Mormon₂ at the outermost level forms the foundation of this chapter.

The chapter examines several episodes where Mormon₂ demonstrates an affective relationship with his narration. It must be emphasized again that Mormon₂ explicitly engages with written accounts. Everything he includes is either based on or directly quotes from written records which were transmitted *and* delivered to him through the centuries. This situation mirrors that of the modern readers. They engage with a written delivered text of supposedly ancient origins.

Mormon₂'s pre-reading of these records in preparation for his narration leads to him repeatedly modeling the affective-experiential reading practice demanded by the text. He identifies with his characters and blends their experiences with his own. Experientially, he as narrator moves down a narratological level and the extra- and intra-diegetic begin to meld into one another. This melding of diegetic levels is significant for the *Book of Mormon*, since the actual reader has already been pulled into the epidiegesis. The model therefore asks the epidiegetic reader to experientially meld

¹Cf. section 5.3, esp. p. 162, and figure 5.1 on p. 157.

with the levels of the diegesis.

7.1 Mormon₂ and Alma₂ at Ammonihah

Mormon₂ models such an affective reaction to his narrative in his interactions with Alma₂. These two share a unique structural and emotional relationship in the text. As will be shown in this chapter, the text repeatedly uses metalepsis to move between the narrator voices of Mormon₂ and Alma₂. The two also share the strongest intertextual relationship of any two characters in the text. The most immediate connection is that both men are at some point prophet-commanders of the Nephite armies. Alma₂ marches “at the head of his armies” and leads the Nephites against the seditious Amlicites (FE, 225–26). Mormon₂ describes the start of his military career as a fifteen-year-old in a similar manner: “I did go forth *at the head of an army* of the Nephites, against the Lamanites” (520, my emphasis). Alma₂ was also both the high priest of the church and the chief judge of the Nephites at the time of this military campaign. Mormon₂ is the final spiritual leader, and he seems to be all that remains of organized government in his role as supreme commander of the Nephite armies.

The two narrator-characters also share an important structural relationship. Mormon₂’s most recognizable phrase is *and thus we see*. He uses some form of this phrase twenty-one (possibly twenty-three)² times throughout his narration. However, the phrase is not exclusively used by Mormon₂. Ammon₂ uses it once (298); Alma₂’s interlocutors at Ammonihah use it once (256); and Alma₂ uses this phrase ten (possibly twelve) times (!) throughout his presence in the text, including once at Ammonihah.³ Alma₂ is therefore the only other voice in the *Book of Mormon* given the power to interpret scripture and doctrine to an extent comparable to Mormon₂’s position.

²Cf. p. 269.

³“Now we see that” (245); “Now we see that [...] and thus we see, that [...] And we see that” (257); “therefore we see that” (303); “we see that” (328); “Now we see that” (337); “and thus we see, that [...] And now we see by this, that [...] and thus we see [...] And thus we see that” (338).

7.1.1 Narrating Ammonihah

The unique narratological relationship between Mormon₂ and Alma₂ is first established through the events at Ammonihah, where Alma₂'s preaching directly results in the massacre of women and children due to the conversion of their husbands and fathers. The unique character of Ammonihah can already be seen with the headnote that introduces the section on Alma₂ preaching in the city.

Headnotes are another common and defining feature of Mormon₂'s narration. They can be identified by being in italics, and they generally serve to introduce shifts in narrators or narratives. They usually only set up a new section, for example in Mosiah when the section on Alma₁ is introduced with "An account of Alma and the people of the Lord, which was driven into the wilderness by the people of king Noah" (202). Alma₂'s other sermons are also frequently introduced with strictly transitional headnotes.⁴

When the headnotes summarize events beforehand, it is usually in very broad terms, like with the transition to the missionary princes that mentions "[t]heir sufferings and deliverance" (269). When the summaries are more detailed, they usually touch on all major events. For example, the headnote for the book of Helaman mentions "wars and contentions" and "dissension," as well as the "prophecies of many Holy Prophets, before the coming of Christ" (407). The progression of events in Helaman is also summarized in broad, but complete terms: "And also many of the Lamanites are converted. An account of their conversion. An account of the righteousness of the Lamanites, and the wickedness and abominations of the Nephites" (*ibid.*).

This is where the headnote introducing Alma₂'s preaching at Ammonihah becomes interesting. It breaks with the usually functional nature of the headnotes relating to Alma₂, and it instead includes at least some plot summary. What is more, the summary leaves out major events. The headnote reads: "The words of Alma, and also the words of Amulek, which was declared unto the people which was in the land of Ammonihah. And also they are cast into prison, and delivered by the miraculous power of God which was in them" (245). Not only does the reader know that this following sec-

⁴Cf. FE, 232, 239, 323, 330, 332.

tion involves a sermon, but also that the people of Ammonihah reject this preaching. An important omission in this headnote is the massacre of the women and children.

The headnote thus prefigures Mormon₂'s upcoming reticent narration concerning the atrocity. He mentions the overall arc of the rejection and imprisonment and ultimate delivery of Alma₂ and his companion Amulek. However, he does not foreshadow one of the most horrific episodes in the entire text: women and children burnt alive on a pyre because of the faith of their husbands and fathers. This suggests the unspeakable nature of the events to come.

The unique relationship between the two narrators is established early on in the narration of Alma₂'s preaching. The narration by Mormon₂ includes the use of metalepsis between Mormon₂ and Alma₂ and to some extent Amulek as well. The prophet-narrators are thereby placed in close narratological proximity, and the text uses this proximity to establish a sorrowful-empathetic connection between the two narrators at Ammonihah and later on with Alma₂'s soliloquy.

In introducing the sermon at Ammonihah, the text follows the same pattern of a discursively introduced shift as seen with narrators like Zeniff (FE, 173). At this point in the narrative, Alma₂ and his new companion Amulek have been introduced. In preparation for the shift to Alma₂'s verbatim sermon, Mormon₂ concludes his extradiegetic narration by saying: "And it came to pass that *they* [Alma and Amulek] went forth and began to preach and to prophesy unto the people according to the spirit and power which the Lord had given *them*" (245, my emphasis). The third-person plural *they* and *them* unambiguously refer to both missionaries.

This ends chapter VI of the book of Alma, and the next chapter is introduced by the headnote "*The words of Alma and also the words of Amulek which was declared unto the people which was in the land of Ammonihah [...] according to the record of Alma*" (ibid.). This summary tells the reader that the following is some record that is different from the one Mormon has been presenting up to this point. As with Zeniff, Alma₂ immediately introduces himself after the transition between extra- and intradiegetic narrator: "And again, *I Alma* having been commanded of God that *I* should take Amulek and go forth and preach again unto this people..." (ibid., my

emphasis).

The switch between chapters VI and VII is therefore properly narrated by using both a summary headnote and an immediate change in grammar, and Alma₂ includes extensive direct quotation of his own sermon. He subsequently closes the report: “Now it came to pass that when I Alma had spoken these words...” (248), and he then introduces Amulek and his upcoming sermon—which technically makes Amulek a metadiegetic narrator: “And it came to pass that Amulek went and stood forth and began to preach unto them also. And now the words of Amulek are not all written; nevertheless a part of his words are written in *this* book” (ibid., my emphasis). The chapter ends here, both in the 1830 and LDS chapter divisions.

The previous chapter break was followed by a shift in diegesis. However, that break was also followed by an introductory header. Alma₂ has told the reader that Amulek’s words are included in “this book,” a book which was marked as belonging to Alma₂, by noting that what followed was “according to the record of Alma.” Alma₂’s previous closing remarks even set up a quotation from Amulek’s sermon by telling the reader that at least “a part of his words are written” (248). Alma VIII begins with a third-person narration about Amulek. “Now these are the words which *Amulek* preached unto the people which was in the land of Ammonihah, saying...” (ibid., my emphasis). For now, the reader has no reason to assume that this third-person narration *about* Amulek is anyone other than Alma₂, since Alma₂ had clearly introduced the transition from his own voice to the voice of Amulek. There is no ambiguity as to whether the first person voice in this section is that of Amulek, since he also immediately introduces himself: “*I am* Amulek. *I am* the son of Giddonah” (ibid., my emphasis).

He finishes his sermon, which is clearly indicated by the text: “And now when Amulek had spoken these words...” (249). This follows the pattern established previously, where the end of the intradiegetic Alma₂ is acknowledged by the extradiegetic Mormon₂. Since the narrating voice that had introduced Amulek was that of Alma₂, it is reasonable to assume that the intradiegetic Alma₂ will pick up the narration again now that Amulek’s metadiegetic sermon is finished. And yet the text suddenly changes narration levels by using the third person plural:

[T]he people began to be astonished, seeing there was more than one witness who testified of the things whereof they were accused, and also of the things which was to come, according to the spirit of prophecy which was in *them*. Nevertheless there were some among them who thought to question *them*. Nevertheless there were some among them who thought to question *them*, that by their cunning devices they might catch *them* in *their* words, that they might find witness against *them*, that they might deliver *them* to their judges, that *they* might be judged according to the law, and that *they* might be slain or cast into prison - according to the crime which they could make appear or witness against *them* (249–50, my emphasis).

All of these third-person plural pronouns refer to both Amulek (who had previously been speaking) and Alma₂ (who had introduced Amulek's narration voice). The narration voice has therefore not returned to that of Alma₂ but to the extradiegetic Mormon₂. The transition is *logically* established by an extremely high concentration of the third-person plural (rather than the singular, as would be expected). However, the transition is never discursively acknowledged, making it a metalepsis.

The narration later introduces more of Amulek's debate. Speaking of the lawyers accusing Alma₂ and Amulek, the narrating voice (now presumably Mormon₂ and no longer Alma₂) says: "Now they knew not that Amulek could know of their designs. But it came to pass as they began to question *him*, *he* perceived their thoughts, and *he* said unto them. . ." (250, my emphasis). This shift back to the voice of Amulek is thus properly narrated, even if the text is unclear from which level this shift originates.

Once Amulek finishes speaking, "the people were more angry with Amulek" (250–51). If it were not for the strange transition to the third-person plural, this passage could well still be Alma₂ speaking *about* Amulek. The narration completes a few more properly narrated transitions in and out of the quotation of Amulek before it finally establishes that the third-person plural used previously was in fact referring to *both* Alma₂ and his companion Amulek. The main antagonist of the two missionaries, Zeezrom, is introduced: "And there was one among them whose name was Zeezrom. Now he was the foremost to accuse *Amulek and Alma*" (251, my emphasis). Only here is the meaning of the third-person plural from a

page earlier definitively established. Because of this continual ambiguity, there is no way of establishing where the shift in narrator levels from Alma₂ back to Mormon₂ occurs. It can be argued that it occurred with the short introduction immediately before Amulek begins to speak or in the transition from the end of Amulek's first speech to the further narration about Amulek when the third-person plural is used.

Wherever one might place the transition, it is clear that a transgressive shift has occurred somewhere, but the shift is only indicated by a change in grammatical number. If the reader is not paying close attention, the transgressive shift from Alma₂ to Mormon₂ might not even be recognized as such. Like with the metalepsis with Helaman₂, it is what I have called a morpho-syntactic metalepsis.⁵

The effect of the instances of clandestine morpho-syntactic metalepsis is that various narratological levels blur together rather than being clearly distinguished (as was the case when Mormon₂ first introduced himself through a jarring metalepsis). The blurring effect metalepsis is described by Genette as establishing "between narrator and character(s) a variable or floating relationship, a pronominal vertigo in tune with a freer logic and a more complex conception of 'personality.'"⁶ The narrators' personalities can begin to meld and the clear demarcation of voices begins to break down. I return to this idea more closely in the discussion of Alma₂'s soliloquy later in the chapter.

7.1.2 Mormon₂'s Flight: Changes in Poeticity

The emotionality at Ammonihah is seen principally through the pronounced alteration in Mormon₂'s intrusiveness. After the introductory instances of metalepsis, Mormon₂'s narration of Ammonihah includes one of the most bizarre passages in the *Book of Mormon*. Grant Hardy calls it "A Digression on the Nephite Legal and Monetary Systems" (RE, 281; MSE 271). Mormon₂ brings the narrative to a complete halt and digresses for pages at a time from the flow of the plot in order to provide seemingly irrelevant

⁵Cf. p. 162 in this study.

⁶Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 246.

cultural information regarding laws, standardized payment, coinage, and prices.

The “digression” is preceded by the scene of Zeezrom being the principal opponent of Alma₂ and Amulek in their sermon to the people of Ammonihah. Zeezrom accuses them as a way of getting the populace to turn on missionaries. The end of the descriptive pause finally returns to the previous scene by saying that Zeezrom riles up the audience as a way of accusing Alma₂ and Amulek and discrediting their ideas. Everything between these two portions of the scene is an extensive, rambling, highly intrusive pause.

The section borders on the incoherent and the complexity makes it difficult to keep up. Mormon₂ is usually much more succinct in his narration. Even his section on describing Nephite geography (287–88), which is of a similar length to the digression on coinage, is fairly straightforward. Most of the *Book of Mormon* narrative follows a clean narrative line. Even the occasional jumps, while chronologically jarring, are not inherently confusing on a narrative level. And yet here the usually controlled narrator widely swerves off course.

The content of the pause could simply be summarized as: ‘The lawyers and judges receive payment for their services, and they therefore have a financial incentive to create more legal disputes. An onti was the most valuable coin at that time and was worth seven day’s work for a judge.’ These statements are the only ones of immediate narrative value. Perhaps the caveat ‘and this was all technically legal’ could be added.

The laws for the payment of lawyers and judges stands in stark contrast to church policy established under Alma₁ when founding the original congregation of the church (193). Nephite priests do not receive payment and are thus a type of lay clergy. Alma₂, who has been the (paid) chief judge of the Nephites before leaving on several proselyting missions, is only acting in the capacity of an (unpaid) high priest of the church.

And yet the lawyers, who in Mormon₂’s eyes provide no valuable service beyond enriching themselves, receive substantial payment. The contrast between self-serving lawyers and selfless priests adds to the contempt Mormon₂, and by extension the reader, feels towards those disputing with Alma₂ and Amulek, who, as will be evident soon, are both preaching at the risk of their very lives.

The whole “digression,” broken down by levels, is given in figure 7.1 on page 246. Each entry at a level deals with roughly the same concept as other entries at that level. When a new concept is introduced, the diagram has an added level. When an explanation returns to a previous concept, it is at the same level as the previous mention of the concept. This analysis shows that Mormon₂’s descriptive pause jumps erratically, and the jumps illustrate how many different threads and concepts are intermixed in the description.

Most of these are not required to understand the immediate events of the narrative, and they are never of any further narrative use. They can charitably be called ‘world building’ and could perhaps be used to further understand Nephite culture (but does the reader need to know the cost of barley?). Perhaps future studies of the *Book of Mormon* will be able to establish the further narrative function of the different levels.

After the Digression, Mormon₂ recounts Zeezrom tempting Amulek with a large amount of money. “Behold, here is six onties of silver, and all these will I give thee if thou wilt deny the existence of a Supreme Being” (252). The digression established that even one onti was a large amount of money (seven days of work for a judge). Six onties would be forty-two days of work, roughly two months’ pay.⁷

The text never reveals whether Zeezrom thought this offer would work. It seems the text is suggesting that Zeezrom is so greedy that he would have fallen for the temptation himself. Putting aside the heavy-handed attempt at buying off Amulek in front of the audience instead of in a backroom meeting, we see the anger of Mormon₂ as narrator. He describes Zeezrom as “a man which was expert in the devises (*sic*) of the Devil, that he might destroy that which was good” (252).

Mormon₂ is not impressed by Zeezrom. In his sermon on faith, hope, and charity, Mormon₂ says that “all things which are good, cometh of God” (577). Conversely he says that “that which is evil, cometh of the devil” (*ibid.*). Good things lead to being righteous since “that which is of God,

⁷Here is the calculation: A gold senine is the payment for a day of work, which is worth the same as a senum of silver. An onti of silver is equal to an ezrom (worth 4 senums), an annor (worth 2 senums), and a single senum put together. Therefore $4 + 2 + 1 = 7$ senums, or 7 days of work as a judge.

Scene: And there was **one among them** whose name was Zeezrom. Now he being the foremost to accuse **Amulek and Alma**, he being one of the most expert among them, having much business to do among the people.

L1 Now the object of these lawyers were to **get gain**; and they **got gain** according to their **employ**.

L2 Now it was in the **law of Mosiah** that every man which was a Judge of the law, or which was appointed to be judges, should receive wages **according to the time** which they labored to judge those which were brought before them to be judged.

L3 Now if a man oweth another, and he would not pay that which he did owe, he was complained of to the Judge; and the Judge executed authority, and sent forth officers that the man should be brought before him; and he judgeth the man according to the law and the evidences which are brought against him; and thus the man was compelled to pay that which he oweth, or be striped, or be cast out from among the people, as a thief and a robber.

L2 And the judge receiveth for his wages **according to his time**:

L4 a senine of gold for a day, or a senum of silver,

L5 which is **equal** to a senine of gold;

L2 and this is according to the **law** which was **given**.

L6 Now these are the **names** of the different pieces of their gold, and of their silver, according to their value.

L7 And the names are **given by the Nephites**; for they did **not reckon** after the manner of the **Jews** which were at Jerusalem; neither did they measure after the manner of the Jews;

L8 but they **altered** their reckoning and their measure, according to the minds and the circumstances of the people, in **every generation**, until the reign of the Judges,

L2 they having been **established by king Mosiah**.

L6 Now the **reckoning** is thus: A senine of gold, a seon of gold, a shum of gold, and a limnah of gold. A senum of silver, an annor of silver, an ezrom of silver, and an onti of silver.

L5 A senum of silver was **equal to** a senine of gold,

L9 and either for a measure of **barley**, and also for a measure of every kind of grain.

L5 Now the amount of a seon of gold was **twice** the value of a senine; and a shum of gold was twice the value of a seon; and a limnah of gold was the **value of** them all; and an annor of silver was **as great as** two senums; and an ezrom of silver was **as great as** four senums; and an onti was **as great as** them all.

L6 Now **this is** the value of the lesser numbers of their reckoning:

L5 A shiblon is **half of** a senum;

L9 therefore, a shiblon for half a measure of **barley**;

L5 and a shiblum is a **half of** a shiblon; and a leah is the **half of** a shiblum.

L6 Now this is their number, according to their **reckoning**.

L5 Now an antion of gold is **equal to** three shiblons.

L1 Now, it was for the sole purpose to **get gain**, because they received their wages according to their **employ**;

L10 therefore, they did **stir up** the people to riotings, and **all manner** of disturbances and wickedness, that they might have **more employ**;

L1 that they might **get money** according to the **suits** which were brought before them;

Scene: therefore **they** did stir up the people against **Alma and Amulek**.

Figure 7.1: Digression on the Nephite Legal and Monetary Systems

inviteth and enticeth to do good continually” (ibid.). Mormon₂ places the blame for the destruction of his people on the fact that his people no longer served God.

This is why Mormon₂ can call Zeezrom someone who is trying to destroy what is good. In Mormon₂’s eyes, Zeezrom is the type of devilish demagogue that will lead to destruction, and he is not shy about labelling Zeezrom as such. Amulek agrees with this assessment and calls Zeezrom a “child of hell” (252). Amulek had previously harshly rebuked the lawyers he had been debating: “O ye wicked and perverse generation; ye Lawyers and hypocrites; for ye are laying the foundations of the Devil” (250). Neither Mormon₂ as narrator nor the intradiegetic Amulek hold back their contempt for Zeezrom the lawyer and the lawyers in general.

Amulek’s rebuke and his sermon on the resurrection and future judgment finally cows Zeezrom. Alma₂ then takes up the opportunity to also preach to the people. He begins a sermon about the Old Testament king and high priest Melchizedek. He specifically takes his sermon from the scriptural record the Lehites had brought with them from Jerusalem. He says to the people: “Behold, the scriptures are before you” (260). Using this written scriptural basis, Alma₂ relates how Melchizedek’s people “had waxed strong in iniquity and abominations; yea, they had all gone astray: they were full of all manner of wickedness” (ibid.). His mention of this other group of people suggests he considers the people of Ammonihah to also be in such a state.

However, the high priestly king was able to cause his people to repent by virtue of his powerful preaching: “[B]ut Melchizedek having exercised mighty faith, and received the office of the High Priesthood, according to the holy order of God, did preach repentance unto his people” (ibid.). The preaching on the part of Melchizedek succeeds in converting the population. “And behold, they did repent; and Melchizedek did establish peace in the land in his days; therefore he was called the Prince of Peace” (ibid.). The logic seems clear to Alma₂: If Melchizedek was able to cause the people to repent by virtue of his faith and calling in the high priesthood, this should work again among the Lehites.

Alma₂ had been consecrated the high priest and was therefore the leader of the church throughout the holdings of the Nephites (220). He had pre-

viously also been the chief judge, the head of government of the Nephites. In this dual calling, he mirrored Melchizedek. However, before embarking on his ministry through Nephite lands, he gave this office to a man called Nephiah. He only remains the high priest when preaching in Ammonihah (232). In this regard, Alma₂ is no longer completely like Melchizedek, who combined both the office of spiritual leader and head of government. The people of Ammonihah point this out during his first attempt at preaching in the city (243). Alma₂ nonetheless seems to consider his relationship with the scriptural high priest Melchizedek to be sufficient to apply the perceived lesson to his own situation.

Alma₂'s reaction to his exposition of Melchizedek and his ministry is that "when [he] had said these words unto them, he stretched forth his hand unto them and cried with a mighty voice, saying, Now is the time to repent, for the day of salvation draweth nigh" (260). He too calls the people to repentance. If Melchizedek "did preach repentance unto his people" and it caused them to repent, why should it not also cause Alma₂'s people to repent?

In this matter, Alma₂ follows Nephi₁'s invitation for his people to apply the scriptures to themselves. Nephi₁ says: "[F]or I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning" (52). He later repeats this idea when he "will liken [Isaiah's] words unto [his] people" (86). Nephi₁ finally invites his people to do this themselves: "Now, these are the words; and ye may liken them unto you, and unto all men" (*ibid.*). Nephi₁ takes an Old Testament prophet and applies (*i.e.* likens) these texts in the context of his life and the lives of his people. Alma₂ follows this model and applies the lessons he derives from reading the Old Testament account to his own situation. Patterns shown in written accounts should work in the present. If God does not change, why would the results of a similar if not identical action be any different, even centuries later?

And yet this application fails miserably and spectacularly. This failure leads to the atrocities of Ammonihah, since the people are so incensed by Alma₂'s accusations that they begin to purge their city of believers. One can be cynical and say that the rhetorical situation was not similar enough, since Alma₂ was no longer the chief judge and therefore Alma₂ presumed too much in his application. Whatever the diegetic explanation, Alma₂'s

failed attempt is mirrored by Mormon₂. As the final prophet, he had scriptures that told of the success of missionaries and prophets in converting a people. Like Alma₂, Mormon₂ was also unable to achieve the same scriptural results.

Despite the rising furor, Alma₂'s and Amulek's preaching seems to work, since they succeed in convincing at least Zeezrom, and cause him to repent: "[H]is soul began to be harrowed up, under a consciousness of his own guilt; yea, he began to be encircled about by the pains of hell" (262). He subsequently pleads on behalf of the two missionaries. "Behold, I am guilty, and these men are spotless before God" (ibid.). Mormon₂ summarizes his attempts by saying: "And he began to plead for them from that time forth" (ibid., my emphasis). It is not a completely surprising situation that a man so shaken to his core would then defend his previous opponents. This logical connection is marked with an *and*.

However, it is surprising that the people are not convinced by the chief antagonist suddenly defending his erstwhile rivals. One would expect the audience to at least be astonished that Zeezrom is now on the side of Alma₂ and Amulek. However, the text says: "[B]ut they reviled him, saying: Art thou also possessed with the devil?" (ibid., my emphasis). The intensity of the reaction is surprising. The seemingly illogical response is marked by the use of *but*. As a result of rejecting him, the text says that the ruling class "spit upon him, *and* cast him out from among them, and also all those which believed in the words which had been spoken by Alma and Amulek; *and* they cast them out, *and* sent men to cast stones at them" (ibid.). Considering the rejection, these reactions follow in a logical *therefore* or at least a form of *and then*.

Matters only get worse from there. The lawyers and judges of Ammonihah who have been disputing with Alma₂ proceed to round up the wives and children of the men converted by the two missionaries: "And they brought their wives and children together, and whosoever believed or had been taught to believe in the word of God, they caused that they should be cast into the fire" (262). On top of this, the people also engage in book burning, something that must be especially painful for a recordkeeper like Mormon₂, wholly reliant on delivered texts: "[A]nd they also brought forth their records which contained the Holy Scriptures, and cast them into the

fire also, that they might be burned and destroyed by fire” (ibid.). The missionaries are also bound and forced to watch the carnage.

The murders of the women and children tragically prefigure events during Mormon₂’s life. Centuries later, he must impotently watch at least two instances of war crimes involving women and children: The Lamanite forces sacrifice women and children to their “idol gods” (526); in another instance, they feed the wives and children of executed POWs with only the flesh of their killed husbands and fathers (584). Mormon₂’s empathy with Alma₂ can then be seen through how the narration changes at this point.

For the rest of the chapter, Mormon₂’s presence is only detectable through his use of conjunctions. Ānanda and Abhinava explicitly mention that even conjunctions can play a role in emotional suggestion. Due to the particulars of Sanskrit syntax, the translators refer to these as “particles,” specifically *ca* (and) and *tu* (but) (DhvL, 463–64 A and L). The narrative of the atrocities at Ammonihah that follows is dominated by simple clauses connected with only *and*. The relevant portion of the chapter (FE, 262–64), including the murder of the women and children, is given in Appendix E, where the conjunctions as well as words indicating logical or temporal progression between the clauses are highlighted. The predominance of the linking *and* as well as the general simplicity of poeticity should be noted.

The monetary digression has proven that Mormon₂ can become verbose. After having called Zeezrom “a man which was expert in the devices of the Devil,” he should be ready to excoriate the priests and their utter moral bankruptcy. And yet these events are described with austere matter-of-factness. The previous metalepses have already shown that Mormon₂ has a floating narratological relationship with Alma₂, and the digression shows that he is very present and active in narrating the events. Mormon₂’s identification with Alma₂ can then be seen in Mormon₂ the narrator all but disappearing in that role. It is this sudden detachment which is emotionally significant in the context of Mormon₂ as narrator. The rambling digression also becomes a type of stalling tactic, where Mormon₂ can put off having to narrate the upcoming horrors by going through every aspect of coinage and prices he can think of.

Most of the elements of the narrative are linked with only a terse *and*. The people reject Zeezrom’s conversion *and then* they cast out him and

the believing men *and then* they drag their wives and children together *and then* throw them on the pyre to be burned alive *and then* Alma₂ and Amulek are forced to watch *and then* they are thrown in prison *and then* they are mocked *and then* they are freed from the prison. The description of the events could almost be telegraph messages in the bareness of its style. The title of Swift's study of this passage is "When Less is More: The Reticent Narrator in the Story of Alma and Amulek." The OED defines *reticent* as "Reluctant or disinclined to speak out or express personal thoughts and feelings freely; reserved in speech; given to silence or concealment."⁸ The style of Mormon₂ as narrator can best be described with this adjective.

The text uses the common phrase *and it came to pass* to introduce the pain and anguish of Amulek. In this context it rings almost hollow and numbed, as if to say *and then* Amulek was pained, as if this were only a purely logical description of the most obvious causality. The central passage of the bare narration of the massacre is given below:

And it came to pass that they took Alma and Amulek, and carried them forth to the place of martyrdom, that they might witness the destruction of those which were consumed by fire. *And it came to pass* that when Amulek saw the *pains* of the women and children which were consuming in the fire, he was *also pained*; and he saith unto Alma, How can we witness this awful scene? *Therefore* let us stretch forth our hands, and exercise the power of God which is in us, and save them from the flames. *But* Alma saith unto him, The spirit constraineth me that I must not stretch forth mine hand; for behold, the Lord receiveth them up unto himself, in glory; and he doth suffer that they may do this thing, or that the people may do this thing unto them, according to the hardness of their hearts, that the judgments which he shall exercise upon them in his wrath, may be just; and the blood of the innocent shall stand as a witness against them, yea, and cry mightily against them at the last day (262–63).

In this moment, Mormon₂ follows the example of the compassionately unattached Vyāsa. Perhaps the horror of this scene can only be conveyed in the negative, by stripping denotation to only the bare minimum and ex-

⁸OED.com, *reticent*, *adj.*

pressing via suggestion. Turley speaks of Mormon₂'s narration of these events "creating silences that speak louder than words."⁹

One particularly loud silence has to do with Amulek. Swift says of the text's description of Amulek's feelings:

[T]he narrator does not say that Amulek saw the women and children being burned but that he saw their *pains*. The simplicity of the statement makes it all the more poignant. Rather than describing what Amulek saw in detail, the narrator opens up the opportunity for us to imagine the scene by giving us the least amount of information—least amount, perhaps, but also the most powerful.^{10a}

Describing being burned alive along with one's children or one's mother as simply 'pains' almost makes a mockery of the excruciating physical and mental agony these women and children must have experienced (in the diegesis). Describing Amulek's reaction as "he was also pained" almost makes me (and I imagine many other readers) want to scream at the narrator: *How do you expect him to feel!? Pained!?! Is that all!?! And yet one needs to also ask: What else could the narrator have said? Which word is adequate for this situation? It is perhaps in acknowledgement of the inadequacy of all words that the text reverts to the least adequate. Swift expresses this another way: "[T]he narrator opens up the opportunity for us to imagine the scene by giving us the least amount of information—least amount, perhaps, but also the most powerful."*^{10b}

This utter inadequacy also stems from the greatest narrator reticence in this narrative. Swift points out that after the events the narrator mentions many of the sacrifices Amulek has to make because of his support of Alma₂. And yet the narrator "does not tell us what happened to [Amulek's] immediate family. His gold and silver are mentioned, his father and kindred deserve some consideration, but there is nothing about his wife and children."^{10c} Amulek was one of the men who "believed in the words which had been spoken" (FE, 262), and it was the wives and children of these believing men who were cast into the fire.

⁹Turley, "Alma's Hell," 40.

¹⁰Swift, "When Less is More," a–b 96, c 99, my emphasis.

Amulek's wife and children are never mentioned again in the entire *Book of Mormon*. They are not even hinted at; they disappear as of the events of Ammonihah. This makes his wife and children conspicuous by their absence. The reader needs to almost recoil at this statement via the negative. The logical conclusion is that his wife and children were also burned alive and that he was forced to impotently watch them screaming in agony.

Once this realization occurs to the reader, caused only by suggestion via absence, Amulek's question to Alma₂ also seems the most inadequate of all pleas he could have made to Alma₂: "How can we witness this awful scene? Therefore let us stretch forth our hands, and exercise the power of God which is in us, and save them from the flames" (ibid.). The text only has Amulek describe the events as an *awful scene*. As with him being described as *pained*, this description is the least adequate way of translating these events into language. But again, perhaps only the inadequacy makes the *least* adequate become the *only* adequate. (I even experience this inadequacy every time I describe this scene and especially in writing this section.)

This pain leads to the completely understandable (and in the context of the *Book of Mormon* completely realistic) plea to have God intervene. The *Book of Mormon* repeatedly makes it clear that the Nephites know the Old Testament and the great deeds of God in preserving the Israelites. Amulek is therefore perfectly justified in seeking divine intervention in preserving the innocent from an atrocity. The use of the simple conjunction *and* suggests the most understandable causality, but it also becomes almost a scream. *Of course* Amulek would seek divine intervention. It is the only logical (in a mathematical, ethical, moral, emotional, and simply human) result of his being *pained*. And again, only the least adequate can become the adequate.

Alma₂'s reaction to Amulek's plea is also emotionally charged in its detachedness. Swift almost identifies the emotional gut-punch the text employs here. However, he misinterprets the text's simplicity, coldness, and detachment. He identifies the narratological strategy but does not take the next step in identifying its emotional function. Speaking about Alma₂'s response, Swift writes:

The contrast between Amulek's plea to help the people and Alma's faithful but very *logical* response heightens our awareness of the emotions Amulek is feeling. Amulek cries out in agony, but Alma responds with *doctrine*. Alma is right, of course, and we know he is right, but we ache with Amulek.¹¹

And yet the fact that Alma₂ *only* reacts logically suggests a traumatic recoiling and fleeing from the scene. Alma₂'s doctrinal distance is not a sign that he is not emotionally affected. It is all the more an indication that he is overwhelmed and paralyzed by the events unfolding before him.

And here the text performs what I consider its most emotionally heart-wrenching narratological move, its impact only being outstripped by the audacity of its simplicity. This simplicity must be compared to the rambling exposition of the monetary system. The narration introduces Alma₂'s cold response with only a curt *but*. The copious use of *and* in the previous and following events makes this single use of the conjunction stand out all the more. A mighty prophet, converted by an angel who spoke "with a voice of thunder, which caused the earth to shake upon which they stood" (FE, 212), and who had been comforted by that same angel when he had first been rejected in Ammonihah (243) should have the faith in the power of God to intervene in the face of these murders.

The text *should* read: 'Amulek was pained and pled with Alma to intervene. *Therefore* Alma stretched forth his hand.' However, the text employs a single *but*. Despite all legitimate expectations to the contrary, Alma₂ cannot intervene. He says that he is constrained by the Spirit. This harks back to Nephi₁, who said of his killing of Laban: "I was constrained by the Spirit that I should kill Laban" (12). The text never says whether Alma₂ was physically prevented from speaking the requisite words, whether he was only told by the Spirit to not do so and he obeyed, or whether it is only an internal paralysis which he describes as a constraint by the Spirit. Whatever the inaccessible diegetic explanation, Alma₂'s feeling of impotence can only discharge in the logical exposition of doctrine.

The narrator's own paralysis is seen in this simple use of *but*, echoing Alma₂'s feeling of impotence to prevent the events unfolding before

¹¹Swift, "When Less is More," 96, my emphasis.

him. Like the narrator of *Diu Crône*, who briefly takes the place of the Gawein,¹² Mormon₂ mirrors Alma₂'s numb recoiling and detachment from the events. Narratologically, his reticence reflects Alma₂'s feeling of paralysis. This suggests *narratological* paralysis on the part of Mormon₂ and an intense identification with Alma₂'s emotions. Even though Alma₂ wants to save the women and children (which the text suggests include the wife and children of his companion), he *does not* do so, because he feels he *cannot*. Against all expectations and desires, the narrative breaks with 'logical' causality and prevents Alma₂ from acting on his and his companion's desire. The single word *but* is thus charged with emotional suggestion.

The conjunction *but* also serves a special function in Mormon₂'s narration. In the book of Mormon, he says that he wants to preach and convert his people. Through the identification with the soliloquy examined later in the chapter, we see that he wants the angelic voice of thunder which had converted Alma₂. The result of Mormon₂'s desire to preach is described by him as: "*but* my mouth was shut, and I were forbidden that I should preach unto them" (FE, 519, my emphasis). The reason he gives for this frustration of a righteous desire is that his people "had wilfully rebelled against their God" (ibid.). And the text says: "*and* the beloved disciples were taken away out of the land, *because of* their iniquity" (ibid, my emphasis). The use of *and* in conjunction with *because of* suggests the expected causality. The people wilfully rebel, and *therefore* the disciples are taken away. And Mormon₂ describes his unexpected lot: "*But* I did remain among them, *but* I were forbidden that I should preach unto them" (519–20, my emphasis). Even though the chosen disciples of Jesus Christ are taken away, he still has to remain and struggle with the sins of his people.

The least he could ask for is to be allowed to preach and *attempt* to convert them. And yet he is forbidden from doing even this. He must include another *but*. The frustration over his experiences as impotent prophet is again revealed when he says "And I did cry unto this people, *but* it was in vain (523, my emphasis). Against all his hopes and expectations of when he was finally allowed to preach, his people do not repent and all his efforts are "in vain." This sorrow over frustration of expectations and desires is

¹²Schnyder, "Kunst der Vergegenwärtigung," 444–46.

clearly seen with his initial joy over the (false) repentance of his people: “*But* behold this my joy was vain, for their sorrowing was not unto repentance” (521, my emphasis). Against all hopes and joy, he is again frustrated and impotent.

At Ammonihah, the narration’s coldness and distance echoes the cold, doctrinal distance exhibited by Alma₂. The deflation and frustration of desires expressed in the *but* adds to the emotional weight. It must be noted that only other characters (especially the chief judge) have any significant complexity to their speech. Gone is the convoluted Mormon₂ confusingly trying to explain Nephite coinage and monetary compensation for those at law. Gone is the Mormon₂ who had called Zeezrom a tool in the hands of the devil to destroy all that is good.

It is also significant that the rest of the narrative and even the rest of the *Book of Mormon* contain no overt criticism of these judges and lawyers after the events of Ammonihah. Mormon₂ narrates the events the way a completely dispassionate news report would. If anything, the reader can feel that Mormon₂ is *too* dispassionate and *too* distant from the events. The reader knows that Mormon₂ gets intensely involved in his narration, and yet he completely recedes into the background and becomes almost a heterodiegetic narrator with no personal stake in the events or even involvement in the world.

He becomes Swift’s *reticent* narrator, a narrator unwilling or even unable to narrate with any amount of detail. It is as if he recoils from the events and places them at an emotional distance. And unlike Vyāsa, who can force poor Sanjaya to narrate for him,¹³ Mormon₂ must still narrate himself. The emotional involvement of Mormon₂ as narrator can be seen in the single use of *but* by a narrator practically closing his eyes and trying to get through the next portion without breaking down.

Mormon₂’s identification with the events slips in through the use of the deflated realization of thwarted expectations. This failure at preservation harks back to the story in the book of Daniel, where Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego tell the king that their God will preserve them in the flames. However, they add a caveat: “But if not . . .” (Daniel 3:18). Here Alma₂ and

¹³Roy and Ganguli, *Bhishma Parva*, 5; cf. also p. 142 in this study.

Mormon₂ must accept an actual instance of ‘but if not,’ where God does *not* protect those that believe in him from the flames.

The appearance of *but* in conjunction with Alma₂’s feeling of impotence cause these two characters and their experiences to further resonate with each other. This simple conjunction expresses the identificatory discharging of sorrow over the feelings of Alma₂ in that moment. This episode shows Mormon₂’s “deep and quiet empathy for a fallible prophet of God [i.e. Alma₂] not by what is said and how it is said, but by what is *not* said and how it is *not* said.”¹⁴ The lack of complex poeticity and Mormon₂’s general reticence show a deep connection between the two characters. The reticence also reveals a narrator and pre-reader who is wholly absorbed in the events of the text.

7.1.3 Mangled Carcasses: Vengeful Mormon₂

Even though Mormon₂ never explicitly comments on the depravity of the lawyers and judges, his anger slips through in the next chapter. Less than a year¹⁵ after Alma₂’s mission to Ammonihah, the Lamanites suddenly attack and overrun the city before the Nephites can gather their forces. Mormon₂ gives a very specific date for destruction, suggesting that the event left a deep mark on Nephite historiography:

And it came to pass in the *eleventh year* of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi, on the *fifth day of the second month*, there having been much peace in the land of Zarahemla; there having been no wars nor contentions for a certain number of years; even until the *fifth day of the second month, in the eleventh year*, there was a cry of war heard throughout the land; for behold, the armies of the Lamanites had come in on the wilderness side, into the borders of the land, even into the city of Ammonihah, and began to slay the people,

¹⁴Turley, “Alma’s Hell,” 41.

¹⁵Alma₂ enters the city sometime after the “commencement of the tenth year” (FE, 242). Amulek later recounts that he was visited by an angel that commanded him to receive Alma₂ on the “fourth day of this seventh month, which is in the tenth year of the reign of judges” (249). The Lamanites attack the city on the “fifth day of the second month, in the eleventh year” (266). This creates a maximum gap of around half a year.

and to destroy the city (FE, 266, my emphasis).

From the perspective of the Nephites, the Lamanite forces appear without warning and without reason.¹⁶ The attack is such a surprise that the Nephites do not have a standing army to repulse them and instead need to first gather their forces. Before they can do so, the Lamanites overrun the city, kill many of the inhabitants, and take the rest captive.

The Nephite commander at the time, Zoram₂, wants to recover these prisoners of war and turns to Alma₂ for assistance. Here the narrative employs a tragic twist of fate. Zoram₂ turns to Alma₂ since he “was High Priest over the Church” and “had the spirit of prophecy” (267). He wants Alma₂ to use this gift “to know whether (*sic*) the Lord would that they should go into the wilderness in search of their brethren, who had been taken captive by the Lamanites” (ibid.).

This phrasing brings with it the intriguing ambiguity between *whither* and *whether*. Another instance being the Lamanites at Mulek not knowing *whether* to strike.¹⁷ If the use of *whether* were to be accepted as correct for Zoram₂'s inquiry, it would significantly change the passage. Zoram₂ then asks whether *or not* to even save the captives in the first place—considering everything they have been complicit with. That being said, Alma₂ returns not with the directive ‘Yes, go and rescue them,’ but with instructions on *where* to find them.

And yet other passages which also deal with directions, such as the first Lehite ship, do contain the spelling *whither*: “Wherefore, they knew not *whither* they should steer the ship” (48). The ambiguity between *whether* and *whither* is intriguing in its emotional significance on the part of a vindictive Mormon₂. However, the YE rejects *whether* in favor of *whither* for this passage (335, 764) and due to this discrepancy, I do not read more into this difference. It might simply be a spelling error, albeit an unintentionally

¹⁶The diegetic causality is quite complex. The Lamanites who attack Ammonihah are those who had begun killing the converts of the sons of Mosiah. Because they had met with no resistance (due to the strict vow of non-violence of the converts), they are emotionally overwhelmed and look for another outlet for their bloodlust: the city of Ammonihah. When the attackers return after finally being defeated, they again begin killing the Lamanite converts, which prompts the exodus of the people of Ammon to Nephite lands.

¹⁷Cf. FE, 374; p. 156 in this study.

significant one.

Whichever conjunction one prefers, Alma₂, the high priest rejected by the people of Ammonihah, is the only one who can save the survivors of the attack on the city. The text seems to suggest that this tragedy could have been avoided if the people had accepted Alma₂'s preaching. However, since the tragedy has now occurred, the selfless high priest is required to assist the Nephite army and reveal where Zoram₂ and his forces can intercept the Lamanites.

The Nephites engage the Lamanites at the designated location and recover all of the prisoners (FE, 267). And yet this only occurs through the inspiration of the high priest Alma₂. The text never mentions whether the people of Ammonihah ever realize this grim irony or whether they ever thank Alma₂ for his intervention.

This lacuna in the text points to what Derrida says of a true gift and true forgiveness. Considering the fact that the people of Ammonihah had cast out all those who believed and had murdered their wives and children, it stands to reason that only those who had rejected Alma₂ were left in the city and that therefore all of the captives were such non-believers. Alma₂ knows what these people had done or at least had allowed to happen. He was forced to impotently witness it; he has every right to let these people die in captivity. Perhaps he only intervenes for the sake of their children. However, the text never mentions whether there were children among the captives.

By choosing to save them despite all he had seen, the text implies that Alma₂ has forgiven them. In other words, he has forgiven the unforgivable. According to Derrida, this is the only real type of forgiveness:

I can only forgive, if I do forgive, when there is something unforgivable, when it isn't possible to forgive. In other words, forgiveness, if there is any, must forgive that which is unforgivable otherwise it is not forgiveness. Forgiving, if it is possible, can only come to be as impossible.¹⁸

There is no logical principle which could compel Alma₂ to forgive this

¹⁸Derrida, "Certain Impossible," 449.

people. And yet he chooses to do so. No amount of penance is sufficient to undo the harm done during the murders. And it is precisely this forgiveness that is the mark of a truly converted high priest. He saves and rescues, even if it is completely undeserved and the forgiven is unable to ever repay. In fact, the Lamanites converted by the sons of Mosiah₂ thought that the only way to even attempt to repay murder was through their own slavery (FE, 299).

While Alma₂ is allowed to be forgiving by the text not mentioning his or the people's reaction, Mormon₂ as narrator is much less gracious. He explains that the people who had been rescued "were brought by their brethren to possess their own lands" (267). Here he drives home his own feelings about this people. The land of Ammonihah is so covered in rotting corpses that the smell makes it impossible to live there. "And now so great was the scent thereof, that the people did not go in to possess the land of Ammonihah for many years" (ibid.).

The people are returned to their own lands through the divine intervention of a high priest, but these lands are uninhabitable for several years due to the stench of rotting flesh coming from the heaps of corpses (267). Their homeland is gone. The text exhibits an almost sadistic *Schadenfreude* at the fate of these people. The people of Ammonihah had participated in or at least did not interfere with the murder of women and children. And now the city and the relatives of these survivors have been annihilated. The survivors are rescued by the intervention of the prophet they had rejected and are now enabled to return to inhabit their own land and yet their own land is now uninhabitable.

Writing about his own people and their sufferings at the hands of the Lamanites, Mormon₂ expresses his resignation in the face of continual slaughter: "But, behold, the judgements of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked, that the wicked are punished: for it is the wicked that stirreth up the hearts of the children of men unto bloodshed" (525). The justice of God later expressed in Alma₂'s soliloquy, which resonates with Mormon₂'s own thoughts on the justice of God, has finally caught up with the people of Ammonihah. God does not always forgive. At times he repays wickedness in full and in kind. Those wicked who had been left in the city are punished by the wicked Lamanites.

This perverse satisfaction at the destruction of the people can be seen in Mormon₂'s word choice in describing the corpse-strewn battlefield of the city of Ammonihah. "But behold, in one day [the city] was left desolate; and the *carcasses* (*sic*) were *mangled* by dogs and wild beasts of the wilderness" (267, my emphasis). The term *carcass* suggests a slaughtered animal. By the time of the FE, this word is either a pejorative term for a dead human body, or it refers to a gutted and butchered animal with its heads, limbs, and organs removed.¹⁹

The feeling of contempt for these dead bodies is only heightened with the word's use in conjunction with the word *mangled*. This comes from the verb *mangle*: "To hack, cut, lacerate, or mutilate (a person or animal) by repeated blows; to reduce (a body, limb, etc.) by violence to a more or less unrecognizable condition."²⁰ This verb does not only mean to *tear apart* or to *disfigure*.

It also contains an element of *deseccration* (in the literal sense of making non-sacred). In conjunction with the derisive word *carcass*, the word *mangled* discharges the narrator's disgust, contempt, and complete lack of empathy for these dead bodies. In the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, disgust (*jugupsā*) is even its own emotional mode (*sthāyibhāva*).²¹

The combination of the two words suggests a sadistic satisfaction for the justice these people receive. In death, they are dead meat, fit only to be torn apart by wild animals. And they deserve it. Alma₂ might forgive, but Mormon₂ revels in the grisly fate of this people. He is not reserved in expressing his feelings about this gruesome poetic justice. Had the text desired to express pity for the state of these people, it could have used an expression such as 'and their *bodies* were *deseccrated* by wild animals.' In other words: The sacred body would be made unsacred by unforgiving nature. The use of either *carcasses* or *mangled* could still have expressed some degree of sorrow over the deaths. The combination, however, shows the narrator's disgust and expresses that these deaths and the fate of the bodies after death are wholly deserved. The reader might disagree, but it

¹⁹OED.com, *carcass*, *carcase*, *n.* 1a.

²⁰OED.com, *mangle* v.1, 1a.

²¹Ghosh, *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 1:125; Masson and Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture*, 55.

is hard to miss the narrator's feelings in this moment.

Mormon₂ is also very clear as to who he considers to blame for this destruction. The Nephites give a name to this slaughter: The "desolation of Nehors; for they were of the profession of Nehor, which were slain" (FE, 267). The additional mention of this special name might seem superfluous, given that it is never brought up again. And yet this mention is extremely emotionally powerful, since it also helps explain one of the only interruptions during Mormon₂'s account of the murder of the women and children. It included only one short aside to add some information. "Now this Judge was after the order and faith of Nehor, which slew Gideon" (263, cf. 222).

In the context of the narration itself, this information is superfluous. Its function becomes clear only at the destruction of the city. It stands to reason that if those who were killed were those who were of the "profession of Nehor," that the judge who had ordered the murder of the women and children and had taunted and tortured Alma₂ and Amulek for days was among those who were killed and whose bodies, or rather *carcasses*, are *mangled*. Again, the minimal and inadequate becomes the only adequate for expressing the inexpressible.

Mormon₂ is once again a narrator deeply affected (in every sense of the word) by the events he is pre-reading and narrating. He also identifies with those whose experiences he is presenting, most notably Alma₂. This finally brings us to Alma₂'s soliloquy mentioned throughout this chapter. It builds on the metaleptic-empathetic relationship between Mormon₂ and Alma₂ established at and through Ammonihah.

7.2 Emotional and Narratological Blurring

The events at Ammonihah showed a narrator reacting with emotional detachment at horrific events. The *Book of Mormon* also establishes a subtle intertextual-narratological relationship between Alma₂ and Mormon₂. This creates an experiential narratological blurring by way of a series of metalepses between the narrators in Alma XV. This, coupled with the intertextual relationship of the two characters and their experiences, demonstrates an identificatory, affective narrator-narratee relationship.

Chapters VII and VIII covering Alma₂'s sermon at Ammonihah have already employed a morpho-syntactic metalepsis based on pronouns in order to glide between narrative levels. The instances of metalepsis discussed in this section are based on tense. This series of metalepses culminates in Alma₂'s prayer in the form of a soliloquy at the end of chapter XV. This prayer is book-ended by an account of the resettlement of the Lamanites converted by the missionary Ammon₂ and his brothers to Lamanite territory (referred to as the *people of Ammon*). At this point in the narrative, the converts have been resettled, and they are greeted by Alma₂ as high priest.

To demonstrate the transgressive shifts between Mormon₂ and Alma₂, we first need to establish that Mormon₂ is narrating the beginning of chapter XV. The chapter begins by clearly speaking *about* Alma₂ in the past tense: "And Alma also related unto them [the people of Ammon] his conversion" (301). Since Alma₂ is mentioned by name, in the third person, in past-tense narration, it is clear that this must be *extra-diegetic* narration by Mormon₂. The chapter then employs past tense to relate the establishment of the people of Ammon in the land of Jershon, which the Nephites agreed to provide the refugees as a new homeland. The chapter also recounts the subsequent large battle with a Lamanite army that has pursued the refugees in past tense:

And now it came to pass that after the people of Ammon *were* established in the land of Jershon [...] and the armies of the Nephites *were* set round about the land of Jershon [...] behold the armies of the Lamanites *had followed* their brethren into the wilderness [...] Yea, and also there *was* a tremendous battle [...] yea, and tens of thousands of the Lamanites *were* slain and scattered abroad. Yea, and also there *was* a tremendous slaughter among the people of Nephi; nevertheless, the Lamanites *were* driven and scattered, and the people of Nephi *returned* again to their land (301–02, my emphasis).

The aftermath of the battle is then likewise related in past tense:

And now this *was* a time that there *was* a great mourning and lamentation heard throughout all the land [...] and thus the cry of mourning *was* heard among every one of them [...] And now surely this *was*

a sorrowful day [...] And thus *ended* the fifteenth year... (302, my emphasis).

The distance of past tense and the third-person narration about Alma₂ by name thus definitively establish that Mormon₂, the extradiegetic narrator, has been narrating up to this passage. Also important for the following discussion is the past tense *thus ended* at the end of the quote. Mormon₂ as narrator thus concludes the account of the sons of Mosiah, which was introduced in Alma XII. From this new starting point, Alma XV then begins a complex narratological journey towards the soliloquy that ends the chapter.

7.2.1 “ended” or “endeth”? Mormon₂, Alma₂, and metalepsis

The previous past-tense narration brings a major narrative arc to a close: a missionary expedition, widespread conversion, the resettlement of refugees, and finally the large battle at Ammonihah between Nephites and unconverted Lamanites. The end is marked with two sentences linked by a semicolon. The first half that includes the past tense *ended* has already been mentioned above. The rest of the passage gives a brief summary of the events in the arc, ending in “bless their souls forever” followed by a full-stop. The portion after the semicolon could also be rewritten as ‘and this *has been* the account that included’ or possibly ‘and this *concludes* the account that contained the following experiences’:

[A]nd thus *ended* the fifteenth year of the regin (*sic*) of the Judges over the people of Nephi; and *this is the account* of Ammon and his brethren, their *journeyings* in the land of Nephi, their *sufferings* in the land, their *sorrows*, and their *afflictions*, and their incomprehensible *joy*, and the *reception* and *safety* of the brethren in the land of Jershon. And now may the Lord, the Redeemer of all men, bless their souls forever (ibid., my emphasis).

This passage becomes intriguing when comparing different *Book of Mormon* editions, since there are small but significant differences in punctuation and tense. In most of the later editions, the past tense *thus ended* is changed to present tense *thus endeth*. This is already seen in the SE, and

the change is kept in the later LDS editions. However, the RAV and YE return to the FE past tense. The MSE (which follows the L13 text) mentions the original past tense in footnote ^d7. I render the passage as found in different editions (including superscript) in figure 7.2 on page 266.

The disagreement over the formatting stems from the narration's sudden change to present tense after this point. The narration continues with a new sentence: “*And this is the account* of the wars and contentions among the Nephites, and also the wars between the Nephites and the Lamanites; and the fifteenth year of the reign of the Judges *is ended*” (ibid., my emphasis). The FE includes another semicolon after *is ended*. The narration then suddenly continues in present tense.

The disagreement over which tense (*ended/endeth*) and which punctuation (semicolons or full-stops) to use and whether to employ paragraph/verse breaks and where to place them shows that a transgressive narratological move takes place in this vicinity. There is obviously a change in the narration (and likely even a change of narrator). We can see disagreement among editors over how firm the division between the parts of the narration should be and where to place the transition to the ‘new’ present tense narration.

The FE does not even include a paragraph break, but it nonetheless establishes a boundary between the summary and the new introduction starting with the capitalized *and* in “And this is the account of the wars and contentions.” This attributes the previous summary and final blessing to Mormon₂'s past-tense narration. The change of *thus ended* to present tense *endeth* found in the SE (320) and ThE (294) makes the dividing line more fuzzy, since the formatting still uses a semicolon between *endeth* and the summary rather than a full-stop. The punctuation thus still connects the summary back to the past-tense narration. However, the present tense *endeth* simultaneously points to the upcoming present tense narration.

The RAV and YE return to past tense *ended*, but they create a different kind of fuzzy division. The RAV places a semicolon after verse 42 (of the CoC versification) before the summary and its introduction, but it nonetheless capitalizes “And this is the account of Ammon and his brethren...” at the beginning of verse 43 (181). The YE, using LDS versification, places a full-stop after verse 7 and capitalizes the beginning of verse 8. The past

FE, 302

And now surely this was a sorrowful day; yea, a time of solemnity, and a time of much fasting and prayer; and thus **ended** the fifteenth year of the reign (*sic*) of the Judges over the people of Nephi; and this is the account of Ammon and his brethren...

SE, 320

And now surely this was a sorrowful day; yea, a time of solemnity, and a time of much fasting and prayer; and thus **endeth** the fifteenth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi; and this is the account of Ammon and his brethren...

ThE, 294

And now surely this was a sorrowful day; yea, a time of solemnity and a time of much fasting and prayer; and thus **endeth** the fifteenth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi; and this is the account of Ammon and his brethren...

RAV, 181

42 And now surely this was a sorrowful day, a time of solemnity and a time of much fasting and prayer. And thus **ended** the fifteenth year of the reign of the judges of the people of Nephi;
43 And this is the account of Ammon and his brethren...

L81/L13, 278 in both

6 And now surely this was a sorrowful day; yea, a time of solemnity, and a time of much ^afasting and prayer.
7 And thus **endeth** the fifteenth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi;
8 And ^athis is the account of Ammon and his brethren...

RE, 331–32

⁶ And now surely this was a sorrowful day; yea, a time of solemnity, and a time of much fasting and prayer.
⁷ And thus **endeth** the fifteenth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.^a

Fifteenth Year Summary^b

⁸ And this is the account of Ammon and his brethren...

FN^b8: The present tense indicates that the author of this editorial summary is Alma₂.

YE, 379

6 And now surely this was a sorrowful day,
yea, a time of solemnity and a time of much fasting and prayer.
7 And thus **ended** the fifteenth year
of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.
8 And this is the account of Ammon and his brethren...

MSE, 316

⁶ And now surely this was a sorrowful day; yea, a time of solemnity, and a time of much fasting and prayer.
⁷ And thus **endeth^d** the fifteenth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.^c

Alma₂'s Fifteenth-Year Summary^f

⁸ And this is the account of Ammon and his brethren...

FN^f8: The present tense indicates that the author of this editorial summary is Alma₂. A similar summary, in Mormon₂'s voice, occurs at Alma 16.13–21, when the account of Alma₂'s preaching journeys comes to an end. In this case, Alma 28.8–29.17 functions as a single literary unit that brings to a conclusion the narrative that began at Alma 17.

1.07

Figure 7.2: End of the fifteenth year in different editions

tense therefore points back to Mormon₂'s narration, but the summary is also part of the upcoming narration, at least to some extent.

The L81/L13 as well as the RE and MSE create more definitive divisions, but they place the dividing lines differently. In the former, the present tense *endeth* and the summary are grouped together with the upcoming present tense narration by ending verse 6 with a full-stop and beginning verse 7 with "And thus endeth the fifteenth year..." (L81/L13, 278). Hardy, using the same LDS versification, instead adds intertitles in bold *after* verse 7, grouping *endeth* with the previous past-tense narration (RE, 331–32; MSE, 316).

The reason it is plausible to attribute the summary introduced by "and this is the account of Ammon..." (FE, 302) to Mormon₂ as narrator is that Words of Mormon has already established that Mormon₂ speaks of his own time and record-making process in the present tense. He speaks of "the record which I *have been making*" and says that "it *is* many hundred years after the coming of Christ" (FE, 151, my emphasis). The present tense *is* in "and this is the account" then refers to the text as narration and not the 'historical' events.

This discussion might seem arcane and pedantic, but it is important if we are to understand what the *Book of Mormon* is doing here in terms of its narratology. It seems that even Joseph Smith was unsure of where to place the beginning of the new narration, seeing as the SE and ThE use the present tense *endeth*, but nonetheless maintain the semicolon.

The reason we should ask whether to attribute the summary to Mormon₂ as the previously established past-tense extradiegetic narrator is that there seems to be a change of narrator. The likely candidate is Alma₂,²² but this cannot be definitively established through the text. There are indications we can point to for why we believe it is Alma₂, and they are part of the following discussion. However, they hardly constitute proof.

That a change in the narration voice has occurred is finally clear, at least logically and analytically, when the FE suddenly does fully shift to present tense. The repetition of the events of the fifteenth year introduced by a repetition of the phrase "And this is the account" as well as the phrase

²²This is also the position of Hardy (*see above*; RE, 332, n. ^b8; MSE, 316, n. ^f8).

“...the fifteenth year of the reign of the Judges *is ended*” (FE, 302, my emphasis). This present tense copula construction is maintained in all of the other editions examined here.

The passage gives the same information that has been given only a few sentences earlier, albeit now in present tense. The full repeat-summary runs as follows:

And this is the account of the wars and contentions among the Nephites, and also the wars between the Nephites and the Lamanites; and the fifteenth year of the reign of the Judges *is ended*; and from the first year to the fifteenth, *has brought* to pass the destruction of many thousand lives; yea, it *has brought* to pass an awful scene of bloodshed; and the bodies of many thousands *are* laid low in the earth, while the bodies of many thousands *are* mouldering in heaps upon the face of the earth; yea, and many thousands *are* mourning for the loss of their kindred, because they *have* reason to fear, according to the promises of the Lord, that they *are* consigned to a state of endless wo; while many thousands of others truly *mourn* for the loss of their kindred, yet they *rejoice* and *exult* in the hope, and even *know*, according to the promises of the Lord, that they *are* raised to dwell at the right hand of God, in a state of never ending happiness... (ibid., my emphasis).

On the same page, thousands *were* slain and scattered and the cry of mourning *was* heard. Half a page later, thousands *are* laid low, and thousands *are* mourning. In this second account of the fifteenth year, the people *mourn*; they *rejoice* and *exult*; and they *know*. This continuous use of present is the clearest indicator that a significant shift (like in diegetic level) has taken place.

The fluid transgression of diegetic levels continues in chapter XV by the narrating voice using the common phrase “and thus we see”:

[A]nd thus we see how great the inequality of man is because of sin and transgression, and the power of the Devil, which comes by the cunning plans which he hath devised to ensnare the hearts of men; and thus we see the great call of diligence of men to labor in the vineyards of the Lord; and thus we see the great reason of sorrow,

and also of rejoicing: sorrow because of death and destruction among men, and joy because of the light of Christ unto life (302–03, my emphasis).

Mormon₂'s and Alma₂'s interpretative affinity mentioned earlier in the context of *and thus we see*²³ makes it entirely plausible that the phrases “and thus we see” are narrated by Alma₂ and that no further metalepsis from the intradiegetic Alma₂ back to the extradiegetic Mormon₂ has taken place. And yet, the mere fact that another shift is plausible makes the use of this phrase in conjunction with the previous metalepsis another transgressive narratological move. The text creates further ambiguity as to the diegetic levels and moves into a liminal space of overlapping narrator voices. The use of “and thus we see” in Alma XV therefore does not guarantee that Mormon₂ is speaking; nor does it guarantee that Alma₂ is still speaking.

7.2.2 *Aus der Seele sprechen: Alma₂ Speaks for Mormon₂*

After the preceding narratological ambiguity, we finally arrive at the soliloquy²⁴ mentioned throughout this chapter. The passage emotionally and experientially melds the voices of Mormon₂ and Alma₂ by way of metalepsis and intertextuality. In addition, the transition between the preceding present tense summary and the new type of discourse (from summary to pause, narration to soliloquy) is itself transgressive, increasing the preceding overlap of narrator voices.

After one (possibly two) changes in narrator (depending on which narrator we attribute “and thus we see” to),²⁵ the text launches into the soliloquy. The FE does not include any extra formatting (specifically no paragraph break) to show the change in discourse from narration to soliloquy,

²³Cf. p. 238.

²⁴ “[A] long discourse produced by one character (and not addressed to other characters)” (Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 54).

²⁵ First from Mormon₂ (past tense) to Alma₂ (present tense), attributing the instances of “and thus we see” to Alma₂. We have a second shift if we attribute the instances of “and thus we see” to Mormon₂. This would also mean that the soliloquy constitutes a third shift back to Alma₂.

nor do the SE (320) or ThE (295). The FE reads: "...and joy because of the light of Christ unto life. O that I were an angel..." (303). The three editions only employ the usual extra space between a full-stop and a new sentence.

The division between summary and pause is marked to varying degrees in later editions of the *Book of Mormon*. The LDS versification adds a chapter break after Alma 28:14 (YE, 380). Hardy also includes another large header: "A Meditation by Alma₂ on Missionary Work" (RE, 332; MSE, 317). The RAV is less drastic and only uses a verse break between vv. 51 and 52 (181).

In the FE, the lack of extra formatting could be put aside and labelled an oversight on the part of the typesetter. However, it is significant that this formatting is also found in the SE and ThE. In addition to the focus on the delivered closed unit used in my study, the agreement between the early editions suggests that the lack of a paragraph break is significant for the functioning of the text. It should not be read as an error or an oversight, but an essential feature of the text. The lack of line editing is all the more significant given the previous change to *endeth* in the SE and ThE. These pages were examined closely enough to decide on a change in tense, and yet no paragraph break was included lower on the same page (SE) or on the next page (ThE).

Since the text never states that this is Alma₂ speaking (either before or after), the floating morpho-syntactic relationship between narrators continues. The fluid transition into this prayer also does nothing to indicate another narratological change. The narration voices of Mormon₂ and (presumably) Alma₂ are now tightly entwined through the changes in tense and the overlapping use of "and thus we see." This intertwining of voices then allows the *Book of Mormon* text to produce one of its most subtle and yet poignant emotional effects.

The emotional effect is predicated mostly on the intertextual relationship between the feelings and experiences expressed in the soliloquy and Mormon₂'s own life. The entire account of his life in the books of Mormon and Moroni is filled with the laments of a frustrated prophet. In a letter to his son, he admits his own limitations as a prophet: "Behold, I am but a man, and I have but the strength of a man" (FE, 584). He is also frustrated

with the failure of any type of preaching, be it forceful or compassionate: “Behold, I am laboring with them continually; and when I speak the word of God with sharpness, they tremble and anger against me; and when I use no sharpness, they harden their hearts against it” (583).

His desire is to convert the whole world: “[A]nd I would that I could persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent” (524). And yet, he is hindered by God from preaching to his people for most of his life: “And I did endeavor to preach unto this people, but my mouth was shut, and I were (*sic*) forbidden that I should preach unto them [...] But I did remain among them, but I were (*sic*) forbidden that I should preach unto them” (519, repetition in original).

Such a man will see himself in the yearning expressed at the beginning of the soliloquy. It is not difficult to imagine a man both joyful over the success of Alma₂ and weeping over his own failings and restrictions as prophet. It is not difficult to imagine him wishing to shake his people to their core with the voice of an angel yearned for at the start of the passage. The words used in this soliloquy by Alma₂ could easily be uttered by Mormon₂. One need only change “I” to *I, Mormon*. The fact that the text employs metalepsis in order to arrive at this prayer has the text all but placing the words into Mormon₂’s mouth:

O that I were an angel, and could have the wish of mine heart, that I might go forth and speak with the trump of God, with a voice to shake the earth, and cry repentance unto every people; yea, I would declare unto every soul, as with the voice of thunder, Repentance, and the plan of redemption, that they should repent and come unto our God, that there might not be no (*sic*) more sorrow upon all the face of the earth (303).

Alma₂, the presumptive speaker of this prayer, was himself converted by such an angel. “[B]ehold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto them; and he descended as it were in a cloud; and he spake as it were with a *voice of thunder*, which caused the *earth to shake* upon which they stood” (212, my emphasis).²⁶ The logic of the initial desire to have the voice of an angel

²⁶Page 212 is misprinted as page 122 in the FE.

seems to be that if such a voice worked with Alma₂, it must work to rouse others to repent.

This type of personal likening was already seen with Alma₂ at Ammonihah. Granted, the angelic logic needs to set aside the multiple failures of angels to truly convert Laman₁ and Lemuel. The desire to have the voice of an angel coupled with a rate of success less than one hundred percent points towards one of the *Book of Mormon*'s most striking theological claims: Not even the power of God can *force* people to repent.

book of Mormon The text continues to unfold its emotional communication through the means of intertextuality within the *Book of Mormon*. When the whole book of Mormon as well as chapters XIII and IX of the book of Moroni are read in conjunction with Alma XV and the soliloquy in particular, it becomes clear how the text uses intertextuality alongside metalepsis in order to blur together the experiences of these two characters.

As with the intertextuality of the two battles,²⁷ I only give a few of the most striking parallels (emphasis always mine). A more complete table is included in Appendix F. For example, the princes see how the Lamanites that have returned from the defeat after the attack on Ammonihah are again killing the recent converts. The princes turn to the converted Lamanite high king and make a suggestion: "Let us *gather together* this people of the Lord" (299). Subsequently, "they *gathered together* all their people; yea, all the people of the Lord, and *did gather together* all their flocks and herds" (300). This phrasing appears repeatedly in Mormon₂'s account of his own battles: "[W]e *did gather* in our people as fast as it were possible, that we might get them *together* in one body (520). The Nephite retreat means that the Lamanites kill all stragglers. Being gathered with one's people is a matter of physical survival: "[W]hatsoever lands we had passed by, and the inhabitants thereof were *not gathered in*, were destroyed by the Lamanites" (527). The final battle is also preceded by such preparations: [W]hen we *had gathered in* all our people in one to the land of Camorah. . ." (529).

The princes also suggest that the king and his converted people flee: "...and *flee* out of the hands of our enemies, that we be not destroyed" (299). The verb *flee* also appears frequently in Mormon₂'s military cam-

²⁷Cf. section 5.1.

paigns. Fleeing is often the only way of escaping the brutality of the Lamanites. The occasional victories also cause the Lamanites to flee: “I beat [the Lamanite king] with my army, that he *fled* before me” (521); “[T]he Nephites did begin to *flee* before the Lamanites” (521); “And my words did arouse them somewhat to vigor, insomuch that they *did not flee* from before the Lamanites” (522); “[W]e did stand before them with such firmness, that they *did flee* from before us” (522); “[W]hen they *had fled*, we did pursue them with our armies” (522); “[A]nd the remainder *did flee* and join the inhabitants of the city Teancum” (525); “[A]nd there was an exceeding sore battle fought in the land Desolation, in the which they did beat the Nephites. And they *fled* again from before them” (526); “[T]he Nephites *did again flee* from before them” (526); “[T]he Lamanites did come against us as we *had fled* to the city of Jordan” (526); “[A]nd as many as *have fled* to the army of Aaron, have fallen victims to their awful brutality” (584).

The first of the connections between the soliloquy is the first phrase when the speaker of the soliloquy wishes to be something more, namely an angel. As mentioned above, Mormon₂ laments that he is “but a man” and that he has “but the strength of a man” (584). Mormon₂’s wish to convert the whole world is introduced by the phrase “I would that I could” (524). Alma₂ later reflects on the mercies of God: “[Y]ea, then do I *remember* his *merciful* arm which he extended towards me” (303).

Mormon₂ explains that the reason he is hopeful that his people can still repent is that he knows God is merciful: *...knowing the mercies and the long suffering (sic) of the Lord* (521); *...supposing that he would be merciful unto them, that they would again become a righteous people*” (521). Alma₂ recounts that the princely missionaries “*did establish his [God’s] church* (303–4) and explains that “that same God *did establish his church among them*” (304). Mormon₂ recounts a command he received from God: “[T]he Lord did say unto me: [...] *build up again my church*” (523). The last connection I mention here is Alma₂’s summary of the previous missionary efforts: “Behold, they have *labored* exceedingly, and have brought forth much fruit” (304). Mormon₂ explains to his son: “And now my beloved son, notwithstanding their hardness, let us *labor* diligently: for if we should cease to *labor*, we should be brought under condemnation: for we have a *labor* to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay” (583).

This selection shows that there are many striking intertextual links between the narrative of the resettlement of the people of Ammon and Mormon₂'s life. Like with the battles for Mulek and Antiparah, these sections should therefore be read together. The experiences and the success of Mosiah₂'s sons, as well as the conversion and repentance of many of the Lamanites, are striking in their extreme contrast with Mormon₂'s own experiences and frustrations with his people. Mormon₂ repeatedly mentions that he wishes to preach repentance but is forbidden.

Once he is finally commanded to preach, these efforts fail. The internal pressure of the desire to preach is seen with Mormon₂'s frustration at wanting to preach but being forbidden by God for some reason. The final line of this first section is the core statement of Alma₂'s soliloquy and Mormon₂'s writings in general: "...that there might be no more sorrow upon all the face of the earth" (303). The reason the voice wishes to cause people to repent is that a lack of repentance is considered the cause of sorrow.

This also points to one of the most tragic differences between the soliloquy and Mormon₂'s writings. The soliloquy mentions Alma₂'s joy six times. All of Alma XV contains eighteen instances of *joy*. The first part of the chapter up to the soliloquy also includes one instance of *rejoice*. The soliloquy itself contains only one instance of *sorrow*, which is coupled with the desire to rid the world of it. The rest of the chapter contains three more instances of *sorrow*, one instance of *sorrows*, and one instance of *sorrowful*. In contrast, Mormon₂'s narration in the book of Mormon contains twelve instances of *sorrow* and only one instance of *joy* and one of *rejoice*. On the one hand, the narrative of Alma₂ and the sons of Mosiah₂ is dominated by *joy* over success. On the other hand, Mormon₂'s writings are dominated by *sorrow* over the continued wickedness of his people and his own failures as a prophet and military commander.

To make matters worse, Mormon₂'s only instance of joy and rejoicing in his own book is even thwarted. After a string of terrible defeats, the Nephites begin to lament the deaths of their kin at the hands of the Lamanites. Mormon₂ initially believes that the sorrow will lead to repentance and to the people remembering the power of God. However, he soon realizes that the people's sorrow is rooted in depression, fear, and hate:

And it came to pass that when I, Mormon, saw their lamentation, and their mourning, and their sorrowing before the Lord, my heart did begin to *rejoice* within me: knowing the mercies and the long suffering of the Lord, therefore supposing that he would be merciful unto them, that they would again become a righteous people. But behold *this my joy was vain*, for their sorrowing was not unto repentance, because of the goodness of God, but it was rather the sorrowing of the damned (521, my emphasis).

While Alma₂ rejoices in the success of the sons of Mosiah₂ among the Lamanites, Mormon₂ does not experience (or at least does not report on) any joy. The brief moment of joy he experiences immediately collapses (modulates) into sorrow, being “in vain.” When read with this overshadowing sorrow in mind, Alma₂’s phrase “that there might be no more sorrow upon all the face of the earth” makes Mormon₂’s writings all the more tragic. His own experiences are dominated by sorrow, and he seeks a way to end it.

Mormon₂’s epistles in the book of Moroni include one final instance of *rejoice*. The only genuine joy he experiences is in relation to his son: “My beloved son Moroni, I *rejoice* exceedingly that your Lord Jesus Christ hath been mindful of you, and hath called you to his ministry, and to his holy work” (581). At least his own son is righteous, and thus the only solace he finds is in family. With this one exception, Mormon₂’s writings are therefore dominated by sorrow. This stands in stark contrast to the exuberant joy expressed by Alma₂ in the soliloquy. The metaleptic melding of the two characters creates a sense of yearning and perhaps even envy for the success of Alma₂ and his colleagues and their accompanying joy.

The intertextuality with the prayer continues in the next phrase “But behold, I am a man and do sin in my wish” (303). This relates to Mormon₂’s previously mentioned frustration over being ‘but a man.’ The parallel between the prayer and Mormon₂’s life makes the next part of the prayer all the more tragic. Alma₂ himself must also give up his desire to be more than a man: “[F]or I had ought to (*sic*) be content with the things which the Lord hath allotted unto me” (*ibid.*). This sentiment is repeated later on in the prayer: “Now seeing that I know these things, why should I desire more than to perform the work to which I have been called? Why should I

desire that I was an angel, that I could speak unto all the ends of the earth?" (ibid.).

The intertextuality of the rest of the prayer causes these statements to become applicable to Mormon₂. He too must be content with or at least has to accept his lot in life. Not only can he not leave his condition of (fallen) man, he also cannot escape the time of his birth and its socio-political conditions. This feeling is echoed in the book of Helaman, when Nephi₂ longs for the days of his namesake (examined later in this chapter of the study).

Through its contents, the soliloquy finally makes it analytically clear that this is the intradiegetic Alma₂ and not the extradiegetic Mormon₂. Alma₂ mentions the "success of my brethren, which have been up to the land of Nephi" (304). These brethren are the princely missionaries, rather than any of Mormon₂'s companions (cf. MSE, 317 n^b1). He also sees that his prayer for the repentance of his own people has been heard, despite his lack of angelic power. "And behold, when I see many of my brethren truly penitent, and coming to the Lord their God, then is my soul filled with joy; then do I remember what the Lord has done for me; yea, even that he hath heard my prayer" (FE, 303).

In contrast, Mormon₂'s prayerful desires were *not* fulfilled: "[A]nd my soul had been poured out in prayer unto my God all the day long, for them; nevertheless, it was without faith" (523). Alma₂'s people repent and his prayer was answered, whereas Mormon₂ can only pray without faith. The text does not only draw Alma₂ and Mormon₂ together in synergy of desire, but also shows the contrast between the two men.

The *Book of Mormon* carefully and subtly folds these two characters into one another by means of metalepsis and extensive intertextual allusions and echoes. The joy of Alma₂ contrasts with Mormon₂'s sorrow. This creates an emotional tension. It is precisely this tension which makes this passage so emotionally appealing, beautiful, and poignant.

The process of this metalepsis is so subtle that the return to Mormon₂ as extradiegetic narrator also occurs with no fanfare. Alma XV ends with a clear "Amen," followed by a chapter break in all editions. In terms of content, the text folds back on itself and returns to the matter of the resettlement of the people of Ammon mentioned in the previous chapter.

BEHOLD, now it came to pass that after the people of Ammon *were* established in the land of Jershon, yea, and also after the Lamanites *were* driven out of the land, and their dead *were* buried by the people of the land. Now their dead *were* not numbered, because of the greatness of their numbers; neither *were* the dead of the Nephites numbered. But it came to pass that after they *had buried* their dead. . . (304, my emphasis, capitalization in original).

The return to past tense indicates a return to the *extra-diegetic* level. This passage even repeats the exact phrasing of the previous mention of the event at the beginning of chapter XV, including the past tense: “. . . that after the people of Ammon *were* established in the land of Jershon” (301, my emphasis). The vertigo of narrators is even maintained for a few more pages, since Alma₂ was last mentioned by name on page 301 and is only mentioned by name again on page 307 when Korihor is “brought before *Alma* and the chief judge” (307, my emphasis).

The new chapter (Alma XVI) began page 304, meaning it takes the chapter three pages before again mentioning Alma₂ by name. The last time he has been explicitly mentioned was on page 301. The ambiguity of narrators is therefore maintained for approximately seven pages. However, once Alma₂ is reintroduced, the text establishes a definitive shift back to Mormon₂ by repeating the name several times. This is similar to the high concentration of third-person plural as an indication of the metalepsis²⁸ between Mormon₂, Alma₂, and Amulek at Ammonihah:

. . . that [Korihor] might be brought before *Alma*, and the Chief Judge, which was governor over all the land.

And it came to pass that when he was brought before *Alma* and the Chief Judge, that he did go on in the same manner as he did in the land of Gideon; yea, he went on to blaspheme. And he did rise up in great swelling words before *Alma*, and did revile against the priests and teachers, accusing them of leading away the people after the silly traditions of their fathers, for the sake of glutting in the labors of the people.— Now *Alma* saith unto him. . . (307, my emphasis).

²⁸Cf. pp. 240–43 in this study.

On an analytical level, all of these small grammatical signs and the general joyful and successful contents make it clear that the soliloquy is in fact *intra*-diegetically narrated by Alma₂ and not *extra*-diegetically by Mormon₂ (or at least some intradiegetic voice that is *presumably* Alma₂). And yet reading the passage as a flowing, novelistic text—especially using the FE—a first-time reader could easily be unsure about the diegetic level of the text and be forgiven for taking several pages, if not an entire chapter, to recognize the occurrence of metalepsis between Alma₂ and Mormon₂ in Alma XV.

The use of metalepsis establishes that the border between Alma₂'s and Mormon₂'s diegetic levels is fuzzy. This creates Genette's variable and floating relationship between narrator and character.²⁹ The narrator voices are melded and juxtaposed through the text's use of morpho-syntactic metalepses between narration levels.

Coupled with intertextuality, this builds the connection between these two narrator-characters (Mormon₂ and Alma₂) into the very structure of the text itself. Mormon₂ as intertextual foil demonstrates an emotionally charged mix of *déjà vu* and envy when juxtaposing the events of Ammonihah (including the atrocities committed there) and the sentiments expressed in Alma XV with the atrocities reported in Mormon₂'s epistle in Moroni chapter IX and the events of Mormon₂'s time.

The large amount of intertextual parallels also makes phrases which have no counterpart in Mormon₂'s narration stand out. Such intertextual gaps between Mormon₂ and Alma₂ mean that Alma₂ speaks for Mormon₂ and expresses something which Mormon₂ can metaleptically express by blurring the narration.

One such orphan-phrase is "yea, and this is my glory, that perhaps I may be an instrument in the hands of God, to bring some soul to repentance" (303). This desire to bring others to repent is a clear expression of what Mormon₂ desires. He sees repentance as the path to peace and an end to the suffering around him. And yet his desire is never fulfilled due to his own failures as prophet-commander. In fact, he is the first to truly fail in either capacity, since all prophets and commanders before him all

²⁹Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 246.

eventually succeeded in preserving the Nephites.

One might say, to play on the German phrase *jemandem aus der Seele sprechen*, that the text ‘speaks from out of Mormon₂’s soul,’ meaning that the soliloquy in general and such orphan phrases in particular are exactly Mormon₂’s own sentiment and that Alma₂’s text resonates with Mormon₂’s own feelings. The German phrase is difficult to translate, since English lacks grammatical endings for translating the rare instance of a double dative. An approximate literal translation is ‘speaking for someone from out of that other person’s soul.’ This is usually used as an exclamation: *Du sprichst mir aus der Seele!* lit. *You speak for me from out of my soul!* This means that what the other person has just said, often a lament, is what oneself is thinking or feeling.

English has an approximation in the phrase *my thoughts exactly*, but the German has a more affective connotation. One does not only identify cognitively, but emotionally and even experientially. The other person provides words which one has not yet expressed, is not able to do so as eloquently, or even at all. It is a recognition and affirmation that the other’s words express perfectly what one is feeling in the moment or in general. This is what the first section of Alma₂’s soliloquy does for Mormon₂ as a character. It expresses his own thoughts, feelings, and desires, but through the words of another narrator.

Had the text clearly marked this section as a quotation, this identificatory effect would have been diminished. The reader would be able to clearly differentiate between the narration of Alma₂ and that of Mormon₂. This would have the *reader* placing these two characters and their experiences onto one another rather than having the text itself do so. The text has Mormon₂ say these words in some fashion, since the many transgressive shifts have not created a clear distinction between the two narrators. The text twists down and up via tense changes and uses the phrase “and thus we see” to collapse the two levels into one another.

7.2.3 Mormon₂ and Alma₂ as Reader Model

The blurring of voices and experiences through Ammonihah, its aftermath, and the soliloquy also causes a blurring of the temporal situation of the nar-

rators. Both the chronologically later voice of Mormon₂ and the chronologically earlier voice of Alma₂ weave in and out of Alma XV. This blurring is a blending of experiences of the two narrator-prophets. Mormon₂ both identifies with Alma₂ and yearns for Alma₂'s success. These transgressive shifts serve as a "testimonial function" of an "affective relationship"³⁰ between Mormon₂ and his diegesis (specifically Alma₂). Chapter XV—and especially the soliloquy—thus has Mormon₂, as narrator pre-reader, model a reading practice that requires understanding the text in relation to the now-reader's own experience.

In addition, the text itself (through metalepsis) causes the temporal and textual distance between the narrators to collapse into synchronous presence. The narration occurs in a non-place and in a non-time. Chronological distance and barriers are broken down. The text shows that this passage resonates with Mormon₂ by employing intertextual markers connecting the two men and their experiences and desires. Ultimately, the actual reader cannot avoid following this intertextual example. The pre-reader model established by Mormon₂ requires that the reader—more specifically, the *epidiegetic* reader—identify with the narrative in a synchronous utopia.

The modeling of blurred diegetic levels and intertextual emotionality point to a Hindu concept unique to *rasa* theory. In the *Abhinavabhāratī*, Abhinava argues that the "tasting" of *rasa* is "coloured... by latent impressions."³¹ In the *Locana*, he explains this as "the stimulation... of previously deposited memory elements" (DhvL, 81 L). One of the terms Abhinava uses is *vāsanā*, "literally, the perfuming of the self by its former experiences, including those of previous (*sic*) lives; hence, the latent impressions of the mind" (227 L n6). These traces are gathered in the other term, the *saṃskāra*, "memory bank" (192 L). Taken together, these two concepts are "sub-conscious states which are being constantly generated by experience" as well as "the tendencies of past lives, most of which lie dormant in the mind."³² In other words, intertextual entries of experience are part of the totality of the archive that is an individual human.

³⁰ Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 256.

³¹ Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 72 n2.

³² Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 263.

Western literary theory will not accept the inclusion of the cycle of rebirths. However, both traditions agree that humans are not only defined by their immediate experience starting at the time of birth. The concept of traces left by previous lives points to the fact that humans are greatly influenced—even defined by—things which occur long before actual birth. This can be as simple as including gestation in the womb and our mother’s health and diet during that time. An individual is defined and affected by language, culture, and socio-political realities. These defining factors range far beyond conscious interaction and experience. Gestation points to the fact that an individual is affected in his or her development through the experiences and decisions of others (good or bad).

In Western terms, Abhinava argues that a text can only be emotionally understood through the intertextual totality of a physiological-psychological-experiential being. The reader is able to emotionally identify with the characters because he or she has experienced such things or things akin to them. This resonance with traces could also occur with traces of which the reader is not even consciously aware.

A text is a *bricolage* of textual elements derived from other texts. A human being is a complex amalgamation of archived experiences. In the same way that texts derive meaning from other texts, the presentation of a narrative with all of its defining factors causes “a flowering of [the spectator’s] latent impressions (*vāsanā*)” (DhvL, 221 L). By reading a text in an experiential manner, the text awakens, draws on, activates, or, as Abhinava says here, “causes to flower” something present in the reader. The reader cannot help but read a text through these experiential traces.

The consequence of this is that a text has no final emotional meaning, since experiential reading cannot ever ‘exhaust’ a text. Reading relies on the specific and non-reproducible physiological-psychological-experiential constellation of the reader at the time of reading. Reading a text one day in a particular mood or years later after more life experience will cause the emotional ‘message’ of the text to change as well.

All of this is modelled by Mormon₂ the narrator and his metalepsis and intertextuality with Alma₂. Returning to Schnyder, Heinrich von dem Türflin identifies with his narration of *Diu Crône*. The events at Ammonihah and Alma XV have Mormon₂ bring “himself into play as a reader who

is... deeply affected by his reading” and who has “an affective experience” and who “vicariously experiences the affective reactions of the protagonist.”³³ Mormon₂ thus becomes the affective model for the expected reading practice of a reader of the *Book of Mormon*.

The reader must open him- or herself up to the flowering of latent traces as a means of empathetic experience. All diegetic levels should begin to blur, and the reader must in some manner vicariously experience the events. The *Book of Mormon* lays the groundwork for such reading by drawing the actual reader into the epidiegetic. The past of the text in its *pre-read* state must then fold into the present of the epidiegetic *now-reader*.

7.3 “I am consigned”: Anger over Capriciousness

Returning to Mormon₂ as model reader, the motif of *aus der Seele sprechen* (emotionally speaking for someone)³⁴ is repeated in Helaman III with Nephi₂. This prophet has witnessed yet another rapid transition from righteousness to wickedness, and he has to accept that the conditions of his life are inescapable and that he has to function within the limitations of his time of birth. This prompts Nephi₂ to begin a soliloquy. In this case, the text does not employ the same contortions as the move into Alma₂’s soliloquy, and the change in narrative level and discourse type is clearly marked. That being said, the experience of the previous soliloquy suggests that the reader can apply the same type of reading in this instance.

In contrast to the one by Alma₂, this soliloquy is a lament. Mormon₂ describes Nephi₂’s prayer as him “pouring out his soul unto God” (FE, 427). The reason for the prophet’s sorrow is that “this great iniquity had come upon the Nephites, in the space of not many years” (*ibid.*). The shift to wickedness foreshadows Mormon₂’s experience when he explains to Moroni₂: “And *only a few years* have passed away, and they [the Nephites at the time of Mormon₂] were a civil and a delightful people” (584, my emphasis). As with Nephi₂’s lament, Mormon₂’s sorrow is greatly increased

³³Schnyder, “Kunst der Vergegenwärtigung,” 445, my translation: Der Erzähler bringt sich hier als Leser ins Spiel, der durch seine Lektüre...dermaßen affiziert wurde [...] ein affektives Erleben [...] stellvertretend die affektive Reaktion des Protagonisten erlebt.

³⁴Cf. p. 279 in this study.

by the rapid nature of the moral decline of his people, and Mormon₂'s sorrow over the wickedness and complete destruction of his own people further establishes an intertextual relationship between Mormon₂ and Nephi₂'s soliloquy. Nephi₂ speaks "in the agony of his soul" (427). Mormon₂'s final lament after the battle of Camorah is a result of his soul being "rent with anguish" (530).

Like Alma₂, Nephi₂ begins the soliloquy with the exclamation 'O!', and he expresses his own frustrations over his lot in life, specifically that he wishes he were born centuries earlier at the time of Nephi₁. He believes that his life would have been much easier:

O that I could have had my days, in the days when my father Nephi_[1] first came out of the land of Jerusalem, that I could have joyed with him in the promised land; then were his people easy to be entreated, firm to keep the commandments of God, and slow to be led to do iniquity; and they were quick to hearken unto the words of the Lord; yea, if my days could have been in them (*sic*) days, then would my soul have had joy in the righteousness of my brethren. But behold, I am consigned that these are my days, and that my soul shall be filled with sorrow, because of this the wickedness of my brethren (426–27).

It does not matter whether Nephi₂'s (or by identificatory implication Mormon₂'s) romanticizing of these supposed halcyon days is accurate. In fact, there are many reasons for saying that Nephi₂ (and by extension Mormon₂) is hearkening back to a time which was just as difficult for Nephi₁ and Jacob₂ as Nephi₂'s and Mormon₂'s times are for them.³⁵

However, this romanticizing is what specifically shows an emotional rather than a purely analytical assessment. Nephi₂ and Mormon₂ are not unreliable narrators. They simply fall victim to the same psychological traps a reactionary or anyone simply yearning for 'the good old days' falls

³⁵For example, Nephi₁'s farewell includes the admission that the spiritual care for his people is emotionally taxing, causing him to frequently weep. He explains: "For I pray continually for them by day, and mine eyes water my pillow by night, because of them" (FE, 121). At the start of the book of Jacob, Jacob₂ explains that the Nephites begin to "grow hard in their hearts" soon after Nephi₁'s death (124), and he opens the sermon in chapter II by saying that he "weighed down with much more desire and anxiety for the welfare of [his people's] souls" (125).

for. Both Nephi₂ and Mormon₂ are characters that can be blinded by their own emotions. To call the two unreliable would mean calling any extra-textual, real person unreliable due to his or her emotionally warped perception of the present and past. If anything, Nephi₂'s unreliability as to the factual analysis of the time of Nephi₁ is an indication that he uncannily appears as all *too* human.

The thoughts and feelings expressed here by Nephi₂ exactly mirror the kind of feelings one would expect from Mormon₂. Nephi₂ (and therefore Mormon₂) wishes to have been born in a different time and circumstances. Both are frustrated with the corruptibility of the people among whom they live. The feeling is that if they had lived in the earlier days, their preaching would have been much more effective and therefore they would have experienced less sorrow over the sins of their people. However, this desire suddenly modulates into sorrowful acceptance of and resignation to their sorrow-inducing circumstances.

Nephi₂ and Mormon₂ accept that they are *consigned*. They are restricted to only these particular circumstances and the results they bring. They have no present but their specific one. Nephi₂ realizes and comes to terms with the fact that his particular present means more sorrow: “[M]y soul shall be filled with sorrow” (427). This motif of sorrow is seen repeatedly with Mormon₂, as mentioned in the previous section on Alma₂'s soliloquy.

The characters who speak for Mormon₂, such as Alma₂ and Nephi₂, are marked by their resigned and even sorrowful acceptance of their particular lot in life. They have to come to terms with their Heideggerian *Geworfenheit* or ‘thrownness.’ The challenge facing Nephi₂ and Mormon₂ is finding a purpose and a way to keep on living despite this sorrowful acceptance. This further instance of *aus der Seele sprechen* shows Mormon₂ not as a stoic hero, boldly facing the trials of his life, but as a tragic hero who must struggle to find meaning in a world literally gone mad in bloodlust and which is tearing itself apart in hate. He is a good man trying to find his way in a doomed world. A large part of his sorrow is that he has access to Nephite records and therefore access to accounts of events which had outcomes very different from his own.

Mormon₂ knows that prophets in the past (including eventually even

Nephi₂) were able to convert their people and to prevent (or at least mitigate) the effects of war. He knows that he lives in the world of contingency and that the sorrow over his own people is not a matter of inevitable fatalism, but one of personal choice. He also knows that his people have to be able to choose. For there to be agency and to choose good, his people must also be allowed to choose the exact opposite and to destroy themselves in the process. If people were to be denied this possibility, they would not be free. Freedom entails the freedom to self-destruct, something I return to later.

7.3.1 Of Semicolons and *yea*: Mormon₂'s Tirade

Mormon₂'s frustrations with the follies he sees in the Nephite records unloads itself at the end of the next chapter of the book of Helaman (439–41). The chapter begins with the Nephites at the time of Nephi₂ yet again switching from righteousness to wickedness (436). The wickedness is stopped by a drought, for which Nephi₂ petitioned God. The drought results in a famine that is intended to try and *force* the people to repent (437).³⁶ After two years of famine, the ongoing wars are stopped, and the people do begin to repent, at least for now. The drought and famine finally end after three years (from the seventy-third year of the reign of the judges to the seventy-sixth year) (*ibid.*).

However, the resulting peace begins to deteriorate within two years due to theological disputes. While these contentions are not yet violent, the following year already sees “much strife.” Fortunately, Nephi₂ and Lehi₄ are able to “put an end to their strife in that same year.” By the next year, there is already another full-blown war, and the secret combinations founded at the beginning of the book of Helaman have returned in full force (438).

Mormon₂ summarizes this development: “And thus in time, yea, even *in the space of not many years*, they became an exceeding great band of robbers; and they did search out all the secret plans of Gadianton; and thus they became robbers of Gadianton” (*ibid.*, my emphasis). The military conflicts with the Gadianton robbers escalate over the next years and the

³⁶Cf. Elijah in 1 Kings 17 and 18.

people begin to revert yet again to their previous wickedness. “And it came to pass in the *eighty and fifth* year, they did wax stronger and stronger in their pride, and in their wickedness; and thus they were ripening again for destruction” (439). The people had only previously been coerced to repent via famine in the seventy-sixth year and by the eighty-fifth, only nine years later, they are already “ripening again for destruction.”

This is where Mormon₂'s affective reactions of frustration and anger over repeated rapid transitions from righteousness to wickedness suddenly appear in the form of a long narrative pause, specifically another soliloquy. While this term is formally accurate,³⁷ the contents and form can only be described as a tirade that suddenly bursts out of Mormon₂ as narrator.

The FE again fails to include a paragraph break, which is maintained in both the SE (463) and ThE (427). The extremely long first sentence of the section that ends Helaman IV is given below. It is broken up by only semicolons and repeated use of the word *yea*. This formatting links all of the clauses in this passage into a long and rambling string of thoughts. The fact that this long string comes without a paragraph break to set it off from the preceding narration further underscores the disruptive and rupturing nature of this tirade:

And thus we can behold how false, and also the unsteadiness of the hearts of the children of men; *yea*, we can see that the Lord in his great infinite goodness, doth bless and prosper those who put their trust in him; *yea*, and we may see at the very time when he doth prosper his people; *yea*, in the increase of their fields, their flocks, and their herds, and in gold, and in silver, and in all manner of precious things of every kind and art; sparing their lives, and delivering them out of the hands of their enemies; softening the hearts of their enemies, that they should not declare wars against them; *yea*, and in fine, doing all things for the welfare and happiness of his people; *yea*, then is the time that they do harden their hearts, and do forget the Lord their God, and do trample under their feet the Holy One; *yea*, and this because of their ease, and their exceeding great prosperity (439, my emphasis).

Initially, the section (and in particular the first sentence) seem like a rea-

³⁷Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 54.

sonable frustration over the previous events and an interpretation of them. The Nephites and Lamanites have proven themselves fickle and ungrateful. However, Mormon₂'s tirade begins in earnest after this first sentence-section. The entire soliloquy is one long multi-page paragraph. This formatting gives the feeling of anger rather than of a cogent and calm analysis of human nature.

The short LDS verses actually disrupt this effect by breaking down thoughts into smaller pieces with a more analytic flow of *thought – pause – thought – pause*. Some of these pauses are still found in the original formatting in the form of full-stops followed by introductory elements such as *and thus we see*, *O how*, and *and behold*. These phrases make the rest of the chapter not flow quite as breathlessly as the first run-on sentence.

However, the contents begin to detach themselves from the immediate interpretation of the events and soon modulate into a general frustration over human nature. It is unclear to what extent Mormon₂'s reaction relates to the particular events he is abridging and to what extent his toils with his own people play a role in his emotional reaction.

The first long sentence of this soliloquy more or less derives from the events described. Some of the specifics and seeming embellishments can be ascribed to the fact that Mormon₂ as narrator has access to further records that provided more details not included in the final abridgement. The previous section saw the people being chastened and then becoming wealthy again but then quickly forgetting God. The view that “except the Lord doth chasten his people with many afflictions, yea, except he doth visit them with death, and with terror, and with famine, and with all manner of pestilences, they will not remember him” (439) can still be seen as being based on the preceding events.

For Mormon₂, the only reason the Nephites in the book of Helaman initially repent is because they are about to die due to starvation. Mormon₂ seems to discount the possibility that if a group only repents because they are being starved, they did not repent out of an inner change but out of pragmatic necessity. Because of this, they will likely revert to their old ways when they begin to prosper again. However, the view that God has to afflict the people to get them to repent is still based on his interpretation of the events presented in the preceding narration.

Then, after this initial polemical interpretation, Mormon₂ goes off on a wild associative tangent in which he expresses frustration over human capriciousness in general. He laments that humankind is foolish, vain, evil, and devilish. They are “quick to hearken unto the words of the evil one” but “slow... to remember the Lord their God” (439–40). His frustrations can best be summarized in one sentence: “O how great is the nothingness of the children of men; yea, even they are less than the dust of the earth” (440). He provides a surprisingly detailed reason for this assessment. Dust, but also water, mountains, treasures, and the earth in general immediately obey God’s commands. Mormon₂ suggests that humankind is less than the dust because it does *not* obey immediately and perfectly. And it is precisely this juxtaposition which shows how frustrated Mormon₂ is in this situation.

Mormon₂ finally comes to the realization that these infuriating circumstances must exist. If humans were not able to disobey a command of God, they would not be free. According to the rest of the *Book of Mormon* and Lehi₁ in particular (63–65), this lack of freedom and agency would nullify the entire soteriology espoused in the text. The resolution of the soliloquy suggests that Mormon₂ is aware of this, but at this point in the tirade, his frustrations with this fact and its implications become clear. Yes, humans must be free to choose, but this also leads to sin and sorrow. This passage in Helaman IV is part of the grieving process of Mormon₂ lashing out against something he has yet to fully internalize and accept.

Finally, by the end of this long soliloquy, Mormon₂ comes to some form of closure. He mentions the “greatfulness (*sic*)” of God and his justice in restoring humans “unto grace, for grace according to their works” (441). Only a few paragraphs earlier, Mormon₂ was expressing frustrations that humans do not always obey God. Here he comes to the realization that this radical freedom is also the prerequisite for salvation, since restoration according to personal choices is the basis of Nephite soteriology as presented by Alma₂ to his son Corianton. Judgment is simply restoration based on the human character formed by human choices (336). Mormon₂ also knows that not all people will be saved due to their personal choices. This is proven by the fact that the “great and last day” will see “some which shall be cast out” (441).

And here we return to the feelings expressed in Alma₂’s soliloquy.

Alma₂ wanted to have the voice of an angel to shake the earth and to cause people to repent so that there might be no more sorrow upon the face of the earth (303). At the conclusion of his own soliloquy quoted above, Mormon₂ says: “And I would that all men might be saved” (441). The previous tirade and this sudden resolution suggest that Mormon₂ has come to terms with the fact that he cannot override human agency and that doing so would in fact destroy the purpose of human existence. He comes to see that God is just and will (eventually) take care of rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked, in this life or the next.

The doctrine of human agency seems pleasant if one has a stable and good life. However, Mormon₂ has seen the worst of what can result from the ability to choose that which is evil. He has witnessed humankind’s (especially men’s) capacity for cruelty and depravity. In one of the letters to his son, Mormon₂ speaks of human sacrifice, utter selfishness, mass rape, and even cannibalism (584). The implication that agency allows for ‘doing what is wrong’ is not academic, and it does not only mean that humans can lie or cheat. Mormon₂ not only has to accept the possibility of individual murder, but he has seen human agency result in the vilest depths a society can fall to.

At its core, this is the doctrine of the *Book of Mormon* as seen through Mormon₂’s emotions: *Man is radically free. And that is terrifying.* This doctrine and its emotional implications are most clearly seen in what I am calling the *secret combinations loop*.

From Robbers to Christ to Robbers: The Secret Combinations Loop

The secret combinations loop starts in the aftermath of the great war against the Gaddianton Robbers (FE, 454–65). The robber army that threatened the entire Lehite civilization has finally been defeated, and the survivors have entered into a “covenant to keep the peace,” effectively disbanding the secret society (465). The loop closes at the end of 4 Nephi when “the robbers of Gaddianton did [again] spread over all the face of the land” (518). The end of 4 Nephi is effectively the inverse of the peace established in 3 Nephi, and the success at disbanding the robbers has thus been fully

reversed.

The secret combinations loop results from a sense of *déjà vu*. History seemingly repeats itself or comes again in inverted form. The loop hinges on the long theophany of Christ, which takes up most of 3 Nephi (476–511). Welch describes 3 Nephi and the theophany in particular as the “Holy of Holies of the Book of Mormon” and the “most sacred inner chamber of the Nephite record.”³⁸ As mentioned before,³⁹ Welch is best known for his work on chiasm in the *Book of Mormon*. Taking the Holy of Holies a fulcrum, the events leading up to the theophany and those that follow exhibit a type of parallelism that can be called a chiasm.

Chiasm is, broadly speaking, a form of poetic or narrative parallelism. In its simplest form, it consists of two components that are repeated in inverted order (AB–BA).^{40a} Chiasms can also contain more than two elements, what Ralf Norrman calls “bilateral symmetry,” such as ABCD–DCBA.^{40b} Some chiasms also hinge on a central element that does not repeat, but instead provides a fulcrum for the two sides. Brad McCoy calls this the “strategic” or “pivotal central component.”⁴¹ Chiasm also need not occur only on the level of phrasing, but a text can also exhibit “thematic chiasmic structuring.”⁴²

The secret combinations loop is a thematic-narrative chiasm that pivots on the theophany and the (super-)natural destruction immediately preceding it (FE, 470–472). The extreme ends of the loop are element **A** (the disbanding of the robbers) in 3 Nephi and its inversion **A**₁ (their reemergence) at the end of 4 Nephi. I do not delve into the theophany itself and instead focus on this chiasmic plot for which this Holy of Holies provides the pivot.

³⁸John W. Welch, “Seeing Third Nephi as the Holy of Holies of the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies and Other Restoration Scripture* 19, no. 1 (2010): 37.

³⁹Cf. p. 36 in this study.

⁴⁰Ralf Norrman, *Samuel Butler and the Meaning of Chiasmus* (London: Palgrave Macmillan): a 1, b 276 n1; cf. also Donald Parry, *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon: The Complete Text Reformatted* (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2007), xvi.

⁴¹Brad McCoy, “Chiasmus: An Important Structural Device Commonly Found in Biblical Literature” *CTS Journal* 9, no. 2 (2003): 18, 20.

⁴²Norrman, *Samuel Butler*, 1.

The *Book of Mormon* text uses strong intertextuality between two narratives (pre- and post-theophany). On top of the inverted beginning and end, there are many other parallels and inversions. Before the theophany, the Lehiters “began again to prosper and to wax great” (465). In 4 Nephi, “the Lord did prosper them exceedingly, in the land” (514–15), and “they had become exceeding rich, because of their prosperity in Christ” (516). The conspiracy of the secret society (the reemerged Gaddianton Robbers) causes “a great contention in the land” (468). The account in 4 Nephi repeatedly mentions that there were “no contentions” (514–15).

Before the theophany, the people begin to rebuild after the toils of the war against the seditious robbers (465). The Lehiters need to rebuild yet again after the theophany due to the devastation of the earthquakes and fires (515). Before the theophany, the Lehiters soon “wilfully rebel” until prophets are yet again sent to preach to them, and as with Abinadi, the people kill these prophets rather than accepting their warnings (466–67). After the theophany, many Lehiters seek to kill the ordained disciples (511) and later also “wilfully rebel” (517). Before the theophany, the secret society assassinates the head of the Nephite government in yet another attempt at reintroducing a monarchy. It also wants to keep other members of the society from being prosecuted for murdering the prophets (466–67).

This assassination results in the complete societal break: “[T]hey did destroy the government of the land,” and the Lehiters therefore “separate one from another, into tribes, every man according to his family, and his kindred and friends” (467–77). Society based on laws is replaced by primitive tribal organization (477–78). After the theophany, there is a period of “no robbers, nor no (*sic*) murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor no manner of Ites” (515). However, “a great division among the people” occurs later (517).

The breakdown of Lehite society is soon followed by the earthquakes, lightning, storms, and fires leading up to the theophany (470–472). Samuel, the Lamanite prophet sent to the Nephites in the book of Helaman, prophesied such destruction as a sign of the crucifixion and death of Christ (446–47; cf. Matthew 27:51–52). There is a “great storm” and “a great and terrible tempest” and “terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder” as well as “exceeding sharp light-

nings” (FE, 470). There are three days of “thick darkness upon the face of all the land” (471, cf. Mark 15:33). This destruction is then followed by the grand theophany.

The chiasm I propose for the secret combinations loop consists of fourteen elements **A** through **N**, some of which are inverted (marked by a ₁). Granted, the plot chiasm is not a perfect sequence **AB...MN-NM...BA**, but it does reveal how the events from before the theophany repeat or are inverted in the centuries leading up to Mormon₂’s autodiegetic narration in the book of Mormon. The most striking parallels and the rough chiastic structure of the pre- and post-theophany events are summarized in figure 7.3 on page 293. A more complete list of the intertextuality with the full quotes can be found in Appendix G.

The thesis of the secret combinations loop can be summarized by a statement made by Mormon₂: “And now there was nothing in all the land, to hinder the people from prospering continually, except they should fall into transgression” (FE, 465). The chiasm shows a human and soteriological tragedy. All of the societal blessings which result from the theophany are slowly but surely undone. The subsequent peace, unity, and prosperity are all the more impressive considering the complete break-down of society leading up to the theophany.

Within a few years of the theophany, all of the Lehites are converted and are joined in a universal church. They institute a proto-communism, where they have “all things common among them” and there are no socio-economic disparities (507). The old tribal divisions are also broken down, and for a long time no one uses the previous cultural distinctions ending with *-ite* (*Neph-ite*, *Zoram-ite*, *Laman-ite*, *Ishmael-ite*, etc.). As Mormon₂ puts it: There was “no manner of Ites” (515). However, all of the progress made during the previous chapter is undone by Mormon₂’s lifetime.

The band of robbers which had been driven back and defeated at the beginning of 3 Nephi has by then returned to spread across the whole land. The established Edenic peace after the extreme disruption of the violent coup has broken down. The old divisions of rich and poor have returned, and all of the old cultural distinctions are back in force. On both sides of the chiasm, the people willfully rebel and actively try to kill prophets sent to preach to them. On both sides, not even great miracles necessarily

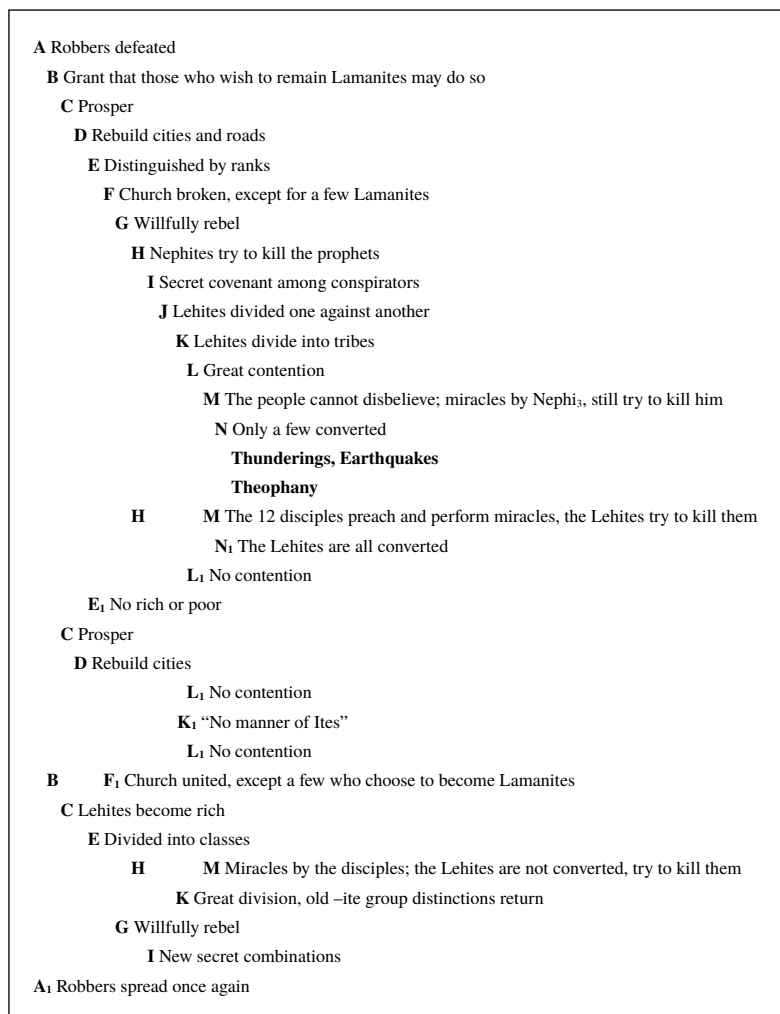


Figure 7.3: Chiastic plot from 3 Nephi II to 4 Nephi

convince the people to repent.

The new loss of Eden after the wondrous theophany points to what is perhaps the *Book of Mormon*'s boldest doctrine: Not even God himself can prevent a people from destroying itself. God can intervene and provide the opportunity for conversion and betterment, but ultimately humans are radically free and *can* fall. And because they *can* (and eventually *do*) fall, it does not matter whether the fall after the theophany occurs after one, ten, a hundred, or a thousand years. If the goal of a theophany were to stop all human suffering by the means of divine intervention, it does not matter if suffering is kept at bay for millennia. The fact that human suffering and human pride return at all is a divine failure.

Mormon₂'s disgust with the events of the loop is most obvious in his summary of yet another sudden turn from righteousness to wickedness before the societal break preceding the theophany: "And thus six years had not passed away, since the more part of the people had turned from their righteousness, like the dog to his vomit, or like the sow to her wallowing in the mire" (468). It must be noted that this is the only time Mormon₂ uses a simile. This poetic form is actually quite rare among the Nephite narrators. Nephi₁ rarely uses them, and they are instead the domain of Isaiah.⁴³ The particular simile used here by Mormon₂ is also an intertextual allusion to both the Old and New Testament: "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly" (Proverbs 26:11). The double metaphor of dog and swine is taken up again in the New Testament: "The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Peter 2:22).

Mormon₂'s figurative description doubles two particularly vivid images, reinforcing how frustrated Mormon₂ is with the people and their repeated and quick turn-arounds. The Nephites (and to some extent the Lamanites) are an explicitly Mosaic, biblical culture.⁴⁴ This cultural con-

⁴³For example, Nephi₁: "... the brightness thereof was like unto the brightness of a flaming fire" (FE, 37). Since the 1 and 2 Nephi quote extensively from Isaiah, there are too many uses by Isaiah to list them all. A few examples include "... thy seed also had been as the sand; the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof [...] And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword" (54); "or like unto a thirsty man, which dreameth" (109).

⁴⁴That they observed the Law of Moses is mentioned frequently throughout the *Book of*

text makes the metaphor all the more revolting and neatly summarizes Mormon₂'s feelings towards the episode. Pigs are non-kosher in the Law of Moses, and dogs are frequently equated with filth, wickedness, and misfortune in the Old Testament, which also uses vomit as a metaphor for sin.⁴⁵

The most theologically significant element in figure 7.3 is the inclusion of elements H and M after the theophany: The twelve disciples preach and perform miracles, but many Lehiters still try to kill them. H and M precede the miraculous N₁, where all Lehiters are converted. The *Book of Mormon* seems to suggest that it was even *because* of the miracles that many Lehiters seek to kill the ordained disciples. It still takes the disciples several years to achieve total conversion.

If every group in the *Book of Mormon* exposed to miracles were to be converted, one could charge the book with arguing for an overriding of agency on the part of God, no matter any vehement insistences to the contrary. It is important that the theophany does not miraculously override agency and sweep away all sin in an instant. Conversion still requires work and risk—even to life and limb.

The fact that risky work was required shows that the people could have potentially *not* been converted. The previous events show that even miracles cannot *force* a people to repent. Not even being unable to disbelieve can force the Lehiters before the theophany to accept the preaching of a prophet (469). The conversion of all the Lehiters after the theophany is itself unexpected and not a given simply because Christ himself appeared.

Mormon₂'s emotionality regarding the secret combinations loop is not restricted to his use of similes. The book of 4 Nephi also develops Mormon₂ as affective narrator through narration speed. The book employs the fastest

Mormon. For example, Nephi₁ wants the plates of brass (i.e. the Old Testament) so that his offspring can observe the Law (FE, 12). In the Promised Land, he builds a temple and institutes the Law of Moses (72). Abinadi's greatest criticism of the priests of Noah₃ is that they teach but do not live the Law (182–83).

⁴⁵Pigs as non-kosher (Leviticus 11:7; Deuteronomy 14:8). Dogs as filthy: Non-kosher meat from carrion is only fit to be thrown to the dogs (Exodus 22:31); the price of a whore and the price of dog are equated as "abominations" that may not be offered as sacrifice (Deuteronomy 23:18); a pack of dogs is used as a metaphor for "the assembly of the wicked" (Psalm 22:16). Vomit: "... as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit" (Isaiah 19:14); "Moab also shall wallow in his vomit, and he also shall be in derision" (Jeremiah 48:26).

speed anywhere in the *Book of Mormon*, covering 287 years over the course of 5 pages. The book of Omni is close (covering at most 164 years over 3.5 pages), but its chronological ambiguity makes a precise calculation impossible.⁴⁶

The book of 4 Nephi consists primarily of summaries covering groups of years. The first few years (34–37 A.D.) receive some treatment, as does the last (320 A.D.). The narrative then accelerates until it moves at a break-neck speed, jumping in intervals twenty or more years long. The initial narration still provides frequent timestamps, but the jumps between them seem arbitrary. The number of years and the story time covered in the summaries varies, and the text only returns to something approaching scene speed at the very end of the chapter.

The book of 4 Nephi mostly summarizes years in blocks, meaning a given year will not be individually narrated but nonetheless lumped together with other timestamps. After listing the group of years, Mormon₂ then adds a summary for what was happening in that time period or what events began sometime in the span of the years mentioned. Take the following example from the early years of 4 Nephi that lists eight timestamps in one sentence:

And thus did the thirty and eighth year pass away, and also the thirty and ninth, and the forty and first, and the forty and second; yea, even until forty and nine years had passed away, and also the fifty and first, and the fifty and second; yea, and even until fifty and nine years had passed away. . . (514).

The short summary that follows does not specify what occurred in which year, but the years are technically narrated in some manner since part of the summarized events must have occurred in each, otherwise the year would not be included in the list.

⁴⁶The book of Omni starts in 323 B.C. (FE, 148), and Mosiah₂ sends out Ammon₁ and the scouts in 121 B.C. (168). Timestamps in the book of Mosiah give at least 38 years from Zeniff to the time Ammon₁ arrives (and this disregards ambiguous indications of time during and after the 38 years). Working backwards from 121 B.C., Zeniff thus left Zarahemla at the latest in 159 B.C., and the book of Omni covers at most 164 years; cf. pp. 207–13 and figure 6.3 on p. 214 in this study.

The book of 4 Nephi also frequently ends a chronological chunk with a timestamp, which usually means that the summary refers to the time up to and including the final year. For example, new developments start in 201 A.D.: “And now in this two hundred and first year, there *began to be* among them those which were lifted up in pride. . .” (516, my emphasis). The end-result is present a few years later: “And it came to pass that when two hundred and ten years *had passed away* there were many churches in the land. . .” (ibid.). The bracketed group here covers 201 up to and including 210 A.D. The next bracket of years ends with 230 A.D. (517). The implication is that the second summary relates to the period between the unmentioned year 211 A.D. and the textual 230 A.D.

Correlating textual timestamps, brackets of years, and the word count (see below) of a given summary shows that 4 Nephi varies widely in what I am calling the ‘rate of narration’ (words per year). Since I am using words as a unit of measurement in 4 Nephi, the average number of words per year is easier to understand than the average ‘number’ of years per word (i.e. speed).⁴⁷ The word count (as given by Microsoft Word) does not include the years themselves (e.g. “three hundred and twenty years”) or introductory phrases (e.g. “And it came to pass that. . .”), nor does the count include when the narration only notes that the year “passed” or “had passed away”). We can call what is left *narration proper* as opposed to simply mentioning that the year or years passed. Using these criteria, the quote above listing the years is not included in the summary’s word count for that group of years.

Mormon₂’s rate for the various groupings of years (excluding the rate of 0 between 60 and 70 A.D.) ranges from a ‘high’ of 80 to a low of 1.1 words per year.⁴⁸ Taking these averages, we see that none of the bracketed groups are anywhere near Mormon₂’s usual scene speed. Dividing the discourse time—i.e. the word count of 4 Nephi’s narration proper (1,571)—by the

⁴⁷Speed would be distance (years) divided by the ‘time’ (words). Narration speed and rate are therefore measures of the same phenomenon, only calculated inversely. Another such coupling is used with fuel efficiency, which can be expressed in both miles per gallon and liters per 100 km.

⁴⁸The year 37 A.D. receives 80 words, and the 83 years between 110 and 194 A.D. are covered by only 88 words.

story time (287 years), we get an average narration rate of only 5.5 words per year in 4 Nephi.

The narration rate of 4 Nephi is broken down in figure 7.4 on page 299. The numbers to the left of the vertical lines mark the general timeline in intervals of 5. The numbers in red on the right are the textual timestamps, meaning years whose numbers are mentioned in 4 Nephi. Curly brackets group together years that are combined in a summary. Implied groupings of years (see above) are represented by brackets ending just above or starting just below a year. The number to the right of a bracket is the word count for the summary covering the bracketed years. The last number is the average words per year for a bracket. Appendix H gives the breakdown of 4 Nephi into grouped years, counted words, and average words per year.

Turning now to the text itself, the narration begins to accelerate using the numerical rhythm **ninth, first, second, ninth**. The *thirty-eighth*, the *thirty-ninth*, the *forty-first*, the *forty-second*, the *forty-ninth*, the *fifty-first*, the *fifty-second*, and the *fifty-ninth* years are mentioned in rapid succession (FE, 514). The speed of the narration quickens using this rhythm, and the seventh decade is skipped entirely. In the eighth decade, the narration speeds up even more, omitting the ninth and tenth decades. This brings the narration to 100 and then 110 A.D., and the 9-1-2-9 rhythm has finally accelerated the narration to its top speed starting with 111 A.D. (515).

At one hundred years after the sign of the birth of Christ (i.e. 100 A.D.), the text relates that there was “no manner of Ites” (515). This phrasing is one of the strangest in the entire *Book of Mormon*. Nowhere else does the text use affixes by way of explanation, and the use of a suffix *-ite* is quite jarring and suggests a special relationship between narrator and the events presented. The narrator has continually spoken about Nephites and Lamanites and many other smaller groups by names ending in *-ite*, such as the Lemuelites and the Zoramites.

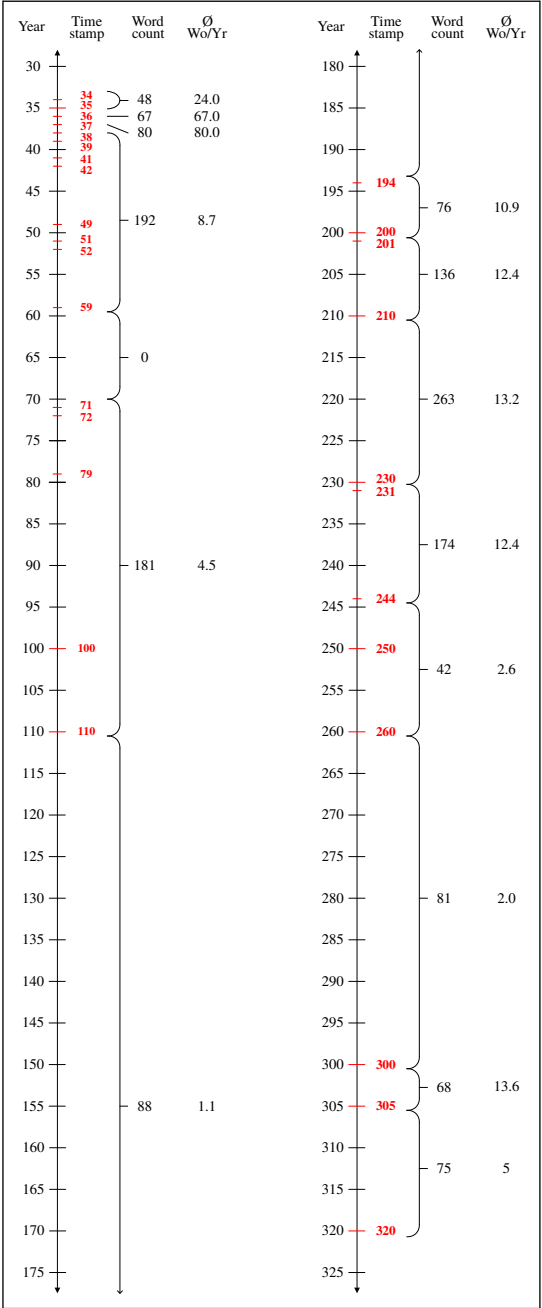


Figure 7.4: Timestamps and word count of Discourse Time for spans of Story Time in 4 Nephi

The amazement at this great feat of abolishing centuries-old cultural distinctions is nicely summarized in this strange use of the suffix. Mormon₂ could have gone through all of the cultural names to say that none of these groups existed any more. However, the statement is quite clear in its brevity. In contrast, when these divisions are firmly reestablished by the end of 4 Nephi, Mormon₂ lists all of the cultural names in exhausting detail, emphasizing the arbitrary nature of the fractures (517).

Even though it took over sixty years to accomplish, the Lehites (or rather the Christians) somehow managed to counteract the old impulse to tribalism. That it took so long is less important than that it was accomplished in the first place. By quickly jumping to the result, Mormon₂ can emphasize that structural change is possible, a point that could be lost in the details if the narration were slower. The implied point seems to be that such changes are possible, even if it takes decades, and the work of the intervening years should not discourage us from pursuing an ultimately attainable goal.

At top speed, the year 111 A.D. begins the long period of social harmony and its corresponding rapid narration. Like my own study, 4 Nephi seems almost uninterested in the joyful and peaceful parts of the narrative. The leveling of all suffix-based cultural designations is undone in a matter of a few sentences of discourse time, and yet these few sentences cover over eighty years of story time. The old *Ites* disappear by 100 A.D., and by 194 A.D. there is a group of Lamanites distinct from the rest of the people. The slow transition from neo-Eden back to the status quo of a fallen world is presented in very compressed, almost elliptical narration, making it seem like the reversion occurred much more quickly than it did. The entire passage is as follows:

There were no robbers, nor no murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor *no manner of Ites*; but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God: And how blessed were they, for the Lord did bless them in all their doings; yea, even they were blessed and prospered, until an hundred and ten years had passed away: And the first generation from Christ had passed away, and there was no contention in all the land. And it came to pass that Nephi, he

that kept this last record, (and he kept it upon the plates of Nephi,) died, and his son Amos kept it in his stead; and he kept it upon the plates of Nephi also; and he kept it eighty and four years, and there was still peace in the land, save it were a small part of the people, which had revolted from the church, and took upon them the name of Lamanites; therefore there *began to be Lamanites again* in the land (515–16, my emphasis).

Over the course of only three sentences (admittedly run-on sentences, but sentences nonetheless), the text undoes the erasure of cultural distinctions which had been maintained for almost a century. Mormon₂ does not explain why a group decides to break or who this group consists of. However, there is still peace, even with the presence of the division between Lamanites and others. This also suggests that division does not inherently and immediately cause conflict.

The point of the reemergence of a group of –ites is that Eden and social progress can be undone, even if it takes decades. Were the slow unraveling presented over the usual scene speed, the details could muddle the message that Eden can be lost once achieved by hard work. We thus have the inverse from before: A society can regress, even if it is not immediately apparent and it takes decades. The previous near-ellipsis was a call to work, and this second jump to the reemergence is a call to vigilance.

Here towards the end of 4 Nephi, the narration rate increases. The previous century had been uninteresting (or at least distracting from the narration’s purpose). Only once further divisions occur is the text again willing to tell the reader about the events between timestamps. The first conflicts occur (or at least are mentioned) in the “two hundred and first year” when there are some people “which were lifted up in pride, such as the wearing of costly apparel, and all manner of fine pearls, and of the fine things of the world” (516). The return of materialism causes the return to socio-economic divisions “into classes” and the institution of “churches unto themselves, to get gain” (ibid.). The division echoes the divide of the people into “ranks” in 3 Nephi, where the people divided “according to their riches, and their chances for learning” (466).

The decline continues, and the narration rate increases again. Whereas there has previously been the separation into Lamanites and socio-economic

classes, “the two hundred and thirty and first year” sees a “great division” (517). Before the theophany, the people “were divided one against another...into tribes” (467). The division was overcome in the unification of the people into a single church. However, this unity is also undone in 4 Nephi when the people splinter into the many Ité groups in 231 A.D.

The text gives way to frustration over all of the different groups that had come up again and the tribalism of breaking into groups and even sub-groups. It would have been one thing if the people had broken away into two great clans. However, for some reason, the people need to break into ever smaller groups.

And it came to pass that in this year there arose a people which was called the *Nephites*, and they were true believers in Christ; and among them there were they which was (*sic*) called by the *Lamanites*, *Jacobites*, and *Josephites*, and *Zoramites*; therefore the true believers in Christ, and the true worshippers of Christ, (among whom were the three disciples of Jesus which should tarry,) were called *Nephites*, and *Jacobites*, and *Josephites*, and *Zoramites*. And it came to pass that they which rejected the gospel, were called *Lamanites*, and *Lemuelites*, and *Ishmaelites* (517, my emphasis).

The explanation is confusing and of limited narrative value. One of the more interesting notes is that there are Lamanites among the believers, who are referred to as Nephites, and yet those who reject the gospel are also called Lamanites. In other words, there are Lamanites who are Nephites but also Lamanites who are *not* Nephites. Does this mean that there are genealogical Lamanites and cultural Lamanites?

Mormon₂ also never explains the basis for why someone calls him- or herself a Josephite as opposed to a Jacobite or a Nephite. This could be based on genealogy. However, considering the thorough mixing of the previous two centuries, it seems unlikely that genealogical lines can be kept truly separate. The divisions and their criteria seem strange to an outsider, and this incongruity also shows that Mormon₂ is frustrated with these divisions and their (at least according to him) arbitrary and dangerous nature.

The point at which the final decline begins about two thirds into 4 Nephi

is textually marked by a noteworthy coupling of adverbs. The *Book of Mormon* frequently uses the adverbs *nevertheless* and *notwithstanding* on their own in order to express instances of unexpected results or turn of events. A given passage may have a rapid succession of these adverbs, but they are almost never used together. The entire text of the *Book of Mormon* uses over 150 instances of either *nevertheless* or *notwithstanding* on their own, but there are only three instances of “nevertheless and notwithstanding” used in immediate conjunction (they are never inversely coupled). This expresses not only surprise at the events, but shock over the inversion of expectation. The coupling is a starker example of the causal surprise of *but* used at Ammonihah.⁴⁹

The first coupling is found at the beginning of 2 Nephi in Nephi₁’s psalm. He sees himself as “wretched. . . [n]evertheless, notwithstanding the great goodness of the Lord, in shewing me his great and marvellous works” (69–70). Despite having been worthy of being shown God’s mercy, he still feels that he is an unworthy sinner: “My soul grieveth, because of mine iniquities” (70). Nephi₁ is presented as knowing that he should not (or at least need not) feel this way about himself. But he does so nevertheless.

The second coupling of *nevertheless* and *notwithstanding* does not come until the beginning of the theophany where the “small voice” which speaks to the people from heaven “nevertheless, and notwithstanding. . . did pierce them that did hear, to the centre, insomuch that there were no part of their frame that it did not cause to quake; yea, it did pierce them to the very soul, and did cause their hearts to burn” (476). The power of this small voice is marvelous, and it defies understanding and expectation. The doubling of the two adverbs reinforces this sense of amazement expressed in the text. It is a positive sense of wonder.

The third and final instance of the coupling is found in 4 Nephi, and it is an example of negative wonder, of being shocked at how such events can occur. A heretical group founds a new church and begins to persecute the original church founded by the disciples of Jesus. Mormon₂ suggests that the persecution is again *because of* miracles: The new church “did despise [the true church of Christ] because of the many miracles which were

⁴⁹Cf. pp. 250–56 in this study.

wrought among them” (516). The disciples at the time again attempt to preach and re-convert the new group. However, they are violently rejected and thrown in prison and see attempts on their lives, despite the miracles performed by these disciples. The chiasmic plot has repeated yet again, since prophets performing miracles are targets of assassinations (elements H and M in figure 7.3). This state of affairs is the beginning of the end, and it is introduced with the last adverbial doubling: “Nevertheless, and notwithstanding all these miracles the people did harden their hearts, and did seek to kill them” (516–17). Much to Mormon₂’s surprise, dismay, and sorrow, the old hardness has again surfaced.

The coupling of *nevertheless* and *notwithstanding*, when read through the lens of Mormon₂ as affective narrator, takes on the quality of a heavy and depressed sigh. Mormon₂ has to admit that the beginning of the required end occurred with this rejection of the disciples and their miracles. He must accept this fact of agency and all of its terrifying and sorrowful implications. He must accept his lot that he is the narrator who has to present the theologically essential fall of an entire people.

Despite the tragedy of this turn of events, the decline is theologically ultimately necessary. At least one group must fully reject Christ, prophets, and miracles. As soon as such higher powers are involved, some group has to fall. If every group is converted and preserved in the end, the argument for repentance and agency would be nullified. The same goes for the theophany of Christ. As soon as he appears, he condemns at least one group to destruction, if not an entire people. If his intervention had ultimately resulted in a ‘happy ending’ for the *Book of Mormon*, the text’s argument for agency would have rung hollow. The text could insist all it wants that this was definitely still their choice to finally repent.

Every group then just so happened to choose the same, and the only reason why no group actually fell over the course of the narrative would be that the particular span of history covered by the text does not contain such an example. However, without a counter-example, the reader could always point out that the people were ultimately at peace and converted because Christ established the impossibility and that they were never *able* to actually fall.

In the past, miracles had still worked in convincing the people to repent,

even if only for a few years. And when the people were again wicked, new miracles occurred and the cycle repeated anew. But one group has to be the final destruction of complete rejection. The *Book of Mormon* cannot end without the destruction of an entire people if it wishes to espouse the doctrine of agency repeated throughout. This realization is both liberating and deeply troubling, and Mormon₂ is caught in the middle of this theology via narrative. By being the subsequent narrator of the events, he has to experience them and deal with the consequences and the ultimate fallout of agency.

The preceding *Book of Mormon* and especially 4 Nephi employ Genette's *final convergence* between narrator and narrative.⁵⁰ As the narrative progresses, as the calendar ticks down, the reader knows that Mormon₂'s life must surface again at some point. The book of 4 Nephi seems to be tripping over itself racing towards Mormon₂, and the final convergence of narrator and narrative and the resulting destruction of the Nephites are getting ever closer. In other words, the narrative is on a crash course with its culmination.

The undoing of the progress of these previous centuries is summarized by Mormon₂ using a parallel to the time before the theophany. Back then, the people "did wilfully rebel against God" (466). Now in 4 Nephi, "they did wilfully rebel against the gospel of Christ" (517). The rate of narration increases proportional to the rate of decline. Mormon₂ again provides much more detail about what occurs between timestamps, and the increments between them shorten. The text provides "two hundred and forty and four years," by which time "the more wicked part of the people... became exceeding more numerous than were the people of God." Two sentences later, after "two hundred and fifty years" and "also two hundred and sixty" we again have "secret oaths and combinations of Gaddianton" (*ibid.*). The narrative has thus come within sixty years of the beginning of Mormon₂'s autodiegetic narration.

The last sixty years until the last timestamp at three hundred and twenty years seem almost a formality. The narrative has finally reached a complete chiasmic repetition of the time before the theophany and therefore at the

⁵⁰Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 221.

negation of the previous almost three hundred years. There are again secret combinations; all of the old socio-economic divisions have returned; and the people have again become wealthy (to the point of greed). This is the backdrop for Mormon₂'s life. He has seen how these negative conditions can be overcome, and he has also seen that converted and even Edenic states *can* endure for long periods of time.

And yet, the text is not interested in exploring how an Edenic state of complete harmony would function or its implications for individual human lives. Mormon₂ never discusses the specific cultural practices or institutions that finally brought about this long period of peace and equality. The implication seems to be that the required ecclesiastical and theological instruments have been sufficiently presented in the previous accounts. How exactly these peaceful centuries employ these instruments in a way that maintains peace for so long or how people experienced the period are of no interest. It only matters that the people regress and that the old divisions return.

However, Mormon₂'s reticence is surprising nonetheless since he has presented more than enough episodes of people returning to their old ways after only a few years. The tirade in the book of Helaman was predicated on such a regression. He could have chosen to savor the period of tranquility and prosperity. The fact that it took the people over a century to return to any sort of division unfortunately does not change the fact that they reverted. During this time, they had the best foundation and prerequisites a society can hope for, and they squandered them.

As Mormon₂ says at the beginning of 3 Nephi: "And now there was nothing in all the land, to hinder the people from prospering continually, except they should fall into transgression" (465). The people have no one to blame but themselves, and there is no objective reason for returning to tribalism, classism, and corruption. This suggests that there is something in human nature that causes people to divide. At the same time, this long period of peace also shows that it is possible to give up these divisions if one so chooses and puts in the requisite work. Humankind is not doomed to its flawed state, and humankind is radically free. Humans need only choose prosperity and peace and harmony, but in 4 Nephi they *choose* to reject it, and not even the intervention of God himself can take this freedom from

them. This freedom to self-destruct culminates in the battle at Camorah.

7.4 Mormon₂ and the Battle at Camorah

Once the narrative has finally caught up with Mormon₂, he begins narrating the difficult life he has led. The first thing he recounts is how, at the age of ten, he is called as the next Nephite recordkeeper (518–19) by Ammaron, who was mentioned at the end of 4 Nephi and who is the last in the long lineage of recordkeeper prophets going back to Alma₂. Mormon₂ never mentions why Ammaron hands off the record to someone not related to Alma₂'s lineage, and Ammaron himself had received the commission from his brother, Amos₂ (518). And here we see yet another connection between Alma₂ and Mormon₂: He is the inheritor of the prophet-archivist line begun by his closest affective-intertextual foil.

The most relevant parts of chapters I and II of the book of Mormon have already been discussed in the context of intertextual relationships between that section of the text and Alma₂'s narration.⁵¹ In short, Mormon₂'s life is dominated by corruption, war, defeat, and depravity—including human sacrifice, mass rape, and cannibalism (584). He does his best to save the Nephites militarily and soteriologically, but completely fails at both. All Nephite military gains are swiftly reversed—culminating at Camorah—, and the Nephites do not repent—even in the face of annihilation at the final battle.

I will conclude the analysis of the *Book of Mormon* with Mormon III, Mormon₂'s final extradiegetic chapter. The chapter leaves no ambiguity as to what is about to happen and how the narrative of the Nephites is going to end. Ever since Words of Mormon, when Mormon₂ mentioned that he has “witnessed almost all the destruction of [his] people, the Nephites” (151), the narrative has been a death march towards its promised conclusion, and this final chapter makes it clear that there is no last-minute rescue: “And now I finish my record concerning the destruction of my people, the Nephites” (529).

⁵¹Cf. esp. pp. 272f. in this study and Appendix F.

They are going to be destroyed once and for all, and it is Mormon₂'s duty to recount this tragedy. The chapter recounts this final battle without any superfluous details of troop maneuvers or the tug-of-war at the front lines of combat as found in the war chapters of the book of Alma. The description of this battle is only concerned with the aftermath and the human cost of a crushing, complete defeat.

The first section of the chapter has Mormon₂ gathering his entire people into one final enormous army. The same pattern is found at the end of the book of Ether, where the two final warlords, Coriantumr and Shiz, spend four years gathering the remnants of the Jaredites and even arm their children for one last battle (572). It is this final gathering of the Nephites that finally breaks Mormon₂ emotionally: "And it came to pass that when we had gathered in all our people in one to the land of Camorah, behold I, Mormon, *began to be old*" (529, my emphasis).

The phrase suggests that it is not a biological definition of *old*. When reading Mormon₂ as a characterized and highly affective narrator, this small phrase contains an entire lifetime of emotion and struggle. As much as we can debate at what chronological age a person is considered 'old,' the word's use in conjunction with *begin* makes it clear that Mormon₂ is not referring to biology. It is his life's final modulation into dejection.

Seeing the Nephites gathered for one last battle is uncannily reminiscent of the final events of the people of Jared—Mormon₂, who later commissions his son to include the book of Ether⁵²—knows how that ended. Even before the final Jaredite battle, "the whole face of the land was covered with the bodies of the dead." So many had died or been killed already in the continuous war "that there was none left to bury the dead" (570) since there had been almost two million casualties on just one side of the conflict (571). Once the final preparations are complete and all the Jaredites—men, women, and children—are armed, the last two great Jaredite armies clash. After six days of fighting, there are only sixty-one warriors left (including Coriantumr and Shiz). On the last day, these last of the Jaredites, having seen their entire civilization reduced to rubble and corpses, fight until only the two warlords are left (572–73). Coriantumr finally gathers

⁵²Cf. section 6.2.1.

enough strength to decapitate Shiz, and he stumbles off the battlefield and is eventually found by the people of Zarahemla (573; cf. 150).

This is the intertextual backdrop of the phrase “began to be old.” Mormon₂ sees his entire people gathered for battle, and the weight of the deprivations and struggles of the previous decades finally come crashing down on his shoulders. The phrase suggests a man who had been holding at bay the thought of the destruction of his people. Up to this point, he might have imagined that the people could still repent.

Previously, he could repress his fears, but upon seeing an entire people, including even women and children, gathered for battle, this final dread crashes down on him, and he begins to feel old and weak and tired. He knows that there will be no quarter given by the Lamanites. The epistles in the book of Moroni make it clear that the Lamanites do not shy away from murdering women and children by this point (584). Mormon₂ has every reason to believe that this battle will be a massacre, as he knows was the case with the Jaredites.

And while seeing this gathering causes Mormon₂ to feel old, it also propels him to finish his abridgment and hide the records: “. . . and knowing it to be the last struggle of my people [...] therefore I made this record out of the plates of Nephi, and hid up in the hill Camorah, all the records. . .” (529). He fears that the Lamanites would destroy the Nephite archive should they find it, and it is only in the face of the imminent destruction of his people and the final victory of the Lamanites that he realizes that he must finish and hide the record and only pass on the bare minimum to his son. It seems that it is this urgency which does not allow him to include the book of Ether himself, requiring him to charge Moroni₂ with doing so.

This decision to finish the record is significant, since Mormon₂ was not explicitly called to be the final recordkeeper of his people. When he was called by Ammaron as a boy to be the next recordkeeper, he was specifically told to continue the line of succession, and he was told to only take the most current volume of the Nephite records and to leave the rest “in the place where they are” (519). As with all of the previous recordkeepers, he was instructed to observe and to record: “[Y]e shall engrave on the plates of Nephi, all the things that ye have observed concerning this people” (ibid.). It is only with the imminent destruction of the Nephites that

Mormon₂ realizes that *he* has to *finish* recounting Nephite history and not only continue it (seeing as only *Lamanite* history will continue after the battle).

Mormon₂ also does not say that he finished his records *on* or *in* the plates of Nephi. He says that he “made this record *out of* the plates of Nephi” (529, my emphasis). The final abridgment that makes up the *Book of Mormon* is the result of a recordkeeper seeing that his entire people is about to fall, and he wishes to ensure that its story is told. As with the *Mahābhārata*, the *Book of Mormon* was never about *whether* the people would fall. It was only ever concerned with explaining *why* and *how* it occurred. The *Book of Mormon* presents itself as a record written in the face of destruction, and this also means that the *Book of Mormon* sees itself as a text composed and narrated by someone with the weight of the world on his shoulders.

The aloof nature of the narration in chapter III should not be read as the text now using heterodiegetic narration in a purely structural manner. Instead, these passages show a deeply sorrowful narrator putting painful events at an emotional distance. As with the events at Ammonihah, Mormon₂ has to narratologically flee from his narration and the events he is presenting.⁵³ The final chapter of Mormon₂'s extradiegetic narration fully reveals the deeply troubled nature of the text's principal narrator, and yet this deeply troubled nature is only seen when reading between the lines and examining the text for small signs of emotional suggestion. Once we begin looking for such suggestive clues, the events of the battle at Camorah take on an even more heart-wrenching and will-obliterating character.

Despite narratological distancing, Mormon₂'s feelings again seep through into the word choice of his narration. While he does not describe the battle, he mentions three times that his people is “hewn down” (529–30). This phrasing is reminiscent of cutting down a tree. In fact, the association is clear throughout the rest of the *Book of Mormon*. The phrase *hewn down and cast into the fire* occurs repeatedly, and it is used prominently in the Allegory of the Olive Tree (131–39).

In this long explicitly figurative narrative, trees which remain corrupted

⁵³Cf. section 7.1.2.

and do not have good fruit are to be hewn down and cast into the fire. Many of the trees are saved through the intercession of the servant of the Lord of the Vineyard. It is only at the very end that a few which are still corrupted are actually hewn down.

Jacob₂ explicitly applies this metaphor to his people in the chapter following the allegory: “[B]ehold, after that ye have been nourished by the good word of God all the day long, will ye bring forth evil fruit, that ye must be *hewn down and cast into the fire?*” (139, my emphasis). By Mormon III, the Lehites have had a literal visit by the Word of God, and yet they fall, and this fall from Eden is what causes them to finally be felled.

However, unlike in the parable, the end of the narrative has the entire people of Nephi (women and children) hewn down. None of them are preserved, even though the Son of God interceded on their behalf only a few chapters earlier. The thesis of the final chapter of the principal narrative can be summarized in an appeal of the Lord of the vineyard to his servants upon seeing that all of the trees had become corrupted. The Lord of the vineyard has to ask himself how it could occur that all of his trees are corrupted even though he cared for them:

But behold, they have become like unto the wild olive tree; and they are of no worth, but to be *hewn down and cast into the fire*: and it grieveth me that I should lose them. But what could I have done more in my vineyard? Have I slackened mine hand, that I have not nourished it? Nay; I have nourished it, and I have digged it, and I have pruned it, and I have dunged it; and I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the day long; and the end draweth nigh. And it grieveth me that I should *hew down* all the trees of my vineyard, and *cast them into the fire*, that they should be burned. Who is it that hath corrupted my vineyard? (135–36, my emphasis).

Especially his question as to *who* corrupted the vineyard is more tragic in the context of the final battle at Camorah. The only answer that can be given is that the people *choose* to fall into their state. There is no one that can be properly blamed, not even Satan. To do so would deprive the people of their agency. The connection of corrupted trees and the people being metaphorically hewn down like trees is repeatedly found in the rest

of the *Book of Mormon*, such as with the seditious kingmen being “hewn down, and levelled to the earth” (368). Seditious men were lifted *up* in pride and are metaphorically pulled *down*.

The connection between being metaphorically and literally brought down is also found at the beginning of Mormon₂'s account of the wars of his people. “[A]nd I saw that the day of grace was past with them, both temporally and spiritually: for I saw thousands of them *hewn down* in open rebellion against their God, and heaped up as dung upon the face of the land” (521, my emphasis). Even before Camorah, the bodies of his people lay on the earth after being killed. Their physical stature was hewn down and gathered in a disgusting heap. Like with the Jaredites, the final battle is preceded by ongoing wide-scale death.

The heap of bodies is reminiscent of the corpses being gathered in piles after the destruction of the city of Ammonihah and the ensuing battle (267, 302). Mormon₂'s disgust for the people of the city and their sins was clear.⁵⁴ In the book of Mormon, the mention of heaps of corpses is more tragic and sorrowful since here it is Mormon₂'s own people, and he has to acknowledge that their destruction during their period of iniquity condemns them. Here he must take this responsibility upon himself.

The connection between moral behavior as fruit and being hewn down and cast into the fire is made clearest in the book of Helaman. Samuel, the Lamanite prophet sent to the Nephites, teaches about the promised coming of Christ and redemption through him. Those that choose to not repent will be condemned at the final judgment, and this state is explicitly connected to the metaphor of being hewn down and cast into the fire (446). A prophecy by Christ as part of the theophany foreshadows the ultimate fall of the Nephites using the same metaphor. Many will be hewn down in final judgment by the justice of God (507–08).

Alma₂, speaking for Mormon₂,⁵⁵ had acknowledged the justice of God and how he must grant justice and give the people the ‘rewards’ for their actions (308). The people are granted the ability to sin and enjoy their wicked state for a while, but after a point they must bear the consequences.

⁵⁴Cf. pp. 259–62 in this study.

⁵⁵Cf. section 7.2.2.

The Nephites are able to reject and work against the intercession of Christ, but they are not able to escape judgment. At the final battle, they are finally literally and figuratively hewn down.

When Mormon₂ says that his entire people is hewn down, these two words bring with them all of the charged meaning of these previous usages. Being *hewn down* does not only mean being killed; it means dying in one's sins. The phrasing is even more tragic, since Mormon₂ makes it clear by implication that the phrase *his people* literally means every last person—man, woman, child (529). His people being hewn down is tragic for all eternity. Had his people survived physically, they might, in theory, have repented at a later point and been spared.

However, Mormon₂'s military failure has now resulted in their deaths. Had he been able to save them, he might have spared them this fate. This agony returns in Mormon₂'s apostrophe to his people after his summary of the battle at Camorah (*see below*). The ability to repent is now gone, since his people have been killed. The text chooses to contain all of these meanings in the two-word phrase *hewn down*. This compression of meaning thus helps to establish Mormon₂ as a highly affective narrator.

The people for whom he has a military and spiritual responsibility are killed during a period where they are morally completely degenerate, and he therefore has to fear for their very souls. How should one express the anxiety over judgment, the sorrow over one's own failure, the sorrow over lost friends (and presumably family)? How else can such an emotionally charged expression be conveyed except through this simple two-word phrase *hewn down*? Again, only the least adequate can become the adequate. But before moving on to the final battle itself and its aftermath, I want to consider a reading of one of Mormon₂'s letters included in the book of Moroni by his son.

7.4.1 “Little children are whole”: The Need to Believe

The second of the three letters includes Mormon₂'s preaching on the concept of child baptism, and he focuses on the innocence of children, arguing that they therefore do not require baptism to be saved. The letter and its contents thus bring Alma₂ and Mormon₂ together in an important point of

doctrine. Both characters and narrators experience the trauma of feeling impotent and unable to save women and children.

In the soliloquy, Alma₂ reflects on the justice of God, and he acknowledges that humans exist in a duality of good and evil and must invariably choose. “Yea, and I know that good and evil hath come before all men” (FE, 303). This duality is set up early in the *Book of Mormon* in the instructions of Lehi₁ to Jacob₂: “Wherefore, the Lord God gave unto man, that he should act for himself. Wherefore, man could not act for himself, save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other” (64). This freedom means that ultimately all are responsible and accountable for their own actions.

At the same time, Alma₂'s prayer adds in the caveat of those who are not (yet) able to sin. Alma₂ says that “he that knoweth not good from evil, is blameless” (303). According to Lehi₁, this state existed with Adam and Eve before the fall, where they did not yet understand the duality of good and evil and were thus unable to commit sin.

Mormon₂ expands on this idea in a long condemnation of child baptism. Mormon₂ repeatedly returns to the idea that those who do not know good from evil cannot commit sin and do not yet require baptism and are therefore saved without baptism should they die before receiving it. This concept of innocence and the implications of requiring soteriological baptism for them are found throughout Mormon₂'s letter. Figure 7.5 on page 315 contains the relevant passages.

The repeated insistence that infants do not require baptism to be saved leaves no ambiguity about the *Book of Mormon*'s stance on the practice of infant baptism. This lack of ambiguity is also accompanied by a strong condemnation of those who advocate and practice infant baptism. Mormon₂ does not only provide a thorough critique in the form of a theological treatise explaining some mistake in the interpretation of doctrine. He excoriates anyone proposing that children require baptism:

That he that supposeth that little children needeth baptism, is in the *gall of bitterness*, and in the *bonds* [of] *iniquity*: for he hath neither faith, hope, nor charity; wherefore, should he be cut off while in the thought, he must *go down to hell*. For *awful* is the *wickedness* to

suppose that God saveth one child because of baptism, and the other must perish because he hath no baptism. Wo be unto him that shall *pervert* the ways of the Lord after this manner, for they shall *perish*, except they repent. Behold, I speak with boldness, having authority from God; and I fear not what man can do (582).

Those advocating child baptism are lumped together with men like Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor, who fight against the church and are condemned for it. Such people *pervert*. Mormon₂ almost needlessly belabors the point about the innocence of children, and he spends an inordinate amount of time explaining a straightforward argument. He all but says that he will fight anyone who claims otherwise. He does fear not “what man can do,” and he will defend what he sees as correct doctrine and fight not just incorrect but *perverted* doctrine.

Mormon₂ seems to do this because this point of doctrine strikes an emotional chord with him. He *must*, for his own sake, believe that children

[L]ittle **children** are **whole**, for they are **not capable** of committing **sin**.

[T]each, repentance and baptism unto they which are **accountable** and **capable** of committing **sin**.

[A]nd their little children **need no repentance**, neither baptism.

Wherefore, if little children could not be saved without baptism, these must have gone to an **endless hell**.

For awful is the wickedness to suppose that God saveth one child because of baptism, and the other must **perish** because he hath no baptism.

Little **children cannot repent**.

For behold that all little **children** are **alive** in Christ, and also all they that are **without the law**.

For the power of **redemption** cometh on all they that have **no law**; wherefore, he that is **not condemned**, or he that is under **no condemnation**, **cannot repent**; and unto such **baptism** availeth **nothing**.

Behold, my son, this thing had not ought to be: for **repentance** is unto them that are **under condemnation**, and under the curse of a **broken law**.

Figure 7.5: Mormon₂'s rejection of infant baptism (FE, 581–82).

who are not yet baptized (such as the Nephite children killed at Camorah) are nonetheless saved. Alma₂, who saw children burned alive for the faith of their parents, *must*, for his own sake, believe that those who do not know good from evil are blameless. If Alma₂ does not believe that those that are not (yet) capable of distinguishing good from evil are saved, he would have to live with not only the guilt of being partly to blame for the deaths. He would then also be to blame for the eternal damnation of these children.

Those that believe the *Book of Mormon* to teach true doctrine will, of course, contend that Alma₂ does not believe something he *needs* to believe, but instead that he receives a measure of solace in a true principle. My rejoinder would be that, if anything, the *Book of Mormon* shows why this doctrine is important and true by showing the social and personal implications of it *not* being true, demonstrating how emotional communication aids in teaching doctrine.

By presenting these narratives and events, the *Book of Mormon* implicitly asks the reader: If only repentance and baptism can save someone, what will happen to those children who only died early because of the conversion of their fathers and the depravity of powerful, greedy men or hate-filled enemies? The narrative makes the only sensible and endurable answer: At least the children are saved. This still leaves open the threshold age at which children can be considered to have the requisite knowledge to repent, but the scene at Ammonihah is not needed to explicate so fine a point. It instead illustrates a theological principle and conveys its urgency. Whatever the metaphysical implications of the truth or falsity of the principle, Alma₂'s required belief intersects with Mormon₂'s own experiences of killed children (both those leading up to Camorah and those killed in the battle).

The third of Mormon₂'s letters to Moroni₂ found in the book of Moroni mentions the war crimes and group torture of Nephite women and children taken as POWs. The Lamanites deprive the prisoners of most water and force them to cannibalize their husbands and fathers (584). The book of Mormon mentions a string of military defeats that all result in women and children taken as prisoners being sacrificed to the Lamanite gods (526). The human sacrifices in particular and their preceding Nephite defeats occurred during a period of time when Mormon₂ had refused to be the com-

mander of the Nephite armies due to their own brutality and wickedness (524).

These military defeats cause Mormon to write: “And now I, Mormon, seeing that the Lamanites were about to overthrow the land. . .” (ibid.). He does not mention why these particular battles were the final indication of the beginning of the end. It is perhaps a combination of the fact that the Nephites are unable to defend women and children and that by this point the Lamanites grant no quarter to even women and children as they had done in centuries past—such as with those abandoned by Noah₃ and his followers (195).

Mormon₂ prepares for the end by hiding the full archival records of the Nephites he had used in his abridgement and then says: “And it came to pass that I did go forth among the Nephites, and did repent of the oath which I had made, That (*sic*) I would no more assist them; and they gave me command again of their armies” (526). It is telling that human sacrifice of women and children non-combatants prompts Mormon₂ to return to his military post. The murder of women and children is thus what causes him to put his affairs in order and to try and preserve his people, even though he knows he will not succeed. He is willing to again risk his life and to continue his sorrowful and doomed work as prophet-commander.

In the book of Alma, the adult members of the people of Ammon were able to still fulfil their oath of pacifism by instead sending their young sons who had not sworn the oath to aid in the Nephite war effort against Amalickiah.⁵⁶ In contrast, Mormon₂ cannot pass off this duty to another; or rather, he cannot ask his son to take command in order to spare him the pain of commanding the slow but inevitable slog to annihilation, and the only thing powerful enough to cause him to take up such a burden is war crimes committed against women and children whom he was unable to save due to a vow of non-violence.

Since he had given up his command at the time, he, like Alma₂, could only impotently stand by and watch. And while Alma₂ was physically bound and also constrained by the Spirit, Mormon₂ was constrained only by his own frustrations with his people and his rejection of his military com-

⁵⁶Cf. FE, 376–77; p. 149 and section 5.3 in this study.

mission. He did not serve as the commander of these battles, even though his people would have given and immediately do give back his commission. Even though the Nephites accept Mormon₂ back, they are no longer willing to accept Christ. They have rejected their actual savior, and instead place the burden of salvation on Mormon₂'s shoulders: "[F]or they looked upon me as though I could deliver them from their afflictions" (526). They look to a doomed and false savior, and yet it is as if he blames himself for not saving the women and children. Like Alma₂, Mormon₂ must therefore believe that at least the children are saved.

The expression of this belief is buried at the very end of the *Book of Mormon* since Mormon₂ never included the sermons found in the book of Moroni in his own narration of his life. In fact, he mentions very little about what he preaches to his people. The contents of his sermons are thus reserved for these final chapters. In a sense, they are included against his will, and they act like something that has been repressed breaking through the surface again. These things must be told, despite Mormon₂'s endeavors to bury them. As with Alma₂'s soliloquy coming many chapters after the murders, Mormon₂'s sermon on the innocence of children comes two books after the mention of the murders. In both cases, there is a delay between witnessing the events and the expression of the processing of the grief via theological belief.

Mormon₂'s letter to Moroni₂ is the return of the intensely emotional narrator, who here is (finally) furious. The doctrine of child baptism is not incorrect on an abstract moral level. It strikes too close to Mormon₂'s experiences, and this belief is highly personal and highly emotional for both him and Alma₂. If child baptism were a requirement, Mormon₂ would have to accept that the children who had been murdered by the Lamanites during the wars of the book of Mormon and finally at Camorah were condemned to hell.

He recoils from the thought and pushes away this possibility through his passionate, even desperate, defense of the doctrine of innocence. Like Alma₂, he *must* believe that these children are saved. And like Alma₂, his belief is only accessible to the reader because another narrator chose to include it. This desperate and emotionally overwhelmed state must be kept in mind when reading Mormon₂'s final apostrophe to his people.

7.4.2 “And I cried”: Mormon₂'s Apostrophe

In describing the aftermath of the final battle, the text is eerily similar to the aftermath of the Kurukṣetra War of the *Mahābhārata*. There, the commander of the Pāṇḍavas, Yudhiṣṭhira, surveys the carnage after the final day of battle. Only seven warriors remain on the Pāṇḍavas side and three on the Kaurava side. Yudhiṣṭhira, the eldest of the Pāṇḍavas princes, hears of his Pyrrhic victory.

The passage contains all of the components of *rasadhvani*. The experiencing character is Yudhiṣṭhira, and the news of his Pyrrhic victory and the sights (and presumably smells) of death and blood (the interacting objects) cause intense reactions on his part. They also prompt a pained soliloquy and result in his bodily collapse. The description again illustrates the most basic and direct *rasadhvani* analysis. All six of the outward signs of the emotional state of the character are described.

While thy army was being slaughtered like a forest cut down with axes, a loud wail was heard rising from thy camp! I am the sole survivor, O monarch, of that vast force!” Hearing these *evil tidings*, Kunti’s son Yudhishtira [...] *fell down* on the Earth, *afflicted* with grief at the loss of his sons.

[...] Having recovered his senses, the son of Kunti lamented in great affliction, *uttering these words rendered indistinct by sorrow*: [...] “The foe who were vanquished have become victorious! Ourselves, again, while victorious, are vanquished! Having slain brothers and friends and sires and sons and well-wishers, and kinsmen, and counsellors, and having vanquished them all, we ourselves are vanquished at last! Misery looks like prosperity, and prosperity looks like misery! This our victory has assumed the shape of defeat.”

[...] Yudhishtira, *crushed by grief*, proceeded, with *tears in his eyes* and accompanied by those friends of his, to the field on which his sons had battled and which still teemed with diverse kinds of creatures. Having entered that *cursed field abounding with fierce sights*, the king saw his sons, well-wishers, and friends, all lying on the ground, *covered with blood*, their *bodies mangled*, and *heads separated from their trunks*. Beholding them in that plight, Yudhishtira, that foremost of righteous men, became *deeply afflicted*. That chief

of the Kurus then began to *weep aloud and fell down on the Earth, deprived of his senses*, along with all his followers.⁵⁷

The description of Yudhiṣṭhira and his reaction is visceral and highly emotional. As a commander, he has lost everything and everyone he has ever loved. The destruction is the result of senseless war, and the senselessness causes Janamejaya to plead with Vyāsa to tell him how his forefathers had their “clear sense over-clouded by fate.”⁵⁸ Passages such as these make it clear why *rasa* is described as tasting an emotion. One cannot help but feel with and for Yudhiṣṭhira, and the cloying smell of rotting flesh practically hangs over the page.

The *Book of Mormon*, while not as ornate in its poeticity, draws on the same emotional motifs of senseless destruction. The most striking feature of this passage is the repeated use of the number *ten thousand* together with *hewn down*.

And it came to pass that they came to battle against us, and every soul was filled with terror, because of the greatness of their numbers. And it came to pass that they did fall upon my people with the sword, and with the bow, and with the arrow, and with the axe, and with all manner of weapons of war. And it came to pass that my men were *hewn down*, yea, even my *ten thousand* which were with me, and I fell wounded in the midst; and they passed by me that they did not put an end to my life. And when they had gone through and *hewn down* all my people save it were twenty and four of us, (among whom was my son Moroni,) and we having survived the dead of our people, did behold on the morrow, when the Lamanites had returned unto their camps, from the top of the hill Camorah, the *ten thousand* of my people which were *hewn down*, being led in the front by me; and we also beheld the *ten thousand* of my people which were led by my son Moroni. And behold, the *ten thousand* of Gidgiddonah had fallen, and he also in the midst; and Lamah had fallen with his *ten thousand*; and Gilgal had fallen with his *ten thousand*; and Limhah had fallen with his *ten thousand*; and Joneam had fallen with his *ten thousand*;

⁵⁷Protap C. Roy and Kisari M. Ganguli, *The Mahabharata of Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa: Sautika Parva* (Calcutta: Bharata Press, 1889), 39–40, 42, my emphasis.

⁵⁸Roy and Ganguli, *Adi Parva*, 163.

and Camenihah, and Moronihah, and Antionum, and Shiblom, and Shem, and Josh, had fallen with their *ten thousand* each.

And it came to pass that there were ten more which did fall by the sword, with their *ten thousand* each; yea, even all my people, save it were those twenty and four which were with me, and also a few which had escaped into the south countries, and a few which had dissented over unto the Lamanites, had fallen, and their flesh, and bones, and blood lay upon the face of the earth, being left by the hands of those who slew them, to moulder upon the land, and to crumble and to return to their mother earth (FE, 529–30, my emphasis).

Even if the reader does not calculate how many tens of thousands are killed in this battle, the sheer quantity and density of the number makes it clear that this was an enormous and incomprehensible slaughter. The listed total comes to twenty-four captains with ten thousand *each*. Fourteen of these captains are listed by name, but the last ten are simply lumped together. It is as if Mormon₂ the narrator cannot bear the thought of having to list *all* of the companions he has lost. He manages to get through the majority of the names, but then breaks down and only manages to dryly state that ten more were killed with ten thousand each. The implication of even this single number is mind-boggling and emotionally overwhelming.

However, the text is vague as to who is included in the twenty-four divisions⁵⁹ listed. At first glance, each includes *all the people* and therefore women and children. This would mean that ‘only’ 240,000 are killed on the Nephite side (there is no mention of Lamanite losses). However, there is also an indication that the troops of each division include only *men-at-arms* and that the actual casualty count would need to include their wives and children on top of the 240,000, perhaps bringing the suggested deaths to a million or more.

Mormon₂ says that his *men* are hewn down, the troops he personally led to the front. The single *men* in contrast to the ten thousand of *the people* could suggest that only Mormon₂ had command over an elect male-only vanguard of veteran heavy infantry positioned to bear the brunt of the initial Lamanite wave. After all, the Lamanites *pass by* him and his men and only *then* slaughter the rest of the Nephite forces.

⁵⁹ A modern military division includes between ten and twenty thousand troops.

In a literary context, it is futile to argue about what ‘actually’ happened at the battle at Camorah. Establishing anything beyond more questions slips into debates over the historicity of the events. However, the single mention of *men* combined with the narrator breakdown in shifting to a lump sum suggests that the text is again obfuscating for emotional effect. Mormon₂ has previously been shown to retreat into narratological distance when the events he is narrating are too painful.⁶⁰ Such small indications suggest that Mormon₂ is not telling the whole story (or at least that more story could be told), and enough details slip through for the attentive reader to want more and to be left unfulfilled by Mormon₂’s reticence.

His renewed reticence can perhaps best be explained by one of his letters concerning the war crimes of both sides: “And now, my son, I dwell no longer upon this horrible scene” (585). The leaked details reveal Mormon₂ as a narrator unwilling or even unable to narrate more. The impact of the events is too traumatic, and he does not wish to needlessly burden the reader. How can one express the inexpressible? Does it need to be expressed? How can he confront his final dual failure as prophet and commander? How does one process such events?

The text also employs the images found in the description of the battlefield in the *Mahābhārata*. Mormon₂ says that his people’s “flesh, and bones, and blood lay upon the face of the earth, being left by the hands of those who slew them, to moulder upon the land, and to crumble and to return to their mother earth” (530). This description suggests a literal slaughter, that the Nephites are hacked to pieces, and that the Lamanites literally cut their path through their opponents. Bones do not lie on the ground separate from the flesh after only a single day. Usually bones are only found protruding from the body, much less severed, after scavengers have mutilated the corpses over the course of days if not weeks. For the bones to be noted as separate from the flesh of the body suggests that entire limbs are severed and flesh is gouged. The people are not only killed; they are carved up. This short description suggests the unloading of hate and malice on the part of the Lamanites. In contrast to previous conflicts, there is no mention of prisoners.

⁶⁰For example, at Ammonihah (cf. section 7.1.2).

Mormon₂ finally emotionally breaks down: “And my soul was rent with anguish, because of the slain of my people: And I cried...” (530). While the bodies of his people are literally torn apart, his soul is rent. Yudhiṣṭhira “lamented in great affliction,” and his words were “rendered indistinct by sorrow.”⁶¹ Mormon₂ instead cries out. This cry finally unloads all of the emotions—the grief, pain, anger, frustration—of the entire *Book of Mormon* into a final existential scream.

The feeling of frustration found in Alma₂'s soliloquy, expressed most clearly in the initial *O that* (FE, 303), comes bursting through repeatedly in Mormon₂'s apostrophe to his people. Unlike a soliloquy, which is not directed at anyone in particular, an apostrophe is “[a] figure of speech, by which a speaker or writer suddenly stops in his discourse, and turns to address pointedly some person or thing, either present or absent.”⁶² Mormon₂ is speaking directly to his people even though they are dead.

The tragedy of the exclamation is the interplay of different grammatical moods. The passage vacillates between the indicative and the subjunctive, the *realis* and the *irrealis*, what is and what could have been. At the same time, the cry also contains the existential horror of possibility, the *possibility* of falling.

O ye fair ones, *how could* ye have departed from the ways of the Lord!
 O ye fair ones, *how could* ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with
 open arms to receive you! Behold, if ye *had not* done this, ye *would*
not have fallen. But behold, ye *are* fallen, and I *mourn* your loss. O
 ye fair sons and daughters, ye fathers and mothers, ye husbands and
 wives, ye fair ones, *how is it* that ye *could* have fallen! But behold,
 ye *are* gone, and my sorrows *cannot* bring your return (FE, 530, my
 emphasis).

The passage's addressee becomes ambiguous when read as a deeply emotional cry at the culmination of not only the book of Mormon, but the *Book of Mormon*. The most immediate layer of his people as addressee works on the interplay of non-determinism. In reality, there was no fatalistic death-march propelling them forward (despite my word choice earlier). The peo-

⁶¹Roy and Ganguli, *Sauptika Parva*, 40.

⁶²OED.com, apostrophe, n.1, 1.

ple *could have* chosen to repent like the people in the countless episodes before. And while they did not *have to* fall, they nonetheless *did* fall. The people resolved the *possibility* into *actuality*.

Mormon₂ knows it *could have* been different, since he has seen this difference in the one thousand years of Lehite history and the ambiguous number of centuries of Jaredite history. The first sentences are all predicated on this non-deterministic possibility. How *could* they? Why *did* they? Why *didn't* they? This sorrowing over the lost possibility is best summarized in a sentence in third conditional: "If ye *had not* done this, ye *would not have* fallen." By referring to the past, these events are by definition *non-real*. They can no longer be changed, and they have precipitated into the *realis*.

The text employs this contrast between the *irrealis* of the past and the depressing *realis* of the present to great theological and emotional effect. If the people *had repented* (but they did not), they would *now* not be lost to Mormon₂. He has seen enough history to know this is true, and yet he has to admit that they *are* fallen. This state now results in his mourning. There was nothing forcing the people to fall; and yet, how can *he* not mourn? Their choices leave him only the possibilities of mourning or repressing his sorrow, since he has no choice but to be confronted by this sorrow.

Mormon₂ repeats this sorrow in his final sentence. And yet, to even call it *sorrow* makes a mockery of the emotions the text is portraying here. This is existential, soul-crushing horror, grief, and pain crashing down on a man (over-)burdened since youth. And yet, as so often before, no words can express the depth and darkness of the all-encompassing, existential black hole Mormon₂ is in. All that is left is the least and only adequate.

Mormon₂'s sorrow cannot change what has happened. Sorrow over loss cannot transform loss from the *realis* back into an *irrealis*. The last two sentences of the apostrophe contain the unanswerable emotional-doctrinal question par excellence of the *Book of Mormon*. How is it that a people, visited by God incarnate, can nonetheless fall? How is it that they *have* fallen? And yet the *text* needs the Nephites to ultimately fall for it to express the *possibility* of such a fall.⁶³ If it were never actualized, a fall would cease

⁶³Cf. p. 304 in this study.

to be a real threat. There would always be the lender of last resort to bail out their misdeeds and prevent them from truly falling. The Nephites have to be doctrinally sacrificed, and Mormon₂ must sorrow. And yet he as a character can ask why *he* had to be the one required to bear this sorrow. Why was *he* chosen to live at that time and be the emotional vessel of this doctrine? His sorrow is the pain over the real possibility and the horrible implications of true, radical, complete human agency. Whatever social, discursive, historical, or other constraint, humans are free, free to fall.

The pain over the loss of his people brings with it an even more terrifying existential question. Mormon₂ is addressing his destroyed people, yes. However, one cannot help but feel an even wider and overwhelming addressee. It does not matter whether we call this *God, Universe, Natural Law, the Given, the Always-Already, saṃsāra, māyā* or any number of other terms. The most tragic question in the apostrophe is the seemingly innocuous phrase: 'How *is* it that ye *could* have fallen!' Gilbert's use of an exclamation point (rather than a question mark) indicates that this is not truly a question. It is a shocking realization at the horror of the conditions of existence.

How can it be that the Nephites were even able to fall? What is the basis? *Why* is this basis? Who *laid* it? Who *allowed* it? How is it that humans can, are *allowed, enabled, permitted* to be *free* to fall? Are they truly only *permitted*? Or does not even God have this power to actually prevent them, should he so choose? Was humankind therefore never truly under his control?

Alma₂ provides a radical answer. If humans were not permitted to sin, to fall, if the "work of justice" were not permitted to run its course, "God would cease to be God" (338). And yet this answer does not truly answer anything. Does this mean that God *would* cease to be, i.e., that *he himself* can fall from his station? Is God himself contingent? Or does Alma₂ mean that since God *cannot* fall himself, the works of justice are not, cannot be destroyed? Is Alma₂ using this expression in the sense of *when God ceases to be God (which he will never do), only then*? Whatever the answer to this theological-cosmological problem, its use in the *Book of Mormon* shows the emotional, human, and existential implication of the radical human agency the *Book of Mormon* espouses.

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Mormon₂'s pain is over experiencing and not simply grasping the real human cost of true agency. The implications of this doctrine cannot be explained. They can only be felt. Mormon₂'s thesis becomes the acknowledgement of a concept introduced in his frustrated rage in Helaman IV. There he said that the "children of men" are "less than the dust of the earth," since the dust obeys God. Humans do not always obey; they can rebel; they can fall, but only humans can truly fall. Their existence after the fall of Adam of Eve therefore also includes the terrifying condition of *fallability* (if I may be permitted the term).

Having now found a highly emotional Mormon₂, the question becomes: How does Mormon₂ as affective pre-reader factor into scripture and its performative truthfulness, and what does a post-secular study of scripture gain from grasping this? First and foremost, the *Book of Mormon* is akin to a postmodern, highly reflexive text. Mormon₂ follows a proto-postmodern example more in line with the *Mahābhārata*'s Vyāsa than the biblical almost heterodiegetic narrator voices. The title *The Book of Mormon* is wholly apropos of its internal functioning of an affectively involved narrator reading and compiling the long history of his people, which culminates in his dual failure as prophet-commander. The text is so closely wound up with Mormon₂ that it could even be called Mormon's Book.¹

The previous chapter showed that Mormon₂'s affective reactions include a wide range of emotions: frustration, anger, disgust, compassion, wonder, and especially sorrow. *Rasadhvani* asks us to determine which of these emotions is the dominant mode. For guidance in answering this question, I turn to the book of Ether one last time. As with Mormon₂ and the *Book of Mormon*, the eponymous Ether only appears himself at the very end of the book. Ether is the chronicler of the utter destruction of the Jaredites and must witness an entire people tear itself apart without regard for casualties. He does not speak directly until the very end, and he is only paraphrased or summarized throughout by Moroni₂.

¹The Norwegian and Swedish title is *Mormons Bok*, and the Danish is *Mormons Bog*.

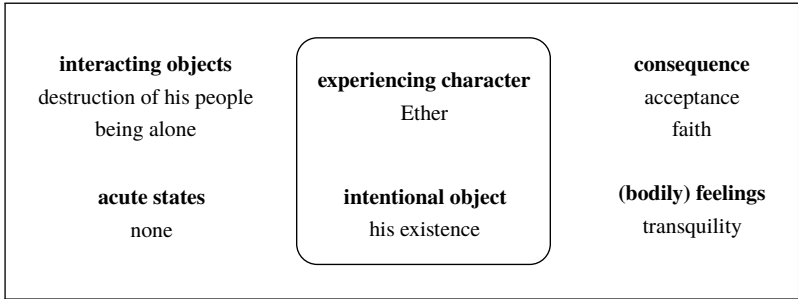


Figure 8.1: Ether’s final emotional state of *śānta*

He is thus at the narratological mercy of the narrator a level higher, and Ether is only granted a voice in the closing two sentences of the book, by which time he has seen how the prophets’ warnings (including his own) have not been able to prevent his people’s annihilation. Ether’s closing words echo Mormon₂’s and Moroni₂’s own feelings: “Whether the Lord will that I be translated, or that I suffer the will of the Lord in the flesh: It mattereth not, if it so be that I am saved in the kingdom of God. Amen” (FE, 573). This short passage can nonetheless be parsed using *rasa* in order to establish its emotional mode. The components of the *rasa* unit are summarized in figure 8.1 above.

The experiencing character is Ether, and the interacting objects are the destruction of his people as the fulfillment of prophecy and his seeing that he is now alone, just like Moroni₂ (cf. 532). The intentional object towards which the emotion (or lack thereof) is directed is similar to Mormon₂’s existential question addressed to the organizing principle of the world. Here it is Ether’s own existence. The acute states exist precisely in that they are absent. His bodily feelings can perhaps be summarized as tranquility or peace. He has trust in God and has hope towards salvation in the next life. He does not seek anything further from his life on earth and patiently awaits the day he can leave this fallen state. The consequence is Ether’s calm acceptance of his lot. He is filled with what Ānanda and Abhinava

would describe as the passionless state of *śānta*.² Rather than looking toward suicide to end his plight, he looks forward to salvation, whenever that day will be, and he subordinates his will to the will of God.

This short analysis would place the book of Ether in the mode of *nirveda-vairagya* and postulate its sentiment as *śānta*. This conclusion stands in contrast with the previous analysis of the *Book of Mormon* and the predominance of the sorrowful mode. However, the reader only hears of Ether's final state at the very end of the narrative, and the reader is denied a view of the process by which he arrived there. Mormon₂, on the other hand, is practically omnipresent in his affectivity, and the reader is privy to the complex highs and lows of his emotional journey.

Everything in the *Book of Mormon* leading up to Mormon₂'s final apostrophe then converges on, or rather collapses back into, the principal mode of sorrow. In fact, Kershnik's woodcut for Words of Mormon depicts a crying Mormon₂ writing the abridgement (MSE, 170). In *rasa* terminology, this means the *sthāyibhāva* of *śoka*, "sorrow, affliction, anguish, pain, trouble, grief" (MW 1091).³ This puts the *Book of Mormon* in line with the *Rāmāyaṇa*, which also has *śoka* as its principal *sthāyibhāva* (DhvL 690 A).

8.1 Sorrow as Dominant Mode

The many other emotional modes used throughout the *Book of Mormon* fulfill a role similar to the one played by the three failed *puruṣārthas* in the *Mahābhārata*. All the other modes eventually cease and return to sorrow. In Mormon₂'s own words: "[A]ll things must fail" (FE, 580). In the *Mahābhārata*, the soteriological failure of the three other *puruṣārthas* only serves to heighten disenchantment with the world, since the presence of the transient positive experiences emphasizes just how much is ultimately lost.

The heroism of Moroni₁, Lehi₃, Teancum, Helaman₂, Antipus, and the two thousand young soldiers⁴ must stand in contrast to the slaughter these

²Cf. section 4.3.1.

³Cf. also Masson and Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture*, 52

⁴Cf. chapter 5.

victories all entail. Antipus' heroic love and exertion do not save him. In fact, had he abandoned the field and left Helaman₂ and his troops to die, he and his officers would have survived the battle. His righteous actions are *not* rewarded, at least in this life. Alma₂, the mighty prophet, cannot save the believers. God allows them to be murdered. Even though the Lamanites that attacked Ammonihah are defeated and the remaining inhabitants of Ammonihah are rescued, the losses caused by this victory mean that many more must mourn the loss of loved ones.

The wonder seen at the disappearance of all Ites must give way to a frustration and anger over the capriciousness, stubbornness, and selfishness of humans in again returning to conflicting groupings. And most shockingly, not even a physical theophany of their savior can prevent the cataclysm of Mormon III at Camorah. Mormon₂'s grim satisfaction at the grisly fate of those killed at Ammonihah⁵ is no comfort when his compatriots are killed in what is the same constellation of just rewards for previous actions.

Mormon₂'s collapses into sorrow are a result of having to accept that people were allowed to choose. And for there to be choice, God cannot always intervene to preserve those that believe in him. At least occasionally, the "but if not" expressed by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego means *not* (cf. Daniel 3:18). Choice must ultimately mean allowing for choosing destruction, even if the righteous must at times suffer and are not saved. If the people of Ammon can choose to change and if the Nephites can forgive them (FE, 299–301), then conversely, later Lehiters can choose to change for the worse and break apart. Alma₂'s explanation to Amulek is true,⁶ but that does not make it easy to accept.

The *Book of Mormon* presents the principle of agency as something to be mourned and with which one has to come to terms. This requires working through (in all of its psychoanalytic associations) the gravity of the principle. Ether is alone because his people chose to slaughter each other. His final state of *sānta* would not be the result of quick acceptance of this fact, and the reason that Ether seems so at peace is that he is not permitted to speak in his own voice before the very last sentences. The type of con-

⁵Cf. section 7.1.3.

⁶Cf. FE, 262–63; also pp. 251–54 in this study.

version exhibited by Ether would require a long mournful processing and pained acceptance. His *final* state thus does not posit the world-weariness of *nirveda-vairagya* as the final mode, and instead the principal mode is *śoka*, sorrow. A calm, converted state is then the product of a long process of mourning and not a disassociation from the world.

The *Book of Mormon* subtly and therefore deeply expresses what the principle of agency means, and the only way to comprehend this *idea* is to *experience* it. The only way to properly communicate the needed urgency is to *taste* the implication, and this tasting is intended to teach and therefore protect. The *Book of Mormon* expresses the desire to protect in Moroni₂'s first farewell at the end of the book of Mormon: “[G]ive thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that ye may *learn to be more wise than we have been*” (FE, 538, my emphasis). As with Janamejaya wishing to understand the causes for the destruction of his ancestors (to better be able to avoid these errors himself),⁷ the intent of the *Book of Mormon* is to teach a principle by illustrating it as a tasting experience.

Agency becomes a *tremendum* in both the urgency to consider one's actions and their impact but also the overwhelming feeling of receiving forgiveness should one choose to change. The urgency of this tremendous doctrine can only be expressed in a performative manner. The compassionately unattached Vyāsa⁸ communicating the detached, passionless state of *śānta* points to the fact that to *understand* the weight of doctrine requires an emotional and even experiential component.

A text can plead all it wants, but only an experiencing reader can mourn and emotionally digest the *tremendum* which doctrine brings with it. Moroni₂, as the pre- and model-reader, repeatedly uses the phrase *and thus we see*. And yet much of his affective narrator reactions to the text show that his seeing is beyond mere logical analysis of events and causality.

For the reader, to truly *understand* the narrative and its implications for action requires not only understanding the plot. Charting the geography or chronology is not what produces understanding. More importantly, ana-

⁷Roy and Ganguli, *Adi Parva*, 163.

⁸Cf. Mehta, “Dvaipāyana,” 106; cf. section 4.3.2 in this study.

lytic decoding does not produce *action*. Being able to logically lay out the doctrine in examinable and falsifiable propositions is not the form of *understanding* that the *Book of Mormon* read through Mormon₂ as affective narrator seeks to transmit.

The text's repeated call is to repent, to see the societal externalities of human behavior. The *Book of Mormon* shows how this call is, on the one hand, necessary in order to avoid disaster, but on the other hand that it is also *possible* no matter the circumstances. Humans are so radically free that not even the power of God can actually *force* them to do anything. Can an entire people slip through the fingers of the hand of God?⁹ Yes.

Even though this study's section on the book of Helaman and the famine spoke of the famine being used to 'force' the people to repent,¹⁰ the rest of the narrative of the *Book of Mormon*, and especially the book of Mormon, show that this is not actually the case. The destruction at the very end shows that some people will not repent even when they are literally in the face of death. The people during the famine therefore still chose to repent. Humans are radically free both to change for the better and the worse, and they can *choose* life or destruction. This means that humans have the ability to either rise or fall, and this is terrifying and overwhelming.

The radical freedom of fallability espoused by the *Book of Mormon* is not a liberating feeling. If *anything goes*, then, in fact, *anything* can happen—both falling *and* rising. The *Book of Mormon* not only discusses but also dramatizes this terrifying and tremendous concept through the soteriological failure of even a corporeal theophany of Christ, since not even his appearance and intercession can cause eternal peace. And even the theophany does not immediately force peace; that too must be achieved by patient and long-suffering work.

If the people were actually prevented from committing sin, it would not be sin and they would not be condemned. Conversely, as Lehi₁ says, if sin were not punished, there could be no reward for righteousness (FE, 63–64). For the *Book of Mormon*, intent is not the same as action. This again means that Alma₂'s sorrowful admission at Ammonihah is strictly

⁹Cf. D. H. Lawrence, *The Poems*. ed. Christopher Pollnitz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1:615–16.

¹⁰Cf. FE, 437; p. 285 in this study.

speaking true, and yet the admission is not that of a strict schoolmaster, but instead the agony-filled realization of a man confronted with the terrifying implications of this doctrine. He does not have to admit it in the context of a petty lie or even adultery. Instead, he must acknowledge that humans must be permitted to act even when faced with the darkest impulses, even when innocents die as a result.

This type of emotionally difficult acceptance of overwhelming doctrine is also found in Nephi₁'s narration. Speaking of the destruction which would happen before the theophany and which he witnessed in his visions, he also cries out due to the emotionally overwhelming nature of the scene and its doctrinal implications: "O the pain, and the anguish of my soul for the loss of the slain of my people! For I, Nephi, hath (*sic*) seen it, and it well nigh consumeth me before the presence of the Lord" (107). Seeing the wicked destroyed in preparation for the theophany is painful, and Nephi₁'s anguish of the soul prefigures Mormon₂'s soul being rent with anguish over seeing the just destruction of those that continued to refuse to repent. Nephi₁ comes to a pained admission over this divine justice for wickedness: "[B]ut I must cry unto my God, thy ways are just" (*ibid.*). Even though it is painful to admit, agency tempered with justice can lead to calamity, and this possibility for calamity must exist if there is to be agency. It fills Nephi₁'s and Mormon₂'s souls with anguish, and yet they must both come to terms with the necessity of this pain.

Mormon₂ and his sorrowful narration become the slow and painful working through of the state of acceptance found in Ether. The acceptance of the required constitution of the world becomes the final form this sorrowful mode must take. Fortunately, the *Book of Mormon* allows and even asks for a long digestion process. The *Book of Mormon* acknowledges that to be human, to process what it *means* to be human, in all of its flights of joy and depths of sorrows, means being emotional.

And at the same time, this sorrow and Mormon₂'s failures, unlike in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, are actually a positive message. If Mormon₂ would not have needed to sorrow at the end, agency would have been on tenuous ground. The fact that his companions are gone and that he can only sorrow cements the *Book of Mormon*'s argument for radical human agency. Mormon₂ becomes a messianic figure, whose happiness is sacri-

ficed for the sake of saving others from their own suffering. He becomes God's chosen vessel to reveal truths which can spare humankind undue suffering. Like Christ, he must accept the cup of suffering his time of birth and ecclesiastical calling give him (cf. Luke 22:42).

Mormon₂, the only prophet to fail completely, whose life was filled with sorrow and who longed for a different life and time, can be found in Isaiah's description of the mission of Christ quoted by Abinadi. Christ will be despised and his mission rejected, and yet his mission is to carry human grief and sorrow in order to save humankind from both. The passage is eerily similar to Mormon₂'s sorrowful life:

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed (FE, 185; cf. Isaiah 53:3–5).

Mormon₂, the sorrowful vessel made to carry grief in order to save the reader, becomes Christ-like and therefore God-like. The extradiegetic and the supradiegetic converge, and Mormon₂ becomes the way to understand the manner in which God becomes grieved through permitting—perhaps even *having to* permit—human agency, with all of its tremendous implications. Out of their love for humankind, Mormon₂ and God must carry and endure sorrow in order for humankind to have the possibility of salvation.

According to Mormon₂, the only thing that will *not* fail is charity, “the pure love of Christ” (FE, 580). Despite the predominance of sorrow, Mormon₂ and God never cease loving or caring for the Lehitites (and humanity in general). In fact, should he and Moroni₂ “cease to labor” for the Nephite, this would mean that are “brought under condemnation” themselves (583). Godly love and care is unwavering, even if it leads to pain and sorrow. Mormon₂'s cry in his apostrophe, “how is it that ye could have fallen,” can only receive one answer: *Because if the Nephites could not have fallen, no one could be saved*. Sorrow must be experienced, since the Nephites and humans are loved. If Mormon₂'s (or God's) sorrow were

to be selfishly prevented, then salvation would not be possible, which would in turn show a lack of unfailing love. Mormon₂ would be condemned, and God would cease to be God.

8.1.1 “The Lord of the vineyard wept”: Tasting God

Turning now to the God of the *Book of Mormon*, I want to examine how his narratological presence affects the emotional message and communication of the text. While God’s active narratological presence is slight when compared to his actions as an active narrative participant, his presence as supradiegetic veto instance and textual guarantor becomes the final Abhinavian protagonist whose emotional modulations tie together the tasting experience of a *rasa* work. The *Book of Mormon*’s homodiegetic God is one who is acquainted with grief. God becomes similar to Vyāsa, who can only be emotionally indirectly present in his narrative. Like Vyāsa, God keeps a watchful eye over the events and intervenes occasionally in order to have the story told as intended.

The God of the *Book of Mormon* uses Mormon₂ not only as sorrowful, failed prophet, but as messianic narratological device through which he reveals himself to the reader. If the entire text can be read as revealing Mormon₂ and his personality and even emotions, God as the supradiegetic implied author and therefore the deified principle of coherence can also be known.¹¹ Grasping the emotional organizing principle means grasping God, since he is presented as that principle.

This sorrowful God is hinted at in the Allegory of the Olive Tree in Jacob III. Towards the end of the allegory, at a time when all of the trees have become corrupted, the Lord of the Vineyard weeps and asks his servant: “What could I have done more for my vineyard?” (FE, 135). He wishes to understand how the calamity of total corruption could possibly have been avoided. Did he somehow fail? Did he not take enough care of his vineyard? The Lord of the Vineyard weeps again and again turns to his servant: “Who is it that hath corrupted my vineyard?” The implied answer is that Satan can perhaps be held responsible.

¹¹Cf. section 6.1.2.

And yet the *Book of Mormon* does not take the easy route of simply blaming such things on Satan. The servant answers his Lord: “Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard?” (136). The answer contained in this question is that it was the trees of the vineyard themselves. In other words, those who become corrupted (i.e. sin, fall) choose to do so. They are permitted to choose. This makes considering one’s decisions (for good or ill) so important. Humans must choose and choose well.

The Lord of the vineyard and therefore the God of the *Book of Mormon* is a God who weeps, a God who sorrows over seeing his creation become corrupted. This concept is developed further in later ‘Mormon’ theology.¹² The God of the *Book of Mormon* becomes sympathetic, and it is not out of apathy, much less cruelty that he allows innocents to be caught up in the destructive agency of others. It is out of the only possible answer to Mormon₂’s question: *If falling were not possible, then righteousness would be ineffectual and even meaningless.*

If God could ensure eternal Eden, the purpose of human existence would have been, according to Lehi₁, “created for a thing of nought; wherefore, there would have been no purpose in the end of its creation” (FE, 64). As terrifying as the implications of human agency are, the *Book of Mormon* is a clear proponent of the Fortunate Fall, where the potential for suffering is the prerequisite for joy. And even though the God of the *Book of Mormon* must sorrow over seeing his creation tear itself apart, he cannot interfere forever, otherwise the purpose of his creation would be destroyed. Like the Lord of the Vineyard, he must sorrow if humans are to be saved or to even have the potential for joy.

The reader is then invited to taste the dread of such a God who must allow for such things, who must be willing to allow such sacrifice. When seen, or rather *experienced*, in this light, the God of the *Book of Mormon* becomes tragic and sympathetic. He is the guarantor who must maintain the conditions of agency both through his intervention and soteriological reticence. He becomes a God who must, like Alma₂, watch as humans act out their cruelest impulses. Like Alma₂, the God who weeps is constrained

¹²In the *Pearl of Great Price*, Enoch sees God weep (Moses 7:28–40); see also Terry Givens and Fiona Givens, *The God who weeps: How Mormonism makes sense of life* (Salt Lake City, UT: Ensign Peak, 2012).

by the demands of agency. Like Mormon₂, he must at times be restrained from attempting to preach. And yet, like Mormon₂, he must remain among them, waiting and hoping that they might at some point repent.

The *Book of Mormon* thereby is not only testimony of past revelation but is a continuing site thereof, where the reader is invited to come and know the nature of God. The text is therefore an *epiphany*, “a place where the sacred appears or becomes sensible to the worshiper” (DhvL, 694 A n12). The text as affective-experiential tool becomes not only revelation to Joseph₄ and Joseph Smith Jr.¹³ It also becomes a revelation of God’s character and his loving interest in his creation. The God presented is not a passionless Trinity, but a knowable, emotionally involved personality acting within the world of its creation. The *Book of Mormon* is the invitation to *experience* and *taste* the character of God through his messianic messenger, Mormon₂.

In fact, several characters describe knowing God as an act of tasting. Benjamin says to his people that “knowledge of the glory of God” and knowing “of his goodness” mean having “tasted of his love” (163). Alma₂ repeats this metaphor to Helaman₂: Being “born of God” like Alma₂ means having “tasted as I have tasted” (325). And finally, Mormon₂ himself uses this imagery for describing getting to know God: “And I, being fifteen years of age, and being somewhat of a sober mind, therefore (*sic*) I was visited of the Lord, and tasted, and knew of the goodness of Jesus” (519).

Knowing God is therefore not an abstract, purely cognitive act. Such things can only be awakened and experienced. In the words of both *rasadhvani* and the *Book of Mormon*, such things can only be *tasted*. In the words of Nephi₁ and P. Lal, they can only be *felt*.¹⁴ As Moroni₂ promises the reader: God will manifest himself through the *Book of Mormon* (FE, 586). The text as written artefact thus becomes the *facilitator* of religious experience, even revelation.

¹³Cf. p. 189 in this study.

¹⁴FE, 46; Lal, “The Hindu Experience,” 98.

8.2 Only felt: Post-Secular Scripture

The previous chapters have shown that the *Book of Mormon* is far from the “meanest book in the English language.”¹⁵ It can proudly stand among the greatest achievements of American literature and sacred writings in general. The narrative is audacious in how it plays with history, culture, the Bible, and even its readership. It spins all of these elements together into an imminently coherent utopic world that even if it were not real, surely could have been. And most importantly, one can only access this vivid world through willing consent to the risky experiment of the experiential apparatus.

The utopia also causes the text’s peritextual borders to morph. The introductory title page and preface become liminal texts attributable to both Joseph₄ and Joseph Smith Jr. instead of the usual buffering threshold of peritextual transition.¹⁶ In the FE, the outermost peritextual layer is therefore pushed back to the hard front cover. This hard boundary becomes an isolating layer that hermetically seals the text and its diegesis in preparation for the risky experiment.

The top cover becomes the rigid boundary between, on the one hand, the real extra-textual world and the actual reader, and, on the other hand, the diegesis and the soon-to-be epidiegetic reader. The text itself (and not only the analyst’s heuristics) therefore brackets off the issue of constative historicity, and this bracketing can be taken literally in the sense of a physical barrier enclosing an isolated world.

The constative historicity is also bracketed by the end of the FE. The volume ends with Moroni₂’s farewell, the liminal texts of the Testimony of the Three Witnesses and the Testimony of the Eight Witnesses, and finally the hard physical boundary of the back cover. The front’s hard barrier of cover and liminal title page requires a consenting heart to open the microcosmic text, and the epidiegetic reader (in the best case, changed by the experiment) is later released through a process of increasing extra-textualization from the diegetically promised Testimony of Three and the

¹⁵Cf. Campbell, *Delusions*, 15; p. 35 in this study.

¹⁶On the title page and Joseph₄, see p. 189f. in this study; on peritext, see section 3.5.1 and the definitions in section 3.7.1; on liminal text, see pp. 188–92.

more vaguely diegetic nature of the Testimony of Eight. The hard front demands a price of admission (a plunge past the barrier), and the back provides a send-off. The reader becomes a *mission*-ary, someone sent forth after receiving a special revelation from and of God. Even the physical binding of the text therefore becomes part of the aesthetic functioning of the delivered text.

8.2.1 “Unto all nations”: Expanded Readership

The binding's dual function of isolating barrier and liminal release greatly expand the intended readership of the volume. The text's internal and liminal functioning does not restrict itself to Antebellum Americans or even modern Americans. The epidiegetic readership encompasses the whole world. As Alma₂ explains in the soliloquy: “For behold, the Lord doth grant unto *all nations*, of their own nation and *tongue*, to teach his word” (FE, 303, my emphasis). As Mormon₂ says: “And I would that *all men* might be saved” (441, my emphasis). Christ's instructions to the three disciples who wish to remain on the earth are: “Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the Gospel to *every* creature” (537, my emphasis). Translation and wide distribution are an expected use of the text. The book does not want its experiment and its theological findings restricted to only the narrow finite set of readership of Americans at the time of publication. The message is too urgent and far-reaching to be limited in its audience.

The wider invitation to experiment upon the word of the *Book of Mormon* is enabled, like any well-constructed experiment, to be executable independent of the original parameters. The *Book of Mormon* is self-sufficient and sui generis, and it is accessible independent of religious confession. Furthermore, it is available in a transnational, translanguagual context. The text invites all to engage with it and to experience it and its doctrine, no matter the reader's constellation of experiential traces. The cultural background of the reader is not exclusionary, since even those not familiar with the Bible can nonetheless engage with the experiential apparatus. The *Book of Mormon* can in fact be brought to all the world independent of its close intertextuality with the Bible, because all relevant biblical passages would still be present when translated in its entirety.

Like medieval ‘secular’ literature,¹⁷ the *Book of Mormon* makes itself independent of its wider epitextual context. It is a complete work and can be read, understood, and experienced independent of the reader’s starting point, since everything that is required is found within. The holistic nature of the text even includes the instruction manual. The manner of engagement becomes independent of other texts and social discourse (religious or secular), since the felicitous reading practice is dramatized text-internally. The epidiegetic reader is textually trained and formed, and the text therefore teaches its own felicity conditions which will activate its performative-revelatory functions. The *Book of Mormon* can therefore be understood from within its delineated, finite delivered text.

8.2.2 From Clay to Text: John Gilbert as Editor

Aesthetic functions and implicit reader instructions of peritext must therefore be kept in mind, and literary readings in particular must refer to a delineated edition. The original unadorned novelistic formatting (which received Joseph Smith’s blessing on three separate occasions) signals that the way to read the text is as narrative, rather than didactic text. Modern versification (essentially miniature paragraphs) is didactically useful, but it disrupts the original flowing narrative. The choppy nature of versification (never mind the YE’s clause-based divisions) makes the text feel *staccato* rather than the flowing *legato* of the original. Breaking large paragraphs into compact verses or even clauses makes citation easier, but the emotional significance of the syntactic style and punctuation can become lost.

The most significant peritextual choices for this study have been paragraphing and punctuation. Many of the emotional analyses of this study were predicated on specific formatting choices made by John Gilbert. The general *legato* of his paragraphing allows semicolons, for example, to noticeably change the rhythm of the narrative. The obvious difference can then emphasize Mormon₂’s characterization as affective narrator. When the *legato* is replaced by the bare *staccato* of simple clauses in Ammoniah, or conversely when the narration shifts to the *accelerando* of breath-

¹⁷Schnyder, “Kunst der Vergegenwärtigung,” 431; p. 96 in this study.

less semicolons, such shifts can become significant for the functioning of the text.

Without the narrative formatting, it can be difficult to detect, for example, Mormon₂'s rant in Helaman IV (or rather Helaman 12) and its final deflation.¹⁸ The LDS chapter has the same choppy rhythm as any other versified passage, and versification causes the entire text to become homogenized in its rhythm and tempo, all but negating the emotional potential of paragraphing and punctuation. This again makes it clear that the choice of editions cannot be ignored in literary readings of the *Book of Mormon*.

John Gilbert's status as typesetter must therefore be elevated. Gilbert is the most significant hand in shaping the *Book of Mormon* in its original scriptural-narrative form. He was given what can barely be called a manuscript and had to craft the finished text. His punctuation and paragraphing choices show that he carefully considered not only syntax, but also the characterization of the narrator. Helaman IV especially shows a keen awareness for the effect of punctuation on the rhythm and experience of reading. The exclamation point at the end of Mormon₂'s existential question¹⁹ also shows that Gilbert grasped the emotional intensity of this cry.

The significance of his peritextual choices demonstrates that John Gilbert should be considered a collaborator with Joseph Smith. Even though Gilbert does not appear diegetically (unlike the author and proprietor Joseph₄), his editorial choices made Joseph₄'s (and Joseph Smith Jr.'s) raw revelation flesh and caused it to dwell among men for the first time. If the extraction of the raw clay of the English text is accepted as revelation, then Gilbert is the inspired potter sculpting the text. And unlike Joseph₄, Gilbert did not claim the "gift and power of God." (Cf. FE, i.) He only had his own experience and skill. As Brigham Young Junior found out, Gilbert did not even believe in the divinity of the text,²⁰ and yet he took great care in crafting it. For those that believe in the text's divine nature, Gilbert should be considered as much of an instrument in the hands of God as the scribe

¹⁸Cf. section 7.3.1.

¹⁹Cf. FE, 530; p. 325 in this study.

²⁰Gutjahr, *Biography*, 28.

Joseph₄.

The production of the final text is therefore itself an inspired creative act. In the *Mahābhārata*, the divine Ganesh was required to create the written text. If the remover of obstacles is needed to create textualized scripture, Gilbert begins to also move in prophetic, even divine spheres. Even when the divine nature of the text is not accepted, Gilbert's extensive work earns him at least an editor's credit. At minimum, the author-signature for the FE should read: Joseph Smith Junior, author and proprietor, with special assistance by John Gilbert, editor.

8.3 The *Book of Mormon* as *tremendum*

Gilbert then becomes a model for the reader of the text. He did not believe in the text's constative scriptural claims, but he nonetheless immersed himself deeply into it. He took the text seriously, on its own terms, from the ground up. Taken together, the need for a defined delivered text and the establishment of the isolated experiential apparatus mean that scholarly study of the *Book of Mormon* cannot remain in the laboratory containment of mere 'interest.'²¹ In order to complete his work, Gilbert required far more than textual curiosity. He had to (and did) take the text more seriously than that.

The *Book of Mormon* acknowledges that its emotional-religious communication is risky, and it wishes to provide an experiential experiment. This entails committing to an unknown and an uncontrollable. An experiment should bring about new understanding, and, as Latour suggests, a successful performative utterance changes the interlocutors.²²

Scripture changes the vessel. If this change occurs (if the reader has a 'revelation' about the nature of human agency, human existence, or even the nature of God), then the text has become performatively true. Whatever the constative truthfulness of the text's historical, soteriological, or cosmological claims, the text cannot be denied this performative truth, even if the

²¹Cf. Strohschneider, "Foreigners in Pre-Modernity," 132; Baecker, *Wozu Kultur?*, 167; pp. 80–82 in this study.

²²Cf. Latour, *Rejoicing*, 32; Latour, "Thou Shall Not," 29; p. 9 in this study.

reader denies its constative truth. The reader can, in fact, maintain a type of agnosticism in the hermeneutical dualism,²³ putting aside constative questions in favor of performative ones.

Embracing the risky *tremendum*²⁴ of the foreign text means moving away from analytic *superbia* and asymmetrical, one-sided annoyance. As God explains to Moroni₂ lamenting his perceived weakness: “Fools mock” (FE, 564). It has long been easy to ridicule and dismiss the *Book of Mormon* rather than to actually read and try to grasp it. It is easy to mock the text for its abundance of *and it came to pass* or the apparent absurdity of Lamanites as the progenitors of the indigenous peoples of the Americas (a claim which the text itself never explicitly makes).

It is more difficult (and risky) to consent to reciprocal irritability.²⁵ The text under study must be allowed to surprise and perhaps even overwhelm. It must be granted the right to scratch at the reader’s certainly known model of the world. The reader must be willing to be thrown (off) by the performative experiment proposed by the text. Gilbert is still a post-secular model in this regard: Such charitable immersion does not immediately and inevitably lead to ‘conversion.’ The experiment is risky, but the outcome is non-deterministic. Just because Gilbert took the text seriously does not mean that he became a ‘Mormon.’

This reciprocal non-deterministic irritation need not only require feeling annoyed by the presence of the religious Other. Rudolf Otto speaks of the experience of the Holy (whose main component is the *tremendum*) as “something uniquely attractive and *fascinating*.”²⁶ The consenting, immersive, affective manner self-reflexively proposed, dramatized, and demanded by the *Book of Mormon*²⁷ becomes almost religious in its reverence and the depth of experience. A post-secular study of religion then means consenting to the uncertain experiment of the *tremendum*.

It opens a reader (and even the scholar) to a wholly foreign and yet

²³Cf. Fenton and Hickman, “Learning to Read,” 3; p. 15 in this study.

²⁴Strohschneider, “Foreigners in Pre-Modernity,” 117; Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, 12; p. 79 in this study.

²⁵Cf. Strohschneider, “Foreigners in Pre-Modernity,” 122; p. 80 in this study.

²⁶Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, 31.

²⁷Cf. section 6.3.

deeply attractive world. Research is then no longer based solely on interest, but even on fascination. The potentially dangerous qualities which pre-modern negating logic sought to excise and which modern scholarship was still able to contain through ‘interest’ becomes an enlarging encounter with a ‘secular’ *tremendum*, or at least a ‘post-secular’ *tremendum*, since this openness was not considered desirable under purely secular conditions. Something approaching axiological symmetry²⁸ can then only exist in consenting to fascination.

The God of the *Book of Mormon*, who invites the reader to taste him through the messianic Mormon₂, becomes a further model for a post-secular approach. The invitation to experiment upon the word is more akin to Christ’s and Phillip’s invitations in John 1: “Come and see!” The post-secular invitation of the experiential apparatus is: *Come and experiment! Come and taste!* The results of this tasting experiment are still disconcertingly open.

Post-secular fascination does not mean a reactionary return to some rejected halcyon days before people forgot about God. In fact, the post-secular charitable embrace of the *tremendum* will inevitably lead to a loss of *Deutungshoheit* (interpretive sovereignty) of the religious ‘side.’ If the experiment is allowed to actually be a religious *tremendum*, it must be so for all ‘sides.’ Reciprocal irritation means that the believer *also* needs to be open to the risk of the scripturalized text slipping from his or her interpretive control.

Other religious approaches (in this case the CoC) then take on more weight and become valuable alternatives, complements, and perhaps even challenges to the dominant interpretation. The introductory elements of the 2002 RAV as well as Bolton’s utopic view²⁹ demonstrate that the CoC tradition has a well-founded understanding of the textual-narrative functioning of the *Book of Mormon*. There is much the LDS tradition can learn from this different religious interpretation, and this learning can then extend to scholarly approaches, which contribute to a deeper understanding of the scriptural functioning of the text.

²⁸Cf. Strohschneider, “Foreigners in Pre-Modernity,” 104; p. 84 in this study.

²⁹Bolton, “Utopian Vision.”

A post-secular *tremendum* starting from modern ‘interest’ (rather than only ending there) and continuing to fascination can become an ecumenical, joining experience. The reciprocal risk of a post-secular approach becomes what Thomas Ellis describes as “the self who responds to that which structurally exceeds its initiative and, in such excess, calls it out of its immersion in immediacy.”³⁰ This structural excess is the fascinating foreign object which eludes being fully grasped by one’s order—secular or religious.

Folding fascination and *tremendum* back into the object gives it attributes previously associated with the experience of the divine. The scientist in the laboratory is immersed in the immediacy of the experiment, and the literary scholar is immersed in the experiential apparatus of the text. And yet a successful experiment will draw the scientist and the scholar out into larger spheres of understanding. A *very* successful experiment will open up new questions which currently exceed their order’s capacity to grasp or fully control.

An overwhelming Other structurally exceeds the initiative of the self to wholly contain and neutralize it, and an experiment with a post-secular religious Other should change the reader and expand his or her immediate world into the wider worlds of the unknown but fascinating. It is risky, granted. However, there is much to be gained from *willingly* seeing that what was previously seen as Order (secular or religious) is, in fact, another order.³¹ The post-secular reader must be open to being thrown off and surprised by the text. The reader must consent to the risk that the text will most likely throw previous certainty of Order into disarray.

A post-secular approach does not see this deflation from capital **O** to lower-case **o** order as annihilating and disconcerting and requiring martial defense. It sees that there is much to be gained from another order, no matter the starting point in secularism or another religious order. Fortunately, such an approach does not require giving up on one’s own order. The *Book of Mormon* only asks for a willing, consenting plunge past its cover, and it provides everything else that is required. The experiment with the for-

³⁰Thomas B. Ellis, *On the Death of the Pilgrim: The Postcolonial Hermeneutics of Jarava Lal Mehta* (Dordrecht, London: Springer, 2012), 161.

³¹Cf. pp. 78–81 in this study.

eign object can start from a known model, and this model is then expanded instead of broken down.

A post-secular approach to the *Book of Mormon* and scripture in general constitutes a venture to grasp the text in a manner akin to that in which the believer relates to it. It is an attempt to feel what the believer sees in the text. As this post-secular study has shown, there is a solid, understandable textual foundation on which religious faith in scripture is based, and this faith is not simply a projection down from the reception level to the object level, where some text is elevated from without. The object level itself possesses something special and fascinating. One must then acknowledge that scripture and the religious belief (and even knowledge) based on it are far from simple irrationality (here in the common pejorative rather than Otto's more nuanced usage in *The Idea of Holy*).³² Scriptural-(ized) texts bring with them an allure which *can* be grasped, should one be willing to take up the risky experiment.

Fascinated post-secular performative approach does not contradict or oppose the explicitly religious scripturalization of a text like the *Book of Mormon*, and the text's establishment of a microcosmic experiential apparatus allows the *Book of Mormon* to be regarded as scripture, even revelatory scripture, no matter one's view of the "standard story"³³ of the origins of the text. Indeed, a post-secular reading separate from the constative adds another facet to the special status maintained through continuous scripturalization. It coaxes out elements which make texts like the *Book of Mormon* candidates for scripturalization and why generations of believers continue to pass them down. Post-secular scholarship of scripture becomes an important contributor to scripturalization by expanding the readership that can benefit from these texts. All that is left to be said after these many pages is that the *Book of Mormon* is truly fascinating and worthy of a reverent approach. It is worthy of an experiment upon its words.

³²Cf. Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, 60–61.

³³Cf. C. Thomas, *A Pentecostal Reads*, 442.

A Differences in Paragraphs

For p. 24.

The entry indented with an * is the odd one out.

The specific difference is noted next to the page citation.

Line breaks and indents are as they appear in the editions.

All lines are complete as in each edition (without justified margins).

#1 children of men. And now I

* FE, 16 – No line break

world. Wherefore I shall give commandment unto my seed, that they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the children of **men**. **And** now I would that ye might know, that after my father Lehi had made an end of prophesying concerning his seed, it came to pass that the

SE, 18–19

Wherefore I shall give commandment unto my seed, that they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the children of **men**.
(page break)

And now I would that ye might know, that after my father Lehi had made an end concerning his seed, it came to pass that the Lord spake

ThE, 18

unto God and unto those who are not of the world. Wherefore, I shall give commandment unto my seed, that they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the children of **men**.

And now I would that ye might know, that after my father Lehi had made an end concerning his seed, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto him

#2 should come. (And it came to pass that) I, Nephi*** FE, 23 – Paragraph break and extra phrase**

of the Holy Ghost; which power, he received by faith on the Son of God. And the Son of God was the Messiah, which should **come**.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, was desirous also, that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God unto all those

SE, 26

by the power of the Holy Ghost; which power he received by faith on the Son of God; and the Son of God was the Messiah, who should **come**: () **I, Nephi**, was desirous also, that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which

ThE, 24

power of the Holy Ghost; which power he received by faith on the Son of God; and the Son of God was the Messiah, who should **come**. () **I, Nephi**, was desirous also, that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God unto all

#3 their rejoicings. For behold*** FE, 204 – Line break but no indent**

came to pass that he did deliver them, and he did shew forth his mighty power unto them, and great was their **rejoicings**. **For behold**, it came to pass that while they were in the land of Helam, yea, in the city of Helam, while tilling the land round

SE, 217

that he did deliver them, and he did shew forth his mighty power unto them, and great were their **rejoicings**.

For behold, it came to pass that while they were in the land of Helam, yea, in the city of Helam, while

ThE, 199

did deliver them, and he did shew forth his mighty power unto them, and great were their **rejoicings**.

For behold, it came to pass that while they were in the land of Helam, yea, in the city of Helam, while tilling the land round about, behold an army of the Lamanites were

#4 own condemnation. Now it came

FE, 229

selves the curse; and even so doth every man that is cursed, bring upon himself his own **condemnation**.

Now it came to pass that not many days after the battle which was fought in the land of Zarahemla, by the Lamanites and the Amlicites, that there was another army of the Laman-

SE, 243

that ye should see that they brought upon themselves the curse; and even so doth every man that is cursed, bring upon himself his own **condemnation**.

Now it came to pass that not many days after the battle which was fought in the land of Zarahemla, by the Lamanites and the Amlicites, that there was an-

* ThE, 224 – Line break but no indent

upon themselves the curse; and even so doth every man that is cursed, bring upon himself his own **condemnation**.

Now it came to pass that not many days after the battle which was fought in the land of Zarahemla, by the Lamanites and the Amlicites, that there was another army of

#5 bands of death. And now it came

FE, 231

ing filled with great joy, because of the resurrection of the dead, according to the will, and power, and deliverance of Jesus Christ from the bands of **death**.

And now it came to pass that Alma, having seen the afflictions of the humble followers of God, and the persecutions

SE, 246

the dead, according to the will, and power, and deliverance of Jesus Christ from the bands of **death**.

And now it came to pass that Alma, having seen the afflictions of the humble followers of God, and the persecutions which were heaped upon them by the re-

* ThE, 226 – No line break

filled with great joy, because of the resurrection of the dead, according to the will, and power, and deliverance of Jesus Christ from the bands of **death**. **And** now it came to pass that Alma, having seen the afflictions of the humble followers of God, and the persecutions which were

#6 found guiltless. And again*** FE, 235 – No line break**

prepare quickly, for the hour is close at hand, and he knoweth not when the time shall come: for such an one is not found **guiltless**. **And** again I say unto you, is there one among you that doth make a mock of his brother, or that heapeth upon him persecutions? Wo unto such an one, for he is not pre-

SE, 249

that he should prepare quickly, for the hour is close at hand, and he knoweth not when the time shall come; for such an one is not found **guiltless**.

And again I say unto you, is there one among you that doth make a mock of his brother, or that heapeth

ThE, 224

and I would that he should prepare quickly, for the hour is close at hand, and he knoweth not when the time shall come; for such an one is not found **guiltless**.

And again I say unto you, is there one among you that doth make a mock of his brother, or that heapeth upon him

#7 any longer. And now*** FE, 535 – No line break**

over you; and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any **longer**. **And** now, I speak also concerning those who do not believe in Christ. Behold, will ye believe in the day of your visitation, behold, when the Lord shall come; yea, even

SE, 564

vengeance hangeth over you; and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any **longer**.

And now, I speak also concerning those who do not believe in Christ. Behold, will ye believe in the day of your visitation, behold, when the Lord shall come;

ThE, 520

and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any **longer**.

And now, I speak also concerning those who do not believe in Christ. Behold, will ye believe in the day of your visitation, behold, when the Lord shall come; yea, even

B Battles for Mulek and Antiparah

For chapter 5.

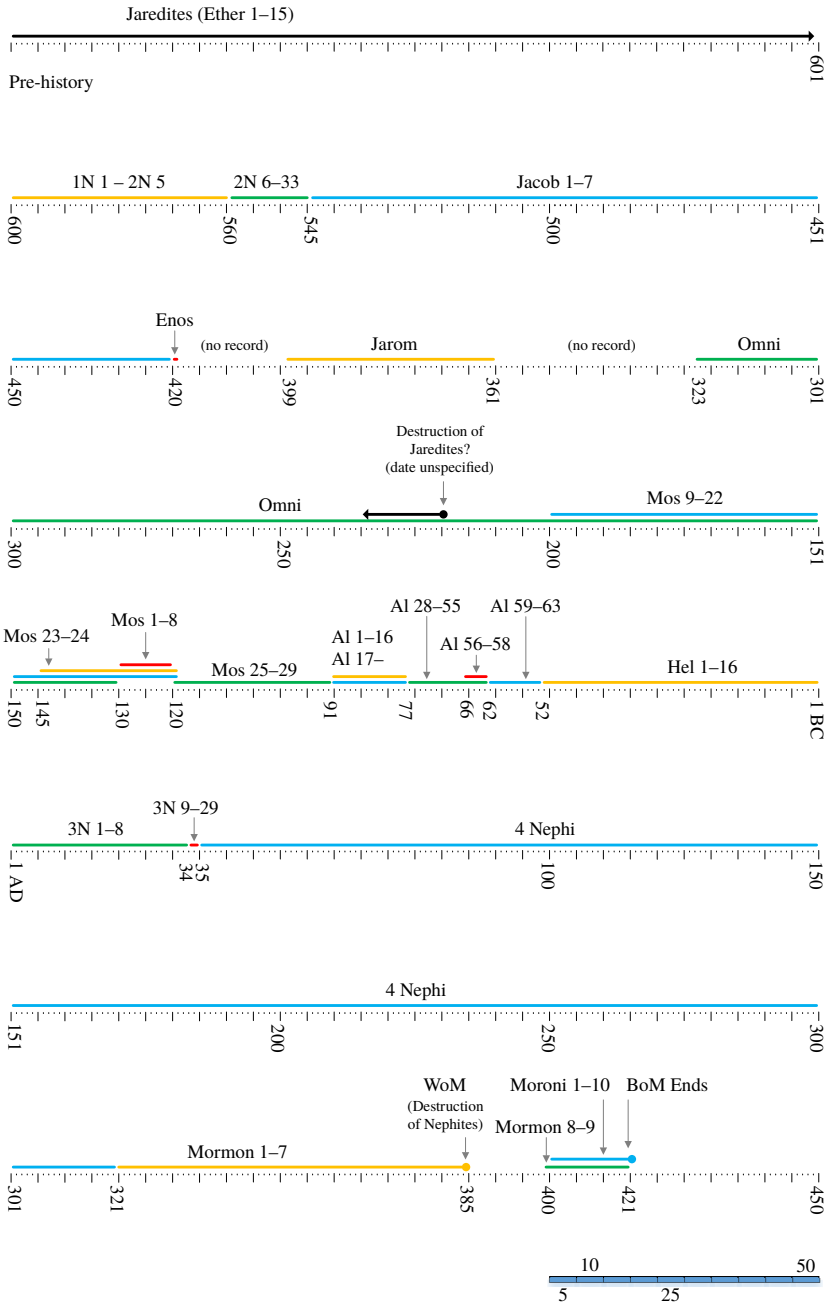
Mulek	Antiparah
...that perhaps he might take again, by stratagem or some other way, those cities which had been taken out of their hands (371).	[W]e were desirous to bring a stratagem into an effect upon them (384).
...one of the greatest of the armies of the Lamanites (375).	the strongest army of the Lamanites; yea, the most numerous [...] the most powerful army of the Lamanites (384).
...did not give way before the Lamanites (374).	...began to give way before the Lamanites (385).
...but the Lamanites were wearied , because of their long march " (373).	The army of Antipus being weary , because of their long march in so short a space of time...(385).
[T]he armies of the Lamanites did march forth against Teancum, supposing by their numbers to overpower Teancum...(373).	We supposed that we could overpower them...(383).
...in the latter end of the twenty and seventh year of the reign of the Judges (372).	...in the commencement of the twenty and seventh year (383).
...flatter them out of their strong hold (<i>sic</i>) (372).	...not desirous to make an attack upon them in their strong holds (<i>sic</i>) (383).
But behold, Jacob, which was a Zoramite, would not come out with his army (372).	They durst not pass by us with their whole army (383).
Therefore he caused that Teancum should take a small number of men (372).	Antipus ordered that I should march forth with my little sons (384). ...until I had gone forth with my little army (384).
Moroni and his army, by night, marched into the wilderness (372).	... Antipus did march forth (384).

<p>Moroni had obtained a possession of the city Mulek, with a part of his army, while he marched with the remainder to meet the Lamanites (373).</p>	<p>... with a part of his army, leaving the remainder to maintain the city (384).</p>
<p>[H]e began to retreat down by the seashore, northward (373).</p>	<p>... we did flee before them, northward (384).</p>
<p>... while Teancum was thus leading away the Lamanites (373).</p>	<p>And thus we did lead away the most powerful army of the Lamanites (384).</p>
<p>[W]hen the Chief Captains of the Lamanites had beheld Lehi, with his army, coming against them, they fled in much confusion (373). [A]nd the remainder of them, being much confused, knew not whether to go or to strike (374).</p>	<p>[T]herefore the men of Antipus being confused, because of the fall of their leaders ... (385).</p>
<p>[W]hen the guards of the Lamanites had discovered Teancum, they ran and told it unto Jacob, their leader (372–3).</p>	<p>... when they had been informed by their spies ... (384).</p>
<p>[T]he armies of the Lamanites did march forth against Teancum (373).</p>	<p>[T]hey came forth with their army, and marched against us (384).</p>
<p>[The Lamanites] took courage and pursued them with vigor (373).</p>	<p>[T]he Lamanites took courage, and began to pursue them (386).</p>
<p>... before Lehi should overtake them (373).</p>	<p>[I]t was their intent to slay us before Antipus should overtake them (384).</p>
<p>Now the Lamanites did not know that Moroni had been in their rear with his army (373). And Lehi pressed upon their rear (374).</p>	<p>Behold, we know not but they have halted for the purpose that we should come against them to battle (385). ... when Helaman came upon their rear with his two thousand (386).</p>

<p>Now Lehi was not desirous to overtake them (373).</p>	<p>And now Antipus, beholding our danger, did speed the march of his army. But behold, it was night; therefore they did not overtake us, neither did Antipus overtake them (384). [T]he armies of Antipus had overtaken them (385).</p>
<p>[T]hey were surrounded by the Nephites (373).</p>	<p>[W]e, the people of Nephi, the people of Antipus, and I with my two thousand, did surround the Lamanites (386).</p>
<p>Moroni commanded his men that they should fall upon them (373).</p>	<p>[W] hat say ye, my sons, will ye go against them to battle? (385).</p>
<p>... until they had given up their weapons of war (373). [T]hey were compelled to march with their brethren (374).</p>	<p>... insomuch that they were compelled to deliver up their weapons of war (386).</p>
<p>And now the number of prisoners which were taken (374).</p>	<p>And as we had no place for our prisoners ... (386).</p>
<p>[T]here were many slain on both sides (374).</p>	<p>[T]here had not one soul of them fallen to the earth (386).</p>
<p>Jacob was killed (374).</p>	<p>Antipus had fallen by the sword (385).</p>
<p>... their Chief Captains, all those which were not slain (374).</p>	<p>... because of the fall of their leaders (385).</p>

C Timeline based on 2013 LDS edition

The diagram (on the next page) does not take into account more detailed headnotes (e.g. Alma 56). Chapter ranges are for continuous narrative. Stacked timelines result from time jumps. The headnotes do not account for differences of the time of narration and the time of the narrated events (e.g. the headnote for Words of Mormon does not give a separate dating for the events after Mormon₂'s commentary). This distinction is not added to the diagram. It does not constitute a definitive timeline, even beyond the inherent ambiguity of the chronology. I include it here to show the complexity of even the textually fixed chronology.



D Usage of *manifest*

For p. 226.

The word *manifest* occurs fifty-one times, and there are five instances of the noun *manifestation*. Each of these instances involves the power of the divine and either access to it or its effect on the world. Four instances of the noun are each manifestations “of the spirit” (FE, 236, 241, 524, 586). The last instance ties in with Moroni₂’s promise. Speaking to Moroni₂, Christ says: “But he that *believeth* these things which I have spoken, him will I visit with the *manifestations* of my spirit; and he shall *know* and bear record” (546, my emphasis). Here it is the spirit of *Christ* that will be made manifest. Belief, manifestation, and knowledge thus all go hand in hand. The form *manifest* can be roughly placed into seven thematic groups. The groupings below cover most but not all of the instances. All of the examples show that *manifest* has a clear connection to the divine and access thereto. Emphasis is mine.

Manifest a Change

The first of the thematic groupings concerns people manifesting miraculous changes, and it is associated with testimony. Alma₂ manifests that he has been converted: “[I] did *manifest* unto the people that I had been born of God” (325). This is similar to another instance where individuals who are healed by the power of God testify of this healing: “[They] did truly *manifest* unto the people that they had been wrought upon by the spirit of God, and had been healed; and they did shew forth signs also, and did do some miracles among the people” (469–70). The second instance is a bodily contact with the transcendent, and it relates to the accompanying effects the contact has on those who were healed and the people around them.

Revelation to a Prophet

Prophets receive revelation by having things made manifest through the Spirit of God. Nephi₁ lays out this principle to his family: “Behold, they were *made manifest* unto the prophet, by the voice of the spirit: for by the spirit are all things made known unto the prophet” (56). A revelation to a prophet is defined by its contact with the transcendent and divine. The duty of a prophet is often to know of the future and to warn the people of the consequences should they not repent. This foreknowledge also involves teaching of things before they occur, such as the coming of Christ. The prophets of the *Book of Mormon* repeatedly emphasize the fact that only through a prophet can the people know of the coming of Christ and the resulting salvation before it comes and can prepare for it.

Jacob₂ says knowledge of the coming of Christ and his salvation “truly had been *made manifest* unto us concerning our people, what things should happen unto them. And we also had many revelations, and the spirit of much prophecy; wherefore, we knew of Christ and his Kingdom, which should come” (123). This revelatory foreknowledge is repeated by Jacob₂ in his discussions with Sherem, who denies that prophets can know of the coming of Christ. Jacob₂ counters this accusation by saying that the coming of Christ “hath been *made manifest* unto me, for I have heard and seen; and it also hath been *made manifest* unto me by the power of the Holy Ghost” (141). Here seeing and hearing a vision are also equated with a manifestation.

The extent and awe-inspiring nature of prophetic revelations is mentioned by Moroni₂ in the book of Ether. Speaking of the revelation to the brother of Jared, Moroni₂ says that “there never was greater things *made manifest*, than that which was *made manifest* unto the brother of Jared” (546). All of these things are revealed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Personal Revelation by the Spirit

The next grouping concerns personal revelation and knowledge through the Spirit. Manifestations through the Holy Ghost are capable of transmitting knowledge. Alma₂ explains that his personal knowledge and conviction of his teachings comes through the Spirit. He says that he knows that his teachings are true due to a manifestation: “And now I do know of myself that they are true; for the Lord God hath *made them manifest* unto me by his holy spirit; and this is the spirit of revelation which is in me” (236).

The *Book of Mormon*'s use of *manifest* also always requires an object. The Spirit does not manifest as an end unto itself. It manifests *something*, either new revelatory content or a confirmation of the truthfulness of previous revelations. Reading Alma₂'s passage in conjunction with the end of the *Book of Mormon* solidifies the connection between manifestation through the Spirit and a confirmation of truth and the gaining of personal testimony. The spirit of revelation is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Such a manifestation is promised to the reader at the end of the text. In other words, the reader is promised the spirit of revelation.

Speaking of his teachings and the manner in which he has received them, Alma₂ makes this connection explicit: “And moreover, I say unto you, that as *it* has thus been *revealed* unto me. . . even so according to the spirit of prophecy, which is in me, which is also by the *manifestation* of the spirit of God” (236). A manifestation of the spirit of God is the same as the spirit of prophecy. Since the readers are promised a manifestation by the spirit, they are promised the spirit of prophecy.

Many of the Nephites, not only the prophets, have a claim to such personal contact with the transcendent if they fulfill the requirements: “*And as many as* are not stiffnecked, and have faith, have communion with the Holy Spirit, which *maketh manifest* unto the children of men, according to their faith” (146). The connection between manifestation and revelation by the Spirit is continued throughout the *Book of Mormon*. “[T]hen shall *the greater things* be made manifest unto them” (506). “I have inquired

of the Lord, and he hath made *it* manifest unto me” (512). “And *these things* do (*sic*) the spirit manifest unto me” (524). “Come unto me, O ye house of Israel, and *it* shall be made manifest unto you how great things the Father hath laid up for you” (547). “And after this manner did the Holy Ghost manifest *the word of God* unto me” (581). Each of these instances of *manifest* has to do with a revelation of *something* from the transcendent.

“In the flesh”

The most common usage of the verb is in connection with Christ showing himself physically. The text repeatedly mentions that Christ will “manifest himself in the flesh” (twice on 74, 121; once each on 104, 130, 143). Even though these manifestations take place in different times, their shared characteristic is that God is made flesh and is physically present. The first instance is the birth and earthly ministry of Jesus Christ in Palestine, which ended with his crucifixion and resurrection. Nephi₁ describes this as “the time that he should *manifest himself* unto the children of men” (23).

The second instance is the theophany of Christ to the Lehites. This event is repeatedly prophesied and foreshadowed. Nephi₁ receives a revelation from Christ promising him that Christ will manifest himself to his descendants. “For, behold, saith the Lamb: I will *manifest myself* unto thy seed” (31). In the chapter proceeding the account of this physical manifestation, Mormon₂ foreshadows this event: “[S]oon after the ascension of Christ into Heaven, he did truly *manifest himself* unto [the Nephites], shewing his *body* unto them” (475–76).

The manifestation of Christ is explicitly physical. After presenting himself to the people, Christ invites them to come forward. “Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may *feel* the prints of the nails in my hands, and in my feet, that ye may *know*...” (477). Not only does Christ have the physical dimensions of a man; he also has corporeality. His body can be handled and provides physical resistance, allowing touch. This echoes the passage in the New Testa-

ment where Thomas has to be convinced of the resurrection of Christ. He is invited to place hands and fingers into the wounds on Christ's hands and in his side (John 20:27).

Second Coming

The final instance of physical manifestations of Christ is at the Second Coming. The *Book of Mormon* says that the important difference between this manifestation and the one in Palestine and to the Lehites is that this will be to the entire world: “[A]nd the time cometh that he shall manifest himself *unto all nations*” (32). The manifestation which started with his birth was only restricted to a small geographical area. The second group of manifestations was only among the Lehites. Nephi₁ says that this manifesting will occur “in the spirit of power” and “in power and great glory” and “in the flesh” (66, 75, 104). This promise is already found on the title page: “[A]nd also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD, manifesting Himself unto all nations.” The theological truthfulness of these prophecies is not relevant here, only that *manifest* also covers these grand cosmic shows of transcendent power. And most importantly, these grand displays use the same verb as individual, private experiences of contact with the divine.

Secrets or Sealed Records

Two instances of the verb involve secrets and works of darkness being revealed. These will “be made manifest in the light” (118). The purpose of the translation of the records of the Jaredites is that their secrets “may be *made manifest* unto this people; yea, all their murders, and robbings, and their plunderings, and all their wickedness and abominations, may be *made manifest* unto this people” (328).

In the book of Ether, the voice of Jesus Christ prophesies of the New Testament and the coming forth of the book of Revelation: “And then shall my revelations which I have caused to be written by my servant John be

unfolded in the eyes of all the people [...] that they shall be *made manifest* in very deed” (547). Here inspired scripture is brought to the world by the power of God. Christ also promises the manifestation of the records of the vision of the brother of Jared. Moroni₂ recounts that “after Christ truly had showed himself unto his people,” the records of the Lehites “should be *made manifest*” in the future (546). In all of these cases, sacred scripture is promised to be manifest in the future.

The translation and manifestation of sealed sacred records is to be done by means of a seer. Ammon₁ explains to Limhi the need for a seer in connection with the plates of Ether. Through the seer, “shall secret things be *made manifest*, and hidden things shall come to light, and things which are not known shall be *made known* by them, and also things shall be *made known* by them which *otherwise could not be known*” (173). The function of a seer is therefore, in part, to bring to light things which are otherwise inaccessible. Joseph₄ is that seer who will produce the modern *Book of Mormon* as a manifestation of sacred text.

E Ammonihah – Predominance of ‘and’

For p. 250 (cf. FE, 262–64).

And it came to pass that he began to cry unto the people, saying: Behold, I am guilty, and these men are spotless before God.

And it came to pass that he began to plead for them, from that time forth;

but they reviled him, saying: Art thou also possessed with the Devil?

And it came to pass that they spit upon him,

and cast him out from among them, and also all those which believed in the words which had been spoken by Alma and Amulek;

and they cast them out,

and sent men to cast stones at them.

And they brought their wives and children together,

and whosoever believed or had been taught to believe in the word of God, they caused that they should be cast into the fire;

and they also brought forth their records which contained the Holy Scriptures,

and cast them into the fire also, that they might be burned and destroyed by fire.

And it came to pass that they took Alma and Amulek,

and carried them forth to the place of martyrdom, that they might witness the destruction of those which were consumed by fire.

And it came to pass that when Amulek saw the pains of the women and children which were consuming in the fire, he was also pained;

and he saith unto Alma, How can we witness this awful scene?

Therefore let us stretch forth our hands,

and exercise the power of God which is in us,

and save them from the flames.

But Alma saith unto him, The spirit constraineth me that I must not stretch forth mine hand; for behold, the Lord receiveth them up unto himself, in glory; and he doth suffer that they may do this thing, or that the people may do this thing unto them, according to the hardness of their hearts, that the judgments which he shall exercise upon them in his wrath, may be just; and the blood of the innocent shall stand as a witness against them, yea, and cry mightily against them at the last day.

Now Amulek saith unto Alma, Behold, perhaps they will burn us also.

And Alma saith, Be it according to the will of the Lord. But behold, our work is not finished; therefore they burn us not.

Now it came to pass that when the bodies of those which had been cast into the fire, were consumed,

and also the records which were cast in with them, the Chief Judge of the land came

and stood before Alma and Amulek, as they were bound;

and he smote them with his hand upon their cheeks,

and saith unto them, After what ye have seen, will ye preach again unto this people, that they shall be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone? Behold, ye see that ye had not power to save these which had been cast into the fire; neither hath God saved them because they were of thy faith.

And the Judge smote them again upon their cheeks,

and asked, What say ye for yourselves?

Now this Judge was after the order and faith of Nehor, which slew Gideon.

And it came to pass that Alma and Amulek answered him nothing;

and he smote them again,

and delivered them to the officers to be cast into prison.

And it came to pass that when they had been cast into prison three days, there came many Lawyers, and Judges, and Priests, and teachers, which were of the profession of Nehor;

and they came in unto the prison to see them,

and they questioned them about many words;

but they answered them nothing.

And it came to pass that the Judge stood before them,

and saith, Why do ye not answer the words of this people? Know ye not that I have power to deliver ye up unto the flames?

And he commanded them to speak;

but they answered nothing.

And it came to pass that they departed

and went their ways,

but came again on the morrow;

and the Judge also smote them again on their cheeks.

And many came forth also,

and smote them, saying: Will ye stand again and Judge (sic) this people, and condemn our law? If ye have such great power, why do ye not deliver yourselves?
And many such things did they say unto them, gnashing their teeth upon them,
and spitting upon them,
and saying, How shall we look when we are damned?
And many such things, yea, all manner of such things did they say unto them;
and thus they did mock them, for many days.
And they did withhold food from them, that they might hunger,
and water, that they might thirst;
and they also did take from them their clothes, that they were naked;
and thus they were bound with strong cords,
and confined in prison.
And it came to pass after they had thus suffered for many days,
(**and** it was on the twelfth day, in the tenth month, in the tenth year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi,) that the Chief Judge over the land of Ammonihah, and many of their teachers and their Lawyers, went in unto the prison where Alma and Amulek was bound with cords.
And the Chief Judge stood before them,
and smote them again,
and saith unto them, If ye have the power of God, deliver yourselves from these bands, and then we will believe that the Lord will destroy this people according to your words.
And it came to pass that they all went forth
and smote them, saying the same words, even until the last;
and when the last had spoken unto them, the power of God was upon Alma and Amulek,
and they arose
and stood upon their feet;
and Alma cried, saying, How long shall we suffer these great afflictions, O Lord? O Lord, give us strength according to our faith which is in Christ, even unto deliverance;
and they break the cords with which they were bound;
and when the people saw this, they began to flee, for the fear of destruction had come upon them.

And it came to pass that so great was their fear, that they fell to the earth,
and did not obtain the outer door of the prison;
and the earth shook mightily,
and the walls of the prison were wrent in twain, so that they fell to the earth;
and the Chief Judge, and the Lawyers, and Priests, and teachers which smote upon
Alma and Amulek, were slain by the fall thereof.
And Alma and Amulek came forth out of the prison,
and they were not hurt; for the Lord had granted unto them power, according to
their faith which was in Christ.
And they straightway came forth out of the prison;
and they were loosed from their bands;
and the prison had fallen to the earth,
and every soul which was within the walls thereof, save it were Alma and Amulek,
were slain;
and they straightway came forth into the city.
Now the people having heard a great noise, came running together by multitudes,
to know the cause of it;
and when they saw Alma and Amulek coming forth out of the prison,
and the walls thereof had fallen to the earth, they were struck with great fear,
and fled from the presence of Alma and Amulek, even as a goat fleeth with her
young from two lions;
and thus they did flee from the presence of Alma and Amulek.

F Alma XV, Mormon I–VI, Moroni VIII–IX

For pp. 272ff.

Up to Soliloquy	Mormon and Moroni
<p>Now when Ammon and his brethren saw this work of destruction among those who they so dearly beloved (299).</p>	<p>Behold, I had led them, notwithstanding their wickedness, I had lead them many times to battle, and had loved them, according to the love of God which was in me, with all my heart (523).</p>
<p>... therefore, when Ammon and his brethren saw this great work of destruction, they were moved with compassion (299).</p>	<p>and we having survived the dead of our people, did behold on the morrow... from the top of the hill Camorah (529–30). And my soul was rent with anguish, because of the slain of my people (530).</p>
<p>Let us gather together this people of the Lord (299). And it came to pass that they gathered together all their people; yea, all the people of the Lord, and did gather together all their flocks and herds (300).</p>	<p>And it came to pass that we did gather in our people as fast as it were possible, that we might get them together in one body (520). And it came to pass that the Nephites did again flee from before them, taking all the inhabitants with them, both in towns and villages (526). But it came to pass that whatsoever lands we had passed by, and the inhabitants thereof were not gathered in, were destroyed by the Lamanites (527). And it came to pass that when we had gathered in all our people in one to the land of Camorah (529).</p>

<p>[A]nd flee out of the hands of our enemies, that we be not destroyed (299).</p>	<p>And it came to pass that I beat him with my army, that he fled before me (521). [T]he Nephites did begin to flee before the Lamanites (521). And my words did arouse them somewhat to vigor, insomuch that they did not flee from before the Lamanites (522). And it came to pass that we did stand before them with such firmness, that they did flee from before us (522). And it came to pass that when they had fled, we did pursue them with our armies (522). [A]nd the remainder did flee and join the inhabitants of the city Teancum (525). and there was an exceeding sore battle fought in the land Desolation, in the which they did beat the Nephites. And they fled again from before them (526). And it came to pass that the Nephites did again flee from before them (526). And it came to pass that the Lamanites did come against us as we had fled to the city of Jordan (526). [A]nd as many as have fled to the army of Aaron, have fallen victims to their awful brutality (584).</p>
<p>...that we be not destroyed (299). Behold, the Nephites will destroy us... (299).</p>	<p>they could not get into the country which lay before us to destroy the inhabitants of our land (527). the inhabitants thereof were not gathered in, were destroyed by the Lamanites (527). and they whose flight did not exceed the Lamanites, were swept down and destroyed (527). (for the Lamanites would destroy [the plates]) (529). ...I fear lest the Lamanites shall destroy this people (583).</p>

<p>...destroy us, because of the many murders and sins we have committed against them (299).</p>	<p>...began to swear before the heavens that they would avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren which had been slain by their enemies (523). and they thirst after blood and revenge continually (583).</p>
<p>...this was a joyful meeting (300).</p>	<p>Farewell, my son, until I shall write unto you, or shall meet you again. Amen (583).</p>
<p>And it came to pass that the voice of the people came, saying, Behold, we will give up the land of Jershon [...] and this land Jershon is the land which we will give unto our brethren, for an inheritance (300–01).</p>	<p>But behold we did go forth against the Lamanites, and the robbers of Gaddianton, until we had again taken possession of the lands of our inheritance (522). [W]e made a treaty with the Lamanites and the robbers of Gaddianton, in the which we did get the lands of our inheritance divided (522).</p>
<p>on account of their fear to take up arms against their brethren, lest they should commit sin (301).</p>	<p>And behold, I had employed my people, the Nephites, in preparing their lands and their arms against the time of battle (522–23).</p>
<p>[A]nd they were among the people of Nephi, and also numbered among the people which were of the Church of God (301).</p>	<p>And if it so be that they perish, we know that many of our brethren have dissented over unto the Lamanites, and many more will also dissent over unto them (585).</p>
<p>And they did look upon shedding the blood of their brethren with the greatest abhorrence (301).</p>	<p>[The Nephites] delighted in the shedding of blood continually (525). Know ye that ye must lay down your weapons of war, and delight no more in the shedding of blood (531).</p>
<p>[A]nd they never could be prevailed upon to take up arms against their brethren (301). [T]hey were about to break the covenant which they had made (382).</p>	<p>And it came to pass that I utterly refused to go up against mine enemies (524). And it came to pass that I did go forth among the Nephites, and did repent of the oath which I had made (526).</p>

<p>[T]hey never did look upon death with any degree of terror for their hope and views of Christ and the resurrection; therefore death was swallowed up to them (301).</p>	<p>...and with that awful fear of death which fills the breasts of all the wicked (529). [I]t seemeth me that they have no fear of death (583).</p>
<p>therefore they would suffer death in the most aggravating and distressing manner which could be inflicted by their brethren, before they would take the sword or the cimeter to smite them (301).</p>	<p>[T]hey did curse God, and wish to die. Nevertheless they would struggle with the sword for their lives (521). Know ye that ye must lay down your weapons of war, and delight no more in the shedding of blood, and take them not again, save it be that God shall command you (531).</p>
<p>And thus they were a zealous and beloved people, a highly favored people of the Lord (301).</p>	<p>For behold, the spirit of the Lord hath already ceased to strive with their fathers, and they are without Christ and God in the world, and they are driven about as chaff before the wind. They were once a delightful people (528). ... a people... without civilization (584). [B]ut O my son, how can a people like this, whose delight is in so much abomination (584). O the depravity of my people! they are without order and without mercy (584). [A]nd they have become strong in their perversion; and they are alike brutal, sparing none, neither old nor young; and they delight in every thing save that which is good (584–85). ... wickedness of this people... they are without principle, and past feeling; and their wickedness doth exceed that of the Lamanites (585).</p>
<p>And thus a tremendous battle; yea, even such an one as never had been known among all the people in the land from the time Lehi left Jerusalem (302).</p>	<p>... I, Mormon, began to be old; and knowing it to be the last struggle of my people... (529).</p>

<p>[T]ens of thousands of the Lamanites were slain and scattered abroad (302). nevertheless, the Lamanites were driven and scattered (302).</p>	<p>And it came to pass that in this year the people of Nephi again were hunted and driven (522). And from this time forth did the Nephites gain no power over the Lamanites, but began to be swept off by them even as a dew before the sun (526). [T]he Lamanites did come again against us to battle, and we did stand against them boldly; but it was all in vain (527). . . . the Gentiles, which the Lord hath said should scatter this people (527). But behold, it shall come to pass that they shall be driven and scattered by the Gentiles; and after that they have been driven and scattered by the Gentiles (528).</p>
<p>Yea, and also there was a tremendous slaughter among the people of Nephi (302).</p>	<p>[T]he Nephites were driven and slaughtered with an exceeding great slaughter (526).</p>
<p>[A]nd the people of Nephi returned again to their land (302).</p>	<p>[W]e did beat them, insomuch that they did return to their own lands again (523).</p>
<p>And now this was a time that there was a great mourning and lamentation heard throughout all the land, among all the people of Nephi (302). [Y]ea, the cry of widows mourning for their husbands, and also of fathers mourning for their sons, and the daughter for the brother; yea, the brother for the father: and thus the cry of mourning was heard among every one of them; mourning for their kindred which had been slain (302). [Y]ea, and many thousands are mourning for the loss of their kindred, because they have reason to fear, according to the promises of the Lord, that they are con-signed to a state of endless wo (302).</p>	<p>Thus there began to be a mourning and a lamentation in all the land, because of these things (521). . . . I, Mormon, saw their lamentation, and their mourning, and their sorrowing before the Lord (521).</p>

<p>[Y]ea, the cry of widows mourning for their husbands, and also of fathers mourning for their sons, and the daughter for the brother; yea, the brother for the father: and thus the cry of mourning was heard among every one of them; mourning for their kindred which had been slain (302).</p> <p>[Y]ea, and many thousands are mourning for the loss of their kindred (302).</p>	<p>And the husbands and fathers of those women and children they have slain; and they feed the women upon the flesh of their husbands, and the children upon the flesh of their fathers (584).</p> <p>[A]nd the sufferings of our women and our children upon all the face of this land, doth exceed every thing (585).</p>
<p>[A]nd from the first year to the fifteenth, has brought to pass the destruction of many thousand lives; yea, it has brought to pass an awful scene of blood shed; and the bodies of many thousands are laid low in the earth, while the bodies of many thousands are mouldering in heaps upon the face of the earth; yea, and many thousands are mourning for the loss of their kindred [...] while many thousands of others truly mourn for the loss of their kindred (302).</p>	<p>[F]or I saw thousands of them hewn down in open rebellion against their God, and heaped up as dung upon the face of the land (521).</p> <p>And now all these things had been done, and there had been thousands slain on both sides, both the Nephites and the Lamanites (525).</p> <p>[A]nd their flesh, and bones, and blood lay upon the face of the earth, being left by the hands of those who slew them, to moulder upon the land, and to crumble and to return to their mother earth (530).</p>
<p>[W]hile many thousands of others truly mourn for the loss of their kindred, yet they rejoice and exult in the hope, and even know, according to the promises of the Lord, that they are raised to dwell at the right hand of God, in a state of never ending happiness (302).</p>	<p>My beloved son Moroni, I rejoice exceedingly that your Lord Jesus Christ hath been mindful of you, and hath called you to his ministry, and to his holy work (581).</p>

Soliloquy

O that I were an **angel**, and could have the **wish** of mine heart (303).
But behold, I am a **man**, and do sin in my wish (303).

Mormon and Moroni

[A]nd I **would that I could** persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent (524).
Behold, I am but a **man**, and I have but the **strength** of a **man** (584).

<p>... that I might go forth and speak with the trump of God, with a voice to shake the earth (303).</p>	<p>And it came to pass that I did speak unto my people, and did urge them with great energy (522). Behold, I speak with boldness, having authority from God (582). Behold, I am laboring with them continually; and when I speak the word of God with sharpness, they tremble and anger against me; and when I use no sharpness, they harden their hearts against it (583).</p>
<p>... and cry repentance unto every people; yea, I would declare unto every soul, as with the voice of thunder, Repentance, and the plan of redemption, that they should repent and come unto our God (303).</p>	<p>[A]nd I would that I could persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent (524). And I did endeavor to preach unto this people, but my mouth was shut, and I were forbidden that I should preach unto them (519). But I did remain among them, but I were forbidden that I should preach unto them (519–20). And it came to pass that the Lord did say unto me, Cry unto this people repent ye, and come unto me (523). ...persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent and prepare to stand before the judgement seat of Christ (524). Therefore, repent ye (528).</p>
<p>... that there might be no more sorrow upon all the face of the earth (303).</p>	<p>For I know that such will sorrow for the calamity of the house of Israel; yea, they will sorrow for the destruction of this people; they will sorrow that this people had not repented, that they might have been clasped in the arms of Jesus (527).</p>
<p>I had not ought to (<i>sic</i>) harrow up in my desires... (303).</p>	<p>And now behold, I, Mormon, do not desire to harrow up the souls of men (527).</p>

<p>... of a just God (303). [F]or I know that he granteth unto men according to their desires, whether it be unto death or unto life; yea, I know that he allotteth unto men, yea, decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable, ac-cording to their wills, whether they be unto salvation or unto destruction (303).</p>	<p>[F]or I knew the judgments of the Lord which should come upon them (526). Vengeance is mine, and I will repay (524). But behold, the judgements of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked, that the wicked are punished (525). [A]nd the Father, yea, the eternal Father of heaven, knoweth your state; and he doeth with you according to his justice and mercy (530). [H]ow can we expect that God will stay his hand in judgement against us? (584). Behold, my heart cries wo unto this people. Come out in judgement, O God, and hide their sins, and wickedness, and abominations from before thy face! (584).</p>
<p>[A]nd this is my joy (303). ... then is my soul filled with joy (303). ... in the which my joy is full (304). [B]ut I do not joy in my own success alone, but my joy is more full because of the success of my brethren (304). ... my soul is carried away, even to the separation of it from the body, as it were, so great is my joy (304).</p>	<p>[M]y heart did begin to rejoice within me (521). But behold this my joy was vain (521). And it came to pass that my sorrow did return unto me again (521). And wo is me (522). [F]or my heart has been filled with sor-row (522). And my heart did sorrow (522). But behold, I was without hopes (<i>sic</i>) (526).</p>
<p>[T]hen do I remember what the Lord has done for me; yea, even that he hath heard my prayer (303).</p>	<p>[A]nd my soul had been poured out in prayer unto my God all the day long, for them (523). nevertheless, it was without faith, because of the hardness of their hearts (523).</p>

<p>And behold, when I see many of my brethren truly penitent, and coming to the Lord their God (303).</p>	<p>notwithstanding the great destruction which hung over my people, they did not repent of their evil doings (520). And it came to pass that the Nephites began to repent of their iniquity (521). And it came to pass that when I, Mormon, saw their lamentation, and their mourning, and their sorrowing before the Lord (521). [F]or their sorrowing was not unto repentance (521). And they did not come unto Jesus with broken hearts and contrite spirits (521). ...because of their wickedness...because of their wickedness, all my days (522). ...because of this the great calamity of my people; because of their wickedness and their abominations (522). [A]nd yet the Nephites repented not of the evil they had done, but persisted in their wickedness continually (525). [F]or they repented not of their iniquities, but did struggle for their lives, without calling upon that Being who had created them (526). O that ye had repented before this great destruction had come upon you (530). I fear lest the Lamanites shall destroy this people; for they do not repent, and Satan stirreth them up continually to anger one with another (583).</p>
<p>[Y]ea, then do I remember his merciful arm which he extended towards me (303).</p>	<p>... knowing the mercies and the long suffering (<i>sic</i>) of the Lord (521). therefore supposing that he would be merciful unto them, that they would again become a righteous people (521). ...according to his justice and mercy (530).</p>

<p>[F]or I surely do know that the Lord did deliver them out of bondage...yea, the Lord God, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, did deliver them out of bondage (303–04).</p>	<p>[A]nd they did not realise that it was the Lord that had spared them, and granted unto them a chance for repentance (523). And thrice have I delivered them out of the hands of their enemies (523–24). [A]nd because this people repented not after that I had delivered them, behold, they shall be cut off from the face of the earth (524). [A]nd they gave me command again of their armies: for they looked upon me as though I could deliver them from their afflictions (526).</p>
<p>[A]nd by this did establish his church (303–04). [Y]ea, and that same God did establish his church among them (304).</p>	<p>Lord did say unto me: [...] build up again my church (523).</p>
<p>[Y]ea, and that same God hath called me by a holy calling, to preach the word unto this people, and hath given me much success, in the which my joy is full (304). [B]ut I do not joy in my own success alone, but my joy is more full because of the success of my brethren (304). Now when I think of the success of these my brethren (304).</p>	<p>[T]he Lord did say unto me, Cry unto this people [...] And I did cry unto this people, but it was in vain (523). My beloved son Moroni, I rejoice exceedingly that your Lord Jesus Christ hath been mindful of you, and hath called you to his ministry, and to his holy work (581).</p>
<p>Now seeing that I know these things, why should I desire more than to perform the work to which I have been called? (303). Behold, they have labored exceedingly, and have brought forth much fruit (304).</p>	<p>Behold, I am laboring with them continually (583). And now my beloved son, notwithstanding their hardness, let us labor diligently: for if we should cease to labor, we should be brought under condemnation: for we have a labor to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay (583).</p>
<p>And now may God grant unto these my brethren, that they may sit down in the Kingdom of God (304).</p>	<p>that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in the kingdom of God (583–84).</p>

G Secret Combinations Loop

For figure 7.3 on p. 293.

	3 Nephi up to theophany	Theophany to end of 4 Nephi
A	<i>Robbers defeated</i> (3 Nephi II)	...the robbers of Gaddianton did spread over all the face of the land (518).
B	And they granted unto those robbers which had entered into a covenant to keep the peace, of the band which were desirous to remain Lamanites ... (465).	... neither were there Lamanites , nor no manner of Ites ... (515). [T]herefore there began to be Lamanites again in the land (516).
C	And they began again to prosper and to wax great (465).	[T]he Lord did prosper them exceedingly, in the land (514–15). [T]hey had become exceeding rich , because of their prosperity in Christ (516).
D	And it came to pass that there were many cities built anew , and there were many old cities repaired (465).	[T]hey did fill cities again where there had been cities burned; yea, even that great city Zarahemla did they cause to be built again (515).
E	... distinguished by ranks , according to their riches, and their chances for learning (466).	[A]nd they had all things common among them, every man dealing justly, one with another (507). [A]nd they had all things common among them, therefore there were not rich and poor , bond and free, but they were all made free... (514). And from that time forth they did have their goods and their substance no more common among them, and they began to be divided into classes (516).

F	[A]nd thus there became a great inequality in all the land, insomuch that the church began to be broken up; yea, insomuch that in the thirtieth year the church was broken up in all the land, save it were among a few of the Lamanites , which were converted unto the true faith (466).	[A]nd there was still peace in the land, save it were a small part of the people, which had revolted from the church , and took upon them the name of Lamanites (516).
G	Now they did not sin ignorantly, for they knew the will of God concerning them, for it had been taught unto them; therefore they did wilfully rebel against God (466).	[A]nd they did not dwindle in unbelief, but they did wilfully rebel against the gospel of Christ (517).
H	And there began to be men inspired from heaven , and sent forth, standing among the people in all the land , preaching (466). Now there were many of those which testified of the things pertaining to Christ; which testified boldly, which were taken and put to death secretly (467).	[The twelve disciples] did go forth upon the face of the land, and did minister unto all the people. . . and they were cast into prison by them. . . and they were cast down into the earth . . . And thrice they were cast into a furnace . . . And twice were they cast into a den of wild beasts (511).
I	[A]nd they did enter into a covenant one with another, yea, even into that covenant which was given by them of old, which covenant was given and administered by the Devil, to combine against all righteousness; therefore they did combine against the people of the Lord, and enter into a covenant to destroy them (467).	And it came to pass that the wicked part of the people began again to build up the secret oaths and combinations of Gaddianton (517).

J	And the people were divided one against another (467).	There were no robbers, nor no murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor no manner of Ites ; but they were in one , the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God (515). [T]here were a great division among the people (517).
K	[A]nd they did separate one from another, into tribes , every man according to his family, and his kindred and friends (467–8).	Lamanites, Jacobites, and Josephites, and Zoramites...Nephites, and Jacobites, and Josephites, and Zoramites...Lamanites, and Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites (517).
L	And they did cause a great contention in the land (468).	... and there was no contentions and disputations among them (514). And it came to pass that there was no contention among all the people (515). And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land (515). And the first generation from Christ had passed away, and there was no contention in all the land (515).
M	And it came to pass that they were angry with him, even because he had greater power than they, for it were not possible that they could disbelieve his words (469). [A]nd even his brother did he raise from the dead , after he had been stoned and suffered death by the people (469).	[A]nd they went forth doing mighty miracles among them. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding all these miracles the people did harden their hearts , and did seek to kill them... (516–17).
N	And it came to pass that the thirty and first year did pass away, and there were but few which were converted unto the Lord (469).	[T]he people were all converted unto the Lord (514).

H 4 Nephi: Rate of Narration

For figure 7.4 on p. 299.

The text not included in the word count is in bold and square brackets (cf. FE, 514–18).

The rate is rounded to one decimal.

The parentheses in the text are found in the FE.

WC = Word count – NR = Narration rate (words per year)

Years	Text	WC	NR
34– 35	[And it came to pass that the thirty and fourth year passed away, and also the thirty and fifth] , and behold the disciples of Jesus had formed a church of Christ in all the lands round about. And as many as did come unto them, and did truly repent of their sins, were baptized in the name of Jesus; and they did also receive the Holy Ghost.	48	24.0
36	[And it came to pass in the thirty and sixth year] , the people were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there was no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another; and they had all things common among them, therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the Heavenly gift.	67	67.0
37	[And it came to pass that the thirty and seventh year passed away also] , and there still continued to be peace in the land. And there were great and marvellous works wrought by the disciples of Jesus, insomuch that they did heal the sick, and raise the dead, and cause the lame to walk, and the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear; and all manner of miracles did they work among the children of men; and in nothing did they work miracles save it were in the name of Jesus.	80	80.0

Years	Text	WC	NR
38– 59	<p>[And thus did the thirty and eighth year pass away, and also the thirty and ninth, and the forty and first, and the forty and second; yea, even until forty and nine years had passed away, and also the fifty and first, and the fifty and second; yea, and even until fifty and nine years had passed away]; and the Lord did prosper them exceedingly, in the land; yea, in-somuch that they did fill cities again where there had been cities burned; yea, even that great city Zarahemla did they cause to be built again. But there were many cities which had been sunk, and waters came up in the stead thereof; therefore these cities could not be renewed. And now behold it came to pass that the people of Nephi did wax strong, and did multiply exceeding fast, and became an exceeding fair and delightsome people. And they were married, and given in marriage, and were blessed according to the multitude of the promises which the Lord had made unto them. And they did not walk any more after the performances and ordinances of the law of Moses, but they did walk after the commandments which they had received from their Lord and their God, continuing in fasting and prayer, and in meeting together oft, both to pray and to hear the word of the Lord. [And it came to pass that] there was no contention among all the people, in all the land, but there were mighty miracles wrought among the disciples of Jesus.</p>	192	8.7
60– 70	N/A	0	0

Years	Text	WC	NR
71– 110	<p>[And it came to pass that the seventy and first year passed away, and also the seventy and second year; yea, and in fine till the seventy and ninth year had passed away; yea, even an hundred years had passed away], and the disciples of Jesus, whom he had chosen, had all gone to the paradise of God, save it were the three which should tarry: And there were other disciples ordained in their stead; and also many of that generation which had passed away. [And it came to pass that] there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people. And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor no manner of lasciviousness: and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people which had been created by the hand of God: There were no robbers, nor no murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor no manner of Ites; but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God: And how blessed were they, for the Lord did bless them in all their doings; yea, even they were blessed and prospered, [until an hundred and ten years had passed away]: And the first generation from Christ had passed away, and there was no contention in all the land.</p>	181	4.5
111– 193	<p>[And it came to pass that] Nephi, he that kept this last record, (and he kept it upon the plates of Nephi,) died, and his son Amos kept it in his stead; and he kept it upon the plates of Nephi also; and he kept it eighty and four years, and there was still peace in the land, save it were a small part of the people, which had revolted from the church, and took upon them the name of Lamanites; therefore there began to be Lamanites again in the land. [And it came to pass that] Amos died also,</p>	88	1.1

Years	Text	WC	NR
194–200	<p>[(And it was an hundred and ninety and four years from the coming of Christ,) and his son Amos kept the record in his stead; and he also kept it upon the plates of Nephi; and it was also written in the book of Nephi, which is this book. [And it came to pass that two hundred years had passed away]: And the second generation had all passed away save it were a few. [And now I, Mormon, would that ye should know that] the people had multiplied, insomuch that they were spread upon all the face of the land, and that they had become exceeding rich, because of their prosperity in Christ.</p>	76	10.9
201–210	<p>[And now in this two hundred and first year], there began to be among them those which were lifted up in pride, such as the wearing of costly apparel, and all manner of fine pearls, and of the fine things of the world. And from that time forth they did have their goods and their substance no more common among them, and they began to be divided into classes, and they began to build up churches unto themselves, to get gain, and began to deny the true church of Christ. [And it came to pass that when two hundred and ten years had passed away] there were many churches in the land; yea, there were churches which professed to know the Christ, and yet they did deny the more parts of his gospel, insomuch that they did receive all manner of wickedness, and did administer that which was sacred unto him to whom it had been forbidden, because of unworthiness.</p>	136	12.4

Years	Text	WC	NR
211–230	<p>And this church did multiply exceedingly, because of iniquity, and because of the power of satan which did get hold upon their hearts. And again, there was another church, which denied the Christ; and they did persecute the true church of Christ, because of their humility, and their belief in Christ; and they did despise them, because of the many miracles which were wrought among them; therefore they did exercise power and authority over the disciples of Jesus which did tarry with them, and they did cast them into prison; but by the power of the word of God, which was in them, the prisons were rent in twain, and they went forth doing mighty miracles among them. Nevertheless, and not withstanding all these miracles the people did harden their hearts, and did seek to kill them, even as the Jews at Jerusalem sought to kill Jesus, according to his word, and they did cast them into furnaces of fire, and they came forth receiving no harm; and they also cast them into dens of wild beasts, and they did play with the wild beasts even as a child with a lamb; and they did come forth from among them, receiving no harm. Nevertheless, the people did harden their hearts, for they were led by many priests and false prophets to build up many churches, and to do all manner of iniquity. And they did smite upon the people of Jesus; but the people of Jesus did not smite again. And thus they did dwindle in unbelief and wickedness, from year to year, [even until two hundred and thirty years had passed away].</p>	263	13.2

Years	Text	WC	NR
231–244	<p>[And now it came to pass in this year, yea, in the two hundred and thirty and first year], there were a great division among the people. [And it came to pass that in this year] there arose a people which was called the Nephites, and they were true believers in Christ; and among them there were they which was called by the Lamanites, Jacobites, and Josephites, and Zoramites; therefore the true believers in Christ, and the true worshippers of Christ, (among whom were the three disciples of Jesus which should tarry,) were called Nephites, and Jacobites, and Josephites, and Zoramites. [And it came to pass that] they which rejected the gospel, were called Lamanites, and Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites; and they did not dwindle in unbelief, but they did wilfully rebel against the gospel of Christ; and they did teach their children that they should not believe, even as their fathers, from the beginning, did dwindle. And it was because of the wickedness and abominations of their fathers, even as it was in the beginning. And they were taught to hate the children of God, even as the Lamanites were taught to hate the children of Nephi, from the beginning. [And it came to pass that two hundred and forty and four years had passed away], and thus were the affairs of the people.</p>	174	12.4
245–260	<p>And the more wicked part of the people did wax strong, and became exceeding more numerous than were the people of God. And they did still continue to build up churches unto themselves, and adorn them with all manner of precious things. [And thus did two hundred and fifty years pass away, and also two hundred and sixty years].</p>	42	2.6

Years	Text	WC	NR
261–300	<p>[And it came to pass that] the wicked part of the people began again to build up the secret oaths and combinations of Gaddianton. And also the people which were called the people of Nephi, began to be proud in their hearts, because of their exceeding riches, and become vain, like unto their brethren, the Lamanites. And from this time, the disciples began to sorrow for the sins of the world. [And it came to pass that when three hundred years had passed away], both the people of Nephi and the Lamanites had become exceeding wicked, one like unto another.</p>	81	2.0
301–305	<p>[And it came to pass that] the robbers of Gaddianton did spread over all the face of the land; and there were none that were righteous, save it were the disciples of Jesus. And gold and silver did they lay up in store in abundance, and did traffic in all manner of traffic. [And it came to pass that after three hundred and five years had passed away]. (and the people did still remain in wickedness,) Amos died, and his brother, Ammaron, did keep the record, in his stead.</p>	68	13.6
306–320	<p>[And it came to pass that when three hundred and twenty years had passed away], Ammaron, being constrained by the Holy Ghost, did hide up the records which were sacred; yea, even all the sacred records which had been handed down from generation to generation, which were sacred, [even until the three hundred and twentieth year from the coming of Christ]. And he did hide them up unto the Lord, that they might come again unto the remnant of the house of Jacob, according to the prophecies and the promises of the Lord. And thus is the end of the record of Ammaron.</p>	75	5

Concordance FE and LDS

FE = First Edition (1830)

Book	FE Chapter	FE Pages	LDS Chapters
1 Nephi	I	5–16	1–5
	II	16–21	6–9
	III	21–35	10–14
	IV	35–38	15
	V	38–52	16–19:21
	VI	52–56	19:22–21:26
	VII	56–59	22

2 Nephi	I	59–66	1–2
	II	66–68	3
	III	68–71	4
	IV	71–73	5
	V	74–78	6–8
	VI	78–83	9
	VII	83–85	10
	VIII	86–91	11–15
	IX	91–99	16–22
	X	99–102	23–24
	XI	102–112	25–27
	XII	112–118	28–30
	XIII	118–120	31
	XIV	120–121	32
	XV	121–122	33

Book	FE Chapter	FE Pages	LDS Chapters
Jacob	I	123–124	1
	II	124–129	2–3
	III	129–139	4–5
	IV	139–140	6
	V	140–143	7
Enos	I	143–145	1
Jarom	I	146–147	1
Omni	I	148–151	1
Words of Mormon	I	151–153	1
Mosiah	I	153–162	1–3
	II	162–165	4
	III	166–167	5
	IV	167–168	6
	V	168–173	7–8
	VI	173–177	9–10
	VII	177–184	11–13:24
	VIII	184–189	13:25–16:15
	IX	190–201	17–21
	X	201–202	22
	XI	202–215	23–27
	XII	215–216	28:1–28:19
	XIII	217–221	28:20–29:47

Book	FE Chapter	FE Pages	LDS Chapters
Alma	I	221–230	1–3
	II	230–232	4
	III	232–238	5
	IV	238–239	6
	V	239–242	7
	VI	242–245	8
	VII	245–248	9
	VIII	248–254	10–11
	IX	254–259	12
	X	259–266	13–15
	XI	266–268	16
	XII	269–282	17–20
	XIII	282–289	21–22
	XIV	289–299	23–26
	XV	299–304	27–29
	XVI	304–323	30–35
	XVII	323–330	36–37
	XVIII	330–332	38
	XIX	332–340	39–42
	XX	340–347	43–44
	XXI	348–362	45–49
	XXII	362–366	50
	XXIII	366–370	51
	XXIV	370–377	52–53
	XXV	377–381	54–55
	XXVI	382–393	56–58

Book	FE Chapter	FE Pages	LDS Chapters
Alma	XXVII	393–398	59–60
	XXVIII	398–400	61
	XXIX	400–405	62
	XXX	405–407	63
Helaman	I	407–411	1–2
	II	412–426	3–6
	III	426–436	7–10
	IV	436–441	11–12
	V	441–451	13–16
3 Nephi	I	452–456	1–2
	II	457–465	3–5
	III	465–470	6–7
	IV	470–476	8–10
	V	476–483	11:1–13:24
	VI	483–485	13:25–14:27
	VII	485–488	15–16
	VIII	488–493	17–18
	IX	493–500	19:1–21:21
	X	501–503	21:22–23:13
	XI	503–505	23:14–26:5
	XII	506–508	26:6–27:22
	XIII	509–513	27:23–29:9
	XIV	513–514	30
4 Nephi	I	514–518	1

Book	FE Chapter	FE Pages	LDS Chapters
Mormon	I	518–524	1–3
	II	524–528	4–5
	III	529–531	6–7
	IV	531–538	8–9
Ether	I	538–547	1–4
	II	547–548	5
	III	548–555	6–8
	IV	555–562	9–11
	V	562–566	12
	VI	566–573	13–15
Moroni	I	574	1
	II	574–575	2
	III	575	3
	IV	575	4
	V	575–576	5
	VI	576	6
	VII	577–580	7
	VIII	581–583	8
	IX	583–585	9
	X	585–588	10

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