Mormon Bibliography

1978

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During the past two years, there seems to have been an increase in anti-Mormon activities with the creation of such new groups as the “Ex-Mormons for Jesus.” Whether there are actually more participants, or whether they are simply more vocal, is an interesting question that needs some research, both in regard to the amount of material and the reasons for its publication. Regardless, the presence and sources of the anti-Mormon material should be recognized.

The study of anti-Mormon material has always been a contributive part to the study of Mormonism. From the earliest pamphlet, Alexander Campbell’s Delusions (Boston: Benjamin H. Greene, 1832), and book, E. D. Howe’s Mormonism Unvailed [sic] (Painesville, Ohio, 1834), to some of the current material, the student of Mormon history cannot simply ignore these publications. To fully understand the whole experience of Nauvoo, one must be acquainted with John C. Bennett’s The History of the Saints (New York: Bradbury, Soden, & Co., 1842); one ought also see T. B. H. Stenhouse’s The Rocky Mountain Saints (New York: Appleton & Co., 1873) for early Utah history and Frank J. Cannon’s Under the Prophet in Utah (Boston: C. M. Clark Publishing Co., 1911) for later nineteenth-century history.

Much less consideration need be given to those books seemingly written to accompany such anti-Mormon lectures as Increase McGee and Maria Van Deusen’s expose of the temple rites in The Mormon Endowment (Syracuse, N.Y.: Lathrop, 1847), which went through twenty-three editions under such titles as A Dialogue Between Adam and Eve, The Sublime and Ridiculous Blended, Startling Disclosures of the Great Mormon Conspiracy... Spiritual Delusions; Maria Ward’s Female Life Among the Mormons (London: C. H. Clarke, 1855), printed in thirteen English editions under several titles and published in at least four other languages; and, of course, the most famous—Ann Eliza Young’s Wife No. 19 (Hartford, Conn.: Dustin, Gilman and Co., 1875).
Of no historical importance are those written from secondary sources for the express purpose of "exposing" Mormonism, such as Lu B. Cake's Peepstone Joe and the Peck Manuscript (New York, 1899), M. W. Montgomery's The Mormon Delusion (Boston: Congregational Sunday School and Publishing House, c1890), W. Wyl's [pseud. of Wilhelm Ritter von Wymetal] Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City, 1886), and William Jarman's U.S.A. Uncle Sam's Abscess, or Hell upon the Earth (Exeter, England: Printed at H. Leduc's Steam Printing Works, 1884).

Currently, anti-Mormon writers belong to two general groups: dissident Mormons, and non-Mormons who feel a need to save Mormons from themselves.

The dissident group is most notably represented by Jerald and Sandra Tanner, whose voluminous publications for over a decade include a periodical, The Salt Lake City Messenger. A bibliography published in 1970 of their work lists 120 titles published by their press, Modern Microfilm Co., with a large percentage of them written or edited by the Tanners. Of less importance are the materials being produced by the Ex-Mormons for Jesus. These organizations, some of whose credentials are false and others questionable, exist in at least four locations. They publish some pamphlets but are more interested in making cassette tapes to be used in anti-Mormon lectures. Also publishing fairly regularly are the fundamentalists, who perceive the granting of the priesthood to Blacks as the final step in the Church's apostasy and who have revived the "Adam-God" controversy. Still other dissidents publish independently, chiefly purloined documents surreptitiously taken from various libraries, which supposedly show that Mormonism is either a fallen church or never was true.

The non-Mormon group consists of ministers and members of other churches who view Mormonism as a threat to Christianity. The most important persons in this group are Wesley Walters and Walter Martin. The latter is a professional lecturer, while the former has done some writing about Joseph Smith. It was Rev. Walters (with Chris Vlachos) who had the infamous interview with LeGrand Richards in which he carefully set him up and taped the conversation without Elder Richards's knowledge. In addition, there is the ever-present Utah Christian Mission, which publishes small pamphlets chiefly at general conference time.

It may appear that there is an increase in anti-Mormon writers, but as one looks at the history of anti-Mormon writing, one sees that this situation has been the same throughout the history of Mormons, with publications by dissidents and other churches.
As in the past, *Mormon Americana*, vol. 19 (1978), has been used for the compilation of the "Mormon Bibliography."

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