UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA

THE BOOK OF MORMON: CREATION AND CIRCULATION THROUGH A POST-TRANSLATION LENS

Dissertation submitted to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to obtain a Master's Degree in Translation

By

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Abstract

Since its publication in 1830, the Book of Mormon has been translated into 116 different languages. Between 1851 and 1856 the first six translations were published in Danish, French, Welsh, German, Italian, and Hawaiian. The main objective of my thesis is to examine these translational events, especially the initial creation of the text and the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian cases, through a post-translation lens, i.e., not to analyze the translations themselves but to investigate how the circulation of the text through translation resulted in cultural changes in these three target cultures and the source culture. Data will be gathered such as the number of converts or examples of productions of culture in the communities where the translations were introduced, complemented by a cultural-historical analysis of the relationship between the translations and those source and target cultures at the time, as well as an analysis of the paratexts of the original and the translations. My research aims to answer the following questions: Why was the Book of Mormon presented as a translation? Why was the Book of Mormon translated into these specific languages at those particular times? How did these translations impact the receiving cultures? In other words, what pre- and post-translation effects can be identified?

Keywords: translation, post-translation, pre-translation, religion, Book of Mormon

Resumo

Desde a sua publicação em 1830, o Livro de Mórmon foi traduzido para 116 línguas. Entre 1851 e 1856, as primeiras seis traduções foram publicadas em dinamarquês, francês, galês, alemão, italiano e havaiano. O principal objetivo desta tese é examinar estes momentos de tradução, especialmente a criação do texto e das traduções dinamarquesas, galesas e havaianas, através do conceito teórico da pós-tradução. Ou seja, o objetivo não é analisar as próprias traduções, mas antes investigar como a circulação do texto através de tradução resultou em consequências culturais nestas três culturas de chegada e na cultura de partida. Para tal, serão analisados dados como o número de fiéis ou exemplos de produções de cultura nas comunidades onde as traduções foram apresentadas, complementados por uma análise histórico-cultural da relação entre as traduções e as culturas de partida e chegada nesse tempo, bem como uma análise dos paratextos do original e das traduções. A investigação pretende responder às seguintes questões: Porque é que o Livro de Mórmon foi apresentado como uma tradução? Porque é que o Livro de Mórmon foi traduzido para estas línguas específicas naqueles momentos específicos? Como é que estas traduções impactaram as culturas de chegada? Por outras palavras, que efeitos pré e pós-tradução podem ser identificados?

Palavras-chave: tradução, pós-tradução, pré-tradução, religião, o Livro de Mórmon

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Introduction

In just under two hundred years, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints[1] has amassed over 17.25 million members (Walch 2024b). What began as a small group of men in the small town of Palmyra, New York, is now a characteristically global religion. With over 90,000 active missionaries and 189 temples across the world, what is often described as a quintessentially American religion is certainly not spatially confined to America nor culturally confined to Americans (Walch 2024b). In fact, according to statistics released by the Church, membership outside the United States and Canada has been greater than within the United States and Canada since 1998 (Walch 2024b).

At the heart of Mormonism is the Book of Mormon, translated into English by the prophet Joseph Smith Jr., and published in 1830. The Book of Mormon is one of the four foundational scriptures of the Church of Latter-day Saints, and its publication coincides with the formal organization of the Church (Smith 2007). On March 26, 1830, the first printed copies of the Book of Mormon went up for sale, and just over a week later, on April 6, 1830, the Church was officially established (Smith 2007).[2] The publication of the Book of Mormon is what cemented the fledging group as a new religion and Joseph Smith as a prophet. Since 1830, the Book of Mormon has been translated into 116 different languages, spreading its influence across the globe. In 1990, the 50 millionth copy of the Book of Mormon was printed, in 2000 the 100 millionth, in 2011 the 150 millionth, and in 2023 the 200 millionth (Chou and Chou 2015; Walch 2024a). The circulation of the Book of Mormon is far from trivial. But what implications does the circulation of a text have?

The circulation of a text, and in particular of religious texts, is significant because it represents the circulation of the ideas found in that text. Religious beliefs do not travel magically from one culture to another, or even from one individual to another, they manifest themselves in material forms that render them transferable (O'Connor 2021). Israel encourages us to reconceptualize translation as "a wider complex process of negotiation

[1] Hereafter referred to as the Church of Latter-day Saints, or simply, the Church.
[2] The Church was officially established as the "Church of Christ" on April 6, 1830. The name was changed to "The Church of the Latter Day Saints" in 1834 and changed for a second time to "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" in 1838 (Smith 2007, xvi).

between two or more cultures, where every translation act is an act of interpretation that have political and cultural implications" (2019, 328). This is to say that translation is more than the transfer of words from one language to another. Translation is a mechanism for negotiation, a bridge between cultures, a conduit for beliefs and ideas between two groups. When one thinks about translation in this way, then the translation of the Book of Mormon into 116 different languages is more than an impressive statistic, it symbolizes the journey of Mormon beliefs from the source culture into the target cultures. And then what?

Edwin Gentzler (2017) challenges translation studies scholars to take the next logical step, to ask what happens *after* a translation is circulated in the target culture. In Susan Bassnett's foreword to Gentzler's book, she writes: "Gentzler invites us to see translation as a revolutionary act, in that it brings ideas and forms across cultural boundaries, offering life-changing possibilities" (2017, ix). When the Book of Mormon is translated into a foreign language, it provides the speakers of that language with an opportunity to intake new ideas that they would not have had if the text had not been translated. If translation enables religions to reach new audiences by importing religious beliefs into other cultures, then religious translations truly have the potential to change people's lives.

But the introduction of new ideas into a culture goes beyond whether people believe them or not. As such, the introduction of new religious ideas into a culture also goes beyond whether people convert or not. Bassnett explains in her foreword that "[t]he repercussions of translation are to be seen everywhere and in every discipline" (Gentzler 2017, ix). The translation of written texts bleeds into politics, art, literature, science, and other disciplines (Gentzler 2017). New ideas are not merely transferred to individuals in the target culture, but to other physical mediums. These "cultural ramifications" of translation are what Gentzler designates as post-translation effects (2017, xii). Gentzler states that:

> The post-translation repercussions are well known to all. Finding better methods to describe, inventory, or assess translations does not help measure whether or not the ideas contained within are understood and incorporated into the belief systems of the receiving cultures. This book serves as a call to begin that process. (2017, 3)

This passage underlines the need for translation scholars to look beyond translations towards what is happening in the culture *around* translations. Translations are not static. They do not

occur and then cease to have any influence. Again, Gentzler is emphasizing that the *aftermath* of a translation has been long neglected by researchers. Still, this is not the only aspect of translation studies that Gentzler views as lacking. On the field of post-translation, Gentzler elaborates:

> The other direction post-translation studies is moving, which is a bit deceptive given the "post" in its name, is taking a more detailed look at pre-translation culture that conditions not only the production of translated texts but original writing as well. Post-translation studies examines those conditions, socio-political and linguistic, that create an environment in which highly innovative, original writing can flourish. (2017, 3-4)

Not only should researchers expand their analyses to what happens after a translation, but to what happens *before* a translation. Post-translation entails asking what cultural consequences a translation provoked, but also, what cultural conditions caused that translation to be made in the first place.

This thesis, therefore, strives to address both aspects of Gentzler's proposal. On one hand, this thesis aims to situate Joseph Smith's translation of the Book of Mormon within its cultural context and identify the cultural conditions of that context that prompted Smith's translation. On the other hand, the objective is to evaluate whether or not the beliefs contained within the Book of Mormon were incorporated into the target cultures where the translations were introduced. In other words, the main goal is to explore the pre-translation conditions of the English Book of Mormon and the post-translation effects of its foreign language translations. With over 116 translations, it is impossible to investigate the post-translation effects of all the Book of Mormon translations that exist within the time and space available in this study. The scope of this research, therefore, will be limited to three case studies. These are the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations, published in 1851, 1852, and 1855.

The very beginnings of the idea for this thesis originated from an essay assignment that broadly prompted the writer to choose a topic surrounding translation and creativity. Having discussed the topic of pseudotranslation in another class, the Book of Mormon was top of mind, and the essay ended up revolving around the concepts of original, translation, and pseudotranslation in regard to Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. While researching

for that essay, it became clear just how pervasive translation was throughout Mormonism as a whole. The fact that the Book of Mormon had been translated into so many languages sparked curiosity. Why so many translations? Why were some translations into lesser-spoken languages produced before translations into more widely spoken languages? Who was responsible for initiating the translations? When trying to settle on a subject for this thesis, these questions resurfaced. Of course, there had to be a narrowing down of the questions within the theme of Book of Mormon translation, and it was suggested that it might be interesting to approach the topic from a post-translation perspective. Early searches on Book of Mormon translations into foreign languages revealed that there are several distinguishable moments of greater translational activity, with the first wave of six translations taking place between 1851 and 1855. This wave was considerably smaller than the other spurts of translational activity and therefore seemed like a more approachable area to focus on. Additionally, these were the first translations of the Book of Mormon outside of English which makes them of significant cultural and historical importance. Even reducing the scope to this first wave, trying to fit the analysis of six different cases into the space of this thesis would undoubtedly prevent any meaningful investigation into each case. Therefore, for practical reasons, three of these six translations were chosen to be a part of this study. There is no real rhyme or reason behind the decision to include the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations instead of the German, French, or Italian translations, except for the fact that these translations are into target languages with fewer speakers, which only further begs to question *why* those languages were chosen for translations at that time.

The first chapter will address the framework and methodology for the thesis. The beginning of the chapter will discuss Gentzler and post-translation studies and the latter half will delve into Pym and translation history. Bandia and Milton's (2009) work on agents of translation, Guzmán's (2013) work on the translator's archive, and Batchelor's (2018) work on paratexts will also be introduced in this section. The main goal of the first chapter is to lay the groundwork for the rest of the research, explaining why this type of research is valuable and how it will be performed. The second chapter focuses on the broader relationship between translation and religion, then more directly explores the Christian influence on translation studies as a discipline, and lastly highlights the ties between translation and the origins of the Church of Latter-day Saints. This last section also goes into detail about Joseph Smith

and his (pseudo)translation of the Book of Mormon. The third chapter opens with a description of translation and translators in the Church as it stands today, and then moves into an analysis of when and where the Book of Mormon has been translated. This chapter includes a series of graphs that illustrate several interesting patterns in the history of Book of Mormon translation. The fourth and final chapter includes three case studies of the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations. The aim is to gather information about who produced these translations, how they were produced, and to identify any post-translation effects in those target cultures as well as back in the source culture. A shorter section will also touch on the case of the Deseret Alphabet translation[3], which is an intriguing translation, especially under the lens of post-translation. The fourth chapter ends with an analysis of the paratexts of the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations and briefly compares those translation processes to current Church translation norms. Finally, the conclusion will reflect on the findings of the research, address its limitations, and provide some possibilities for future studies. The hope is that this research contributes to the growing field of post-translation studies as well as to Book of Mormon studies in the context of translation.

[3] The Deseret Alphabet was an English-language spelling reform pioneered by the Church (Moore 2006).

Chapter One
Post-Translation Studies as Framework

Having defined a research topic and the questions this thesis aims to answer about that topic, the next step is to determine how to go about answering those questions. This thesis lies at the crossroads of post-translation studies and translation history, using the methods from the latter to engage with the theoretical framework of the prior.

The term "post-translation studies" first emerged in 2011 in an article by Nergaard and Arduini. They begin by lamenting the state of translation studies, pointing to a divergence between the "stagnant approaches" of the field and the "complex situations of migration and hybrid cultures and languages we live in today" (Nergaard and Arduini 2011, 8). These approaches, they claim, are insufficient to address all the translational phenomena that exist in such an intricate world of interconnected people and cultures. They argue that we must rethink our conception of what translation studies *is* and acknowledge it as a profoundly transdisciplinary field (Nergaard and Arduini 2011). In this transdisciplinarity, it becomes less important to classify something simply as a translation or as not a translation (Nergaard and Arduini 2011). Their goal is not to leave behind the essence of traditional translation studies but to expand the scope of research, allowing translation scholars to study topics that fall outside the conventional bounds of translation studies and to reapproach old questions from a new perspective. This is to say that the pair do not wish to abandon the study of written texts that has long-defined translation studies but to think about other, perhaps less tangible, questions about those texts, the people involved in creating them, and about other acts, perhaps also less tangible, that should be considered as translation.

Nergaard and Arduini's foray into post-translation studies is brief, a relatively short 8-page introduction to the first issue of *Translation*, a journal with the goal to "stimulat[e] ideas for a new reflection on translation," and functions more as an invitation for consideration and further discussion than as a guidebook to post-translation studies (Nergaard and Arduini 2011, 18). The first robust exploration of post-translation studies comes in 2017 with the publication of Edwin Gentzler's book *Translation and Rewriting in the Age of Post-*

Translation Studies. Gentzler begins the book by summarizing Nergaard and Arduini's article and expressing his agreement with their sentiment, stating:

> In my view, this post-translation concept is very helpful. The field of translation studies has accomplished a lot in the past 30 years, mapping out a disciplinary territory, developing translation histories in a variety of nations, coming up with better methodologies for better analyzing translations, and conducting important sociological work on the role of the translator. However, in many ways, the field strikes me as still restricted, primarily focused on written texts and two-way comparisons, and neglecting pre- and post-translation conditions and effects. Scholars have documented *how* texts differ and have shown that translators often make changes, adapt, and rewrite, but explaining *why* remains problematic. (...)While scholars in the field largely dismantled traditional ideas of the translator's fidelity and pointed out degrees of difference, they have been less successful in the analysis of social and psychological reception matters or explored longer-term post-translation repercussions of translated texts. (Gentzler 2017, 2)

Gentzler, like Nergaard and Arduini, argues that scholars should broaden their viewpoint, looking not only at translations (and rewritings) but also at the spaces in which translations (and rewritings) happen. If we conceptualize translation as a means of "introduc[ing] a new idea or aesthetic form into a culture," then questions arise, such as *why* a translation was produced at a certain point in time (Gentzler 2017, 2). What *space* was the translation produced in, and what was the sociohistorical context? What was the perception of translation in that space at that point in time? Gentzler continues:

> Many of the translators cared little what the university professors thought about their translations; they wanted common men and women—farmers, sailors, shopkeepers, and craftspeople—to read their translations and think about and incorporate into their beliefs the new ideas being introduced. The purpose was not to better represent European texts but to *change* the receiving culture, to alter the way people think about politics, liberty, individual freedom, and their relationship to the absent monarchy. Which comes first, the pen or the sword? In many cases, more often than not, changing peoples' ideas about governing systems comes first, and the revolutionary fervor later. Indeed, the subsequent revolution in art, politics, literature, science, or any disciplinary analysis, may be interpreted as post-translation effects. (Gentzler 2017, 2)

Gentzler's book is organized into four chapters, each addressing a translational event or events in different periods and parts of the world. The first chapter, for example, follows the circulation of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from England to Germany and back to England. The chapter begins with an analysis of the translational culture of Elizabethan England. Gentzler highlights Queen Elizabeth's use of translation as a "unifying force" in England, as she encouraged translation into English and participated in translation

herself (Gentzler 2017, 27). In other words, Gentzler claims that Queen Elizabeth's promotion of translation influenced the translational culture of England which in turn set the stage for someone like Shakespeare to appear. In this sense, the culture that Shakespeare existed in, the pre-writing conditions he was subject to, affected what he wrote and when.

The rest of the chapter focuses on the circulation of the text and the concept of rewriting. Gentzler argues that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is, on one hand, a rewriting of Shakespeare's previous work, *Romeo and Juliet*, and on the other hand, a rewriting of the translations that surrounded him in Elizabethan England. This led to a play where "the sources are so multiple and so disparately translated and rewritten in Elizabethan England that Shakespeare could free himself from a single retelling to create anew" (Gentzler 2017, 42). From here, Gentzler traces the trail of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* through translation and rewriting in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Germany and eventually back to the source culture, England.

The idea of rewriting, especially in the current digital culture, is undoubtedly an interesting subject and, as suggested by its title, a fundamental concept for Gentzler's book. However, the most relevant concepts from Gentzler's book for this thesis are pre-translation culture and post-translation effects. Given language limitations, it would also be exceedingly complicated to identify rewritings of the Book of Mormon in the target cultures. Instead, the aim is to identify the pre-writing and pre-translation conditions of the Book of Mormon and its translations into Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian, and to locate post-translation effects in those target cultures in other disciplines as well as back in the source culture. In other words, the goal is not (necessarily) to find translations (rewritings, etc.) that resulted from the translation of the Book of Mormon in those target languages, but to find consequences of the introduction of the ideas found in the Book of Mormon through translation into a target culture in other disciplines. Then, the objective is to consider what information those consequences can provide about the reception of said translation in the target culture. Certainly, and as Gentzler himself admits, "measuring" the reception of a text is a difficult undertaking. It is relatively easy to discover what was translated and when, but how does one determine whether a translation successfully imported new ideas into the target culture? Though Gentzler does not explicitly describe post-translation as a methodology, he does

offer some cursory suggestions on what types of post-translation effects scholars can look for and, through the four chapters of his book, provides examples of describing pre-translation culture and post-translation effects.

In his book, Gentzler elaborates on the translational culture of Elizabethan England, eighteenth-century Germany, late nineteenth-century France, and early twentieth-century China. Reading through these sections can help inform future post-translation studies researchers about what Gentzler means when he references pre-translation culture and what sort of information and data they should look for. Gentzler does not go into much detail about how or where he retrieved this data. He does, however, directly mention the post-translation effects of Bible translations in the preface, writing they "have changed the religions, educational systems, and at times even the politics of many societies" (2017, xii). When explaining that "[t]o measure the success or failure of the ideas or the aesthetics of a translation, one has to look *beyond* translation and to begin to examine the cultural changes that take place *after* the translation," he uses Bible translation as an example, suggesting that the number of converts or the (non-)construction of churches could be indicators of that success or failure (Gentzler 2017, 3). As the Book of Mormon is a foundational religious text of Mormonism, these same "measurements" could be used to evaluate the reception of the translations in target cultures. Again, Gentzler does not make recommendations to researchers about where they should look to discover this data.

It would be a stretch to argue that Gentzler's work on post-translation studies constitutes a methodology in and of itself. Admittedly, this also was not the objective of the book. Nonetheless, Gentzler's exploration of post-translation studies could serve as a sort of methodological framework - not a methodology, per se, but rather an overarching guide for determining what kind of data researchers should look for and what existing methods they should use to retrieve and organize that data. To this end, the field of translation history has much to offer in terms of providing researchers with the means to investigate post-translation questions.

1.1 Translation History

At their core, translation history and post-translation studies share a number of values. In his book, *Method in Translation History*, Anthony Pym lists what he considers the four general principles of translation history:

> 1. [T]ranslation history should explain why translations were produced in a particular social time and place. In other words, translation history should address problems of social causation. (...)
> 2. [T]he central object of historical knowledge should not be the text of the translation, nor its contextual system, nor even its linguistic features. The central object should be the human translator (...) Only through translators and their social entourage (clients, patrons, readers) can we try to understand why translations were produced in a particular time and place. (...)
> 3. (...) If translation history is to focus on translators, it must organize its world around the social contexts where translators live and work. (...)
> 4. (...) We do translation history in order to express, address and try to solve problems affecting our own situation. (Pym 1998, ix-x)

Arguably, Pym's first and third principles more or less equate to Gentzler's reasoning for a turn toward post-translation studies and his push for analyzing pre-translation culture. The "social causation" Pym refers to in his first principle is exactly what Gentzler references in his introduction when he posits that socio-political and linguistic conditions can "create an environment in which highly innovative, original writing can flourish" (as well as translations) (Gentzler 2017, 4). Translations do not just happen. Translations are made by translators who are products of and react to their sociocultural context. This understanding that translations are conditioned by the people who make them who are conditioned by the world they live in is present in Pym's third principle where he argues that translation history must focus on the "social contexts where translators live and work" (Pym 1998, x).

This same idea is also expressed by Theo Hermans who, in his book *Translation and History*, compares writing translation history to TV detectives that work to uncover "motive, means, and opportunity" (2022, 32). Means and opportunity, in this case, refer to the "social, material, and intellectual conditioning of translation at a certain juncture" (Hermans 2022, 32). Pym's push for researchers to value social context is also apparent in his division of translation history into three areas which Pym labels as translation archaeology, historical criticism, and explanation (per Pym, "for want of a better word") (1998, 5). For Pym,

translation history that falls into the field of explanation involves determining *why* translations happened "when and where they did" (1998, 6). While Gentzler approaches the topic from a post-translation perspective and Pym and Hermans approach the topic from a translation history perspective, they all come to the conclusion that explaining *why* translations happen is important and that looking at the spaces in which translations happen is key to answering that question. Conceptually, translation history and post-translation studies are built on the underlying belief that socio-cultural context is crucial to studying translation.

The only link that appears to be missing between translation history and post-translation studies is the notion of post-translation effects. But while Pym does not introduce a similar concept in these four principles, he does describe a near equivalent in his description of translation archaeology. Translation archaeology is what Pym defines as the research involved in answering the question "who translated what, how, where, when, for whom, and with what effect?" (1998, 6). Is Pym's query as to "with what effect?" not the same as Gentzler's advocacy to consider the "longer-term post-translation repercussions of translated texts" (Pym 1998, 6; Gentzler 2017, 2)? Lieven D'hulst (2001) proposes a similar set of questions about potential research areas in translation history: Quis? Quid? Ubi? Quibus auxilis? Cur? Quomodo? Quando? And Cui bono? Or, in other words: Who? What? Where? With whose help? Why? How? When? And, with what effect? (D'hulst 2001). Neither Pym nor D'hulst elaborate to the extent that Gentzler does on these effects, but it is clear to see that while the term post-translation effects may be relatively new, the path towards a post-translation approach is long and has roots in translation history. Hermans writes that, "[d]oing history is a matter of joining dots, seeing links, tracing patterns and then articulating them in the form of a narrative" (2022, 26). So, the goal here is to join dots, see links, and trace patterns in the translation and circulation of the Book of Mormon and its ideas and to articulate them as a narrative of translation.

Unfortunately, Pym, like Gentzler, fails to explicitly guide researchers on how they should perform this research. In an article on the translation of Buddhist texts, Roberta Raine (2014) tackles the archaeological research she has conducted on the translation of the Indian Buddhist canon into Tibetan. Raine (2014) specifically mentions the lack of guidance in both

Pym and D'hulst's work on translation history but develops, along with fellow researchers, a system for identifying translators of the Buddhist canon and unearthing their biographical information. Raine's article is valuable in that it serves as a detailed account of executing archaeological research on translation, a practical example of Pym's theoretical explanation. Nonetheless, the material Raine and her team are researching is considerably less easily accessible than archaeological data on Book of Mormon translations. Raine and her team's study is focused on translators dating back as far as the 7th century, and it was necessary for a research assistant to spend five months going through materials at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in India. The methods used for this thesis, therefore, will not be as extreme as Raine's.

In an attempt to answer Gentzler's question about *why* translations are produced, Pym's (1998) second principle must not be overlooked. Pym thoughtfully observes that "only humans have the kind of responsibility appropriate to social causation" and that "[t]o understand why translations happened, we have to look at the people involved" (1998, ix). Translations are not machine byproducts. They are the result of complex interactions between complex individuals living in complex cultures. And only humans have the true power to decide to translate. Taking this into consideration, this thesis will also pay attention to the agents involved in the three translation processes, trying to understand insofar as possible what interactions happened to cause each translation to be produced. This concept is explored in Bandia and Milton's (2009) book called *Agents of Translation*, which aims to examine the impact of translation agents in a series of case studies. Bandia and Milton define agents as, beyond translators, also "patrons of literature, Maecenas, salon organizers, politicians or companies which help to change cultural and linguistic policies," including "magazines, journals or institutions" (2009, 1). Agents are the people – and other entities – that interact in the translation process and whose interactions affect translations.

One way to investigate translation agents and the links between them is by going through what Guzmán (2013) refers to as the "translator's archive". Guzmán first describes the translator's archive as "a composition of the translations themselves, of other writing products and practices, as well as of the translator's biography", explaining that it "is key to understanding the place of literary translators and their social situatedness and agency at

large" (2013, 172-173). Later in the article, Guzmán clarifies that while physical documents such as notebooks and manuscripts are examples of a strict interpretation of what a translator's archive is, it is useful to conceptualize the translator's archive as "a more complex composition that is not limited to the archive's materiality, to translator's written statements, but which includes translators' biographies, their practices, the agents involved in the translating event, and the relations among them" (2013, 179). Going through items in a translator's archive can help the researcher make discoveries about the agents in a translation process and how they relate to one another. Or, as Guzmán more eloquently writes, to "illuminate the relationship inherent to the translating event, the individuals or agents that participate in it, and the social and political circumstances that condition it" (2013, 188-189). In the case of the Book of Mormon translations, it is important to note that the translators are not translators by profession, but rather converts to the Church who undertook the task of translating. They are not, therefore, translators per se, but people who translated.

Batchelor's (2018) book on translation and paratexts is an example of why the translator's archive is so important. While some types of paratexts may not be of much use when trying to uncover the ties between translation agents, other types such as prefaces and translators' notes are crucial to studying a translator's archive. Paratexts such as who is listed as the translator in the translation can give the researcher clues about the relationship between translation agents. What does it imply if the credited translator is not the actual translator, or if there is no translator credited at all? In an attempt to reconstruct the interactions between translation agents that resulted in the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations, this thesis will draw on Milton and Bandia's (2009) concept of agents, Guzmán's (2013) notion of the translator's archive, and Batchelor's (2018) work on paratexts.

In a relatively recent article, Janiece Johnson (2023) calls for scholars to build "the field of Book of Mormon reception history". Johnson's concept of "reception" is actually fairly in line with Gentzler's notion of post-translation effects and Pym and D'hulst's questions of "with what effect?". Johnson provides examples of what she views as reception such as "naming children after Book of Mormon figures," "a cross-stitched bookmark of a phrase from the book," and "a politician calling someone Captain Moroni" (Johnson 2023, 53). As

Johnson describes it, reception is about the Book of Mormon infiltrating culture. Johnson's proposals for future studies in Book of Mormon reception history are primarily related to the circulation of the English edition of the Book of Mormon, however, she does have a section on potential for researching the reception of foreign-language editions. Here, she writes:

> Translations of the Book of Mormon's text into non-English language bore, with themselves, from the very beginning, the possibility of decentering the text, from its American reception to having implications for readers all over the world. To have a text that could become their own, believers needed to read it in their own tongue. (Johnson 2023, 66)

Later, she continues:

> Some translations developed after substantive demand from those already converted arose, but others were optimistic attempts to create something to which converts might be attracted - to build it, and they would come. Between 1851 and 1855, the Church published the first six non-English editions of the Book of Mormon. Introductory articles on each of these translations exist - the Danish, French, Italian, German, Welsh, and Hawaiian editions. However, there remains much to be understood about these early editions: How do they relate one to another? Most of the articles written on the subject focus solely on the production of the translation and the publication of the books, stopping short of trying to understand the books' growing audience and their experience of reception. How did the experience of a brush-maker in Wales who purchased a subscription for the Book of Mormon and waited months for delivery differ from that of a Parisian who wandered into the Saints' mission office on the Rue de Tournon and purchased a ready-to-be-bound copy waiting on the shelf? (Johnson 2023, 67)

Johnson's interest in Book of Mormon reception history goes hand in hand with Gentzler and post-translation. Both Johnson and Gentzler want to find out what happens *after* a translation. In fact, Johnson's proposal goes a step farther than Gentzler, arguing that the format in which a translation is produced and circulated can affect the way it is received. Presumably, receiving a translation in separate, unbound parts is a different experience than purchasing a pre-bound copy with special finishings. This idea that the materiality of a translation can influence its reception by the target audience is interesting and is explored by O'Connor (2021) in an article where she argues for a material turn in the study of religious translations. O'Connor explains:

> From a new translation studies perspective, a material approach highlights the importance of considering changes in the physical form of the translated work and it is insightful to examine how the book is materially altered as part of its translational re-elaborations, how "transformissions" form part of its afterlives. (2021, 340-341)

It seems reasonable to conclude that the post-translation effects of a translation could be included as part of its "afterlives." The issue of materiality is intriguing and could serve as another avenue for post-translation research. Tackling the materiality of the Book of Mormon translations starts to roam beyond the boundaries of this thesis, but it is an interesting perspective to keep in mind and briefly address.

Hermans (2022) points out that finding primary sources can often cause difficulties for translation studies researchers as translations tend to be hard to find in bibliographies and archives. This means that researchers who are interested in studying translations from a certain place and time, for example, may struggle to even compile a list of all the translations from that certain place and time. Fortunately, this is a non-issue for this research as the plan is to study translations of the same text into different languages. Additionally, the Book of Mormon translations are made available by the Church and are accessible through their website. Not only are the translations themselves available, but the Church has an impressive archive of historic documents, many of which are also available online. As is to be expected, some translation processes are more well-documented than others. Still, the existence of, and easy access to, such a vast collection of resources is a unique and enriching circumstance.

The Brigham Young University Scholars Archive[4] has been especially useful as it houses articles from the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* as well thousands of other articles on Joseph Smith, Mormon history, and the Book of Mormon. Another excellent resource is the *Joseph Smith Papers Project*, which, according to its website[5], aims to "gather together all extant Joseph Smith documents and to publish complete and accurate transcripts of those documents with both textual and contextual annotation." This includes documents, journals, administrative records, revelations and translations, legal records, and financial records. The Church History Catalog[6] has been yet another helpful tool as well as the website of the Church itself which provides access to information about Church History and Church statistics, among other things. It is to note that articles from the Brigham Young University Scholars Archive are primarily written by scholars who are Mormon, which is not surprising

[4] See: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/
[5] See: https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/articles/about-the-project
[6] See: https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/?lang=yue

given that the Archive is an "institutional repository" of the University, which is owned and run by the Church. The *Joseph Smith Papers Project*, Church History Catalog, and Church of Latter-day Saints website are also run by the Church itself. This is not an attempt to invalidate these sources but to take into consideration the potential for bias.

Research on the Book of Mormon in translation studies is minimal, but a handful of translation studies scholars, such as Theo Hermans, Gideon Toury, Douglas Robinson, and Roberto Valdeón have breached the subject. Of course, as non-Mormons there is also a potential for bias. Hermans, Toury, Robinson, and Valdeón all discuss Joseph Smith's translation of the Book of Mormon into English, but they do not address the translation of the Book of Mormon into other languages. On the whole, existing literature on translation and the Book of Mormon is largely focused on this aspect, even within the literature published by Brigham Young University. While the translation of the Book of Mormon into other languages is the subject of plenty of articles, they are mainly written with the intention of recording Church history and not by translation studies scholars. The hope is that this thesis contributes to filling that research gap.

Chapter Two
Translation and Religion

A fully comprehensive literature review on the relationship between translation and religion would be much too extensive for this dissertation. While important, not all the literature in this field is necessarily relevant to the particular object of study. Namely, the extensive research on linguistic and strategic issues regarding the translation of religious texts will not be included here.[7] It is useful, then, to define a more restricted area of focus for this literature review within the overarching disciplines of translation and religion. The aim is to provide an overview of the existing literature on the connection between translation and religion, how religion has impacted and continues to impact Western translation theory, and, lastly, the role of translation in Mormonism.

The interdependent nature of translation and religion appears in a multitude of books and articles, from both translation and religion scholars. On the one hand, various authors demonstrate the importance of religion to translation. DeJonge and Tietz write that, "[h]istorically, the strongest impetus for translation has been explicitly religious," (2015, 1). Bassnett (2002) also alludes to this impetus, stating that the Christian evangelistic desire to spread the word of God provided translation with a new function. While translation for the Romans served as a tool for enrichment, an opportunity to spread knowledge, with the rise of Christianity came another objective: to spread the word of God (Bassnett 2002). On the other hand, various authors highlight the importance of translation to religion.

In an analysis of the spread of religious knowledge through translation in South Africa, Naudé acknowledges the latter's significance to the former, referring to translation as a "vehicle" for the transmission of religious knowledge contained in religious texts (2020, 4). This significance is supported by Israel (2019) who goes as far as to say that without translation, whether that be the translation of religious texts into other languages or the creation of religious texts through a medium by means of divine translation, religions would not endure. O'Connor also expresses this same idea, explaining that the circulation of

[7] Of particular note is the work of Eugene Nida on formal and dynamic equivalence. See, for example, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Nida and Taber, 1974).

religious beliefs relies on an "apparatus or carrier" (2021, 332). In other words, religious beliefs are embodied in (material) translations. Moreover, O'Connor (2021) argues that through social processes, (material) translations are charged with religious meaning and contribute to the construction of religious identity. Similarly, Naudé posits that religious texts are "require[d] for participation" in religious communities and that, in most cases, a connection to religious texts is possible exclusively through translation (2020, 4). In sum, studies have shown how religion has stimulated the production of translations and how translation provides a way to disseminate religious ideas.

Even with the plethora of work on the interconnectedness of translation and religion, multiple studies call for a greater intersection between translation studies and religious studies. Antes et al. (2004) explain that while religion scholars frequently translate and analyze religious texts, these tasks are often carried out from a linguistic perspective. The authors suggest that there are other translation theories, such as considering the context in which a translation is produced, that religion scholars should add to their repertoire (Antes et al. 2004). Specifically, Antes et al. (2004) reference the tendency to translate Islamic mysticism keywords into German using terms from late Middle Ages German mystical vocabulary. They explain that this is an intentional choice, but that justification from the translator would help to understand why these choices were made (Antes et al. 2004). Likewise, Williams (2004) asserts that although translation is pervasive in religious studies, it is oft ignored by religion scholars who, like scholars from other fields, have traditionally looked down on the field of translation as secondary. According to Williams (2004), advancements in translation studies pose new, relevant questions for academics in the religious field, and he urges them to apply these new ideas to their work in religious studies and to think about how their contact with translation can, in turn, contribute to translation studies. Disregard for research on the confluence of translation and religion in both translation studies and religious studies is also mentioned by Israel (2019), who remarks that this disregard prevails even with the overlap of interests between the two. All of these appeals for a greater intersection of translation studies and religious studies are defended by Long's assertion that, "the interdisciplinarity of translation studies is nowhere more evident than in the context of holy text translation" (2005, 16).

On a broader level, Long claims that "[a]ny cultural contact, 'interference' or exchange requires translation" (2005, 2). In other words, translation is what enables cultures to interact with other cultures. Nord concurs with this notion, writing that translation is more than just a linguistic transfer, serving as a way of "facilitating communication" between cultures (2002, 99). This same idea is supported by Naudé, who points out that the translation of texts, and especially literary texts, involves a "reproduction of culture" in which elements of one culture are transferred to another culture (2000, 22). This is to say that religion and the spread of religion, the transfer of religious beliefs from one culture to another, rely on translation because cultural exchange itself relies on translation. Religion, as a part of culture, is logically subject to these same rules.

As we can see, the relationship between translation and religion inevitably begins to wander into the connection between translation, religion, and culture. Translation affects religion. Religion affects translation. Translation affects culture. Culture affects translation. Religion affects culture. Culture affects religion. This naturally brings to mind the 'cultural turn' in translation studies proposed by Bassnett and Lefevere. A few sentences from the introduction of their pivotal work *Translation, History and Culture* highlight this notion:

> There is always a context in which the translation takes place, always a history from which a text emerges and into which a text is transposed. (1990, 11)
>
> [T]ranslations are always doubly contextualized, since the text has a place in two cultures. (1990, 11)
>
> The object of study has been redefined; what is studied is the text embedded within its network of both source and target cultural signs. (1990, 12)

Translation is not an isolated phenomenon. Translations are created within one sociocultural context and introduced into another sociocultural context. Conceptualizing translations without considering these ties would be to overlook an infinite number of factors affecting how (and if) translations are made and received. Many authors express this shift towards a recognition of the cultural context in which texts are translated. Williams explains that translation never takes place in a "void" (2004, 18); Naudé maintains that "translations are never produced in a vacuum" (2005, 28); and Berneking (2016), a Bible translation consultant, similarly advocates for research on the sociology of (Bible) translators rooted in

this same understanding. Literature on the 'cultural turn' of translation studies is abundant and again it would be impossible for all to be included here.[8] Ultimately, what is important to understand is that sociocultural context impacts translation and religion and, in turn, translation and religion impact sociocultural context. This concept is the core of Gentzler's proposition to consider a post-translation perspective.

Expanding on the ties between translation and religion, some authors have explored the direct impact of religion on Western translation theory. Douglas Robinson (1992) identifies the root of translation as a science in Christian antiquity, specifically crediting the desire to control translations of the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin, as well as to control the translators responsible for those translations. The objective of Bible translation, which was to produce an accessible text, determined translation strategies used by translators (Bassnett 2002; Zogbo 2009). Robinson's (1992) argument is that the Christian asceticism which ruled the translations and translators of the Middle Ages, has been internalized and institutionalized in such a way that it continues to characterize modern Western translation theory (although not to such an extreme). Christian asceticism idealizes a translation that is faithful and a translator who acts as a "neutral transfer-machine" or a "disciplined monk" (Robinson 1992, 3-7).

Moura (2020) ties Robinson's description of the ideal translator to Venuti's work on the translator's invisibility. Additionally, Moura (2020) uses a specific instance of Bible translation, the Legend of the Septuagint, to demonstrate the effects of such a foundational account on Western translation theory, especially in regard to the erasure of the translator's corporeal body. The Legend of the Septuagint, the story of the mythical process of the translation of the Bible from Hebrew into *Koine* Greek by seventy-two translators, details the rituals performed by those translators such as washing their hands before translating (Moura 2020). The findings serve as corroboration to Robinson's argument, in that the Septuagint translators, much like a "disciplined monk" are required to rid themselves of all "corporeal qualities" to achieve the most correct translation (Moura 2020, 505). The religious influence on modern translation studies is also addressed by DeJonge and Tietz (2015), who recognize that while translation theory has since expanded far beyond religious

[8] For further reading, see, for example, *Translation, History, and Culture* (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990).

texts, many of the debates that we continue to have around translation stem from debates regarding the translation of religious texts. Apart from the impact of Bible translation on the beginnings of Western translation theory, Israel (2019) adds that Bible translation has played a major role in translation studies since its emergence as a distinct academic discipline in the 1970s.

The emphasis on Bible translation up until this point is not to diminish the translation of other religious texts but rather because the history of Bible translation is arguably most similar to the history and function of translation in Mormonism. The belief that the Book of Mormon can and should be translated, into all languages, is remarkably similar to the push for Bible translation. In fact, the emphasis on translation in Mormonism is more than a shared belief, it is engrained in the doctrinal foundation of the religion. One verse in the Book of Mormon reads:

> Behold, it has been prophesied by our fathers, that [the brass plates] should be kept and handed down from one generation to another, and be kept and preserved by the hand of the Lord until they should go forth unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, that they shall know of the mysteries contained thereon. (Alma 37:4)

Another, in the Doctrine and Covenants, a series of revelations received by Joseph Smith, declares:

> For it shall come to pass in that day, that every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power, by the administration of the Comforter, shed forth upon them for the revelation of Jesus Christ. (D&C 90:11)

These verses do not explicitly call for the translation of the Book of Mormon into other languages. However, for a text – and the ideas contained in that text – to reach "every nation, kindred, tongue, and people," translation is vital.

2.1 Translation and the Origins of Mormonism

Translation has held a coveted role in Mormonism since the conception of the Church. In 1823, Joseph Smith, the founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, allegedly

had a vision of the angel Moroni who relayed to Smith that buried in a hill near his home in Palmyra, New York, was a sacred ancient book written on gold plates, along with two stones (often referred to as interpreters or seers) (Hermans 2014). Four years later, in 1827, following a handful of other visits from the angel Moroni, Smith was instructed to retrieve the gold plates from the hill (Hermans 2014). Smith began to translate the plates a few months later, using the aforementioned stones, which were set in loops of metal like a pair of glasses, and which allowed Smith to be able to read and translate the script (Hermans 2014). At some point in the translation process, Smith stopped using the interpreters in favor of a seer stone which he would use by placing the stone into a hat and then lifting the hat to his face (Hardy 2021). The translation was dictated by Smith to a scribe and, although estimates vary, the entire process took somewhere around 85 days (Welch 2018). The Book of Mormon, the English "translation" of the ancient record written on the gold plates, was published in 1830.

Before diving further into Smith and his translation of the text, it is important to make note of the cultural context in which Smith "translated". By 1830, the United States was in the midst of the Second Great Awakening, a "firestorm of evangelical enthusiasm that had been sweeping through American society for at least a generation" (Wood 1980, 360-361). According to Wood, the Second Great Awakening "brought religion to the remotest areas of America, popularized religion as never before, and created a religious world unlike anything in Christendom" (1980, 361). The religious revival that was happening in the United States resulted from the undoing of traditional religious structures and pushed individuals to search for new ways to connect (Wood 1980). On this shift, Wood explains that "[t]he disintegration of older structures of authority released torrents of popular religiosity into public life. Visions, dreams, prophesyings, and new emotion-soaked religious seekings acquired a validity they had not earlier possessed" (1980, 368). Most importantly, Wood concludes that "[o]nly the culture of early nineteenth-century evangelical could have produced [Mormonism]" (1980, 386). In other words, Smith found himself in a culture where people all around him were looking for new belief systems to subscribe to and who were gradually becoming more accepting of supernatural happenings.

Smith's translation of the Book of Mormon is unique because it lacks a major component of a traditional conception of translation: a source text. Disregarding the validity of Smith's claims of translating an ancient text written in a language he did not know with the aid of stones and a hat, the fact that there is no source text is accepted by both believers and non-believers. For non-believers, there is no source text because the gold plates never existed, and for believers, according to Smith himself, the gold plates were returned to the angel Moroni after Smith had "accomplished by them what was required by [his] hand" (Smith 1851b, 44).[9] While specific definitions vary by author, the general concept of a translation without a source text is referred to as pseudotranslation.

For Rambelli, pseudotranslations are texts "perceived as translations" but which derive from features of a group of texts as opposed to from a singular source text (2009, 208). In other words, instead of translating a specific text, pseudotranslators will craft a "translation" based on characteristics from a genre or group of texts. Maia et al., exploring the existing literature on pseudotranslation, come to a similar conclusion, labeling pseudotranslation as the "clone of a code" as opposed to a "clone of a clone" (2018, 76). Again, the idea here is that what is being translated are the *traits* that a source text of a particular genre would be *expected* to have. Pseudotranslations seek to serve as archetypes of a source genre in the target culture. But why do pseudotranslations exist? What is the purpose of presenting a text as a translation instead of an original? What do authors gain in disguising themselves as translators?

Gideon Toury reasons that pseudotranslation is a means of "introducing novelties into a culture" (1995, 41). Similarly, Rambelli points out that pseudotranslation is a way for "intellectuals to introduce innovations into their own cultural polysystems" (2009, 211). Additionally, Toury (1995) and Rambelli (2009) argue that as translations are usually treated with less rigor than original texts, pseudotranslation can be used by authors to publish their work under less scrutiny. What makes the case of the Book of Mormon particularly interesting, and what Toury refers to as an "extreme case" of pseudotranslation, is that it was not merely presented as a translation, but also *composed* as a translation (1995, 41). On the Book of Mormon and its source text, Hermans reflects:

[9] This is especially curious because it renders the source text as temporary.

> The *Book of Mormon*'s gold-plated original has literally disappeared without trace. We also have an explicit statement, a revelation straight from heaven, affirming the translation's unique quality and complete adequacy, granting it full authority to speak for and even in lieu of its original. This makes the *Book of Mormon* the most dramatic example I know of a translation which is not only promoted to fully equivalent rank with its original but has so totally occupied the latter's place as to hide it from view once and for all. Joseph Smith's version has pushed Mormon's scriptures into irretrievable obscurity, overwriting them wholesale. (2014, 5)

This dynamic renders the issue of whether Joseph Smith's "translation" of the Book of Mormon is a translation or an original moot. Effectively, the alleged translation takes the place that the alleged source text held. Hermans explains that equivalence between translations and originals is not about their quality but something to be "proclaimed" by "external intervention" (2014, 6). According to Hermans, when translations and originals gain equivalency:

> The translations have to all intents and purposes ceased to be translations. A translation which is declared to be, and is recognized as being, in all respects equal to its prototext, may well continue to be a translation in a genetic sense but it no longer functions as such. (2014, 7)

It is interesting that even after the alleged translation of the Book of Mormon was accepted as an equal to its alleged source text, Smith never ceased to characterize the text as a translation and himself as a translator. In terms of paratextual support to his claims, the Book of Mormon contains two pages of testimony from eleven total witnesses who claim to have seen the gold plates and testify to their veracity. These testimonies are what Hermans refers to as "performative speech acts" which function as the "external interventions" mentioned above (2014, 5-6). In the first three editions of the English translation of the Book of Mormon, the testimonies appear at the end of the Book of Mormon, from the fourth edition onward they appear directly after the title page. The testimonies read as follows:

> THE TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES
> Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken. And we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down

> from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true. And it is marvelous in our eyes. Nevertheless, the voice of 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. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.
> Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, Martin Harris
>
> AND ALSO THE TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES
> Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That Joseph Smith, Jun., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen. And we lie not, God bearing witness of it.
> Christian Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, Jun., John Whitmer, Hiram Page, Joseph Smith, Sen., Hyrum Smith, Samuel H. Smith. (Smith 1830, 589-590)

The testimonies, while similar, have a few key differences. The Testimony of Eight Witnesses only attests to the existence of the plates themselves. The witnesses claim to have "seen and hefted" the plates, implying that they physically saw and touched the plates with their own eyes and hands. The Testimony of Three Witnesses differs in two ways. Firstly, the three witnesses testify to the divine nature of the *translation*, they write that they know the plates have been translated "by the gift and power of God." Secondly, the three witnesses do not claim that they physically saw the plates but rather that they were shown to them in a vision by an angel of God. In other words, one group testifies to authenticity of the plates as physical objects and the other group testifies to the authenticity of Smith's translation of the plates. Certainly, and especially following the extended discussion about the importance of context, it is relevant to the narrative to understand who these witnesses are.

The first three witnesses are Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris. All three of these men were involved in the translation process in some way or another, either as scribes or assistants (Baugh 2011). Martin Harris was also responsible for funding the printing of the first edition of the Book of Mormon (Baugh 2011). The trio also all went on to hold leadership positions in the Church, most notably Cowdery who served as Assistant

President to Joseph Smith, and David Whitmer who served as the President of the Church in Missouri (Baugh 2011).

The first four of the eight witnesses are David Whitmer's brothers: Christian Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, Peter Whitmer Jr., and John Whitmer (Baugh 2011). All four brothers would go on to serve in leadership positions in the Church (Baugh 2011). Jacob Whitmer left the Church in 1838, and his brother John Whitmer was excommunicated in that same year (Baugh 2011). Hiram Page, the fifth of the eight witnesses, was married to David Whitmer's sister and also left the Church in 1838 (Baugh 2011). The last three witnesses are Joseph Smith's father and two of his brothers (Baugh 2011). They were also all called to leadership positions in the Church (Baugh 2011).

On the one hand, it makes sense that the witnesses to the gold plates would be people who were close to Smith and who would therefore presumably be in closer proximity to the translation process. If these were the people that Smith regularly spent time with, then it is somewhat logical to assume that they would have a greater chance of bearing witness to Smith and his work translating. On the other hand, the fact that all the witnesses were personally involved in the translation process or related to someone who was involved in it, does lessen the likelihood of impartiality. Regardless, the decision to include the written testimony of eleven witnesses to provide credibility to Smith as a translator and attest to the existence of a source text is particularly unique to the Book of Mormon. However, it does beg the question, would testimony from someone unconnected not be more valuable?

Smith did also seek validation from individuals outside of his sphere. In February 1828, soon after the plates had been retrieved from the hill, Martin Harris took a transcription of some of the Book of Mormon characters to New York, where he planned to meet with various scholars (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.d). A meeting between Martin Harris and Charles Anthon, a professor at Columbia University, did take place, but the two disagree on how the meeting transpired (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.d).

According to Harris, Anthon studied the characters and wrote a statement authenticating them (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.d). After Harris revealed the origin of the plates

to Anthon, Anthon requested to physically see the plates which Harris responded was impossible (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.d). Anthon then, per Harris's account, proceeded to rip up the statement he had written (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.d). Anthon, who does confirm that the meeting happened, recounts that he did not authenticate the characters and had advised Harris to not invest in the Book of Mormon translation and publication (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.d). Because Harris left the meeting convinced that he should continue to support Smith, despite Anthon's warning, the trip is viewed by Mormons as a "fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy" (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.d). Even an event such as this, which arguably directly contradicts Smith's claims, is repurposed to fit a certain narrative. Whether or not Anthon authenticated the characters or not becomes irrelevant. What becomes the main takeaway of the story is that whatever transpired was a prophetic event.

Later that same year, in June 1828, Martin Harris asked for Smith's permission to take the 116 pages of the translation manuscript that had been completed at that time to show to a few members of his family (Haws 2015). Harris was eager to assuage his family's doubts regarding Smith and the translation (Haws 2015). While Harris was in possession of the manuscript, the pages were lost and again, as in the Charles Anthon story, there is no consensus on what really happened to them (Haws 2015). Some argue that Harris's wife burned the manuscript immediately after Harris brought it to her, others claim that she gave it to a neighbor to hide, and yet others assume that she hid it herself in order to force Smith to retranslate the pages (Haws 2015). According to supporters of this last theory, Harris's wife wanted Smith to retranslate the same pages so that she could compare his new translation to the translation she had stolen and expose him as a fraud (Haws 2015).

Like Harris's meeting with Anthon, the loss of the 116 pages was reframed, this time as a consequence of Harris breaking his "oath" in which he "solemnly covenanted" to only show the papers to a handful of people (Haws 2015, 83). Again, what *actually* happened to the pages does not matter so much as how the story was coopted to become part of the growing narrative surrounding the translation process. Whether or not Harris's wife burned or hid the pages becomes irrelevant. What becomes the main takeaway of the story is that the loss of the pages was represented by Smith as a manifestation of divine intervention.

The physical loss of the 116 pages was not the only ramification of Harris' transgression. In July 1828, Smith received revelation, published in the Doctrine and Covenants, chastising Smith for his betrayal and revoking his ability to translate. The revelation reads as follows:

> Behold, you have been entrusted with these things, but how strict were your commandments; and remember also the promises which were made to you, if you did not transgress them.
> And behold, how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men.
> For, behold, you should not have feared man more than God. Although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words—
> Yet you should have been faithful; and he would have extended his arm and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble.
> Behold, thou art Joseph, and thou wast chosen to do the work of the Lord, but because of transgression, if thou art not aware thou wilt fall.
> But remember, God is merciful; therefore, repent of that which thou hast done which is contrary to the commandment which I gave you, and thou art still chosen, and art again called to the work;
> Except thou do this, thou shalt be delivered up and become as other men, and have no more gift.
> And when thou deliveredst up that which God had given thee sight and power to translate, thou deliveredst up that which was sacred into the hands of a wicked man,
> Who has set at naught the counsels of God, and has broken the most sacred promises which were made before God, and has depended upon his own judgment and boasted in his own wisdom.
> And this is the reason that thou hast lost thy privileges for a season. (D&C 3: 5-14)

Sometime around April 1829, around 10 months after Smith lost his power to translate, he received revelation reinstating his gift:

> Now, behold, I say unto you, that because you delivered up those writings which you had power given unto you to translate by the means of the Urim and Thummim, into the hands of a wicked man, you have lost them.
> And you also lost your gift at the same time, and your mind became darkened.
> Nevertheless, it is now restored unto you again; therefore see that you are faithful and continue on unto the finishing of the remainder of the work of translation as you have begun. (D&C 10: 1-3)

The revelation that Smith received taking away and reinstating his ability to translate only goes to further corroborate his claim that the translation was completed through "the gift and power of God." Numerous authors confirm that this is the only explanation that Smith ever

gave for his translation process (Gardner 2016; Hardy 2021; Lancaster 1983; Skousen 1997). However, theories on Smith's translation of the Book of Mormon are plentiful.

Royal Skousen (1997), head of the Book of Mormon Critical Text Project, proposes three possible "kinds of control" over Smith's translation process: loose control, tight control, or iron-clad control. With loose control, Smith would receive the ideas and would then put them into his own words; with tight control, Smith would be able to see the words written out and would then dictate them to his scribe - with this type of control, mistakes could be made by Smith or the scribe during the translation process; with iron-clad control, no errors could be made in the translation (Skousen 1997). Skousen (1997) concludes that while witnesses to the translation process seem to describe an iron-clad control, an analysis of the original manuscript and changes to the Book of Mormon over time suggest a loose control.

Like Skousen, Brant A. Gardner proposes three options for categorizing the translation: literalist equivalence, functional equivalence, or conceptual equivalence (Terry 2014). Gardner more or less discards Skousen's idea of iron-clad equivalence, which he deems as near impossible, and instead opts for the term literalist equivalence (as opposed to literal) (Terry 2014). Literalist equivalence, therefore, is most similar to Skousen's theory of tight control; conceptual equivalence strives to transfer meaning but not necessarily grammar or vocabulary; and functional equivalence closely follows the structure of the original while allowing for more flexibility in the vocabulary used (Terry 2014). After presenting varied evidence, Gardner ultimately settles on the conclusion that although most of the book was translated according to functional equivalence, some evidence points towards sections of literalist equivalence, and other evidence points towards sections of conceptual equivalence (Terry 2014).

Roger Terry (2014) proposes yet another three possible ways of categorizing the translation: human translation, divine translation, or machine translation (machine meaning the interpreters). Terry prefaces his discussion of these three options with a comparison of the Book of Mormon translation process to a "million-piece jigsaw puzzle" (2014, 177). He argues that no translation theorist up until that point in time had been able to account for the long list of potential (contradicting) factors, some of which seem to support the miraculous

nature of the translation while others contradict it. Some of these factors include: “the presence of grammatical errors in the translated text;” “modern vocabulary and idioms;” “historical anachronisms in the text;” “Joseph correcting the scribe’s spelling while looking in the hat” and “vocabulary (...) beyond Joseph’s at that point in his life” (Terry 2014, 178). Terry’s conclusion is that the Book of Mormon is a “human translation (...) aided by divine inspiration (Terry 2014, 185). Interestingly, Terry argues that the translator was not Joseph Smith, who he designates as a “human conduit,” but instead the angel Moroni - who had appeared in Smith’s vision of the golden plates (2014, 185).

Judging from the theories of just three scholars, it is clear to see that there is no real consensus on *how* the Book of Mormon was translated. The majority of literature on translation and Mormonism centers on Smith’s translation process. Given the importance of the text to the religion, which Joseph Smith himself designates as “the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion,” the preoccupation with how the text came to be is understandable (Smith 2007, 57). Still, other authors have sought to explain not *how* the Book of Mormon was translated, but to prove that it *is* a translation.

Multiple authors have identified textual features and physical characteristics that they argue confirm that the Book of Mormon is a translation. John Gee and John A. Tvedtnes (1999) compare ancient manuscripts discovered by archeologists to Smith’s description of the gold plates and argue the existence of some similarities between the two back Smith’s claims. Skousen (1997) and Tvedtnes (1970) both contend that the presence of Hebraisms in Smith’s translation also confirms its status as a translation. There is even an article titled “188 Unexplainable Names: Book of Mormon Names No Fiction Writer Would Choose” (Black and Wilcox 2011). Further yet, a few authors discuss the function of translation as a source of credibility in Mormonism.

Roberto Valdeón uses three different examples of translation to demonstrate how translation was used as an “instrument of normalization” in Mormonism (2014, 219). Valdeón’s (2014) first example is that of pseudotranslation and the Book of Mormon. As this issue was previously discussed, it serves to summarize here that the presentation of the Book of Mormon as a translation strengthened its claim of authenticity (Valdeón 2014). Smith

translated two other important texts before he died in 1844, which Valdeón (2014) uses as his other two examples.

Starting in 1831, the year after the Book of Mormon was published, Smith began a translation (or revision, or rewriting?) of the King James Bible (Valdeón 2014). Valdeón (2014) categorizes Smith's translation of the Bible as a form of intralingual translation and points out that Smith would be unable to consult the source texts as he was unable to read Hebrew or Greek. The Church itself confirms this process of translation, stating that Smith "did not employ Hebrew and Greek sources, lexicons, or a knowledge of biblical languages to render a new English text," instead "dictating inspired changes and additions to scribes" (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.c). In other words, Smith was again serving as some sort of human conduit for God's translation. Valdeón again emphasizes that the "concept of translation provided his work with the element of veracity and respectability he desired for his divine mission" (2014, 229). By labeling his revision of the King James Bible as a translation, especially as a divine translation, Smith effectively preemptively shut down any opposition to his work. While Smith's translation of the Bible was not adopted by the Church for official purposes, it is still demonstrative of the importance of translation to the origins of Mormonism and to Smith himself.

Lastly, Valdeón (2014) brings up Smith's translation of Egyptian papyri into English, a part of which would later be published in the Pearl of Great Price, yet another Mormon scripture. The Church purchased the papyri after Smith was contacted by Michael H. Chandler in 1835 (Valdeón 2014). Chandler hoped that given Smith's success translating the Book of Mormon, he would be able to translate the hieroglyphics on the papyri (Valdeón 2014). Yet again, Valdeón highlights how this is important: "the translation of the Egyptian documents could not only serve to support Smith's linguistic abilities and his translation of the Book of Mormon, it could also give him credit as the founder of the LDS Church" (2014, 232). Smith translated the papyri, and they were thought to have been burned in the 1860s but were rediscovered in 1966. By then, research on Egyptian hieroglyphics had advanced significantly and the papyri were retranslated into English by Robert Ritner (Valdeón 2014). Ritner's translation did not match Smith's translation (Valdeón 2014). As opposed to Smith's

Book of Mormon translation, this instance is markedly distinct as a source text became available to compare to Smith's translation (Valdeón 2014).

In 1981, Joseph G. Stringham, then manager of Evaluation, Training, and Adaptation of the Translation Division of the Church, published an article on the Church and translation. Stringham starts the article by stating that the "translation of scriptures and other materials plays an increasingly important role in an expanding Church" and reveals that members of the Church Translation Division feel as if they are as important as Church missionaries in spreading the gospel (1981, 69). This is of course reminiscent of the Christian drive to translate the Bible. Like in mainstream Christianity, this necessity for translation is also present in Mormon scripture. Moreover, Smith's role as a translator is also cemented in revelation where he is called as "a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ" (Smith 1835, 177). As Smith translated the Book of Mormon by the power of God, the translation can be considered revelation. This would seem to imply that translation, as revelation, is an activity reserved for the prophet. Stringham (1981) makes an important distinction between translation and revelation, reasoning that while Smith's revelations involved translation, this was an exception rather than a rule. In other words, not all translation was to be considered revelation and therefore, translation in the Church was not to be limited to the prophet. Considering this distinction, Stringham presents a nuanced perspective on translation and translators of religious texts:

> Although a stewardship from God, language is a tool of some precision and works best in the hands of great writers who have made the effort to master it. However, error is inseparably tied to translation because of the medium - human language - which is imperfect in all its uses. Once we accept the limitations of language, we can see how important the role of the Spirit is in helping us understand the written word of God.
>
> On the other extreme, there is a great temptation to think that if we translate the words, the Spirit will provide all the meaning. This also is not so. There is more to the stewardship of language than just words. In addition to the words and the Spirit, the meaning is conveyed by such things as intonation, rhetorical figures, syntax, imagery, rhythm, discourse patterns, logic, and pauses. All these are part of man's language. We doubt that God will provide all the meaning of a translation through the Spirit that man should have provided through his skilled use of language. The Spirit will compensate for the limitations of human language, but not usually for the translator's neglect. The Holy Ghost is not a substitute for effort. (1981, 72)

It's unclear whether Stringham believes that Smith produced the Book of Mormon translation devoid of any agency. While he refers to Smith as a seer and categorizes Smith's translations as revelation, he also describes the interpreters as "a dramatic and valuable aid" to the translation process (1981, 69). If Smith were truly nothing more than a human conduit, as Terry (2014) surmises, does it make sense that he would need an "aid"? An aid is something that *facilitates* a process, as in, not something that would translate *for* Smith but something that would *help* him translate. Douglas Robinson, in his description of Smith as a spirit-channeled translator, also theorizes that Smith had to have been more than a "mere passive instrument" (2001, 61). Questions of Smith's agency aside, the passage from Stringham's article is an interesting insight into the role of translators of Mormon scripture.

The last section of Stringham's article is titled "The Human Factor" and tells the story of Maximo Z. Parayno, who translated the Book of Mormon into Pangasinan. The first sentence reads: "[e]ach of the languages we work in has a story" (Stringham 1981, 89). This attention to the life and story of a translator appears to challenge Venuti's notion of the invisible translator. In fact, articles on Mormon translators and their translation process are readily available (Dennis 2002; Homer 2002; McClellan 2002; Scharffs 2002). These articles, although they focus on translation processes, are not written from a translation studies perspective, but the fact that articles about who translated what, where, and how, exist, lends to the idea that perhaps Mormon translators are (at least sometimes) an exception to Venuti's rule. How these translators are represented (or not) in the paratexts of the translations themselves is an issue that will be addressed in Chapter 4. In 2017, almost 40 years after Stringham's article, López-Alcalá published an article claiming that while the study of translators has gained importance in the field of translation studies, Mormon translators have been left in "academic oblivion" (2017, 424). Stringham and López-Alcalá contradict each other, but a fair interpretation seems to be that the lives of many Mormon translators have been documented within the Mormon sphere but not within the sphere of translation studies.

López-Alcalá (2017) focuses the rest of his article on the three schemata which he argues govern the translation process of Mormon translators. These are: "obedience to prophet leaders", "reverence for the sacred nature of the source texts deemed as scripture in the Mormon tradition", and "the duty of sanctification" (López-Alcalá 2017, 440). This last

schema implies that Mormon translators must: follow the Biblical ten commandments, abstain from premarital sex, refrain from marital infidelity, pay tithing, avoid "evil or lurid thoughts, cursing and gossiping," and "public criticism of church leaders," among other things (López-Alcalá 2017, 438). These requirements are not so distant from the rituals of the Septuagint translators and Robinson's (1992) description of the ideal translator in Western translation theory as a "disciplined monk". Presumably, the rigorous discipline of Mormon translators reduces the chance of any "corporeal" interference in the process of translation (Moura 2020).

Chapter Three

Translation, Translators, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

The language menu on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints homepage provides an impressive 137 different language options for navigating their website. In comparison, the official website of the Vatican[10] is available to navigate in 9 total languages and the official website of the Vatican News[11] is available in 34 total languages. It seems a fair assumption that translation, even outside the Book of Mormon, is held in high regard by the Church.

The May 2024 General Conference, for example, was interpreted in 103 languages (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2024a). The first General Conference, which happens twice each year, with interpretation services took place in October 1961, with interpretation provided in Dutch, German, Samoan, and Spanish (Merrill 2011). As of 2011, that number had grown to 93, and an additional 10 languages have been added since then (Merrill 2011). According to Brad Lindsay, then manager of Interpretation Services for the Church, translation of the speeches given at General Conference begin up to six months before the event, which means that interpreters have the advantage of reading a pre-translated script (Merrill 2011). While some interpreters work on-site in Salt Lake City, others interpret from abroad (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2024a). For the May 2024 General Conference, this consisted of about 400 interpreters working from Salt Lake City and 400 interpreters working from elsewhere (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2024a). Interpreters working on-site are provided with "state-of-the-art, soundproof workspaces in which interpreters watch a video feed of general conference, wear headsets, and speak their interpretation into a microphone" (Merill 2011). Additionally, "members of the translation teams meet before each session to review assignments, receive updates and join in prayer" (Orgill 2015).

To date, the Book of Mormon has been translated in full into 97 different languages and has been partially translated, in selections, into an additional 19 languages (The Church of

[10] https://www.vatican.va/content/vatican/pt.html
[11] https://www.vaticannews.va/en.html

Latter-day Saints n.d.a; Schneider 2022). Also, there are a total of 76 revised translations[12] of the Book of Mormon (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.a). The first translation, into Danish, was published in 1851 and the most recent translation, into Macedonian, was published in 2023 (Schneider 2022). Located under the "Scriptures" section of the official Church of Latter-day Saints website is a link to another page titled "Translations and Formats." Opening this page allows the user to browse by scripture - Holy Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price - or by language. Selecting a specific language will lead to yet another page where the available scriptures in that language are located.

The quantity of scripture resources available varies by language. The Portuguese translation of the Book of Mormon, for example, is available in digital text form as a PDF file, EPUB file, MOBI file, Kindle book, braille file, and for a Victor Reader Stream (media player for the blind and visually impaired). The translation is available in audio form as an MP3 file or M4B file. The English version of the Book of Mormon is available in the greatest number of formats, including all the formats of the Portuguese translation as well as on Audible and for a Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY) audio player. In English, the DAISY, MP3, and M4B audio files are available in a male or female voice. Translation of the Book of Mormon in American Sign Language is also available on the website in video format. While some languages are available in more formats than others, all but two translations of the Book of Mormon are available at least as a PDF file. The two exceptions are the Burmese translation, which is not available as a downloadable PDF but is accessible as a digital text through the Online Gospel Library, and the Cakchiquel translation which is also available as a digital text through the Online Gospel Library and as an MP3 audio file.

Availability of the Book of Mormon translations is almost overabundant. Was the decision to record the audio in a male or female voice driven by supply or demand? Is this a feature that users take advantage of? What formats of the Book of Mormon translations are most used? A press release from April 2024 advertises "new audio options in Gospel Library

[12] The Church website categorizes Book of Mormon translations as full, revised, selections, or reprints. It is unclear whether a revised translation consists of an entirely new translation or of an edited edition of an earlier translation. Perhaps the extent to which a revised translation functions more as a retranslation or as a truly revised translation varies case by case.

App." Users can now connect to iOS CarPlay or Android Auto and navigate the Gospel Library App hands-free (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2024b). Furthermore, users can now choose from a selection of accents when listening to their scriptures in audio form (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2024b). Navigating from the "Scriptures" page, the user can also access a page titled "Book of Mormon Stories" which houses an adapted version of the Book of Mormon geared towards children. This version includes simplified verses, illustrations, and an animated video with an audio reading of the verses.

So, how do these translations happen? Who decides that a translation should be produced? Who is responsible for translating? In a book chapter written by Chou and Chou (2015), an attached appendix contains questions regarding the translation of the Book of Mormon into other languages with answers provided by the Priesthood Department of the Church. As to the question of how languages are chosen for translation, the Priesthood Department responds that requests for translation must come from Area Presidencies and are then granted or denied by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve[13] (Chou and Chou 2015). For example, if an Area President feels that a translation would benefit members in their area, they can send a request to the First Presidency who will then evaluate the situation and make a decision. This system is somehow decentralized and centralized at the same time. Initiative for translation must come from outside the central authority, but ultimately all decisions regarding translation are made by the top leaders of the Church.

Once a language is approved for translation, the process must follow the "Worldwide Translation Plan" which functions in different phases of materials to translate (Seymour 2006). In an audio interview with a handful of individuals involved in Church translation, published on the Church website in 2023, it is explained that there is an introductory phase, phase one, phase two, and phase three (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2023). Each phase contains different Church literature. For example, the introductory phase includes the *Gospel Fundamentals* manual and phase one includes the scriptures (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2023). According to Seymour (2006), the phases approved for translation depend on

[13] The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve are part of the "general governance of the Church" (Smith 2007, 12).

the number of members that speak that language. This means that there is a certain order for the translation of Church literature that must be followed.

An interview published on the Mormon blog *Times and Seasons* in 2016 with the then-manager of scripture translation support for the Church, Tod Harris, provides some interesting insight into the contemporary workings of the translation department. Harris is asked to describe the process of producing the newest edition of the scriptures in Portuguese and he explains that the Church worked with the translation office in Brazil as well as with Church leaders in both Brazil and Portugal to find qualified members (Welch 2016a). Harris notes that translation teams are made up of native-speaking members (Welch 2016b). Both Chou and Chou (2015) and Harris confirm the earlier claim by López-Alcalá that anyone who works on scripture translation for the Church must be a temple-worthy member (Welch 2016c).[14]

Translation teams are made up of translators, reviewers, and ecclesiastical reviewers (Welch 2016b). Chou and Chou (2015) report that members of the translation team can work as volunteers or as paid employees. Harris is slightly more specific, stating that most scripture translators work close to full-time and are almost always paid (Welch 2016a). Ecclesiastical reviewers, on the other hand, who are local Church leaders in the target culture, are not paid (Welch 2016b). Their job, as per Harris, is to review "all translated scriptures to ensure that they are doctrinally accurate and are acceptable to native speakers" (Welch 2016a). This team dynamic, according to an answer given by the Priesthood Department, is why translators of scripture translation are not named, as "the work does not belong to any single contributor" (Chou and Chou 2015, 261). All scripture translation is supervised by a team working at Church Headquarters in Salt Lake City (Welch 2016b).

Not only does the Church control what languages are chosen for translation, what materials are translated into those languages, and who can translate, but they also have guidelines for

[14] For reference, temple-worthy members must have a temple recommend which the Church defines as: "A temple recommend signifies that we have been found worthy through an interview with a member of our bishopric or our branch president and also an interview with a member of our stake presidency or mission presidency. Temple recommend interviews are opportunities for us to examine our worthiness. In each of the interviews, our priesthood leaders will ask us about our personal conduct and faith" (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2010). In order for a member to receive a temple recommend they must have an interview with a priesthood leader every two years (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2010).

how translations should be done. In her interview with Harris, Welch asks whether Harris keeps up with academic literature on scripture translation theory. Harris responds by discussing Nida and the distinction between “word-for-word" translations and “thought-for-thought" translations (Welch 2016c). Harris explains that the Church developed a program in the 1980s called the “All Nations Program” which aimed to translate basic Church materials into a major language of every nation (Welch 2016c). To achieve this goal, the Church began producing resources to help translators create “thought-for-thought" translations (Welch 2016c). However, this strategy began to cause problems and Church leaders opted to enact a new policy, still active as of 2016, that counsels scripture translators to strive for literal translation (Welch 2016c). Harris does concede that:

> Recognizing that it is not possible to translate all words and phrases in a literal way into every language, we strive to produce “modified-literal” translations of scriptures in order to provide an experience for target language readers that is very similar to the one readers of the original English text have. (Welch 2016b)

Chou and Chou received a similar answer from the Priesthood Department, who wrote:

> This policy is sometimes referred to as the “literalness policy” because of its emphasis on striving to maintain certain figures of speech and textual features of the original English in the most literal way possible. It is not always possible to do so, particularly if maintaining that literalness makes the translation unusually awkward or detracts in other ways from the acceptability of the translation. At times, a modified literalness is used while still maintaining the correct meaning. (2015, 261)

The Church does provide translators with tools to aid in the translation process. Harris reveals that the Church has created “specialized lexicons, translation guides, and term management aids” (Welch 2016a). Chou and Chou (2015) explain that scripture translators translate from a “Translators Copy” of the English Book of Mormon which also contains study aids. Additionally, they clarify that the English Book of Mormon is the primary source text for all foreign language translations, although translators may sometimes reference translations into similar target languages (Chou and Chou 2015).

3.1 Book of Mormon translations: the state of affairs

Using data from the official Church website and from an article by David Schneider published on the Church News website, an official publication of the Church, a series of

graphs were created in an attempt to organize and analyze information regarding the publication of Book of Mormon translations. Figure 1 represents all translations of the Book of Mormon from 1850 to 2023. This includes full translations, translated selections, and revised translations, and does not include the American Sign Language translation, braille translations - in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, or the language study edition translations - in Cantonese, Mandarin, and Russian, where the text is displayed in English on one side and in the target language on the other. This amounts to a total of 228 published translations. 1983 is the year with the highest number of translations, 13, closely followed by 12 translations in 2000, and 10 translations in both 2018 and 2019. The graph presents four main clusters, albeit the three last clusters are much larger than the first cluster. The first spurt of translational activity begins in 1851 with the aforementioned Danish translation. Four more translations, into German, French, Italian, and Welsh, are published the following year in 1852 and a translation into Hawaiian ends the spurt in 1855. Relative to the 228 total translations, six is not a particularly significant number of translations. However, it is significant that all of these six translations happened in rapid succession and were followed by a period of 14 years without any further translations and a period of 121 years without any further clusters of translational activity.

This period from 1855 to 1976 is remarkably sparse in terms of translational activity, totaling a mere 23 translations. The publications of these 23 translations are irregular, with inconsistent gaps of time passing between the publications. In the 40 years between 1869 and 1909, for example, 11 translations are published. In the next 40 years, between 1909 and 1949, only 5 translations are published. There is a short period, from 1903 to 1906, where a translation is published every year for four consecutive years. This is the longest stretch of consecutive years of translations from 1855 all the way until 1976. The second of the four clusters, and the first of the large clusters, begins in 1976 and ends in 1989. 64 translations are published in this span of 13 years. The third cluster, beginning in 1994 and ending in 2013, totals 86 translations in 17 years. While this cluster is slightly longer than the second cluster and the peak is not quite as high, the average number of translations published per year is actually slightly higher for the third cluster (5.06) than it is for the second cluster (4.92). The final cluster is a period of only 6 years, from 2015 to 2021, and compromises 45

total translations, for an average number of translations published per year of 7.5, the highest of all the clusters.

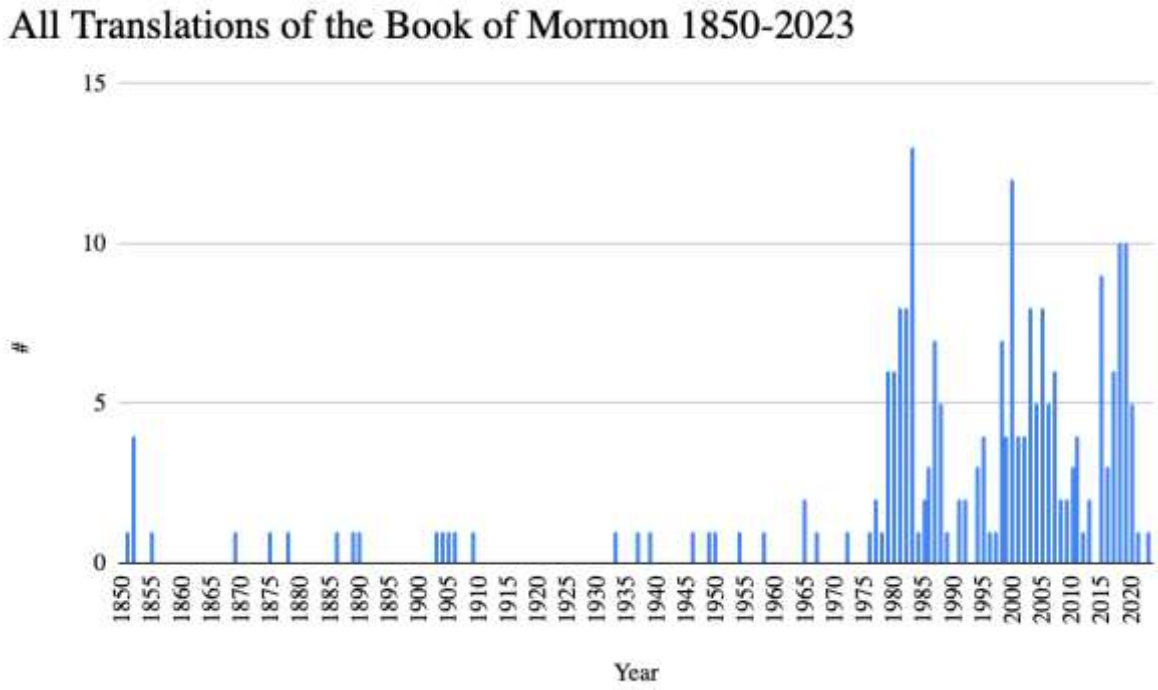

Figure 1[15]

As Figure 1 represents *all* translations, three additional graphs were created to break down this data and determine what types of translations were published and when. Figure 2, Figure 3, and Figure 4, therefore, map the publication of full translations from 1850-2023, translated selections from 1850-2023, and revised translations from 1850-2023, respectively. Figure 2 reveals that of the 29 translations published between 1850 and 1976 in Figure 1, 25 are full translations. This means that for the first 125 years after the start of the Book of Mormon translational activity, approximately 86% of published translations were full translations. The first cluster of 6 translations from 1851-1855 is entirely made up of full translations. The second cluster, from 1976-1989, contains 14 full translations, around 22% of the 64 translations belonging to that cluster. 47 full translations were published as part of the third cluster, from 1994 to 2013, accounting for close to 55% of the total translations published

[15] The 1869 Deseret Alphabet translation, 1905 revised Hawaiian translation, and 1937 Western-Armenian translation are now out of print (Moore 2006; The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.a).

during that period. Lastly, 7 full translations were published from 2015-2023, equaling around 16% of the total translations of the fourth cluster.

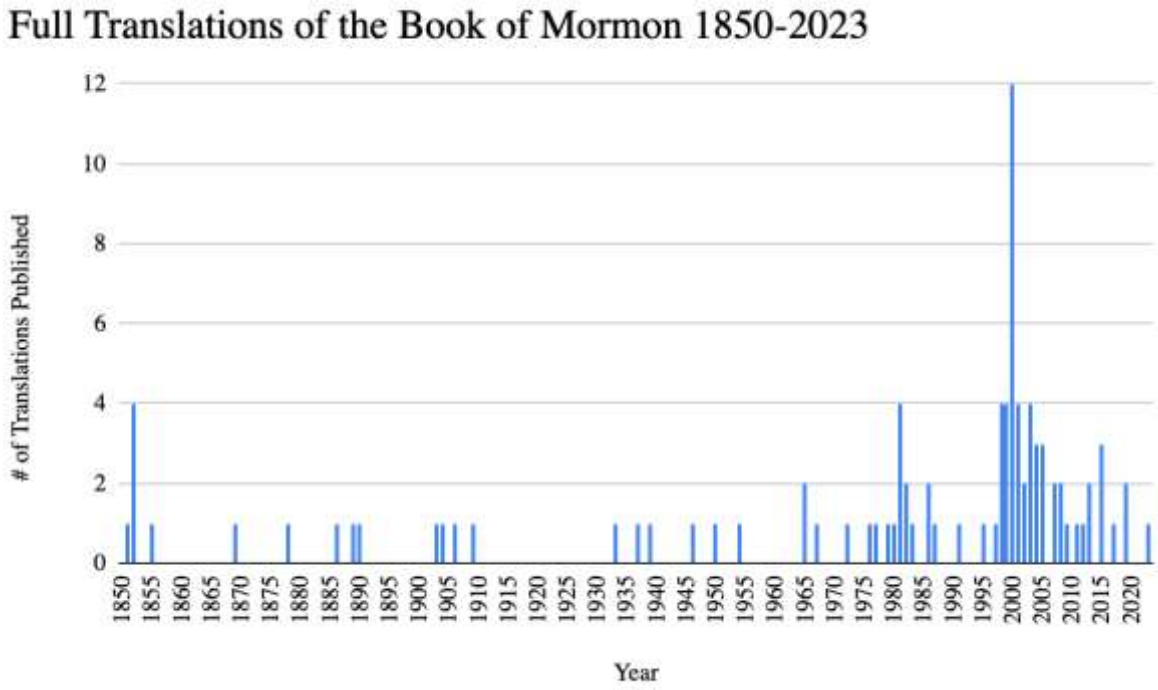

Figure 2[16]

According to Figure 3, only one translation of selections is published until 1977. These are the Spanish translated selections which were published in 1875, the full Spanish translation was published just 11 years later in 1886. Starting in 1977, there is a sharp increase in translated selections, peaking in 1983 with 12 translated selections published in one year. This spike in translated selections published from 1977 to 1989 totals 50 translations, or 78% of the second cluster. After 1989, 7 translated selections are published over the following 9 years and the last translated selection, into Bikolano, was published in 1998, signifying that translated selections represent 6% of the third cluster and 0% of the fourth cluster.

[16] The 1869 Deseret Alphabet translation and 1937 Western-Armenian translation are now out of print (Moore 2006; The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.a).

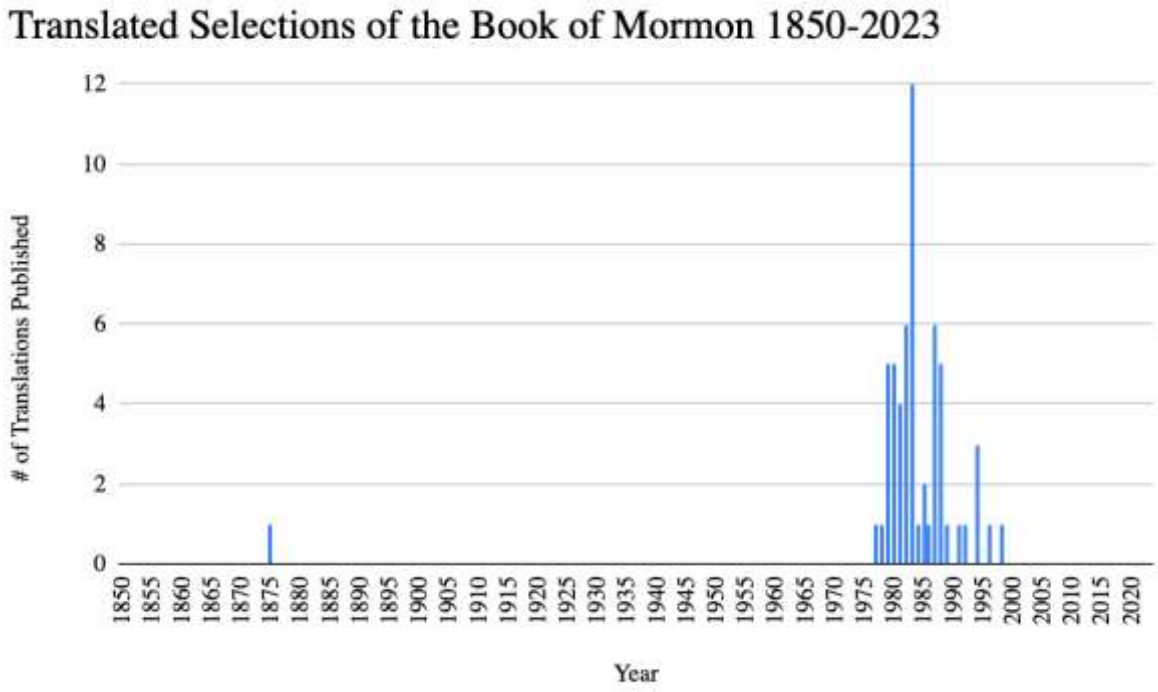

Figure 3

Figure 4 shows that the first revised translation, into Hawaiian, was published in 1905. For the next 89 years, until 1994, only three more revised translations were published, in 1949 (Danish), 1958 (Swedish), and 1992 (Spanish). These first revised translations correspond to the languages of some of the earliest full translations with Danish, Hawaiian, Swedish, and Spanish being the first, sixth, eighth, and ninth full translations. 5 more revised translations are published between 1995 and 2001 but the uptick in revised translations begins in 2002, levels out in 2011, and begins again in 2015. With 0 revised translations published between 1876 and 1889, 34 revised translations published between 1994 and 2013, and 38 revised translations published between 2015 and 2021, revised translations make up 0% of the first and second clusters, just under 40% of the third cluster, and just over 84% of the fourth cluster.

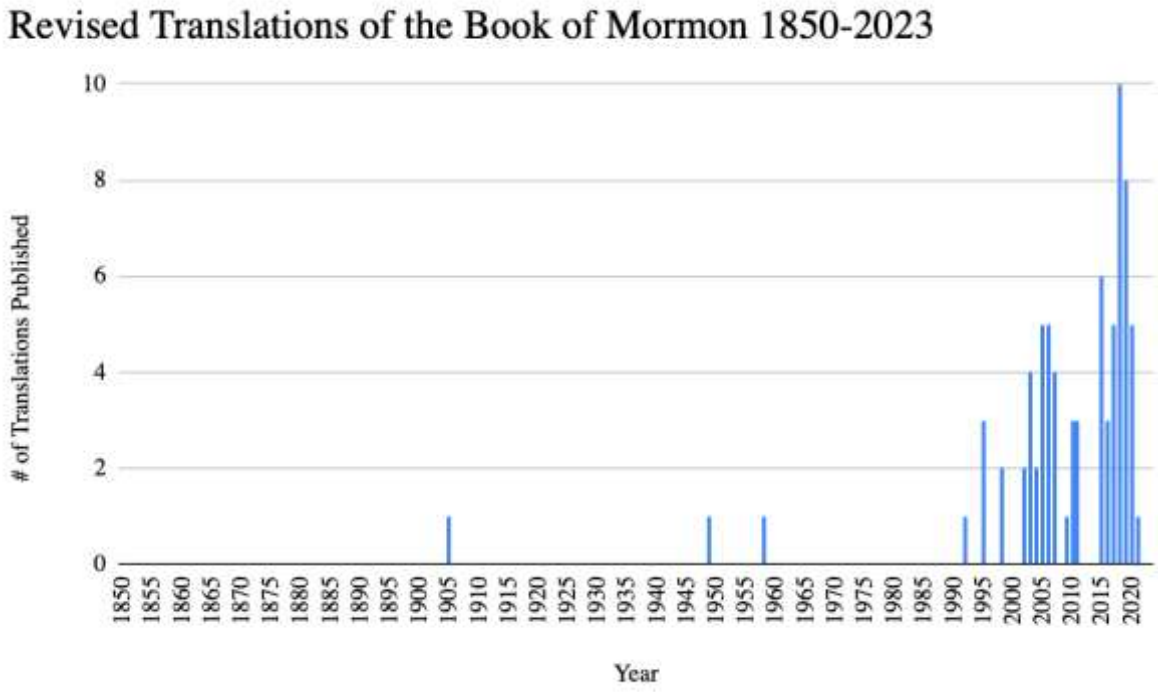

Figure 4[17]

The analysis of Figures 2, 3, and 4, provides some valuable insights for understanding Figure 1. The first small cluster of Figure 1, from 1851-1855, is entirely composed of full translations. From 1855 to 1976, full translations continue to be the most common, albeit sporadic, type of translation published, only 4 translations published during this time are not full translations. The second cluster from 1976 to 1989 is predominantly translated selections, 78%, and the remaining 22% are all full translations. The third cluster from 1994 to 2013 is more evenly divided, with 55% full translations, 40% revised translations, and the remainder translated selections. The fourth and final cluster contains 0% translated selections, 16% full translations, and 84% revised translations. With the exception of the third cluster which is more evenly split between two types of translations, the remaining three clusters are largely explained by a singular type.

While Figures 2-4 address the question of what types of translations were translated when, they do not provide any clarity on where these translations were published. Five additional

[17] The 1905 revised Hawaiian translation is now out of print (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.a).

graphs were created in order to illustrate the publication of the Book of Mormon translations by region - Americas, Asia, Europe, Africa, and Oceania.

The first translation published in the Americas is the Hawaiian translation in 1855. The Hawaiian translation is followed by few and infrequent translations (including a revised Hawaiian translation in 1905 which is now out of print) until 1977. Between 1977 and 1983 there is a cluster of translations published in the Americas, with 14 translations published in just 6 years. Translational activity decreases after 1983 but is still more frequent than the period before 1977. 82% of all translations in the Americas were published after 1977 and the highest number of translations published in one year is 4.

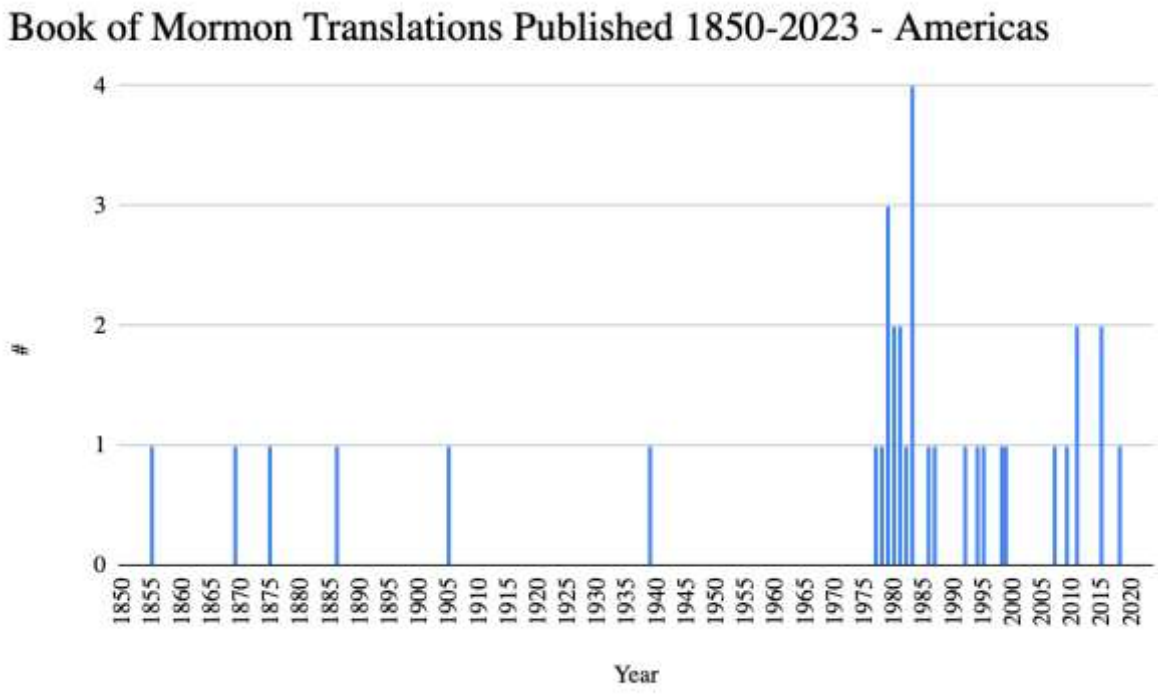

Figure 5[18]

[18] The Spanish and Portuguese translations are included in the "Americas" region as they were originally published in Mexico and Brazil (Schneider 2022). Additionally, the 1869 Deseret Alphabet translation and the 1905 revised Hawaiian translation are now out of print (Moore 2006; The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.a).

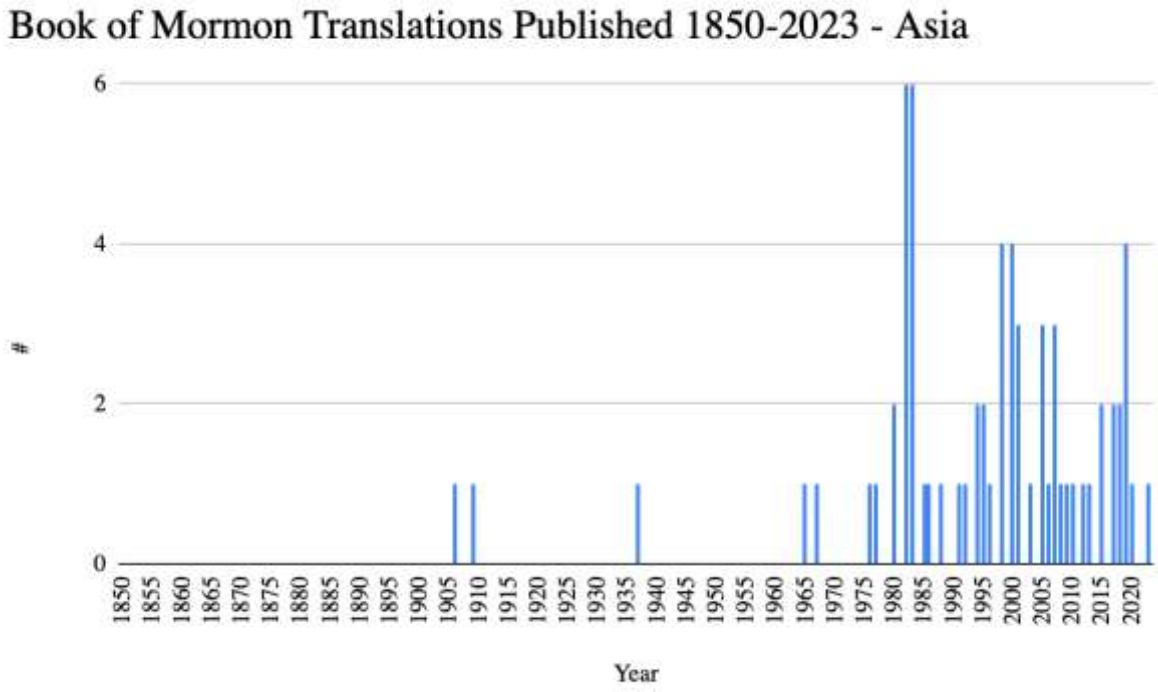

Figure 6[19]

In Asia, the first published translation of the Book of Mormon is into Turkish (Armenian script) in 1906; this translation, like the first translation in the Americas, is also now out of print. Also similar to the Americas, translations into Asian languages are few and far between until around 1976. Translational activity begins to increase in 1976 and there are significantly more translations in Asia than in the Americas although not in such a concentrated fashion. The highest number of translations in one year is six, which happens in both 1982 and 1983. Approximately 93% of all translations into Asian languages happen after 1976.

Translations before 1976 are slightly more frequent in Europe, with 12 translations published between 1850 and 1976 as opposed to 6 in the Americas and 5 in Asia. A short cluster of translations occurs from 1979 to 1981 with 9 translations published in three years, followed by another cluster from 1997 to 2006 with 20 translations published in nine years, and yet another cluster from 2016 to 2021 with 15 translations published in 5 years. 81% of translations in Europe are published after 1976.

[19] The 1937 Western-Armenian translation is now out of print (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.a).

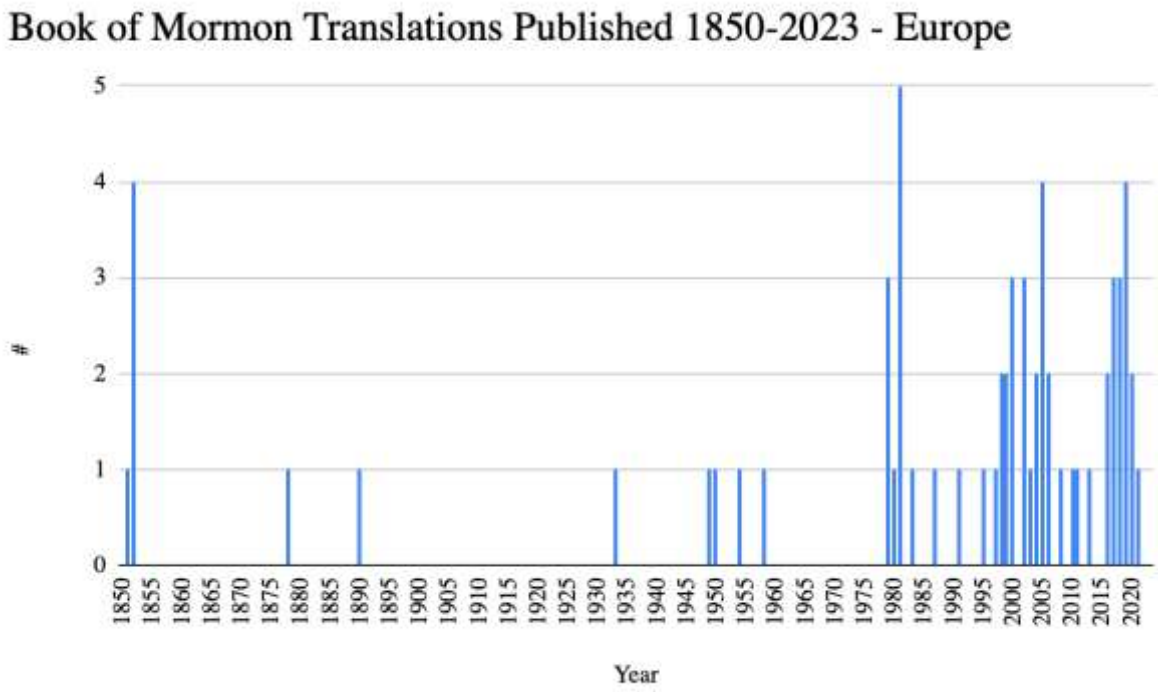

Figure 7

Translations of the Book of Mormon in Africa begin much later, with the first translation being published in 1972. This means that the first translation in Africa occurred almost 120 years after the first translation in the Americas, almost 70 years after the first translation in Asia, and just over 120 years after the first translation in Europe. All following translations into African languages are more or less divided into three groups. 8 translations are published between 1982 and 1988, 15 translations are published between 1999 and 2007, and 10 translations are published between 2015 and 2020. The highest number of translations published in one year is 5 in 2000, closely followed by 4 in 2003 and in 2018.

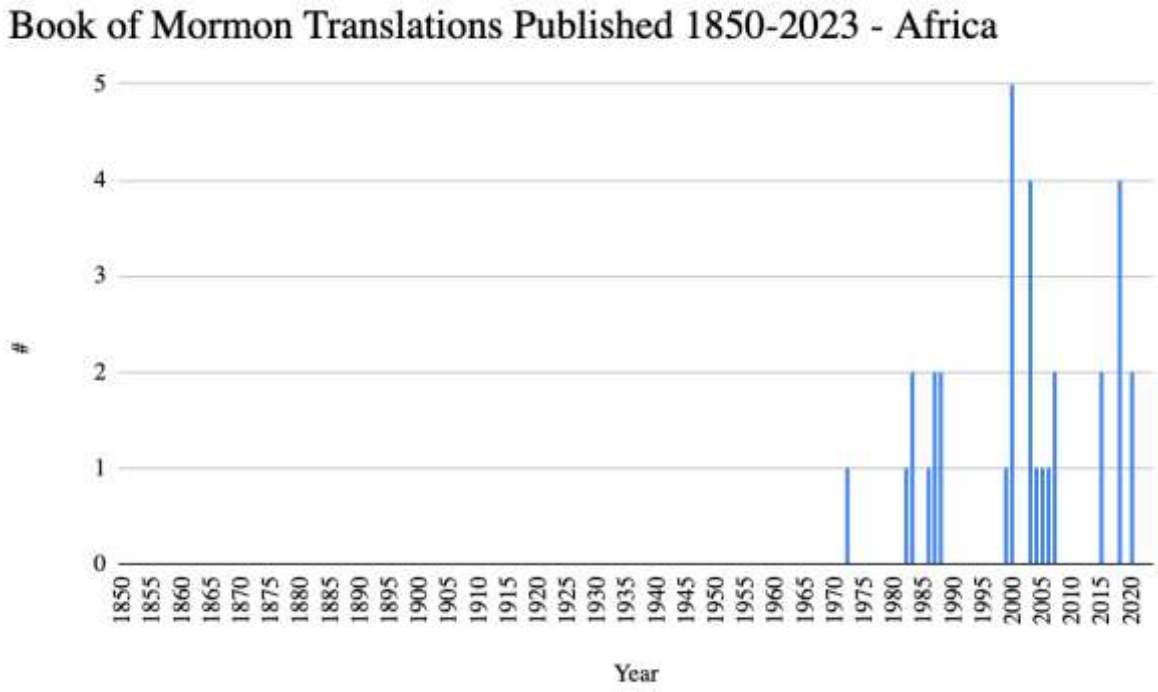

Figure 8

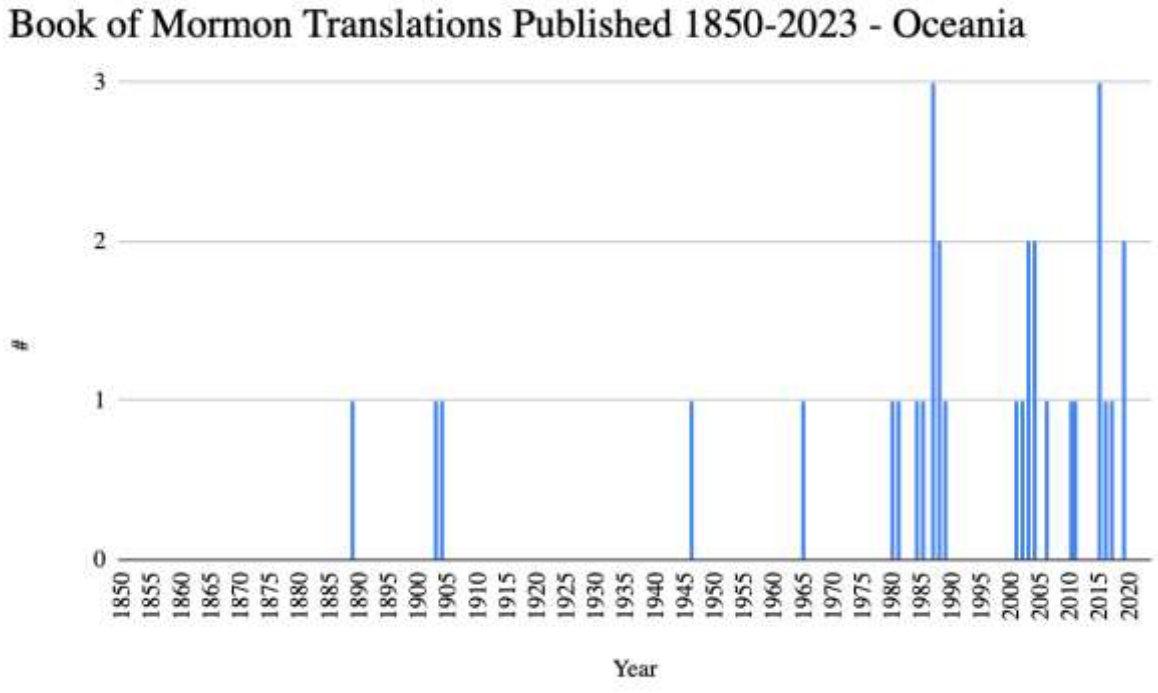

Figure 9

Translations in Oceania are, yet again, infrequent until the latter half of the 20th century. The first translation is published in 1889 and only 4 more are published until 1980. Translations after 1980 can, like in Africa, be loosely divided into three groups. These are: 10 translations between 1980 and 1989, 9 translations between 2001 and 2011, and 7 translations between 2015 and 2019.

Figure 10 compares the total number of translations published in each region. Asia is the region with the greatest number of published translations - despite translational activity in this region starting later than in the Americas, Europe, and Oceania - with 67 total translations. Closely behind is the Americas region with 64 total translations. The remaining three regions are remarkably close in terms of number of translations with 34 in the Americas, 32 in Africa, and 31 in Oceania. This is somewhat surprising given how much later translation in Africa started as compared to the other two regions.

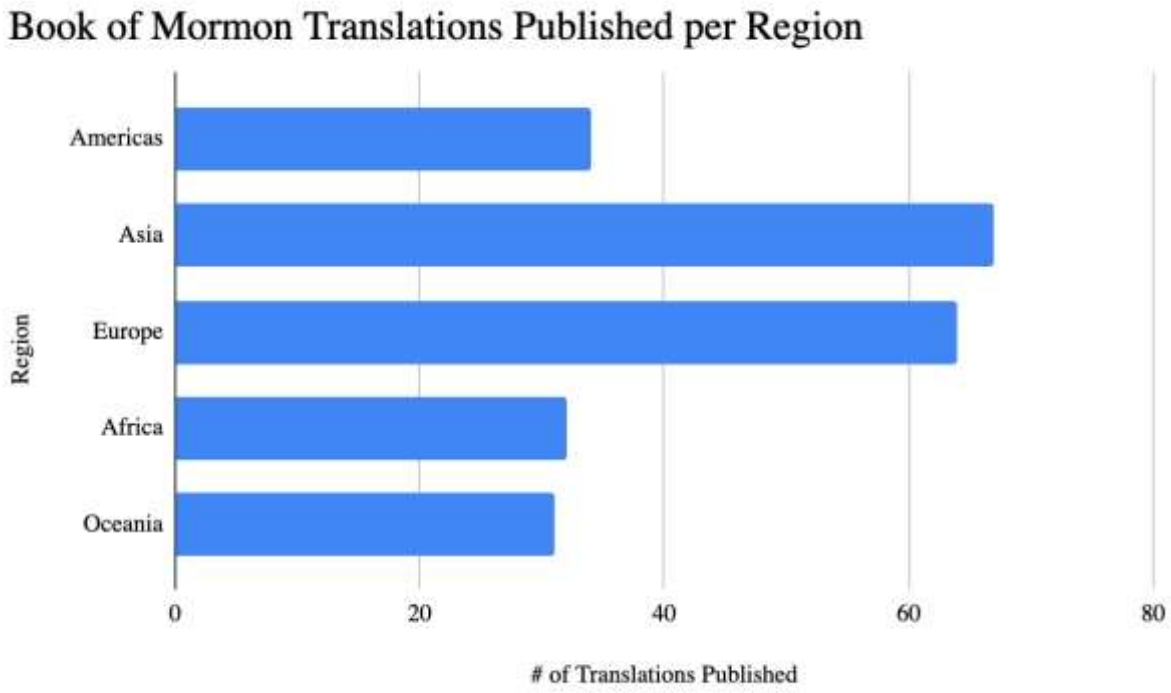

Figure 10

Aside from the context of the source culture and target culture at the time of these translations (or at the time where there are no translations), another important factor to consider is the

context of the Church at these times. Who was the leader of the Church at the time of each translation? What were their goals and aspirations for the Church? What connections did they have with certain languages or regions, were they return missionaries? How did they speak (or not) about translation and its importance? Duarte's (2007) article on non-translation would be an interesting perspective from which to analyze any gaps in published translations. Duarte (2007) discusses different types of non-translation, explaining that a lack of translation can stem from any number of reasons such as cultural distance or ideological embargoes.

Figure 11 takes Figure 1, which represents all translations of the Book of Mormon, and divides the x-axis into shaded sections representing the term of each Church President. The years 1845, 1846, 1878, and 1879 are left blank as there was no Church President at those times. This figure is useful for visualizing the timeline of translations and presidencies, but the data is somewhat difficult to interpret in this rather crowded graph and the information is presented in a more meaningful way in Figure 12 and 13. Figure 12 shows the number of total translations of the Book of Mormon published per Church President. Gordon B. Hinckley is the President with the greatest number of translations during his presidency, 67, followed by Spencer W. Kimball with 48 translations, and Thomas S. Monson with 40 translations. The translations published during the first 11 presidencies of the Church add up to less than the translations published during the individual terms of Hinckley, Kimball, and Monson.

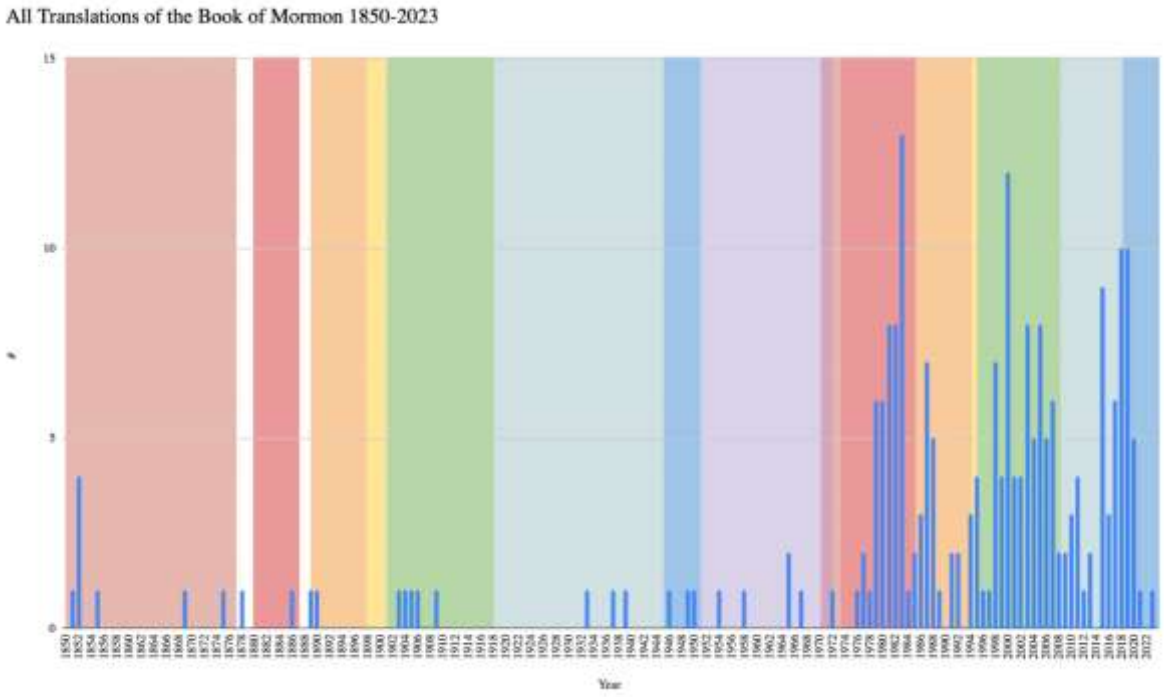

Figure 11[20]

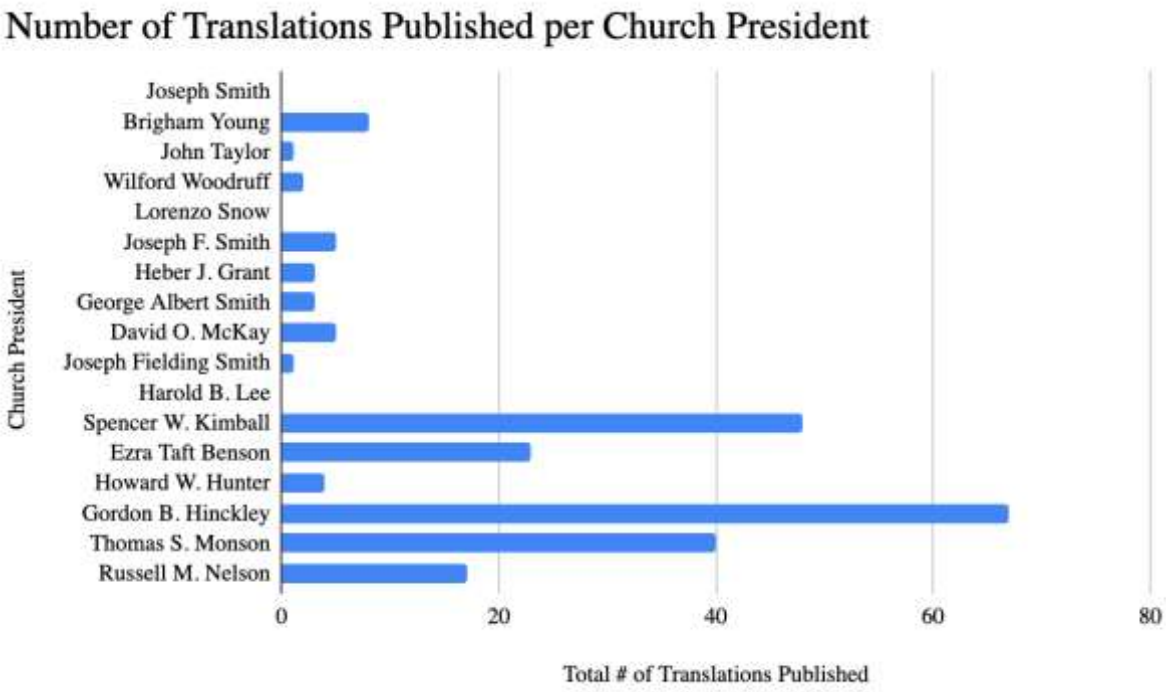

Figure 12

[20] The two periods without any shading, from 1845-1846 and 1878-1879, represent times when there was no Church President.

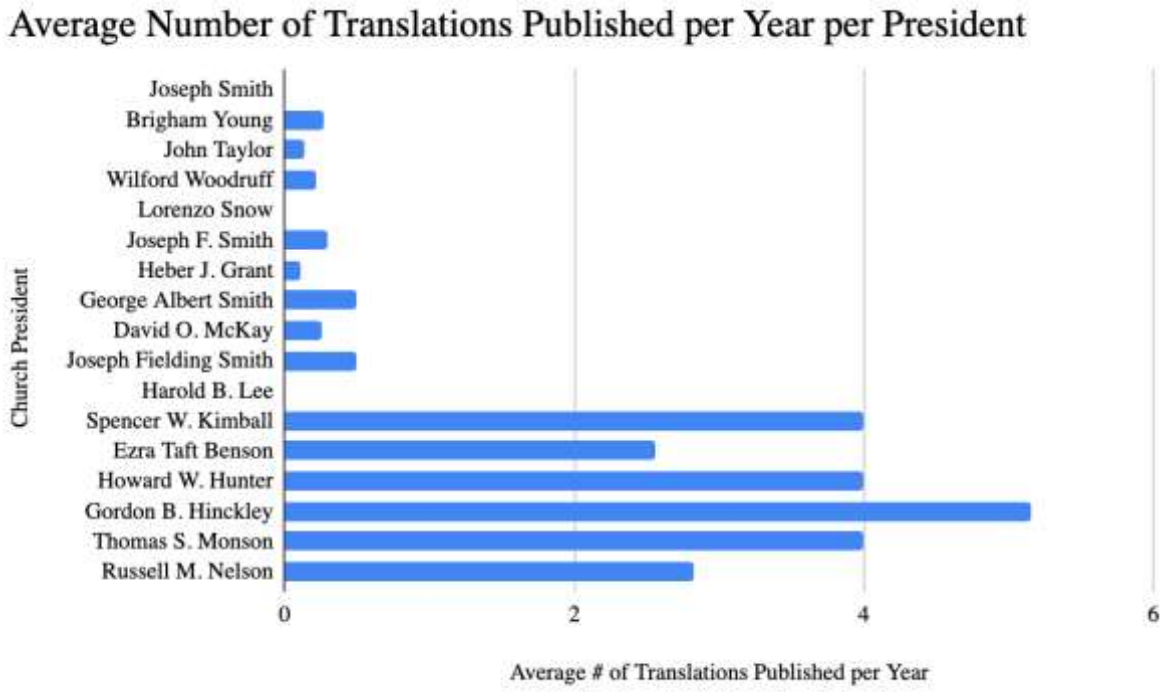

Figure 13

Since not all Church Presidents served terms of the same length, perhaps a more accurate read on the translational activity of each Church President is shown in Figure 13, where the average number of translations published per Church President per year of their presidency is displayed. These calculations show that Gordon B. Hinckley's presidency was the most prolific in terms of translation production. During Hinckley's presidency an average of 5.15 translations per year were published. Whereas Spencer W. Kimball ranks in second place in Figure 12, Kimball, Howard H. Hunter, and Thomas S. Monson come in at a three-way tie in Figure 13 with an average of 4 translations published per year of their presidency.

An analysis of these final graphs goes beyond the scope of this thesis. However, a few more general comments seem reasonable. The number of translations produced under each Church President is dependent on more than simply whether or not that President wants translations to happen. It is important to keep in mind other factors like historical context and the trend of translation in the source culture. For example, there are gaps in translational activity during the Civil War, World War I, and World War II. These are extraneous factors beyond

the control of Church Presidents but would have most likely impacted any decisions to translate.

In sum, there are real identifiable patterns in Book of Mormon translation history. There are distinctive periods with fewer translations and with more translations. Whether these trends are due to Church leadership, historical context in the source culture, the reputation of the Church at any given time, or the trend of translation in general, is unknown. However, it does show that the translations were not totally random. Echoing back to Chapter 2, they were not produced in a vacuum. Each Book of Momon translation exists in the context of the Book of Mormon translations that came before it and would come after it, and to the historical and cultural context of the source and target cultures at the time when it was published.

Chapter Four
Case Studies

Speaking of historical context, an extremely condensed history of the period between Smith's translation in 1830 and the first foreign language translation in 1851 will be valuable to the reader before continuing this chapter. After the publication of the Book of Mormon in upstate New York in early 1830, Smith and other members of the Church moved to Kirtland, Ohio (Smith 2007). In 1838, Smith relocated from Kirtland, Ohio, to Far West, Missouri (Smith 2007). Just one year later, in 1839, Smith and his followers moved once again, this time to Nauvoo, Illinois (Smith 2007). In 1844, Joseph and his brother Hyrum were killed by a mob while imprisoned in a Carthage, Illinois jail (Smith 2007). As tensions in Illinois grew, the Church decided it would be best to relocate yet again (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.e). In 1847, Brigham Young arrived in Salt Lake, the new gathering place for Church members, and in December of that year he was sustained as the president of the Church (The Church of Latter-day Saints n.d.e). By the time of the first foreign language translation, Joseph Smith had been killed and Brigham Young had taken his place as the next Church President.

4.1 The Danish Translation

1842, twelve years after the publication of the English Book of Mormon and nine years before the publication of the Danish translation, the first Dane joined the Church (Watkins 1980). The convert was a man by the name of Peter Clemensen who was living in Boston at the time and who would eventually leave the Church (Christensen 1966). Before losing his faith, however, Clemensen shared his newfound beliefs with a fellow Dane, Hans C. Hansen, who was baptized that same year (Christensen 1966). The following year, in 1843, Hans C. Hansen wrote a letter to his brother, Peter Olsen Hansen, recounting his conversion to the Church, Smith's calling as a prophet, and the miracle that was Smith's translation of the Book of Mormon (Hansen 1885). As it was, Peter had become aware of the Church and the Book of Mormon before receiving his brother's letter, having read about the new religion and its sacred book in a newspaper statement written by a Norwegian convert (Hansen 1885).

Peter writes that in the aftermath of Hans' letter, he told his parents: "I have that book to translate" (Hansen 1885, 2). To clarify, "I have that book to translate," in this case, refers to Peter's desire to translate the Book of Mormon, seemingly as some sort of duty or calling, rather than to Peter physically having a copy of the Book of Mormon to translate. Just a few months later, Peter set off to America, arriving in 1843 and baptized by his brother Hans in March of 1844, making Peter the third Danish member of the Church (Jenson 1914). After his baptism, Peter purchased a copy of the Book of Mormon and began translating in the time he had between eating dinner and going to sleep (Hansen 1885). According to Peter, this amount of time soon became insufficient as the "evenings grew too short" and he stopped translating after reaching the third chapter (Hansen 1885, 2). By the end of 1844, therefore, a translation of the Book of Mormon, albeit incomplete and "imperfect," per Peter's own description, was underway (Hansen 1885, 2).

In November of 1844, Peter traveled to Nauvoo, Illinois, where Hans introduced Peter to Brigham Young (Hansen 1885). Hans told Young that Peter wished to translate the Book of Mormon and Young consequently charged Peter with the "binding duty" to complete the translation (Hansen 1885, 3). Allen (2017) explains that it is possible that Young intended for Hansen's translation to be used by Norwegian converts in the United States as at that point in time written Danish and Norwegian were very similar. Shortly after his meeting with Young, Peter was convinced to travel to New Orleans with some other members and to spend the winter there making money (Hansen 1885). Unsure of whether he should continue the translation process while in New Orleans, Peter posed the question to Young, who responded: "No, not in that wicked place" (Hansen 1885, 3). In some ways, Young's opposition to Peter translating in New Orleans is reminiscent of the idea of corporeal interference previously discussed. The issue here is not the purity of Peter himself but the purity of his surroundings. Young seems to believe that New Orleans, commonly associated with magic and evil spirits, would not be a suitable place to translate because of the effect that the environment could have on Peter and the translation. Perhaps a more appropriate description here would be an adaptation of Moura's (2020) argument. Young wished for Peter to translate free of any extracorporeal qualities.

Peter returned to Nauvoo in the spring of 1845 and Young implored him to resume working on the translation, which Peter did (Hansen 1885). Peter continued to work on the translation for the next six months, occasionally translating while at the temple where he worked, and only stopped when the Church left Nauvoo for the Salt Lake Valley (Hansen 1885). For the next few years, Peter traveled back and forth across the country, and in 1849 he recognized an inner longing to return home to Denmark (Hansen 1885). Peter informed Young of his want to leave America for his "native land" and in October of that year, Peter was called as a missionary to Denmark (Hansen 1885, 4). Peter was to accompany Apostle Erastus Snow[21], who had been chosen to head the opening of the Scandinavian mission (Hunsaker 1965). Snow and Hansen departed from Salt Lake City on October 19, 1849, with around 30 other Church members, many of whom were leaving to open missions in other European countries (Larson 1971). Somewhere along the way, Snow and Hansen were separated on their journey, thus arriving in Denmark on different dates (Christensen 1966). Peter Hansen disembarked in Copenhagen on May 11, 1850, and Snow arrived just over a month later on June 14, 1850, accompanied by George P. Dykes, an American with some knowledge of the Norwegian language, and John Forsgren, a native Swede (Christensen 1966). Larson writes that Snow quickly realized that his inability to speak Danish was prohibiting him from connecting with the Danish people and he set about to learn how to read, write, and speak the language (Larson 1971).

According to Allen, an important factor in the missionaries' success in Denmark was "their use of print media, which capitalized on high literacy rates and voracious newspaper reading among Danes" (2017, 65). After arriving in Copenhagen, Peter authored a pamphlet titled *En Advarsel til Folket (A Warning to the People)* which he published 300 copies of (Allen 2017). Soon after, Hansen translated a piece written by Snow titled *En Sandheds Røst (A Voice of Truth)* which they printed 2,000 copies of (Allen 2017). This shows that even before the Danish translation of the Book of Mormon was complete, the missionaries were producing Mormon literature in Danish.

[21] According to the Church History Biographical Database, Erastus Snow was born in Vermont in 1818 and baptized in 1833.

As for the continuation of the translation process, Hansen claims that by the summer of 1850 "[they]" had "commenced to revise the manuscript" and that, "[they] worked diligently together" for seven months (1885, 6). Allen (2017) identifies the team working "diligently together" as Peter Hansen, Erastus Snow, and two Danish assistants. It is unclear how much knowledge of Danish Erastus Snow would have had at that point as he had only arrived in mid-June. In a letter to the First Presidency of the Church, dated August 17, 1850, Snow writes:

> Brother Hanson had been so long in America, that he had become very dull in his native tongue; and having no Bible or any other Danish book with him in America, as might have been expected, his translation of the Book of Mormon was very imperfect, and will necessarily have to be thoroughly revised before it goes to press. (Snow 1851, 7)

This letter does not indicate that a revision of the manuscript had begun by the summer of 1850. It seems more likely that Hansen continued with his translation shortly after arriving in Copenhagen, but that Snow and the other two assistants only began to help revising a few months later. This timeline would also provide Snow with a few months to start learning the language before initiating the revision. Christensen supports an even later timeline, describing how Snow, Dykes, Forsgren, and Hansen all met in prayer towards the end of September 1850 and decided that Hansen would begin to revise and rewrite his translation (1966, 56-57). Certainly, by February 14, 1851, the translation process had resumed, with a letter written from Erastus Snow to Zerubable Snow revealing:

> I am now very busily engaged with brother Hanson, in translating and publishing the Book of Mormon; it is a very laborious and tedious work to get it issued clean and pure, according to the simplicity of the original; and requires the closest attention. (Snow 1851, 12)

Peter Hansen similarly references a goal to retain the "simplicity" of the English version, stating "Bro. Snow charged me to do my best for to retain the original simplicity of style which characterizes the book, and I think I did so" (Hansen 1885, 6). The translation was finished on May 22, 1851, around seven years after Hansen had initially started and just over one year since he had returned to Copenhagen as a missionary (Larson 1971, 228). Ultimately, then, who translated the Book of Mormon into Danish?

Much of the translation appears to have been done by Peter Hansen, a Danish convert who initiated the translation process of his own accord in 1844, later gaining approval from Brigham Young. Hansen continued to work on the translation for a short time after meeting with Young but stopped when he left Nauvoo in 1845 and only resumed the translation process somewhere around six years later. It is unclear whether Hansen had a completed manuscript by the time he started his revision and rewriting in Denmark or whether there were portions of the text he had not yet translated at all. As for the roles of the other members of the translation team, Hunsaker depicts Snow as "keep[ing] a close watch over the translation as it proceeded" (1965, 32). This depiction, as well as the sources included from Hansen and Snow themselves, imply that Snow's involvement in the translation process was more as a supervisor. As for the other two assistants, Snow and Hansen had enlisted the help of Ms. Mathiesen, a Danish convert who taught German, French, and English (Hunsaker 1965). It is difficult to determine how involved Ms. Mathiesen was in the translation process. Hunsaker claims that Snow found Ms. Mathiesen to be "unsatisfactory" as she sought to alter the style of the book (1965, 32). Snow also makes reference to a "Danish lady" in a letter to Brigham Young on July 10, 1851 (Snow 1851, 12). Snow does not refer to Ms. Mathiesen by name and simply informs Young that she "assist[ed] in the work" (Snow 1851, 12). Ms. Mathiesen would later go on to translate the Doctrine and Covenants into Danish (Christensen 1966).[22] As for the other Danish assistant, information is scarce, but on the origin of the Danish translation, Hansen does recount:

> But now it appears that the evil one got aroused and tried to stick his paw in. A certain well educated lady came and offered her service, rather inferring to my good brother and President that I had not learning enough to be able to produce a good translation. (1885, 6)

[22] According to Christensen, Ms. Mathiesen was "for the most part" responsible for the translation of the Doctrine and Covenants into Danish, although it was "carefully read and revised" by Snow and Hansen before its publication in early 1852 (1966, 63). In his thesis on the history of the Danish mission, Christensen includes a copy of the original title page of the Danish translation of the Doctrine and Covenants, which lists Erastus Snow as the translator (1966, 64). In *Homeward to Zion*, Mulder writes "*Laerdommens og Pagtens Bog*, a translation of Joseph Smith's revelations and epistles found in the Doctrine and Covenants (...) appeared in February 1852" (1957, 76). Not to belabor a point that is beside the point, but it is interesting that Mulder describes Mathiesen's translation of the Doctrine and Covenants as having "appeared" after dedicating an entire paragraph to discussing Snow and Hansen's translation process of the Book of Mormon. Mulder even mentions Mathiesen by name when discussing the translation of the Book of Mormon, explaining that Snow "did engage a language teacher, Mme. Mathiesen, to assist, greatly to Hansen's discomfiture, because she sought to convert the style," but when mentioning the Danish translation of the Doctrine and Covenants, on the following page, no less, he fails to credit Ms. Mathiesen – or anybody – with the work (1957, 75).

It is possible that the lady Hansen refers to is the second Danish assistant. As Ms. Mathiesen later was responsible for translating the Doctrine and Covenants, it seems unlikely that it is she Hansen is referring to here. Still, the existence of this second assistant is not mentioned by Christensen (1966) or Hunsaker (1965). Perhaps the involvement of the individual was so minimal, or negative, that they are consistently left out of the narrative. Regardless, Peter Hansen is responsible for most of the translation, assisted by Erastus Snow, Ms. Mathiesen, and potentially by one other assistant.

The Danish translation of the Book of Mormon is interesting in that the translation was not completed all in the same place. Given that Hansen was baptized in Boston in the spring of 1844, purchased a copy of the Book of Mormon to translate immediately after his baptism, and only traveled to Nauvoo in November of that year, it seems reasonable that he first started the translation in Boston. Hansen then continued to translate in Nauvoo, notably did *not* translate in New Orleans, and finalized the translation in Copenhagen.

As for its publication, the Danish Book of Mormon translation was initially released weekly in 16-page installments, beginning in January 1851 (Christensen 1966). Christensen (1966) explains that this system allowed poorer members to obtain the translation without having to pay an upfront fee. Around 200 copies of the translation were distributed through this system (Christensen 1966). After the final installment of the translation was completed and sent out in May 1851, the full translation was sent to the publisher and 3,000 copies were printed (Christensen 1966). This was the first Book of Mormon published in a foreign language (Watkins 1980). The publisher was F. E. Bordings, of Copenhagen, who would continue to publish Mormon literature for the Church for decades (Christensen 1966). The cost for the publication of the Danish Book of Mormon translation was 1,000 rigsdaler and was paid for by loans from English and Danish converts as well as a 200-pound loan from the British Mission (Christensen 1966). By 1881, the Church had paid F. E. Bordings $25,000 in exchange for the printing of 1,840,750 pieces of Mormon literature in Danish (Christensen 1966). So, to echo Pym, to what effect? What, if any, effects did the publication of the Danish translation of the Book of Mormon have on Danish culture?

Freedom of religion in Denmark was only established with the democratic constitution of 1849 (Allen 2020). Prior to that time, the national religion of Denmark was evangelical Lutheranism, Allen explains that before 1849, the "option of being a Dane but not a Lutheran did not exist" (2017, 4). Further, Allen writes that with this newfound freedom, Danes "were forced to reevaluate not just their doctrinal beliefs, but also their cultural, national, gender, and social identities, many of which were shaped by their religious traditions and practices" (2020, 114). In context, that means that Mormon missionaries arrived in Denmark just one year after the Danes had enshrined religious freedom in their Constitution, at a time where the Danish public was undergoing an upheaval of their cultural identity. Per Allen, "prior to the arrival of Mormon missionaries in Denmark (...) there had been no significant waves of emigration from Denmark" (2017, 7). The wave of emigration of Mormon converts from Denmark consisted of close to 17,000 people (Allen 2017). According to Allen, "until 1870, Danish Mormon convert-emigrants accounted for approximately half of all emigration from Denmark" (2017, 149). Certainly, this is not a trivial amount.

Of course, it is impossible to prove that it was the Danish translation of the Book of Mormon that directly caused those individuals to emigrate. There is no way to go back in time and ask every Danish Mormon convert-emigrant if the translation impacted their decision to leave Denmark. However, if those individuals had not converted to Mormonism, they would not have emigrated to Utah, and if they had not had access to Mormon theology, they would not have converted. In other words, the translation of the Book of Mormon (along with the publication of other Mormon literature in Danish) provided a way for potential converts to be introduced to the ideas of Mormonism that would not have been possible had those ideas only been available in English. Watkins writes that the "immediate availability" of the Book of Mormon to "potential converts no doubt enhanced the efforts of missionaries in Denmark and Norway to demonstrate the authenticity of their religion. The printed word weighed heavily in efforts to reach the Danes" (1980, 2).

It is also interesting to consider emigration itself as a manifestation of Mormon theology. Mormon doctrine describes a Zion and early Church leaders encouraged members to come together in a gathering place. By the time the Danish translation was published, the Mormon Zion had moved to Salt Lake City, and so there was a pull for converts to relocate to this

sacred place. This is an important distinction because the idea that Danish Mormons emigrated *because* they converted lacks any nuance. Danish Mormon converts emigrated because they encountered the notion of Zion and the value given to gathering in the translations of Mormon literature they were exposed to.

In Denmark, post-translation effects of the Book of Mormon are also repeatedly found in art. In 1856, Danish artist Christian Dalsgaard painted "Two Mormons Visiting a Country Carpenter" (Allen 2017). The painting depicts two Mormon missionaries proselytizing inside the home of a carpenter. Mulder (1957) notes that sticking out of a hat on the ground is a copy of *A Voice of Truth*, the piece that Erastus Snow had written, and Peter Hansen had translated into Danish. The fact that a non-Mormon Danish painter chose to craft such a scene goes to show that the presence of Mormonism in Denmark had reached the general public by 1856. So much so, in fact, that Dalsgaard included a piece of Mormon literature that is not even a scripture or central to Mormonism as a whole. The painting is currently on display at the National Gallery of Denmark.[23]

Allen (2017) also specifically mentions the inclusion of a Mormon reference in a "humorous weekly paper" called *Krydersen (The Cruiser)*. The tract, included in an issue of the paper from April 11, 1856, is a parody of the ten commandments, where each commandment is interpreted through a Mormon perspective (Allen 2017). Allen notes that the "casual manner in which the article throws out references to Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John van Cott, elders, Zion, and polygamy suggests these terms were familiar enough to the average Dane not to require explanation" (2017, 141). Again, like with Dalsgaard's painting, the tract is an indication that Mormon concepts had successfully entered Danish culture.

Yet another area where the influence of Mormonism can be seen is in Danish street ballads (Allen 2017). Allen (2017) estimates that there are around ten (surviving) street ballads that specifically mention Mormonism, mostly focused on the emigration of Mormon converts. This is an especially relevant example of a post-translation effect as Allen explains that "street ballads were one of the most common, popular, and inexpensive forms of entertainment for the majority of Danes in the late nineteenth century" (2017, 152). In other

[23] See: https://open.smk.dk/en/artwork/image/KMS965?q=Christen%20Dalsgaard&page=1

words, these songs were not being consumed by fringe groups but by the general Danish public. Also, the ballads must have been composed with this audience in mind, meaning that the creators of the ballads were aware that most Danes would be familiar with these references and that they would find the material entertaining. The first of these street ballads was written sometime between 1855 and 1859 and is titled "Far Away to a Distant Shore" (Allen 2017). Other street ballads include "The Mormon Girl's Lament" (early 1870s), "I Am a Mormon, You Surely Know" (1871), "Ole Person and His Wife Dorthe's Journey to the Mormons" (1874), and "The Most Recent New Song about the Two Journeymen Masons from Copenhagen Who Sold Their Wives" (1884)[24] (Allen 2017).

Beyond paintings, newspapers, and music, Mormonism also entered the world of cinema in Denmark. Nordisk Films, a Danish film company, released a film called *A Victim of the Mormons* on October 2, 1911 (Olmstead 2004). The film was produced by Ole Olsen, who was apparently a "respected producer," directed by "noted" director August Blom, and featured well-known actors, including Vlademar Philander, who was "perhaps the most popular actor of early twentieth-century Danish film" (Olmstead 2004, 206). Contemporaneous ads promised record-breaking ticket sales and newspapers reported that the demand was so great that customers would be able to purchase second-run copies (Olmstead 2004). After its release in Denmark, the film was later released in London on October 10, 1911, and in the United States on February 3, 1912 (Olmstead 2004). Here we can see the effects of the Danish translation back in the source culture. Olmstead describes *A Victim of the Mormons* as one of the "earliest depictions of the Church on the silver screen" (2004, 205). Allen (2020) also mentions *Mormonbyens Blomst (The Flower of the Mormon City)*, another Danish film released in 1911, *The Danites*, a 1912 American film, and *Riders of the Purple Sage*, a 1918 American film. It appears that the 1911 *A Victim of the Mormons* was only the first of a slew of films addressing Mormonism.

Continuing with the theme of post-translation effects back in the source culture, one Danish statue has earned an honorable spot in the Church. The original *Christus* statue stands in the Church of Our Lady in Copenhagen and was sculpted by Bertel Thorvaldsen, a Danish artist (Allen 2020). The Church of Latter-day Saints commissioned a replica of the *Christus* statue

[24] For a more in-depth analysis of these street ballads see (Allen 2017, 147-159).

for the Mormon Pavilion at the 1964-65 World Fair which was to serve as the "central focus point" of the Pavilion (Top 2015, 330). In 1967, the Church unveiled a 2,000-pound marble replica of the statue in what is now the North Visitors' Center of the Salt Lake Temple (Richardson 2021). Since then, additional replicas have been made and are displayed in Los Angeles, New Zealand, Hawaii, Arizona, Washington D.C., Mexico City, Nauvoo, Oakland, St. George, Palmyra, Hill Cumorah, Independence, Idaho Falls, London, Paris, Portland, Provo, Rome, São Paulo, one traveling statue, and one statue at the Icelandic Immigration Museum in Reykjavik (Richardson 2021). At the General Conference in April 2020, Church President Russell M. Nelson announced that the Church would be adopting a new "symbol" that incorporates the image of the *Christus* statue (Church of Latter-day Saints 2020). The symbol is used on the Church website, official Church literature, and news releases.[25] Additionally, mini marble replicas of the Christus are available for purchase in three different sizes on the Deseret Book website[26] (owned by the Church) and as a small crystal emblem on the Church's Online Store.[27]

4.2 The Welsh Translation

In June 1837, seven missionaries were called to open the first foreign mission of the Church in England (Whitney 1904). These seven missionaries were Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Willard Richards, Joseph Fielding, John Goodson, Isaac Russell, and John Snyder, and their arrival in Preston, England, marked the beginning of the British mission (Whitney 1904).[28] Three years later, in 1840, the missionary work had spread into Wales and by the fall of that year the first branch in Wales had been established (Jenson 1941). The first two official missionaries in Wales were Henry Royle and Frederick Cook who, according to the Church History Biographical Database, were both born in England (Neilson and Melville 2019). Dennis writes that while a Welsh translation of the Book of Mormon would eventually be a "key tool for conversion," the first Welsh branch of the Church was located in a northern town where most residents did not use the Welsh language (2002, 45). Given this, there was

[25] To see the announcement in full and the new symbol for the Church: https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/new-symbol-church-of-jesus-christ
[26] https://www.deseretbook.com/product/P3753740.html
[27] https://store.churchofjesuschrist.org/prt/en/children-and-youth-crystal/5638697390.p?style=English&color=60+x+40+x+30+mm
[28] According to the Church History Biographical Database, the seven missionaries were from Vermont; Connecticut; Massachusetts; England; England; England; and Canada, respectively.

no real need for or prioritization of producing a Welsh translation (Dennis 2002). In 1842, missionary William Henshaw was assigned to labor in Merthyr Tydfil, a town in southern Wales, and the lack of "proselytizing materials" in Welsh began to become an issue (Dennis 2002, 45). Henshaw did not speak Welsh but was able to communicate with the "fair number" of Merthyr Tydfil residents who knew English (Dennis 2002, 45). Over the next few years, a handful of new branches were founded throughout Wales and in 1844 the Merthyr Tydfil Conference, the first conference in Wales, was created as the amalgamation of the five existing Welsh branches (Jenson 1941).

In 1845, Captain Dan Jones, commonly referred to as the "Father of the Welsh Mission" received a calling in Nauvoo to serve a mission in Wales (Jenson 1941). Captain Jones was a Welsh native who had emigrated to the United States sometime around 1840 and had converted to Mormonism after meeting Joseph Smith (Jenson 1920). During Jones' first mission from 1845 to 1849, Jones was responsible for publishing a variety of Mormon literature in Welsh (Dennis 2002). Jones' publications from this period include several pamphlets, a hymnal, a lengthy scriptural commentary, a translation of the *Proclamation of the Twelve Apostles*, and *Prophet of the Jubilee*, a monthly Welsh Mormon periodical which was first published in July 1846 (Dennis 1988). Notably, these early Welsh Mormon publications were originally produced by Jones in the Welsh language, they were not translations of earlier English Mormon publications. Additionally, Dennis (1988) only specifies that the translation of the *Proclamation of the Twelve Apostles* was published by request (of Brigham Young). Presumably, this means that the other publications were published by Jones' own initiative. Jones printed all but one of his publications using his brother's, John Jones, press in Rhydybont (Dennis 2002). When Jones' mission ended at the end of 1848 and he left Wales in the beginning of 1849, a man by the name of John S. Davis was assigned to take over Jones' printing duties (Dennis 2002).

John Davis had started a printer's apprenticeship at the age of 13 and in 1845, at 23, he was working in John Jones' print shop (Dennis 2002). While helping with the printing of some of Captain Jones' publications, Davis was exposed to the ideas of the Church and decided to be baptized (Dennis 2002). After Davis assumed Jones' role in 1849, the *Prophet of the Jubilee* was renamed *Zion's Trumpet*, and Davis continued to publish other material for the

Church (Dennis 1988). In the August 1850 issue of *Zion's Trumpet*, Davis published an announcement that he would be translating and publishing the Doctrine and Covenants as he had been "counseled" to do so (Dennis 2002). The announcement does not specify *who* counseled Davis to begin the translation, but other issues of the *Zion's Trumpet* from 1850 mention that the translation would be published in the name of F.D. Richards[29] or Brigham Young (Dennis 2011). It is reasonable to assume that Richards or Young were responsible for instructing Davis to translate the Doctrine and Covenants.

Dennis (2002) writes that by this time in 1850, most of the over 4,000 Welsh members of the Church could not speak English. Decidedly, the profile of Welsh Mormon converts had changed significantly from the beginning of the mission in 1840, and the need to produce Welsh Mormon literature continued to grow. The wrapper of the June 1850 issue of *Zion's Trumpet* contained a short song written by Church member Thomas Conway:

> O that we, the Welsh, might have,
> Our Book of Mormon in our tongue,
> So that we might have greater light
> And comforts on our sojourn;
> Also, the Book of the Doctrines,
> Which would certainly provide teaching
> To the officers of the church of Jesus,
> And the monoglot Saints in their midst. (Dennis 2011)

Apparently, the desire to have the Doctrine and Covenants and the Book of Mormon translated into Welsh was not exclusive to Church leadership and missionaries. Conway's tune implies that the Welsh Mormon public also wished to have access to these important scriptures.[30] Still, this want seems to not correspond with the actual demand for the translation of the Doctrine and Covenants. A note on the wrapper of the December 1850 issue of *Zion's Trumpet* reads:

> We believed that we would receive about 1500 subscribers to the DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS, but instead we received no more than half that number, which prompts us to delay its publication, until there is greater call for it, although a segment of it is ready for the press, and great effort has gone into it. It is true that we were instructed to print it, but how can we do that without support? The five thousand Welsh Saints are now the ones who will determine when this book will be printed, and not us. (Dennis 2011)

[29] According to the Church History Biographical Database, F. D. Richards was called as the President of the British Mission on January 30, 1851.
[30] Of course, Conway's wish is not necessarily representative of the entire Welsh Mormon public.

Granted, a fewer number of subscribers than expected could have multiple causes. Were the majority of Welsh Mormon converts able to afford the translation? Were the majority of Welsh Mormon converts aware of the translation and its subscription system? Despite the lackluster support for the translation expressed in this passage, Davis published the Welsh translation of the Doctrine and Covenants in 20 installments over a period of 27 weeks, with the final segment being released in August of 1851 (Dennis 2002). After all 20 installments were published, they were bound together as a whole (Dennis 2002). Interestingly, this means that the Book of Mormon was not the first Mormon scripture to be translated into Welsh.

While this thesis is focused on the translation of the Book of Mormon into other languages, in the Welsh case the translation of the Doctrine and Covenants is also of particular importance. As another main Mormon scripture, the translation of the Doctrine and Covenants into Welsh represents the transfer of Mormon ideas into Welsh culture. The translations of the Doctrine and Covenants and the Book of Mormon into Welsh were published so close together in time that it would be impossible even to distinguish the post-translation effects of one versus the other. It is less important to concentrate on the translation of the Book of Mormon specifically, and more important to recognize that this period is marked by the introduction of Mormon ideas to the Welsh, via the Doctrine and Covenants *or* the Book of Mormon *or* other Welsh Mormon literature published around the same time. This thesis chose to analyze the translation of the Book of Mormon into other languages because it is a way to identify a specific time in which Mormon ideas were transferred to the target cultures. The translation of the Doctrine and Covenants into other languages also marks specific times when Mormon ideas were transferred to target cultures, and in the Welsh case, these two instances happen to roughly coincide.

In the July 26, 1851, issue of *Zion's Trumpet*, before the entirety of the installments of the Doctrine and Covenants had been published, Davis requested for Church leaders to garner subscriptions for a Welsh translation of the Book of Mormon (Dennis 2002). While the Doctrine and Covenants was translated first, the plan seems to have always been to translate both texts into Welsh. Notes from a conference in the East Glamorgan District on October 20, 1850, specify that "the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants are to be

translated into Welsh," (Dennis 2011, 292). It is unclear why the order of the translations transpired as it did. In the foreword to the Welsh translation, Davis reveals that the decision to publish a Welsh translation of the Book of Mormon was made by President F. D. Richards (Smith 1852). If the intention from the beginning was to translate both texts, it seems likely that F. D. Richards was behind the order to translate both texts. The announcement referenced above which said that the translation of the Doctrine and Covenants would be published in the name of F. D. Richards or Brigham Young, in the context of this additional information, points towards a conclusion if the translation were to be published in Young's name, it would be in name only. F. D. Richards, therefore, most likely counseled Davis to complete both translations.

In his request for subscriptions, Davis explained that the Book of Mormon translation, like the Doctrine and Covenants, would be published in installments until its completion, for the price of a penny and a half per installment and totaling between 30 and 32 installments (Dennis 2012, 244). Subsequent issues of *Zion's Trumpet* provided updates on the number of subscriptions Davis urged Church leaders to be "aggressive" in their push for more subscriptions (Dennis 2002, 47). The first installment of the Welsh Book of Mormon translation was released on September 20, 1851 (Dennis 2002). A letter from Thomas Conway to Davis published in the October 18, 1851, issue of *Zion's Trumpet*, reads, in part, "for while this book is in the English language, its light for the Welsh is only like the light of the moon; but when we have it in the Welsh language, we shall have it like the light of the sun" (Dennis 2012, 331). Conway also includes another song with his letter:

> Rejoice, all you monoglot Welshmen,
> We shall have the wish of us all,
> Namely the translation of the Book of Mormon
> Into our harmonious and unfading language;
> The fullness of times has come,
> For the God of heaven to give to us,
> The secrets he gave to Mormon,
> And his dear associates.
> Here is the book that for many years,
> Namely for fourteen hundred,
> Was in the earth at Cumorah,
> Like some fair and beautiful treasure;
> It was like the setting sun
> For such a long time:
> Now it is like the shining sun

Rising to do its work.
Its light is spreading,
Through different languages of the world,
Now it is coming to the Welsh (...). (Dennis 2012, 332)

Conway's composition only reinforces the idea that translation is crucial to the spread of religious ideas. On April 17, 1852, only six months after the first installment, the last installment of the Welsh Book of Mormon was sent out with the *Zion's Trumpet* (Dennis 2002). The timeframe of Davis's translations is vague. If Davis had only begun to translate the Book of Mormon after the final installment of the Doctrine and Covenants, he would have completed the translation in under one year. The announcement that the Doctrine and Covenants would be translated into Welsh was published in August 1850, it seems likely that Davis would have begun translating around that time. In this scenario, Davis would have translated both texts in around a year and a half. At the very earliest, Davis could have begun translating after taking over Jones's duties in early 1849. Even then, both translations would have been produced in just over two years. In any case, the translation process was remarkably quick, the Welsh Book of Mormon translation alone is 496 pages long.

Information on Davis's translation process of the Book of Mormon is sparse. Some curiosities are known, such as the fact that Davis completed the entire translation using only one quill pen and that the first published copy of the book was dedicated to President Brigham Young and taken to him in Utah (Whitney 1904). In a letter to Levi Richards, dated November 7, 1851, Davis writes: "I would like if I could have time to write you a long yearn, but the translation of the Book of Mormon takes too much of my time" (1851, 1-2). This statement indicates that, in essence, translation had become a job for Davis. Davis was not merely translating in his spare time but was actively dedicated to translating and to finishing the translation in a timely manner.

The foreword to the Welsh translation provides a few more clues as to Davis's translation process. The authors of the foreword explain that the translation was produced as best as possible considering the limitations that Davis was working under (Smith 1852). There is no elaboration as to what these limitations were, but Dennis (2002) speculates that they could be referring to a lack of qualified Church members to assist Davis, such as typesetters or proofreaders, or possibly even to the physical space where Davis was translating. At that

time Davis was using a press in the "cramped conditions" in his own home in Merthyr Tydfil (Dennis 2002).

Davis's translational activity did not end with the Welsh Book of Mormon. By September 1852, the same year that he completed the Book of Mormon translation, Davis had translated the Pearl of Great Price, yet another Mormon scripture (Dennis 2013). For some perspective, this means that in the thirteen months between August 1851 and September 1852, Davis published the final installment of the Doctrine and Covenants, the entire Book of Mormon, and the entire Pearl of Great Price. Clearly, Davis was an extremely prolific translator. In 1854, Davis left Wales and emigrated to Utah where he worked as a printer (Dennis 2002). Captain Jones returned to Wales on a mission and resumed his role publishing Mormon literature in Welsh after Davis's departure (Dennis 1988).

Available data suggests that Davis is more or less single-handedly responsible for executing the translation of the Book of Mormon into Welsh. While President F. D. Richards directed Davis to produce the translation, Davis himself was the one who published the announcement in *Zion's Trumpet*, urged Church leaders to recruit subscribers, completed the translation, printed the translation, and published the translation. By all appearances, the translation of the Book of Mormon into Welsh was a much less collaborative process than the Danish translation.

In terms of circulation, at least 2,000 copies of the Welsh translation were distributed through the subscription system, and another 200 copies were ordered to be printed after the translation's completion (Dennis 2002). According to information found in *Zion's Trumpet*, the plan was for subscribers to bind the installments together once they had all been released (Dennis 2012; Dennis 2013). A note to subscribers published in the November 1, 1851, issue of *Zion's Trumpet* warns:

> We think that it is best not to cut its pages before it is bound, lest some are lost, and cannot be replaced. Since it will be out in about six months, it is better for the most careless not to read it, rather put the segments safely aside, for binding, and after that remember to read it. (Dennis 2012, 354)

The April 17, 1852, issue of *Zion's Trumpet*, which included the final installment of the translation, further instructs subscribers:

> Since the ink in new books require time to dry, it is not wise to bind the Book of Mormon too soon, unless the binder is warned to refrain from putting undue pressure on it, so it will not cause it to be printed double. We will again receive volumes of the Book of Mormon to bind, the same as with the "Doc. and Cov.," and for about the same price; and whoever wishes to have it bound handsomely and cheaply in London, may send his volume here, and we shall endeavor to see to it. (Dennis 2013, 130-131)

To ever so briefly return to O'Connor's (2021) argument for the material turn in the study of religious translation, this information is relevant because it shows that the idea was not for the translation to exist in a series of loose papers, but to be bound "handsomely" (Dennis 2013, 131). So, and to echo Pym, with what effect? What post-translation effects can be found?

By the end of 1840, the year in which the Welsh mission was opened, there were around 100 members of the Church in Wales (Jenson 1941). By the end of 1848, there were around 3,603 members (Jenson 1941). By mid-1850, just before the translation of the Doctrine and Covenants, there were around 4,000 members (Dennis 2002). By 1852, members of the Church in Wales surpassed 5,000 (Jenson 1941). Between 1853 and 1856 alone, 2,000 new members were baptized in Wales (Neilson and Melville 2019). Considering these statistics, Church membership in Wales increased drastically following the publication of the Welsh Book of Mormon translation in 1852. Dennis writes that "several hundred Welsh converts accepted Mormonism before anything was available in Welsh about the new religion; however, the greatest increase in conversion parallels the time of most prolific output of Mormon writings" (1988, 2). In the conclusion to his book *Welsh Mormon Writings from 1844 to 1862* he continues along the same line:

> It is more than just happenstance that the printing of Mormon materials in the Welsh language coincided with the surge in convert baptisms in Wales during the mid-nineteenth century. It would be hard to evaluate to what extent there existed a cause-and-effect relationship; however, many Welsh people who became Mormons gave credit for their conversion to being able to read about Mormonism in their own language. (1988, 231)

Dennis's observations were written almost 30 years before Gentzler published his book on post-translation. And yet, is Dennis's depiction of the effects of the Welsh Book of Mormon translation not a perfect example of post-translation and post-translation effects? Dennis

explains that many Welsh Mormons converted *because* they gained access to Mormonism, and therefore to Mormon ideas, *in their own language*. The translation successfully reached an audience who otherwise would not have had access to those ideas and who, logically, would not have converted.

While the number of Welsh converts grew post-translation, like the Danish converts, they were encouraged to emigrate to Utah and members in Wales began to leave for the United States (Neilson and Melville 2019). In 1849, before the publication of the Welsh translation, Captain Jones led a company of 250 Welsh converts to Utah (Jenson 1941). Over time, more and more converts emigrated and membership in Wales dwindled (Jenson 1941). By 1856, the size of emigrating groups had increased, with Captain Jones assisting a company of over 700 Welsh converts leaving for Utah (Neilson and Melville 2019). Some branches lost so many members that they were disbanded and regrouped into other branches (Jenson 1941). In an article entitled "Welsh Emigration to the United States," Alan Conway writes that "one must include the Mormons who took out hundreds of Welsh to Utah" (1959, 15). Apparently, the emigration of Welsh Mormon converts was drastic enough that it is included in an overview of Welsh emigration to the United States. Conway (1959) establishes that the majority of the Mormon Welsh emigration took place between 1840 and 1870, meaning that some of the period most marked by emigration began before the publication of the translation. According to Dennis (1988), the consequences of Welsh Mormon emigration had reached the printing of Welsh Mormon literature by the early 1860s. Dennis explains that "by 1862, most of the approximately ten thousand Welsh Mormons had either returned to earlier religious preferences or emigrated, and so the Welsh Mormon press fell silent" (1988, 2). In 1873, the remaining three conferences of the Welsh mission were combined as the Welsh conference (Jenson 1941). Just 21 years after the publication of the Welsh Book of Mormon translation, what had been 13 conferences were reduced to one. To date, no temples have ever been built in Wales.

One significant Welsh immigrant is Martha Hughes Cannon. Martha was born in Wales in 1857 and after her family joined the Church they emigrated from Wales to Utah in 1861 (Clark n.d.; Monson 2024). By the time Martha was 25, she had earned four college degrees, including a medical degree from the University of Michigan (Clark n.d.). In 1887, a law was

passed that removed women's voting rights in Utah, in response, Martha became an advocate for women's rights and worked with the Utah Woman Suffrage Association (Monson 2024). After women regained their right to vote in 1895, Martha was the first female to register to vote in Salt Lake City (Clark n.d.). One year later, in 1896, Martha became elected as the first female state senator – beating her husband in the election (Monson 2024). As of today, a statue of Martha Cannon is located in the National Statuary Hall in Washington D.C. (Aerts 2024). The Hall contains two statues from each state of important individuals from their history (Aerts 2024). The statue of Martha Cannon in D.C. accompanies a statue of Brigham Young (Aerts 2024).

Lastly, it would be remiss not to mention the work of Ronald D. Dennis. Dennis first became interested in early Welsh Mormons when going through old family documents (Jackson 2002). After stumbling upon a pamphlet written in Welsh by his ancestor, Captain Jones, Dennis became curious as to what the pamphlet said (Jackson 2002). Dennis could not find anyone up to translating 19th century Welsh, so he and his family moved to Wales for six months so that he could start learning the language (Jackson 2002). Since then, Dennis has conducted a remarkable amount of research on 19th century Welsh Mormons and translated an impressive number of Welsh Mormon writings. His earliest publications in the field include *The Call of Zion: The Story of the First Welsh Mormon Emigration* and *Welsh Mormon Writings from 1844 to 1862: A Historical Bibliography*. Dennis produced what he calls facsimile translations in English of the 1846, 1847, and 1848 issues of the *Prophet of the Jubilee* as well as of the 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, and 1857 issues of *Zion's Trumpet*. These facsimile translations were published between 1997 and 2017. Together, they make up over 5,000 pages of translation. In 2003, Dennis also published *Defending the Faith: Early Welsh Missionary Publications*, a facsimile translation of seventy different early Welsh Mormon writings including pamphlets and poems.

Additionally, Dennis started the Welsh Saints Project[31], a website "seek[ing] to preserve and share information about the early converts to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Wales" (The Welsh Saints Project, n.d.). As of today, the site contains information about over 5,000 Welsh Mormon immigrants, including birth dates, death dates, burial places,

[31] Originally called the Welsh Mormon History site.

parents, spouses, children, migration records, census records, and photos. According to Jackson (2002), Dennis's goal is to document every 19th century Welsh Mormon convert. In the foreword to the translation of the 1849 *Zion's Trumpet*, D. L. Davies describes Dennis as the "towering master of the history of the Latter-day Saints' earliest Welsh Mission," and notes that "he single-handedly transformed one of the most neglected aspects of Welsh - and possibly Mormon - history into a veritable library of knowledge" (Davies 2001, xi).

Some of the data on the Project's website provides evidence of post-translation effects. Specifically, there are examples of what Johnson (2023) referenced in her article on reception history. A search through the immigrant listings reveals individuals with names from the Book of Mormon. For example, 10 immigrants on the website have the name "Nephi" and 11 have the name "Moroni."

4.3 The Hawaiian Translation

While the Hawaiian translation is the first non-European language translation of the Book of Mormon, as well as the first Book of Mormon translation in the Pacific region, Latter-day Saint missionary activity in the Pacific region did not begin in Hawaii. In 1844, six years before Mormon missionaries would arrive in Hawaii, a trio of Latter-day Saints were called to proselytize in the Society Islands[32] (Bishop and VanOrden 2005). Apparently, the translation of any Mormon scripture or materials into Tahitian during that time was inhibited by the lack of printing infrastructure on the island (Bishop and VanOrden 2005). The existence of a justification for the absence of translation into Tahitian seems to imply that there had been some discussion around the topic. Still, it would be seven years before the first non-English translation of the Book of Mormon was published and eleven until the publication of the Hawaiian translation.[33]

The story of the Hawaiian translation of the Book of Mormon begins with George Q. Cannon, born in the Isle of Man in 1827 (Whitney 1904). Cannon and the rest of his family converted to the Church in 1840 when he was 13 years old after his aunt married one of the

[32] Now known as French Polynesia (Bishop and VanOrden 2005).
[33] And, of note, 60 years until the publication of the Tahitian translation.

Twelve Apostles of the Church (Whitney 1904). Two years after his baptism, in 1842, Cannon and his family emigrated to Nauvoo (Whitney 1904). After their move, Cannon spent time learning about the printing business from his uncle who was an editor at two Mormon newspapers in Nauvoo (Whitney 1904). Whitney describes Cannon as "possessed of an unusual mentality, he absorbed knowledge as a sponge takes in water, and what his quick and wide apprehension encompassed, his marvelous memory ever retained" (1904, 659). Cannon left Nauvoo for Salt Lake City as part of the Mormon exodus in 1847 and then left Salt Lake City for California in 1849 to work in the gold mines (Whitney 1904). Cannon was sent to California by Brigham Young, as he was there to serve a "gold mission," meaning that any profits he made while there would be returned to the Church (Marlowe and Christensen 2019). Just one year later, in 1850, Apostle Charles C. Rich, with Brigham Young's permission, called for eleven of the missionaries serving in California to embark on a new mission to the Hawaiian Islands[34] (Marlowe and Christensen 2019; Neilson and Melville 2019). Among these eleven was George Q. Cannon (Neilson and Melville 2019).

The group set sail from San Francisco on the *Imaum of Muscat* and arrived in Honolulu on December 12, 1850 (Cannon 1882; Marlowe and Christensen 2019). By the time they arrived in Hawaii, one of the missionaries had returned to Utah instead of continuing on with the group, establishing the following ten men as the first Latter-day Saint missionaries in Hawaii: Hiram Clark, Thomas Whittle, Henry W. Bigler, Thomas Morris, John Dixon, William Farrer, James Hawkins, Hiram Blackwell, George Q. Cannon, and James Keeler (Cannon 1882).[35] Upon arrival, the group was split into five pairs and assigned to labor in five different areas (Cannon 1882). Cannon and his partner, James Keeler, were sent to the island of Maui (Cannon 1882). Reflecting on his arrival in Hawaii, Cannon writes:

> The monotonous character of their language, their rapid utterance, their numerous gestures, caused us to watch them with interest. We thought them a strange people. I little thought at that time that I would ever learn their language, or become as familiar with their customs as I afterwards did; for, though we had been sent on missions to the Islands, we supposed our time would be occupied in preaching to the whites. (Cannon 1882, 17)

[34] Some sources also refer to Hawaii as the Sandwich Islands (Bishop and VanOrden 2005; Cannon 1882; Neilson and Melville 2019; Woods 2008a).
[35] According to the Church History Biographical Database, the ten missionaries were from Vermont; Canada; Virginia; Wales; England; England; England; Tennessee; England; and Vermont, respectively.

One could infer from Cannon's observation that he at that time had no intention of learning the Hawaiian language or even preaching to the native Hawaiians that there was, at that time, also no intention of translating the Book of Mormon into Hawaiian. Continuing, he remarks:

> The white people were not numerous at Lahaina, and there were but very few at any other place on the island of Maui. Preaching to them with the hope of convincing them of the truth seemed a hopeless labor. The question arose directly, "Shall we confine our labors to the white people?" It is true that we had not been particularly told to preach to the natives of the islands, but we were in their midst, had full authority to declare unto them the message of salvation, and if we did not declare unto them the message of salvation, and if we did not declare it unto them, some other Elders would have to come and do so, in order to fulfill the command of God to his servants.
>
> For my part I felt it to be clearly my duty to warn all men, white and red; and no sooner did I learn the condition of the population that I made up my mind to acquire the language, preach the gospel to the natives and to the whites whenever I could obtain an opportunity, and thus fill my mission. I felt resolved to stay there, master the language and warn the people of those islands, if I had to do it alone; for I felt that I could not do otherwise and be free from condemnation; the spirit of it was upon me. (Cannon 1882, 22)

It is interesting that Cannon describes the "spirit" he felt upon him to "master the language" (Cannon 1882, 22). In this passage, there is no explicit mention of praying about the situation or asking God for an answer, but Cannon's resolve certainly appears to be the result of some sort of spiritual inspiration or guidance. Later on in *My First Mission*, Cannon does state that the Lord had "revealed unto" him to "acquire the language" (Cannon 1882, 53). Again, towards the end of the book, Cannon reflects that "the Lord plainly manifested that it was His will that this work should be done" (Cannon 1882, 73). Cannon also claims that his knowledge of the language itself was a gift from God:

> My desire to learn to speak was very strong; it was present with me night and day, and I never permitted an opportunity of talking with the natives to pass without improving it. I also tried to exercise faith before the Lord to obtain the gift of talking and understanding the language. One evening (...) I felt a peculiar sensation in my ears; I jumped to my feet (...) and exclaimed (...) that I believed I had received the gift of interpretation! And it was so. (Cannon 1882, 23)

He does not seem to view this gift from God as a consequence of his particular circumstances, writing:

> I mention this that my readers may know how willing God is to bestow gifts upon his children. If they should be called to go as missionaries to a foreign nation, whose language they do not understand, it is their privilege to exercise faith for the gifts of speaking and interpreting that language, and also for every other gift which they may need. (Cannon 1882, 23-24)

The idea that one could turn to God and receive the gifts of speaking and interpreting a language is somewhat reminiscent of Joseph Smith's translation. Smith's narrative of translation seems to have spawned the notion, among believing Mormons, that there is, or at least there can be, a spiritual aspect to language and translation. Would Cannon have believed it was possible to receive "the gift of interpretation" had he not been aware of Smith and his translation? What if Smith had claimed responsibility for the translation instead of crediting God?

In March of 1851, Cannon met Hawaiian native Jonathan Napela (Woods 2008a). Napela was a descendant of royal lineage and began attending a Protestant school on Maui in the early 1830s (Woods 2008a). Afterward, Napela became a lawyer and from 1848 to 1851 he worked as a district judge in Wailuku (Woods 2008a). Of their first encounter, Cannon describes entering Napela's house and feeling "convinced that [he] had met the men for whom he had been looking" (Cannon 1882, 36). At that time, in March of 1851, the Book of Mormon Hawaiian translation had yet to begin, so Cannon was most likely referring to having found men who could teach him the language. This is especially probable in retrospect, as just a few weeks after meeting, Cannon was invited to stay at Napela's house so that they could teach each other their languages (Woods 2008a). Almost two full years after their first encounter, Napela was baptized by Cannon in January of 1852 (Woods 2008a).

It is somewhat ambiguous what triggered the beginning of the translation process, as Cannon merely describes himself as having been "led to commence the translation" (Cannon 1882, 68). It is unclear whether Cannon had had previous conversations with Church leaders or with other elders regarding a Hawaiian translation, but his description of being "led to commence" the translation without referencing anyone in particular points to a more spiritual pull to start translating. This scenario seems even more likely when considering Cannon's account that "[his] fellow-laborers, the Elders, encouraged [him], and from the First

Presidency at home - Presidents Young, Kimball and Richards - came words of cheer, approving of what [he] was doing and counseling [him] to persevere" (Cannon 1882, 69). It appears that Cannon informed his fellow Elders and the First Presidency of his plans to translate and that they were supportive of that decision, not that he was under any order, or really even a suggestion, to produce a translation.

According to Britsch, Cannon was the primary translator and translated with "the help" of Napela (Britsch 1978, 78). Napela was characterized by Cannon as a well-educated man who "thoroughly understood his own language" and who "could give [him] the exact meaning of words" (Cannon 1882, 68-69). Furthermore, Cannon argued that Napela was a particularly valuable asset as "he had studied the principles of the gospel very thoroughly, he had a great comprehensive mind to grasp the truth, and he had been greatly favored by the Spirit" (Cannon 1882, 69). Cannon writes that Napela "got the spirit of the book" (Cannon 1882, 69). Once again, the importance of religiosity to translation is emphasized.

In *My First Mission*, Cannon recalls his translation as having started in January 1851 (Cannon 1882, 69). Surely, this is a small mistake or misremembering. January of 1851 was only one month after Cannon arrived in Hawaii, three months before Cannon met Napela, and a whole year before Napela was baptized. It is much more reasonable to assume that translation began in January 1852, and this is the starting date that Britsch references (Britsch 1978). According to Cannon:

> In the beginning my method was to translate a few pages, and then, when opportunity offered, explain to Brother Napela the ideas, whether historical or doctrinal, in great fullness. By this means he would get a pretty thorough comprehension of the part I was translating. I would then read the translation to him, going carefully over every word and sentence, and learning from him the impression the language used conveyed to his mind. In this way I was able to correct any obscure expression which might be used, and secure the Hawaiian idiom. (Cannon 1882, 69-70)

Cannon also reveals that he sometimes had "other intelligent men" present for the revision of the text (Cannon 1882, 70). Whether these intelligent men were native Hawaiians or other English-speaking missionaries is uncertain. As Cannon progressed with his translation, he claims:

> The Spirit of translation rested upon me, it even became a very easy labor for me. I obtained great facility of expression in the language, and before I got through with the book, I had a range of words at my command, superior to the great bulk of the people.
>
> This was a very natural result. Doctrines, principles and ideas were in the Book of Mormon which were outside the ordinary thoughts of people. The translation of these, called forth the full powers of the language, and really required - that which I felt I had while engaged in this work - the assistance of the Spirit of inspiration. (Cannon 1882, 70)

At one point Cannon even writes that he had spent so much time speaking in Hawaiian that it became difficult for him to remember English, stating that he "was able to speak and write it with greater ease and correctness than [his] mother tongue" (Cannon 1882, 47). Just as Cannon credited the Spirit with his knowledge of the language, he credits the "Spirit of translation" and the "Spirit of inspiration" for helping him "call forth the full powers of the language" (Cannon 1882, 70). It would be interesting to know what the translating dynamic between Cannon and Napela was truly like. Cannon had been in Hawaii for just over a year when he began translating the Book of Mormon. Presumably, and especially as he had been working with Napela to learn the language, Cannon would have been able to make some significant progress in his language skills over that year. Still, for one to translate a book with hundreds of pages, rife with complicated language and expressions, would be a difficult feat after one year of learning a language. As per Cannon, Napela's role was fundamentally that of a revisor. Was Cannon truly the primary translator of every single page? If so, how extensive were Napela's revisions?

Cannon writes that he finished translating on July 22, 1853 and completed a revision of the translation that September (Cannon 1882, 70). This would be around a year and a half after he had started the translation. After the translation was completed, a thorough revision was carried out with Elder William Farrer, one of the missionaries who had sailed from San Francisco to Hawaii with Cannon, and Brother Kauwahi, "a man of acute intellect and talent and good education, and who was called the most eloquent and best reasoner in the Hawaiian nation" (Cannon 1882, 71). The biographical sketch of J.W.H. Kauwahi on the Church Historian Press's website reveals that Kauwahi attended the same Protestant school as Napela, going on to work as a lawyer, land overseer, and member of the Hawaiian legislature. Cannon's revision of the translation with Farrer and Kauwahi took place from December 24,

1853 until the end of January 1854 (Cannon 1882, 71). This revision process was supposedly less intensive than Cannon's work with Napela. Of the revision, Cannon writes:

> During this revision, I read the book through twice, with the exception of a few pages: once to Brother Farrer, who looked at the English version, to see there were no words or sentences omitted; afterwards to Brother Kauwahi, who also looked at the English book, he being a little acquainted with English, to correct any inaccuracies in the translation or the idiom.
>
> Where there was an expression that was not very plain, or that was out of the ordinary line of the Hawaiian thought - and there were many such - I took pains to explain it fully to Brother Kauwahi, as I had done before to Brother Napela, so as to be sure that I had used the most simple and clear language to convey the idea. (Cannon 1882, 71)

Before Cannon's revision with Farrer and Kauwahi, the issue of how and where to print the Hawaiian translation was discussed at a conference in October of 1853 (Cannon 1882, 71). Members debated whether they should pay an outside printing firm to print the translation or buy a press themselves that they could use to print the translation as well as other Church materials (Cannon 1882). The next issue was to come up with the money to purchase a press (Cannon 1882). Cannon and two other elders were chosen to travel throughout the islands to collect funds (Cannon 1882). Individuals who subscribed for a copy of the translation were provided with a copy after its publication (Cannon 1882). Another Church member, Edward Dennis, loaned $1,000 to purchase the necessary materials (Cannon 1882). The money was sent to purchase a press from somewhere on the East Coast and the press was then sent to Honolulu (Cannon 1882; Neilson and Melville 2019). The press arrived in Honolulu in October 1854 but as nobody knew how to operate it, it was ultimately shipped to California (Neilson and Melville 2019). By then, Cannon had returned home from Hawaii but in April of 1855 was called on yet another mission to go to California and publish the Hawaiian translation (Cannon 1882). Joseph Bull and Matthew F. Wilkie, members of the Church, neither of whom knew Hawaiian, were sent to California along with Cannon and the pair set the copy of the Hawaiian translation into type (Cannon 1882). The final revision of the text was performed by Cannon and his wife:

> My method of reading the proof was to get her to read the English book while I looked at the proofs of the translation. By this means I was able to detect any omission of words or sentences. After going through the proofs in this way, I read them again, to see if any errors in spelling, etc., had escaped me. This was my only way of reading by copy; for I had no one with me who could read the Hawaiian. (Cannon 1882, 73)

In January of 1856, 2,000 copies of the Hawaiian translation were printed in San Francisco (Neilson and Melville 2019). Only a few copies were bound immediately following the printing, 200 additional copies were bound after eight months, and it is unknown how many more copies were eventually bound (Neilson and Melville 2019). The majority of these bound copies were sent to Hawaii and would begin to circulate in the Hawaiian Islands in 1857 (Britsch 1978; Neilson and Melville 2019). One article on the Church News website claims that the unbound pages fell victim to a fire, eliminating any potential plans to bind the remaining printed pages (Bancroft 2023). According to that same article, Elder Brooks Haderlie, university archivist at Brigham Young University – Hawaii (BYU – Hawaii) was able to locate a mere 22 copies of the 1855 Hawaiian Book of Mormon translation as of 2022 (Bancroft 2023).

So, what impact did the Hawaiian translation of the Book of Mormon have on Hawaiian culture? Cannon himself writes that "the Elders who have since labored upon those islands, know the good the book has accomplished. Its circulation can never fail to benefit all who will read it" (Cannon 1882, 73). Britsch, on the other hand, writes that "the circulation of the book seems not to have been too extensive. In fact, there is evidence that the book did not contribute much to the training or indoctrination of the Hawaiian saints in this early period" (Britsch 1978, 78-79). This seems especially probable given that only 200 copies of the translation were bound directly after its printing. Still, despite the potentially low circulation of the Hawaiian translation, what changes can be identified after its publication?

After the arrival of the first Latter-day Saint missionaries in 1850, the first branch of the Church in Hawaii was established in 1851 (Neilson and Melville 2019). In 1853, there were a recorded 3,016 members of the Church in the Hawaiian Islands (Schmitt 1973). The number reported by the Hawaiian census in December of that same year was slightly lower. 2,778 individuals classified themselves as Mormon in response to the census, granted this census only applied to the Hawaiians and part Hawaiians, 2,119 foreign residents were not included (Schmitt 1973). According to Neilson and Melville (2019), by 1854 there were a total of 53 branches in the islands. Britsch cites a higher number, claiming that in August of 1854 there were 75 branches and over 4,000 Church members (Britsch 1978). Britsch

characterizes that year as the "peak" of interest in the church, asserting that after that point "the novelty of the church's doctrines and activities began to lose their appeal" (Britsch 1978, 81). By 1854, Cannon's translation of the Book of Mormon had been completed but had not yet been printed or distributed. If translations function as a form of importing new ideas, could the publication of the Hawaiian translation reinvigorate interest in the Church? Was Cannon already aware of the declining novelty of the Church when he started the translation? Was his intention to regain that novelty? Certainly, a Hawaiian translation would have the potential to reach a greater number of potential converts.

By mid-1856, the president of the Hawaiian mission, Silas Smith, had sent multiple letters to President Young informing him that "the newness of the Church had worn off and that people were no longer attracted to its novel ideas and doctrines" (Britsch 1978, 77). This is the same sentiment that Britsch had already identified as early as 1854. Distribution of the Hawaiian translation began the next year, although as stated before, it is not certain how many copies were actually circulated in the islands. By October of 1857, the same year the translation began to circulate, membership had dropped to 3,122 (Britsch 1978, 81). Just a few months later, all Mormon missionaries in Hawaii were called home by President Young, most likely due to the impending Utah War (Britsch 1978). Compiling data from the 1884 and 1896 census reports, the 1905 Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the 1909 *Annual*, Schmitt reports the Mormon population in Hawaii in those years. In 1884, there were a recorded 3,576 members or 3.9% of the population; in 1896 there were 4,886 members or 4.4% of the population; in 1905 there were 5,133 members or 3.1% of the population; in 1909 there were 8,162 members or 4.4% of the population (Schmitt 1973). This data is not from the years directly following the introduction of the translation, but it does not seem to indicate any particularly significant leap in Church membership. Of course, there are other factors that also impacted this situation. When the missionaries left Hawaii in 1858, they failed to designate a new leader in the islands (Britsch 1978). Church member Walter Murray Gibson took advantage of this lack of leadership and installed himself as "Chief President of the Islands of the Sea and of the Hawaiian Islands, for the Church of Latter-day Saints" (Dowse 2013). Gibson's reign as Chief President was full of troubles, and he was excommunicated in 1854 (Dowse 2013). This episode would have definitely impacted the perception of the Church in Hawaii.

Still, despite these difficulties, Bishop and VanOrden classify the Church's Hawaiian mission as one of the "strongest in the nineteenth century" (Bishop and VanOrden 2005, 135). There are a handful of indicators that point towards the success of the Hawaiian translation.[36] Laie, Hawaii, is the site of the first temple built outside of the continental United States, the first temple dedicated outside of Utah, and the first temple built in a Church mission (Dowse 2013). A portion of a passage from the dedicatory prayer of the Laie Temple on November 27, 1919, reads:

> O God, accept of the gratitude and thanksgiving of our hearts, for the very wonderful and splendid labors performed in the land of Hawaii by Thy servants President George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith. We thank Thee for their devotion to the gospel and to the people of this land. We thank Thee for raising up Thy servant Elder J. H. Napela, that devoted Hawaiian, who assisted Thy servant President Cannon in the translation of the Book of Mormon, which is the sacred history of the Nephites, the Lamanites, and the Jaredites. We thank Thee that the plates containing the Book of Mormon were preserved so that they could be translated. (The Church of Latter-day Saints 1919)

It is rather significant that Napela and the translation are mentioned at such an important event. Not only does this imply that the translation played a hand in the growth of the Church in Hawaii, or at least towards the decision to build a temple there, but it directly thanks George Q. Cannon and Jonathan Napela for their work as translators. Napela also left a lasting impact back in the source culture. Woods explains that it was Napela who initially came up with the idea of having a missionary training center and who proposed a plan for teaching missionaries the language of their mission (Woods 2008a). Actually, this was the strategy that Napela used for teaching Hawaiian to Cannon and his fellow missionaries (Woods 2008b). As recent as 2008, Napela's language-learning plans were still implemented in Latter-day Saint missionary training centers (Woods 2008a). For reference, in 2019 the Church owned and ran 12 missionary training centers around the world (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2019). 58 total languages are taught in the training centers and in 2018, 20,515 missionaries were trained at the largest of the missionary training centers in Provo, Utah (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2019). Missionaries who are learning a foreign language will spend 6-9 weeks at a training center as opposed to missionaries who do not

[36] This also begs the question: what exactly is a successful translation? Are religious translations only successful if they result in more converts?

need to learn a new language and are only there for around 3 weeks (The Church of Latter-day Saints 2019). Missionary training centers are vital to the Mormon missionary system, and it is quite remarkable that Napela is responsible for such a major component of the Church.

Also back in the source culture, a Hawaiian colony was founded in northwest Salt Lake City in 1889 (Dowse 2013). The colony was called *Iosepa* (Joseph, in Hawaiian) in honor of Joseph F. Smith who had spent time in Hawaii as a missionary (Dowse 2013). Part of this Hawaiian migration to Utah was due to the fact that there was not yet a temple in Hawaii, meaning that members in Hawaii could not be endowed (Woods 2008a). The first Hawaiian to receive a temple endowment was none other than Jonathan Napela (Woods 2008a). For twenty-eight years, the *Iosepa* colony persisted with a population of 228 (Woods 2008a). Following the announcement of the construction of the Laie Temple, *Iosepa* residents made their way back to Hawaii with the last of the inhabitants leaving in 1917 (Dowse 2013; Woods 2008a).

Despite the issues the Church had in Hawaii in the period after 1857 and the unpromising membership statistics presented by Schmitt, the translation of the Book of Mormon into Hawaiian has had lasting consequences both in the target culture and the source culture. According to the Church's Facts and Statistics page on their website, there are 75,635 Church members in Hawaii, 143 congregations, 26 FamilySearch centers, 2 constructed temples and 2 more temples that have been announced. In 1955, the first and only international campus of Brigham Young University was founded in Hawaii (BYU - Hawaii), which houses the Jonathan Napela Center for Hawaiian Language and Cultural Studies (Woods 2008b). In 1962 the Church opened the Polynesian Cultural Center in Laie, which, according to its website, has attracted over 37 million visitors, and was rated "Best Tourist Attraction" by the Honolulu-Star Advertiser in 2022.

4.4 The Deseret Alphabet Translation

After the publication of the Hawaiian translation in 1855, it would be another 14 years until the next Book of Mormon translation was published. This translation, published in 1869, is

unique in that, unlike the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations, it had little to no lasting cultural impact. The Deseret Alphabet "experiment," as Moore calls it, lasted from around 1853 until Brigham Young's death in 1877 (Moore 2006). Various authors show that while the official institutional direction to produce a Deseret Alphabet translation occurred in 1853, the beginnings of the Deseret Alphabet can be found even earlier.

By the late 1700s, American spelling reform was already a topic of discussion, with notable advocates such as Benjamin Franklin and Noah Webster (Alder et al. 1984). According to Alder et al., Webster and his "system of simplified spelling" are behind many of the spelling differences between British English and American English that we still see today (Alder et al. 1984, 276). Franklin and Webster's approach to spelling reform is what Alder et al. categorize as "simplified spelling," in other words, spelling reform that uses the existing English alphabet to alter words with complicated spellings (1984, 276). Some advocates of spelling reform support a more drastic approach, such as Brigham Young, suggesting the creation and use of a phonetic alphabet (Alder et al. 1984). Accordingly, to contextualize the Deseret Alphabet "experiment" in the larger scheme of spelling reform at that time, it would be fair to say that "the concept of revising language symbols was not original with the Latter-day Saints but was fairly common during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" (Moore 2006, 64). In fact, in 1837, Issac Pitman, the "father of modern orthographic reform," published his phonetic system for the English language (Moore 2006, 64). Pitman's system was successful enough that it "eventually became a national movement, with its own schools, journal, and disciples" (Alder et al. 1984, 277). Less than 10 years later, one of those disciples would move to Nauvoo where he would work as a scribe for Joseph Smith and begin to teach phonography classes (Grover and Cranney 1982).

George D. Watt, born in Manchester, England, was baptized on July 30, 1837, after encountering some Mormon missionaries in England (Moore 2006). Watt and his wife were among the first converts in Great Britain (Moore 2006). Watt was a student of the Pitman system and in 1842 he emigrated to Nauvoo where he gave classes to a handful of important individuals in early Mormonism such as Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, and Wilford Woodruff (Alder et al. 1984; Moore 2006). Brigham Young's exposure to spelling and phonetic reform, therefore, can be identified as early as 1842. Watt was called

on a mission to England in 1846 and in 1847, in the midst of the Mormon exodus to Salt Lake, Brigham Young wrote to him requesting "200 lbs. of phonotype" in order to "print a small book for the benefit of the saints" (Moore 2006; Carter 1969, 349). This plan did not come to fruition but, like Moore (2006) argues, it indicates that by 1847 there was already some initiative for the Church to begin using a phonetic alphabet.

For the next few years, the priority of the Church and its members was to adapt to and develop the Salt Lake Valley, leaving the plan for spelling reform on the back burner (Moore 2006). Three years later, in March 1850, the topic was reintroduced at the second-ever meeting of the University of Deseret Board of Regents (Moore 2006). Again, Young's proposal was sidelined, and only in 1853 would a new phonetic alphabet finally come to fruition (Alder et al. 1984). There is some debate over who created the new alphabet, but the general consensus is that Watt was ultimately responsible (Moore 2006). The name given to the alphabet, Deseret, is actually a word that comes from the Book of Mormon (Ivins 1947). Does this not qualify as some sort of post-translation effect?

By 1855, the Deseret Alphabet was being taught in some local schools (Moore 2006). However, there was a lack of printed Deseret Alphabet texts, making the teaching process difficult (Moore 2006). As significant historical events such as the Utah War and the Civil War unfolded, the Deseret Alphabet experiment was once again overshadowed (Moore 2006). Over a decade later, in 1868, ten thousand copies of two primers were printed and distributed (Ivins 1947). The plan for publishing the Book of Mormon in the Deseret Alphabet was to have one version printed in three parts and another version printed in full (Moore 2006). In 1869, 8,000 copies of the first part of the Book of Mormon were published and that same year 500 copies of the full Book of Mormon were published (Moore 2006). The remaining two parts of the first version were never printed (Moore 2006). According to Ivins (1947), it is impossible to know to what extent the Deseret Alphabet translations were ever used in schools and homes. Ivins (1947) reveals that most Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon translations that are found in used bookstores show little signs of use.

By the end of the 1870s, any success the Deseret Alphabet had garnered had dwindled away (Moore 2006). Alder et al. describe the ordeal as an "expensive failure" (1984, 285). Ivins

characterizes the end of the so-called experiment as "unlamented" (1947, 239). To all effects, the Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon translation has faded into obscurity. The Deseret Alphabet translation is not included in the list of Book of Mormon translations posted on the Church website. Of course, there is no way to know why the Deseret Alphabet translation is not on that list. Other translations that are now out of print, such as the 1905 Hawaiian revised edition, are included on the list and clearly labeled as such.

Unlike the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian cases, it is difficult to identify post-translation effects of the Deseret Alphabet translation. When Gentzler references measuring the success or failure of a translation, this case seems fitting as an example of a failed translation.[37] However, there are some other ways to think about the translation that challenge the idea that it was a complete failure. Translations are used as vehicles to introduce new ideas to other cultures. This was not the case for the Deseret Alphabet translation. The translation is interesting because it was not really trying to introduce new ideas or reach another culture. It was made for people in the source culture who already hold the beliefs contained in the text. The source culture and the target culture are one in the same. Therefore, the translation did not fail to impact the target culture, it simply failed as a different material format of their beliefs.

The translation itself can also be interpreted as a post-translation effect. One reason behind Young's push for spelling reform was to make it easier for converts who had immigrated to Salt Lake to learn English (Moore 2006). For example, the publication of the Danish translation caused Danes to emigrate to the United States, and the immigration of Danes to the United States caused Young to search for ways to teach those immigrants English. Really, this scenario makes the Deseret Alphabet translation more of a post-translation effect of a post-translation effect.

[37] And again, what exactly is a failed translation? By all accounts, the Deseret Alphabet translations does appear to have failed. But what measurements can one use to determine the success or failure of a translation? Characterizing a religious translation as a success or failure based purely on the subsequent trend in number of converts seems reductive. It would be interesting to know whether people in the target culture (Mormons in and around Utah) are aware that there was a Deseret Alphabet translation of the Book of Mormon, or if it is now just a mostly forgotten blip in the historical timeline.

4.5 Paratextual comparison

While an analysis or comparison of the translations themselves falls outside the realm of this thesis, a reflection on their paratexts is feasible and potentially insightful. First, a brief return to O'Connor's (2021) argument for a material turn in the study of religious translation and Johnson's (2023) call for scholars to explore the "experience of reception" of Book of Mormon translations in different cultures raises the question of the physical characteristics of the translations and how they were made available to readers. Both the Danish and the Welsh translations were initially published in installments through their respective mission periodicals. On the other hand, the Hawaiian translation was only ever published in its entirety. Without a hard copy of any of the original translations it is hard to say what material differences there are between the three translations, but it is fair to say that receiving the translation in segments would have been a different experience for the readers than receiving a fully bound book.

The Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations have a slightly different sequence of opening pages. The Danish translation begins with the title page, followed by a foreword to the Danish edition, and then followed by the testimonies of three and eight witnesses. The Welsh translation also begins with the title page, followed by a note "To the Welsh," the testimonies, and a table of contents. Finally, the Hawaiian version begins with a title page, followed by an "explanation," the table of contents, and lastly the testimonies. The Danish translation does not have a table of contents.

By 1851 when the Danish translation was published, there were five English editions of the Book of Mormon (Skousen 1992). The 1830 Palmyra, New York edition, 1837 Kirtland, Ohio edition, 1840 Nauvoo, Illinois edition, 1841 first European edition (a version of the 1837 edition but with British spelling), and 1849 second European edition (Skousen 1992). Only the Welsh translation specifies which edition was used for the translation – the first European edition. It is probable that both Hansen and Cannon would have used the 1840 Nauvoo edition, as this would have been the most recent non-European edition at that time, but this detail is not included in their paratexts. All three translations credit Joseph Smith

with the translation of the Book of Mormon into English, but while the Danish and Welsh translations retain the spelling of "Joseph Smith" on the title page, the Hawaiian translation changes the spelling to "Josepa Samika." Presumably, this was an attempt to make the name feel more familiar to the Hawaiian audience, but it is interesting that this same strategy was not employed in the European-language translations. As an aside, the Deseret Alphabet translation also rewrites Joseph Smith and all the witness names using the Deseret Alphabet. The only English included in the translation is the publishing information on the title page.

As for the translators into Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian, they are identified as Erastus Snow, John Davis, and Geogi Q. Pukuniahi, respectively. It seems an oversight to not credit Peter Hansen as the translator of the Danish translation, although Snow was at least somewhat involved in the process. As Mission President, Snow must have had seniority over Hansen, but the decision to list Snow as the translator instead of Hansen does somewhat erase Hansen's efforts. Even more so as Hansen was the one who initiated the translation on his own. It is slightly surprising that most sources make clear that Hansen was the primary translator, and yet as far as the paratexts are concerned, he bears no responsibility. Nevertheless, the second edition of the Danish translation, published in 1858, no longer lists any translator into the Danish language, only listing Joseph Smith as the translator into English. The third Danish edition, published in 1881, also excludes any mention of a translator other than Smith.

The Welsh translation, appropriately, lists John Davis as the translator into Welsh. This 1852 translation crediting John Davis is the edition currently available as a PDF on the Church website, despite the fact that most other foreign-language translations do not credit any translator. In actuality, the Hawaiian translation does not name George Q. Cannon as the translator, but rather Geogi Q. Pukuniahi. This means that the Hawaiian translation adapted Smith and Cannon's names, however it does not alter any of the names of the witnesses. Again, it seems somewhat of an oversight to forego any mention of Napela, especially given the fact that he is by no means a forgotten contributor. The 1852 French translation, for example, lists two translators instead of one. It might have been a more realistic portrayal of the process to list both Cannon and Napela in the paratext, but again, Cannon held more power in the Church than Napela did. Also, it is interesting that the 1855 Hawaiian

translation is not the edition available on the Church website. The PDF attached as the Hawaiian Book of Mormon translation is actually a 1905 revised edition that, according to the Church, is now out of print. In 1992, another Hawaiian translation was published but it was a reprint of the 1855 edition, so it is unclear why the version made available online is an edition that is no longer in use. The 1905 revised translation still credits "Geogi Q. Pukuniahi" as the translator.

All three translations also include some sort of preface to the main text. To be able to read and analyze these paratexts, the Danish and Hawaiian prefaces were translated into English using Google Translate. The Welsh preface, on the other hand, was translated by Dennis into English. Considering these limitations, the discussion of the prefaces will be more general, except in the case of the Welsh preface where a reliable English translation exists. The foreword to the Danish translation was written by Snow and is mostly concerned with relating the history of Smith and the Book of Mormon. The first paragraph states that multiple English editions of the Book have already been published, the second paragraph touches on the translation process, mentioning that the goal was to achieve a simple style and that the translation was reviewed both by native English and native Danish speakers, and from then on, the foreword goes into summarizing the history of the Book. The Danish foreword is about four pages total. The Hawaiian preface, according to Google Translate, is titled "An Explanation," and instead of focusing on the origins of the Church as a whole, focuses on the history of the Church in Hawaii and on the translation process itself. It even includes important dates in the translation process such as the beginning, end, month in which the printer arrived from New York, and when the publication began. The preface also asserts that God played a hand in the translation process. Finally, it ends with the name of the translator, Geogi Q. Pukuniahi.

As for the Welsh preface, it begins:

> To the Welsh
> Beloved Countrymen, - It is not without feelings of gratitude to God that we have the honor of presenting before you this valuable book in the Welsh language. Many of you have freely given your opinion of this book, before you ever saw it, and condemned it, but now, after laboring so long under disadvantages, you can read it for yourselves, and see whether your former opinion was correct. (...) Perspecuity and plain language has been aimed at more than any kind of adornment; and we trust that the meaning of the

> English version by the Prophet Joseph Smith has been rendered as faithfully as could be done. It can be seen, by reading the Book of Mormon, that perfection was not professed even by the writers of the plates at first; and it would be unreasonable for anyone to expect perfection in the second translation of the same. Neither did the translators of the Bible take upon themselves to be perfect; for, from time to time, various corrections were made in their translations; and after the Book of Mormon, in the Welsh language, shall have been revised so much as the Bible, it may be supposed that it will become more perfect, at least, as far as language is concerned. And we may add here that is easier for others to detect errors, than it is for a translator to avoid them. (Dennis n.d.)

As opposed to the Danish and Hawaiian prefaces, the Welsh preface is not at all concerned with the history of the Church. Mainly, it serves to introduce and justify the translation to the readers, even making sure to explain that there may be errors in the text. Also opposed to the Danish and Hawaiian prefaces, the Welsh preface is not only written by the translator, but by John Davis, W.S. Phillips, and Thomas Pugh. According to a *Zion's Trumpet* issue from July 10, 1852, William S. Phillips was the President of the Church in Wales and John Davis and Thomas Pugh were his counselors (Dennis 2013, 227). Compared to the other prefaces, the Welsh preface is also more patriotic. It strives to connect with its audience, the "beloved countrymen," and expresses the joy that the authors feel in being able to share the book with the Welsh people in their language. It is difficult to find information about Thomas Pugh, but William S. Phillips is listed in the Church History Biographical Database as having been born in Wales. Therefore, at least two of the three men were born in the target culture. Perhaps this factor caused Davis and Phillips to have a greater appreciation for the opportunities that a Welsh translation would give to the Welsh people than Snow would have had for the Danish translation or that Cannon would have had for the Hawaiian translation.

As for comparing the translation processes from a broader perspective, each case is unique. The Hawaiian translation, for example, seems to have involved the most collaborative process, followed by the Danish translation and then by the Welsh translation. For its part, the Hawaiian translation had two main contributors, George Q. Cannon and Jonathan Napela, multiple other men helping with revision, including William Farrer and Kauwahi, two additional church members setting the type, and Cannon's wife assisting Cannon with the final proofread. The Hawaiian translation is also unique in that it is the only case where the main translator was translating into his second language instead of into his native language. Furthermore, it is the only case where the translation was printed away from where the translation was to be circulated. The Danish translation was mostly handled by Hansen,

assisted by Snow, Ms. Mathiesen, and (maybe) one other assistant. Not only are fewer actors involved than in the Hawaiian translation, but the method of translation, as far as it was described, does not seem to have been as interactive or back-and-forth as the Hawaiian translation. On the other end of the spectrum, Davis's Welsh translation was essentially a one man show.

In regard to the actors involved in the translation process, they were all members of the Church at the time the translations were produced. It is also to note that Ms. Mathiesen is the only woman involved in any of the three translations. Was it uncommon for women to work as translators in the 1850s? Was it a norm in the source culture for translation to be mainly done by men? Was it a norm in the target cultures? It is also possible that this has something to do with the fact that power in the Church at that time was held by men. Arguably, as a language teacher, Ms. Mathiesen was more qualified than many of the other actors to translate, none of whom had been trained or educated in translation.

In the 173 years since the first translation of the Book of Mormon, the translation process has undergone a number of changes. Over time, the process has become more standardized, institutionalized, and collaborative. By all accounts, the translators of the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations were not under strict directions from Church leadership to translate in a certain manner. In fact, the First Presidency was not directly involved in the decision to begin any of the translations. The profile of scripture translators for the Church has also changed over the years. In the 2023 audio interview with a group of individuals involved in Church translation (including Joseph Stringham and Tod Harris), previously mentioned in Chapter 3, two out of the seven participants are women. At least in the sample group, women are still in the minority, but 2/7 is an improvement from 1/8.[38] Translators of the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations were also, by all accounts, not required to be temple-worthy members in order to translate. All the actors discussed in these cases were Church members, but they were not necessarily fulfilling the temple-worthy requirements. According to Chou and Chou (2015), non-members have worked on some less recent translations as translators and reviewers, but this is no longer the case. On one hand, the types of translators working in scripture translation for the Church has diversified, at least

[38] Regarding Hansen, Snow, Davis, Cannon, Napela, Farrer, Kauwahi, and Mathiesen.

from the 2023 audio interview, it appears that it is now more commonplace for women to be involved. On the other hand, it appears that translator selection has also become stricter, only allowing temple-worthy members to translate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations of the Book of Mormon did create identifiable post-translation effects in the target cultures, as well as some post-translation effects back in the source culture. Post-translation effects were found in multiple disciplines, and the types of post-translation effects found varied by each target culture. Moreover, although it was not necessarily an initial goal, the research performed provided a detailed overview of the three translation processes. The combination of primary and secondary sources lent to a compelling narrative for each case. This type of Book of Mormon translation history, at least for these specific translations, does not seem to be a particularly researched area in translation studies nor in Mormon studies.

Additionally, this thesis analyzed the pre-translation culture which conditioned Smith to present the Book of Mormon as a translation. Ultimately, the pre-translation conditions were intertwined with the concept of pseudotranslation. Smith was inspired to label his work as a translation because of the cultural connotations around divine translation and, simultaneously, translators of the divine. All these discussions were rooted in historical and cultural context.

Reflecting on the methodology chosen for this study, there were both benefits and shortcomings. Most importantly, this research was able to use existing translation studies methods to respond to post-translation questions posed by Gentzler. This is important because it means that scholars who are interested in researching post-translation phenomena can use already established tools and strategies. In fact, it seems reasonable to say that translation history is indispensable to post-translation studies. For this thesis, the combination of doing translation history, exploring translator's archives, identifying agents of translation, and examining paratexts painted a clear picture of what happened before, during, and after the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian translations. Furthermore, these methods produced unexpected findings that benefitted the study. The plan for the thesis was, based on Gentzler's post-translation framework, to identify the pre-translation conditions and post-translation effects for each of the three translations. While using translation history to investigate these translational events, the available resources highlighted another important

aspect of the narrative: the translation process. These sources answered Pym's (1998) questions about who, what, how, where, and when. What was revealed was that there is not always a simple answer to these questions. Translations are tied up in a web of agents, spaces, history, and culture. Trying to untangle those webs and showcase how each translation resulted from its own unique set of circumstances ended up being a bigger part of this thesis than was expected.

Still, this study did face some obstacles that resulted in shortcomings. These issues are more related to being able to execute the methodology than to the methodology itself. Firstly, the language barrier most certainly prevented a more thorough exploration of the post-translation effects in the target cultures. Without knowledge of the Danish, Welsh, and Hawaiian languages, it is impossible to find post-translation effects in those cultures that have not been translated into English or discussed in literature written in English. The post-translation effects discussed in this thesis have already been addressed by other scholars, although not in the context of translation studies. Dennis's work documenting Welsh Mormon writings and his translation of Welsh Mormon materials into English is especially helpful to post-translation studies and more work like his would greatly benefit not only post-translation scholars but also scholars interested in translation history or Mormon history. In regard to the translator's archives, this thesis was only precursory. While the Church History Catalog provides access to thousands of documents, manuscripts, and letters, among other things, certain materials are limited to physical consultation. Access to these additional materials would (presumably) further expose the complicated narrative of each translation process. And again, there is a language barrier to performing an exhaustive investigation of all the materials in the archives.

Opportunities for future research are plentiful. In response to these shortcomings, an important component for further studies would be to work in conjunction with researchers who speak the target languages. This would allow for a broader investigation into post-translation effects, networks of agents, and translator archives. Collaborating with researchers who are knowledgeable in the history of the target cultures at the time of the translations would also be useful. Beyond a more in-depth study of the three cases addressed

here, the same type of research could be applied to the many other Book of Mormon translations.

The graphs created for this thesis could also serve as a starting point for various future projects. Studying translations by region or by Church President are both interesting proposals. Do translations into languages in the same region produce similar post-translation effects? Are translation processes similar across an entire region? Do Church Presidents tend to favor translation into languages of a certain region? Does the country where a Church President served their mission play into which languages they approve for translation? The inquiries are endless. Of course, as the scripture translation process became more standardized over time, some of these questions begin to lose their relevancy. Today, translation processes are not only similar across an entire region but across the entire world. Despite this standardization, post-translation effects persist and even the most recent Book of Mormon translations are candidates for post-translation research.

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