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The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) existed from 1979 until 2006, when it was formally incorporated into the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship. Archived by permission.



# INSIGHTS

A WINDOW ON THE ANCIENT WORLD

December 2000

"by study and also by faith" (D&C 88:118)

## Scholars Examine Ancient Figurines in New Volume

Research Press at Brigham Young University, an imprint of FARMS, will soon publish its seventh book, the *New World Figurine Project*, volume two, edited by Terry Stocker and Cynthia L. Otis Charlton. Volume one, printed in 1991 and edited by Stocker, contributed significantly to figurine studies with material on figurines from the United States, Mexico, El Salvador, Bolivia, and Peru. Volume two—containing approximately 455 illustrations, 20 tables, and 8 maps—follows suit with information on figurines from North, Central, and South America.

As Otis Charlton explains in her introduction to volume two, the *New World* volumes "[bring] together not only information from disparate areas whose scholars do not always see the publications of those from other areas, but . . . provide large, detailed, and clear illustrations so that the articles [can] be easily used for comparative purposes." She further states that previous figurine articles are reprinted in the volumes "in order to make them easily accessible in one place for students and others

doing comparative analyses of figurines in the field."

Stocker and Otis Charlton each contributed to the new volume. In "Covariance of Postclassic Figurine Styles,



New book (above) catalogs ancient figurines such as the one on the left, which was discovered at Mound City, Ohio.

*continued on page 5*

## New Online and Other Membership Options

FARMS is grateful to be part of Brigham Young University and is committed to President Merrill J. Bateman's vision of reaching students of the scriptures all over the world through the Internet. Over the past year a professional team has developed our Web site, and we are both pleased with the results and excited about the direction it will take in the coming year. We believe that the investment

we have made and continue to make in ensuring that our Web site takes advantage of advances in Internet technology will provide increasing benefits to the FARMS membership.

Currently, the *INSIGHTS* newsletter, the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, selections from the *FARMS Review of Books*, and many papers and book selections are available to view or to download and print; popular video lectures are also accessible on our Web site. In 2001 we will be adding video clips of interviews with authors of new publications as

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The Foundation for  
Ancient Research  
and Mormon Studies

# FARMS UPDATE

A Report on Research in Progress

Number 141

## Abinadi's Disguise and the Fate of King Noah

After hiding from King Noah for two years, the prophet Abinadi came before the people in disguise, identified himself by name, and then delivered a message of condemnation to the king and his people. Some might wonder why Abinadi would go to the trouble of disguising himself only to identify himself shortly afterward. Recent scholarly studies of the biblical narrative may help shed light on this curious episode.

One example is an article by Richard Coggins that examines five biblical stories involving kings, prophets, and disguises (1 Sam. 28:3–20; 1 Kgs. 14:1–20; 20:35–43; 22:29–37; 2 Chr. 35:20–24).<sup>1</sup> Each narrative relates a confrontation between a king and God's prophet or spokesman. Sometimes the king or his wife dons the disguise in an unsuccessful effort to deceive God. At other times God's prophet wears and then discards the disguise as part of his divine message.

According to Coggins, "the disguise story ends in each case with the same warning: defeat of the people in battle, and death of the king." He also notes that it is an "unacceptable line of kingship" that is condemned by the prophetic word. All of the kings or their heirs in the biblical disguise stories meet with

brutal deaths, and in each case the dynasty fails.

In this light, it isn't hard to guess what will happen to the wicked and unrepentant King Noah. Abinadi predicts that Noah's people will be brought into bondage and that the armies "shall be slain; and the vultures of the air, and the dogs, yea, and the wild beasts, shall devour their flesh" (Mosiah 12:2; 21:7–12). He also correctly predicts King Noah's violent death by fire (Mosiah 12:3). Although Limhi served as king for a brief time afterward, Noah's royal line ended as Limhi and his people were assimilated into Mosiah's kingdom.

Coggins notes that the number and the distinctive character of the biblical disguise scenes suggest that they work typologically to make a fundamental theological point: "Nothing is hidden from God's sight; he is presented as controlling the situation, often . . . in unexpected ways." Because the Book of Mormon has roots in the Old World, Abinadi's disguise may have conveyed a similar message. If so, the disguise may have been a prop to allude to the blindness of the people. While Abinadi was disguised, the people "knew him not" (Mosiah 12:1). King Noah did not know the Lord (Mosiah

11:27), and the people were blinded to God's prophetic message (Mosiah 11:29). Noah and his supporters may have sought to hide or disguise their sins, but the Lord had seen their abominations (Mosiah 11:20) and would soon reveal them to other nations (Mosiah 12:8).

However, once the disguise was discarded, Abinadi's divine message was clearly revealed to the people, just as "the time shall come when all shall see the salvation of the Lord; when every nation, kindred, tongue, and people shall see eye to eye and shall confess before God that his judgments are just" (Mosiah 16:1). Thus the disguise may have symbolized God's ability to reveal and fulfill his word, notwithstanding the blindness of the people.

As in 1 Kings 20, where a prophet disguises himself "to ensure that his message would be conveyed unmistakably to the king,"<sup>2</sup> Abinadi's use of a disguise in accord with an apparent Old Testament pattern can be seen as effectively foreshadowing Noah's demise.

### NOTES

1. Richard Coggins, "On Kings and Disguises" *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 50 (1991): 55–62.

2. *Ibid.*, 58.

Based on research by Alan Goff



## New Review Focuses on Mormon Studies

In his introduction to the latest *FARMS Review of Books* (vol. 12, no. 2), Daniel C. Peterson argues that Latter-day Saints and other Christians differ in the way they think about their faith. Rooted in Semitic traditions rather than Greek philosophy, LDS religious science is history, not theology. Accordingly, this edition of the *Review* features commentary on several books about the Book of Mormon and Mormon studies, most of which shed additional light on the historicity and geography of the Nephite record.

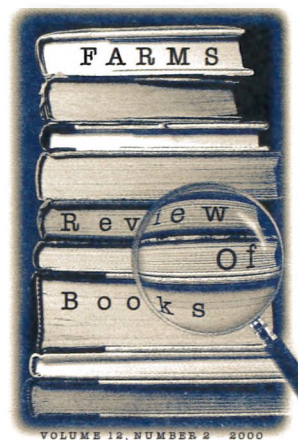
In addition to reviewing books about Mormon and Moroni and new evidences of the events and authorship of the Book of Mormon, reviewers also look at books about the literary and narrative messages of the scriptures. Other books treated cover the ancient world and early Christianity as compared to the restored church. This volume also features three extended responses to a controversial book that attempts to connect the early leaders of the LDS Church to folk magic and occult practices.

In the longest section of this *Review*, John Gee, William J. Hamblin, and Rhett S. James tackle the 1998 revised edition of *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, by D. Michael Quinn. The book, which LDS scholars found very controversial in its first edition, claims that 19th-century Americans were influenced in many things by a folk magic and occult revival. Quinn alleges that the Prophet Joseph Smith and his family practiced magic and that

occult sources had a great effect on the formation of the LDS Church. All three of the reviewers thoroughly address Quinn's claims and his attacks on their personal scholarship and integrity.

In the first response to Quinn's book, John Gee criticizes Quinn's use of the word *magic*. He writes that Quinn "has made a most unfortunate choice in the term *magic*, which he then defines in a deceptive, unhistorical, and fundamentally dishonest way." Gee accuses Quinn of employing the word *magic* as "a term of opprobrium used contrary to its historical context." He then notes that Quinn deliberately excludes from his definition of magic precisely the sense that predominated in Joseph Smith's day. Quinn's work is thus founded on the logical fallacy of equivocation—where key terms are allowed to shift meanings so that conclusions seem to follow when they do not. Gee also discusses historical aspects of the term *magic* that show that Quinn's use of the term *magic* actually becomes "an obstacle to deeper understanding."

William Hamblin provides the most extensive of the three reviews of Quinn's book. With careful detail, Hamblin examines the book for methodological problems and then studies three of Quinn's topics specifically. Hamblin points out, as did Gee, the problem of using 20th-century terms in a 19th-century set-



ting. He also shows how Quinn misuses other language in confusing ways. Then Hamblin points out weaknesses in Quinn's research, logic, and reliability and shows that Quinn's extensive use of footnotes merely keeps the reader from learning where the information

is documented. Hamblin then identifies specific weaknesses in methodology in three of Quinn's topics: the accessibility of occult books, Joseph's alleged ties to magic artifacts, and the influence of Kabbalah (a set of Jewish mystical beliefs).

The final review of Quinn's book, written by Rhett James, begins by offering praise for Quinn's tight writing style and extensive research. But James, too, shows that despite the quantity of information, Quinn's book is misleading and flawed. James continues by showing that not only did the early leaders of the LDS Church not condone the use of folk magic, they specifically taught against it. He also contends that Quinn's explanation that the magic in the social environment prepared people to accept the gospel is not supported by the evidence.

In addition to the reviews of Quinn's book, this edition also covers more positive approaches to Mormon studies. Barry R. Bickmore, author of *Restoring the Ancient Church: Joseph Smith and Early Christianity*, states, "I have endeavored to make this book exactly the kind of book I

would like to have read when I first became interested in comparing Mormonism to early Christianity." Although reviewers Robert L. Garrett and David Waltz are clearly not new to the study of the doctrines of the LDS Church or the writings of the early church fathers, each finds merit in this new volume.

Robert L. Garrett notes that Bickmore does not maintain that the ancient church of Christ and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are identical but rather seeks to "identify and locate some of the early characteristics of the primitive church of Christ and to investigate whether or not the beliefs and practices that Joseph Smith restored were truly found in early Christianity." *Restoring the Ancient Church* provides information helpful to both LDS and non-LDS readers, giving historical and theological background information to aid each group.

David Waltz hopes to "offer a unique review of Bickmore's book" since he is not a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints but is extremely interested in studying the ancient Christian church. After praising the contributions of Hugh Nibley to the study of early Christianity, Waltz recognizes Bickmore's book as a significant addition "to the renaissance of patristic studies." Waltz feels that Bickmore gives a clear presentation of LDS thought concerning the Godhead and its parallels in early Christian writing. Concerning the doctrine of deification (i.e., that humans may become like God), he remarks that as someone who is not LDS, he has been "somewhat troubled by the immense number of passages in the church fathers that promote the doctrine of deification." He says the "honest reader must seriously look at either the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or the Eastern Orthodox Church as maintaining the truly 'historic' teaching on this doctrine."

Waltz is less convinced by Bickmore's parallels between Mormon doctrine and early Christianity concerning baptism for the dead, the Aaronic Priesthood, and temple worship. Still, he concludes, "It is my sincere hope that Bickmore's book will

"It is my sincere hope that Bickmore's book will encourage all Christians to study the early church fathers, along with the scriptures, and that continued dialogue will occur among those who take up this noble pursuit."

encourage all Christians to study the early church fathers, along with the scriptures, and that continued dialogue will occur among those who take up this noble pursuit."

In another review, David Seely highlights various sections of S. Kent Brown's *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla*. Seely notes that Brown's book competently applies methodologies common to biblical studies to the text of the Book of Mormon. Based mostly on word studies, Brown's methodologies

"set out the dimensions and complexities of the Book of Mormon record' without being 'attempts to finalize what can or cannot be known about a subject.'" As Seely notes, *From Jerusalem* exposes "much evidence in the narrative of the Book of Mormon that may not have been noticed by careful, inquisitive readers."

One of Brown's insights comes from prob-

ing "the meaning and purpose of [Lehi's] 'sacrifices and offerings' in light of the law of Moses." Considering the context of these sacrifices yields insight to our understanding of the family's migratory experience.

Seely also reviews Brown's study of Psalm-like laments in the discourses of Samuel the Lamanite. He notes that Samuel's inclusion of prophecy within his laments is a tack not common to biblical literary tradition but evident in the *Thanksgiving Hymns* from Qumran. Another of Brown's studies makes the surprising suggestion that while in the wilderness, Lehi's family may have experienced a "period of servility." In all, Seely surmises that *From Jerusalem* "will stimulate and challenge the reader and, significantly, will invite the reader back to the text of the Book of Mormon, where there is much to be learned."

This edition of *FARMS Review of Books* also includes reviews of 10 other books on the scriptures and Mormon studies and a bibliography of the books written about the Book of Mormon in 1999. (For purchasing information, see the enclosed order form or visit the catalog section of the FARMS Web site.)



## Figurines (continued from page 1)

Settlement Patterns, and Political Boundaries in the Basin of Mexico," Stocker and Dan Edwards compare Mazapan figurines from two areas in the Basin to determine that the southern Basin experienced an increase of population during Mazapan times (A.D. 950–1150). They also conclude that "there is no demonstrable link between the demise of Teotihuacan and a population shift toward the southern Basin." To verify their findings, Edward and Stocker include several compelling maps, tables, and illustrations.

In "Hollow Rattle Figurines of the Otumba Area, Mexico," Otis Charlton describes hollow rattle figurines as "made in a two-piece mold forming a hollow, closed-bodied figure usually enclosing one or more small clay balls." They are categorized as Late Postclassic and were discovered during surveys and excavations conducted in the eastern Teotihuacan Valley of Mexico from 1966 to 1969. Drawing upon the excavation data gathered during those three years, Otis Charlton discusses the chronological and functional associations of these figurines as well as the "social and economic implications of their spa-



A figurine discovered in the eastern Great Basin, in the area of Utah.

tial distribution within the surveyed areas."

Otis Charlton explains that volume two of the *New World Figurine Project* "deals with figurine studies from the descriptive to the ethnographic." This 298-page book features 12 chapters on diverse figurine studies, including Donald R. Tuohy's "The Virgin Anasazi Figurines from 'Lost City'"; Stuart D. Scott's "Pottery Figurines from Central Arizona"; Harry J. Shafer's "Clay Figurines from the Lower Pecos Region, Texas"; B. K. Swartz Jr.'s "Middle Woodland Figurines from the Mann Site, Southwest Indiana"; and Kevin E. Smith's "Human Figurines as Messengers Communicating with Past, Present, and Future Cultures." (For purchasing information, see the enclosed order form or visit the catalog section of the FARMS Web site.)

## Membership Options (continued from page 1)

well as graphic presentations of study aids and the full text of the *FARMS Review of Books*.

The FARMS Board of Trustees has approved a new way to join the Foundation through an Online Membership that will benefit our members not only in the United States but worldwide. Online Membership will provide FARMS members access to FARMS publications as quickly and inexpensively as possible.

FARMS remains committed to the printed medium, and we understand that

the Internet is not available to all our members and that many of us still prefer to receive FARMS publications in the mail. However, mailing and production costs continue to increase, and it has become

New Membership Rates Effective 1 January 2001			
Membership Options	Annual Rates		
	Basic	Shipping and Handling (12 mailings a year)	Total
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\*The Online Membership introductory offer is \$15 per year during January and February 2001. Full-time students providing copies of valid ID cards, and full-time CES educators providing proof of employment, may become online members for \$12.50 per year.

necessary to revise the level of memberships that receive our publications. We have also introduced new Silver, Gold, and Liahona Membership options. These are geared toward those who wish to participate more fully in supporting FARMS in its research on the Book of Mormon and other ancient scripture and who want to receive FARMS publications that are not automatically included in the Combined Membership.

Effective 1 January 2001 we will introduce the following membership options:

- Print Membership (12 issues of the *INSIGHTS* newsletter, 2 issues of the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, a 20 percent discount on all FARMS products, access to the FARMS Reference Service, and updates on recent research)
- Online Membership (access to the FARMS member Web site featuring the *INSIGHTS* newsletter, the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, the *FARMS Review of Books*, paper and book selections, video clips, and graphic presentations of study aids; a 20 percent discount on all FARMS products; and access to the FARMS Reference Service)
- Combined Membership (all the benefits offered in the Print and Online Memberships)
- Silver Membership (Combined Membership and the print versions of the *FARMS Review of Books* and the *FARMS Occasional Papers* series)
- Gold Membership (the benefits of Combined and Silver Memberships, plus a special annual FARMS presentation volume)
- Liahona Membership (the benefits of all memberships and every new FARMS publication)

Print Membership remains \$25 per year, plus a \$10 shipping-and-handling fee to cover 12 mailings per year. Online Membership is \$25 per year, but as an introductory offer during January and February 2001, it will be only \$15 for 2001. The member Web site will be open to all existing FARMS members during January 2001. After 1 February 2001, members who do not wish to have the Online Membership will no longer have access to the FARMS member Web site. For other membership options, please refer to the rate schedule on page 5.

We would like to thank you for the tremendous support you provide us. As we continue to strive to better meet your needs and to expand our research and publication capabilities, we hope that you will continue to support us. As always, should you have any comments or questions about these new options, please do not hesitate to contact us.

# INSIGHTS

A WINDOW ON THE ANCIENT WORLD

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## The Purpose of FARMS

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) encourages and supports research about the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ and other ancient scriptures. It also works to preserve ancient religious documents.

FARMS is a nonprofit educational foundation at Brigham Young University. Its main research interests include ancient history, language, literature, culture, geography, politics, and law relevant to the scriptures. Although such subjects are of secondary importance when compared with the spiritual and eternal messages of the scriptures, solid research and academic perspectives alone can supply certain kinds of useful information, even if only tentatively, concerning many significant and interesting questions about the scriptures.

The Foundation works to make interim and final reports about this research available widely, promptly, and economically. These publications are peer reviewed to ensure scholarly standards are met. The proceeds from the sale of these publications, including most royalties, are used to support further research and publications on the scriptures. As a service to teachers and students of the scriptures, research results are distributed in both scholarly and popular formats.

It is hoped that this information will help all interested people to "come unto Christ" (Jacob 1:7) and to understand and take more seriously these ancient witnesses of the atonement of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

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