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**Title** How Much Was Known about Chiasmus in 1829  
When the Book of Mormon Was Translated?

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**Abstract** Welch shares his study of chiasmus in ancient texts. He states that Joseph Smith knew nothing of chiasmus when he was translating the Book of Mormon. Even so, Welch researches how much the scholars of 1829 knew about chiasmus to show that Joseph could not have intentionally incorporated chiasmus into his own writing.

# HOW MUCH WAS KNOWN ABOUT CHIASMUS IN 1829 WHEN THE BOOK OF MORMON WAS TRANSLATED?

John W. Welch

The study of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon has fascinated Latter-day Saints for over thirty years, and during this time our understanding of this literary feature has improved. At the same time, interest in chiasmus continues to hold the attention of biblical scholars, as is attested by the steady appearance of academic publications utilizing it as a mode of literary analysis. Over the years, I continue to find that the presence of chiasmus in strategic places in the structure of several Book of Mormon passages tells us much about the artistry, complexity, precision, subtlety, meaning, multiple authorship, and origins of the Book of Mormon text.

In this survey, after pointing out a few recent developments that may be of general interest to readers of the *FARMS Review*, I wish to revisit and update some previous research on the historical emergence of chiasmus in the nineteenth century in order to address the specific question, How much was known by scholars about chiasmus in 1829 when the Book of Mormon was being translated? In a way, of course, this question is irrelevant to the Book of Mormon, since the only real issue is how much *Joseph Smith* knew about chiasmus in 1829, not how much was known about it in Germany, England, Boston, or Pennsylvania by scholars or theologians. There is no direct evidence, as far as I am aware, that Joseph Smith had any actual knowledge of chiasmus. If he had, it is odd that he never hinted as much and that no one apparently ever thought to look for such a word pattern in

the Book of Mormon until 1967. Still, probing the level of how much awareness people had of chiasmus in 1829 in the world at large offers circumstantial evidence about how much Joseph Smith *could* have known concerning chiasmus, and that assessment becomes pertinent whenever a claim is made about the likelihood or unlikelihood of any such possibility.

Regarding the current study of chiasmus in general, the *Chiasmus Bibliography* published in 1999 through the FARMS Research Press should be a point of departure for anyone interested in the nature and significance of chiasmus in the Bible, in the Book of Mormon, or elsewhere in world literature.<sup>1</sup> Gauging from the letters we have received from scholars to whom that bibliography has been sent, this reference work—which lists and indexes hundreds of books and articles that present scores of chiastic passages of various lengths and configurations—has been enthusiastically received by academicians. It was also favorably reviewed in the *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, which found this research tool to be “useful and well-presented.”<sup>2</sup> Anyone interested in this subject will want to consult that bibliography and to study the works listed there. Scholarly work on chiasmus continues to appear, as is attested by the stream of publications that have appeared (or that we have become aware of) since 1999.<sup>3</sup> Strong interest in chiasmus in academic circles

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1. John W. Welch and Daniel B. McKinlay, eds., *Chiasmus Bibliography* (Provo, Utah: Research Press, 1999).

2. Roger H. Mortimer, review of *Chiasmus Bibliography*, by John W. Welch and Daniel B. McKinlay, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 25/1 (2002): 120.

3. Examples of recent publications using chiasmus not found in the 1999 *Chiasmus Bibliography* include the following: Martin Arneht, “Die antiassyrische Reform Josias von Juda: Überlegungen zur Komposition und Intention von 2 Reg 23, 4–15,” *Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte* 7 (2001): 189–216; Loren F. Bliese, “Chiastic and Homogeneous Metrical Structures Enhanced by Word Patterns in Obadiah,” *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* 6/3 (1993): 210–27; “The Poetics of Habakkuk,” *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* 12 (1999): 47–75, and “Translating Psalm 23 in Traditional Afar Poetry,” in *Hebrew Poetry in the Bible: A Guide for Understanding and for Translating*, ed. Lynell Zogbo and Ernst R. Wendland (New York: United Bible Societies, 2000), 185–94; Wayne Brouwer, *The Literary Development of John 13–17: A Chiastic Reading* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001); Jonathan A. Draper, “The Genesis

is reflected in the fact that publishing houses such as the Sheffield Academic Press, Doubleday, and the Society of Biblical Literature have published books in this area. I was pleased to be asked by the Society of Biblical Literature's *Review of Biblical Literature* to review John Breck's significant work, *The Shape of Biblical Language*,<sup>4</sup> showing continued interest in this literary topic. Dan McKinlay and I plan to produce a supplement to the *Chiasmus Bibliography*, and so we welcome information on any such items we may have missed.

Various papers, presentations, and Web postings<sup>5</sup> continue to discuss chiasmus from a Latter-day Saint point of view. Kevin Barney's essay in this issue of the *FARMS Review*, which deals with the harmonization of various Isaiah passages, begins with observations on the issue of chiasmus in Isaiah and how to recognize and display it. Barney also responds to remarks by Dan Vogel at the Sunstone Symposium in 2001.<sup>6</sup> Discussions of chiasmus also continue to appear in casual conversations, in devotional settings, in classrooms, or on corner soapboxes. Some dismiss it as contrived and selective;<sup>7</sup> others

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and Narrative Thrust of the Paraenesis in the Sermon on the Mount," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 75 (1999): 25–48; Richard Y. Duerden, "Crossings: Class, Gender, Chiasmus, and the Cross in Aemilia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*," *Literature and Belief* 19/1–2 (1999): 131–52; Peter F. Ellis, "The Authenticity of John 21," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 36/1–2 (1992): 17–25, and "Inclusion, Chiasm, and the Division of the Fourth Gospel," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 43/3–4 (1999): 269–338; Nathan Klaus, *Pivot Patterns in the Former Prophets*, JSOT Supplement 247 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), and *Leviticus 23–27* (New York: Doubleday, 2001); Ralf Rothenbusch, "Die kasuistische Rechtssammlung im 'Bundesbuch,'" *Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte* 7 (2001): 243–72; and Jerome T. Walsh, "Genesis 2:4b–3:24: A Synchronic Approach," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 96/2 (1977): 161–77, and *Style and Structure in Biblical Hebrew Narrative* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2001).

4. John W. Welch, review of *The Shape of Biblical Language: Chiasmus in the Scriptures and Beyond*, by John Breck, *Review of Biblical Literature* ([www.bookreviews.org/bookdetail.asp?TitleId=2329&CodePage=2329](http://www.bookreviews.org/bookdetail.asp?TitleId=2329&CodePage=2329), 2 March 2000, available as recently as 17 March 2003).

5. See [www.jefflindsay.com/chiasmus.shtml](http://www.jefflindsay.com/chiasmus.shtml), available as recently as 17 March 2003.

6. See Kevin Barney, "Isaiah Interwoven," in this number of the *FARMS Review*, 353–402.

7. Earl M. Wunderli, "FARMS Redux: Why I Don't Trust FARMS Research," Sunstone Symposium, 2002.

embrace it as powerful and amazing.<sup>8</sup> I included a brief section on chiasmus in *Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon*;<sup>9</sup> and a lengthy statistical analysis of the unlikelihood that chiasmus in Alma 36 could have appeared by chance has recently been conducted collaboratively by two Latter-day Saint physics professors, one at the University of West Virginia and the other at Utah State University.<sup>10</sup>

In general, when people ask questions about whether a particular passage qualifies as chiastic, I refer them to my article entitled “Criteria for Identifying the Presence of Chiasmus.”<sup>11</sup> All chiasms are not created equal, and a good deal of confusion and misrepresentation could be avoided if certain criteria were stated and applied more precisely and more consistently. Likewise, people often wonder, What does the presence of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon indicate? I have discussed this subject in an essay entitled “What Does Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon Prove?”<sup>12</sup> As shown in that essay, the presence of chiasmus is indicative of many different qualities and characteristics of various passages in the Book of Mormon, just as its presence can be significant in various ways in the Bible or in other texts.

Another set of frequently raised questions includes: Did Joseph Smith know about chiasmus in 1829 when he translated the Book of Mormon? Could he have known of chiasmus from scholarly sources in his information environment? When and where was chiasmus

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8. J. Milton Rich, *The Book of Mormon: Another Witness of Jesus Christ, on Trial* (Salt Lake City: Rich, 2002), 244–50.

9. John W. Welch, “A Steady Stream of Significant Recognitions,” in *Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2002), 340–47. For another recent examination of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon, see John W. Welch, “Parallelism and Chiasmus in Benjamin’s Speech,” in *King Benjamin’s Speech: “That Ye May Learn Wisdom,”* ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 315–410.

10. Boyd F. Edwards and W. Farrell Edwards, “Did Chiasms Appear in the Book of Mormon by Chance?” (unpublished paper, 2002), 34 pp, forthcoming in *BYU Studies*.

11. John W. Welch, “Criteria for Identifying and Evaluating the Presence of Chiasmus,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4/2 (1995): 1–14; reprinted in Welch and McKinlay, *Chiasmus Bibliography*, 157–74.

12. John W. Welch, “What Does Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon Prove?” in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited*, ed. Noel Reynolds (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1997), 199–224.

discovered by biblical scholars? When was this manner of literary analysis published and disseminated, and when did it become generally accepted? Such questions occur to those who learn about chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. I asked these questions in 1967 after I learned of the subject at a lecture in a Catholic theological seminary in Regensburg, Germany, and subsequently discovered chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. Most of what I learned about chiasmus in those early months in Germany came from my reading of Nils W. Lund's *Chiasmus in the New Testament*,<sup>13</sup> which I ordered from the University of North Carolina Press while I was still serving in Regensburg. I returned to Brigham Young University and, as an undergraduate student, wrote a paper entitled "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon," which I submitted to *BYU Studies* in 1968. It was accepted in the spring of 1969 and published in that year's autumn issue.<sup>14</sup> In the fall of 1969, I continued my research on chiasmus in the Ugaritic epics, the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Greek and Latin authors for my 1970 master's thesis in the BYU Classics Department.

My thesis focused primarily on defining and describing three forms of chiasmus (simple, compound, and complex) found in various ancient literatures, but I also devoted a dozen pages in my thesis to what I had been able to learn about the emerging awareness of chiasmus in the early nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup> Prompted considerably by my reading of Lund,<sup>16</sup> I dealt with the question of how much was

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13. Nils W. Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942; reprint, Boston, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1992).

14. John W. Welch, "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon," *BYU Studies* 10/1 (1969): 69–84.

15. John W. Welch, "A Study Relating Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon to Chiasmus in the Old Testament, Ugaritic Epics, Homer, and Selected Greek and Latin Authors" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1970), 100–113. Notes 18–38, 40, 44, 46–48, 51, 57–58, 94–100, and 106, below, together with their accompanying text in this review essay, correspond directly to notes 1–29 and 32–38, together with their accompanying text, in my 1970 thesis.

16. Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 35–40; mentioned also in John W. Welch, ed., *Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981; reprint Provo, Utah: Research Press, 1999), 9.

known about chiasmus in the nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> I argued there that until chiasmus was noticed in the New Testament and it became clear that the presence of certain Hebraisms in the New Testament was important to its analysis and interpretation, Christian scholars found little reason to occupy themselves with the form. While some study of chiasmus in the works of ancient Greek and Latin authors existed earlier,<sup>18</sup> biblical scholars began detecting chiasmus in the scriptures mainly in the first quarter of that century. I showed that the works published in London by Bishop John Jebb<sup>19</sup> in 1820 and by Reverend Thomas Boys<sup>20</sup> in 1824 and 1825 were pioneering efforts in the study of chiasmus in the scriptures. Although their techniques have since been refined,<sup>21</sup> I argued that their conclusions were largely sound.

A few additions, clarifications, and one main correction must now be made. The following is based largely on research conducted in Independence, Missouri, in 2000, and at Oxford, England, in 2001. In particular, it is now evident that John Jebb's 1820 publication became better known in certain circles in the 1820s than was previously thought. Although copies of Jebb's work probably did not make it across the Atlantic in the 1820s, as has been previously conjectured, Jebb's *Sacred Literature* was positively discussed in a large treatise on the critical study of the Bible by Thomas Horne in 1825. That edition

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17. Welch, "A Study Relating Chiasmus," 100–113.

18. See sources cited in John Jebb, *Sacred Literature* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1820), 69–74; for later attention to chiasmus, see Anton A. Draeger, *Syntax und Stil des Tacitus*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1882); Franz Peters, *Zur Wortstellung in den Oden des Horaz* (Münster, Germany: Gymnasium-Progr., 1870); Konrad Meyer, *Die Wort- und Satzbildung bei Sallust* (Magdeburg, Germany: Friese, 1880).

19. Jebb, *Sacred Literature*, cited in Welch, "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon," 72 n. 3, and in Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 37.

20. Thomas Boys, *Tactica Sacra* (London: Seely, 1824) and *Key to the Book of Psalms* (London: Seely, 1825), cited in Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 38; Boys (1824) is cited in Welch, *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, 9, and in John W. Welch, "Chiasmus in Biblical Law: An Approach to the Structure of Legal Texts in the Hebrew Bible," *Jewish Law Association Studies* 4 (1990): 7 n. 11. See also chart 15–20, "Chiasmus in Philemon," in John W. Welch and John F. Hall, *Charting the New Testament* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2002), based on and citing Boys (1824), 65–67.

21. Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 38.



of Horne was published not only in London but also in Philadelphia, and so information about introverted parallelism was present in the United States earlier than I and others had suspected. Yet it still appears unlikely that Joseph Smith had any knowledge of Jebb's ideas before he completed his translation of the Book of Mormon, and the presence of chiasmus in that text remains significant. Indeed, Joseph Smith acquired a copy of the 1825 edition of Horne's treatise, but that did not happen until January, 1834, well after the Book of Mormon was in print, as I discuss below. In addition, it would remain several years after the publication of the Book of Mormon in 1830 before the study of chiasmus in the Bible would receive further currency in the scholarly world.<sup>22</sup>

### Early Explorers of Hebrew Style in the Bible

The work of two men—D. Johannes Albertus Bengel<sup>23</sup> of the University of Tübingen and Robert Lowth<sup>24</sup> of Oxford—preceded that of Jebb and Boys. Bengel is interesting because in 1742, he was perhaps the first to use the term *chiasmus* to describe the phenomenon in the Bible, yet his works had little influence on his contemporaries.<sup>25</sup> Lowth is interesting for exactly the opposite reasons: his works were very influential, especially upon the minds of Jebb and Boys, yet he was never aware of the phenomenon of chiasmus.

22. Ibid., 40.

23. D. Johannes A. Bengel, *Gnomon Novi Testamenti*, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: Sumtibus Ludov. Frid. Fues., 1836), cited in Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 35. The first edition of Bengel's work was published in 1742; an English translation was published by C. T. Lewis and M. R. Vincent in Philadelphia, 1860–62.

24. Robert Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, trans. G. Gregory (London: Johnson, 1787); American editions were published by Joseph T. Buckingham in Boston in 1815 and by Crocker and Brewster in Andover, Massachusetts, in 1829.

25. Nils Lund, "The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament," *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 46 (1930): 105: "I am not in possession of any information that enables me to connect Boys's work with the researches of Jebb or the still earlier observations of Bengel on chiasmus." Jebb, *Sacred Literature*, 69–70, the only one to make use of Bengel's comments on chiasmus, states: "I gladly acknowledge considerable obligations . . . to several valuable remarks dispersed through the *Gnomon* of Bengel," which have "afforded some *coincidences*, rather than *hints*, on the subject of epanodos."

Bengel's *Gnomon Novi Testamenti*, written entirely in Latin and not translated into English until 1860–62, mentions chiasmus in its glossary of literary devices found in the New Testament. Bengel includes 103 entries from *aetiologia* to *zeugma*; the entry on chiasmus, being two and a half pages long, is one of the longest sections in his glossary. Under chiasmus, Bengel discusses two types of parallelism: *chiasmus directus* and *chiasmus inversus*. According to his definition (original Latin given below in the footnote), *chiasmus directus* occurs when the first word in the first part refers to the first word in the second part and the second word in the first part to the second in the second part.<sup>26</sup> Today this is not considered a form of chiasmus at all, for it is simply direct parallelism of the form a-b-a'-b'. *Chiasmus inversus*, on the other hand, occurs when the first of the first refers to the last of the second and the first of the second to the last of the first.<sup>27</sup> This is a veritable form of chiasmus. Bengel gives twelve examples, eight of which are “direct chiasms” and only four of which are “inverse chiasms” (Matthew 12:22; John 5:21–27; Romans 9:24; Philemon 1:5). In later entries in the glossary, Bengel discusses *epanodos*, which he defines as repetition (*repetitio vocum*) either of certain sounds or of meanings (*vel sonum vel quoad sensum*). By repetition, Bengel means something with the form a-b-b-c (repeating b) or with an alternating pattern such as a-b-b-a-b (for example, Galatians 2:16). He also mentions *hysteron proteron* (the last first), but he concludes: “In the New Testament *hysteron proteron* scarcely occurs, because the sacred scriptures 1) either maintain an order of things according to a temporal sequence or 2) use *chiasmus inversus*.”<sup>28</sup> Seeming to argue against what must have been a prevailing scholarly bias against the felicity of chiasmus, Bengel asserts that “Chiasmus is not an error but

26. Bengel, *Gnomon*, 758: “Chiasmus directus est, cum vox aut propositio prior in primo pari referri debet ad vocem aut propositionem priorem in secundo pari: et vox aut propositio in primo pari ad vocem aut propositionem posteriorem in secundo pari.”

27. Ibid.: “Chiasmus inversus est, cum vox aut propositio prior in primo pari referri debet ad vocem aut propositionem posteriorem in secundo pari: et vox aut propositio posterior in primo pari ad vocem aut propositionem priorem in secundo pari.”

28. Ibid., 772.

an elegant arrangement of words.”<sup>29</sup> Bengel’s understanding of chiasmus was sufficient for an initial statement of the phenomenon, yet it obviously lacks clarity since he considered direct parallelisms a form of chiasmus. Unfortunately, Bengel’s work was neither continued by German scholars nor adopted by English theologians.

Lowth’s lectures on Hebrew poetry, delivered at Oxford in 1753, laid down the basic principles of parallelism as the keys for unlocking the literary qualities of the Hebrew Bible. Lowth divided parallelisms into three categories: synonymous, synthetic, and antithetic. Synonymous and synthetic parallelisms consist of lines with similar meanings or similar syntax, respectively; by antithetical parallelism, Lowth meant two lines in which the second introduces an opposite or contrasting idea but in a form that still directly parallels the first (see, for example, Proverbs 15:1). Lowth, however, indicates no knowledge whatever of chiasmus or anything like it, and for this he was criticized by Jebb.<sup>30</sup> For the same reason, Lowth is only of general background relevance to the history of chiasmus in the nineteenth century.

### The Discovery of Chiasmus as a Form of Biblical Parallelism

To John Jebb, Bishop of Limerick, belongs the credit for being the first English writer to explicate chiasmus as a distinct type of parallelism prevalent in the Old and New Testaments. Thanks to the correspondence that Jebb carried on with his friend Alexander Knox, it is possible to follow the development of his work.

In 1805 Knox put Lowth’s lectures into Jebb’s hands, and in 1819 Jebb expressed his debt of gratitude to Knox. “Without you,” he says, “I never might have read Lowth.”<sup>31</sup> Lowth had limited his study of

29. Ibid.: “Qui nihil vitii, elegantiae quiddam habet.”

30. Jebb, in *Sacred Literature*, 55, writes: “His distribution of the clauses into lines is subversive of the order manifestly designed by the prophet.” Also, introverted parallelism is “unnoticed as such by Bishop Lowth, or by subsequent writers on the subject.” Ibid., 53. “It is extraordinary that the peculiarity of [introverted] construction in this passage [Isaiah 27:12–13] should have escaped the penetration of Bishop Lowth.” Ibid., 55.

31. *Thirty Years of Correspondence between John Jebb and Alexander Knox*, ed. Charles Foster (London: Duncan, 1834), letter 173, 27 September 1815, 1:380.

parallelism almost exclusively to the Old Testament, but Knox and Jebb applied Lowth's principles of parallelism to the New Testament as well. Around 1805 their letters became filled with ideas about the structure of passages in the New Testament, and when they realized that some of the passages that they had found could not be explained fully in terms of Lowth's principles, they began to doubt the adequacy of Lowth's definitions. Jebb thought that Bishop Lowth had not pursued his own system far enough: "Lowth's taste confined him, for the most part, to the sublimer order; to the ode, the elegy, the idyllium, &c. If he had possessed more philosophy, he would have penetrated deeper into the nature, the uses, and the elegance of the sententious."<sup>32</sup> To a large extent, this dissatisfaction with Lowth provided the motivating impulse behind Jebb's own work. He set out to correct Lowth's widely accepted definitions of the species of parallelism.<sup>33</sup> Because of this, Jebb's work met opposition from the outset. Lowth's fame was international, but Jebb's was hardly even domestic.<sup>34</sup> Jebb's attempt to criticize Lowth failed partly because of Lowth's established prestige in theological circles and partly because of mistakes that Jebb himself made.<sup>35</sup>

Although Jebb's early opinions were influenced by Knox, Jebb became more independent as time passed. While the two men shared an interest in Hebrew composition, in letter 151 it is clear that Knox was interested in the thought behind the passages while Jebb was concerned with the structure within the passages. In their correspondence Knox repeatedly raised interpretive and philosophic issues, but Jebb was content to stay on the level of philology. For example, Knox was interested in epanodos as a psychological principle of cli-

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32. Ibid., letter 63, 25 January 1805, 1:390–91. Jebb wished to give greater emphasis to meaningful, literal translation in the area of "the sententious poetry."

33. Ibid., letter 175, 10 October 1819, 1:383: "Bishop Lowth's definition of this species of parallelism, ought to be corrected."

34. A German edition of Lowth's *Lectures* appeared in 1758 and an American edition in 1815. Jebb's book was never reprinted.

35. For example, Jebb was convinced that Hebrew poetry never used meter. See Foster, *Thirty Years of Correspondence*, letter 175, 10 October 1819, 1:385.

max; Jebb, on the other hand, was interested in it solely as a figure of speech. In 1818 Knox asked Jebb to collaborate with him on a theological, philosophical, and interpretative application of the principles of parallelism,<sup>36</sup> but Jebb declined since he was determined to avoid exegesis even at the risk of offending his friend.<sup>37</sup> In 1819, when Jebb was nearing the completion of his book on the Bible as literature, Knox commented to Jebb:

I quite agree with you that your philological investigations are not to be embarrassed with theological ideas. If therefore you find the latter mingled in any instance with my suggestions you will be aware that they are by no means intended for your adoption, but solely for your fuller view of what strikes me on the subject.<sup>38</sup>

Jebb's design in *Sacred Literature* was to be as expository as possible, leaving the interpretative work for someone else.

Jebb's *Sacred Literature* is remarkable. Published in 1820, its review of the principles laid down by Lowth is comprehensive, its awareness of Bengel is astute, and its observations on the style and structures of a great number of passages in the New Testament are original. The frequency with which Jebb and Knox mention epanodos in their correspondence during 1818 and 1819 suggests that Jebb may have considered his addition of the notion of "introverted parallelism" the most valuable contribution of his book. Some of his Old Testament examples of introverted parallelism (which are structural, not grammatical; several are complex, not just simple) include the following:<sup>39</sup>

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36. Ibid., letter 173, 27 September 1815, 1:378–79.

37. Ibid., 1:379.

38. Ibid., letter 152, 10 October 1819, 1:398–99.

39. Jebb, *Sacred Literature*, 53–57, also displays an a-b-b-a pattern in Psalm 123:1–2, an a-b-c-c-b-a arrangement in Ezekiel 1:27 and Psalm 84:5–7, and two of the same in Isaiah 27:12 and 13. Although others had previously observed this phenomenon (on p. 70 n. 6 he mentions observations by Hammond, scattered remarks by Bengel, and comments by Wakefield on Matthew 7:6; and on p. 358 he mentions an entry on chiasmus appended by Burke to the "Index of Technical Terms" in the third edition of Bengel's *Gnomon* in 1773), Jebb considered himself the first to explore "the rationale of it" (p. 65).

My son, if thine heart be wise;  
My heart also shall rejoice;  
Yea, my reins shall rejoice;  
When thy lips speak right things.  
(Proverbs 23:15–16)

From the hand of hell I will redeem them;  
From death I will reclaim them:  
Death! I will be thy pestilence;  
Hell! I will be thy burning plague.  
(Hosea 13:14)

The idols of the heathen are silver and gold:  
The work of men's hand;  
They have mouths, but they speak not;  
They have eyes, but they see not;  
They have ears, but they hear not;  
Neither is there any breath in their mouths;  
They who make them, are like unto them;  
So are all they who put their trust in them.<sup>40</sup>  
(Psalm 135:15–18)

In analyzing passages in the New Testament, Jebb made brief use in section 12 of introverted parallelism in commenting on an eight-part structure (a-b-c-d-b-d-c-a) of the “epanodostic kind” in Matthew 15:3–6:

- a And why do ye transgress the commandment of God, by your tradition?
- b For God commanded, saying:
- c Honour thy father and thy mother;

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40. As Jebb, *Sacred Literature*, 57, describes this parallelism, in the first and eighth lines are the idolatrous heathen and those who put their trust in idols; in the second and seventh lines, the fabrication and the fabricators; in the third line, mouths without articulation; in the sixth, mouths without breath; in the fourth, eyes without vision; and in the fifth, ears without hearing.

d And he who revileth father or mother, let  
 him die the death:  
 b But ye say:  
 d Whosoever shall say to his father or mother, [be  
 that] a gift, by which thou mightest have  
 been relieved from me;  
 c Must also not honour his father or his mother:  
 a Thus have ye nullified the commandment of God by  
 your tradition.<sup>41</sup>

Then he took up this subject in earnest in section 16, toward the end of his volume. In doing so, he hoped to shed light on scriptural interpretation by drawing attention to this “technical arrangement, which has not hitherto been investigated as it deserves.”<sup>42</sup> He offered about a dozen examples,<sup>43</sup> including

No man can serve two masters:  
 For, either he will hate the one, and love the other;  
 Or he will adhere to the one, and neglect the other:  
 Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.  
 (Matthew 6:24)

Give not that which is holy to the dogs;  
 Neither cast your pearls before the swine;  
 Lest they trample them under their feet;  
 And turn about and rend you.  
 (Matthew 7:6)

Behold, I send you forth as sheep,  
 In the midst of wolves;  
 Be ye therefore prudent as the serpents;  
 And harmless as the doves.  
 (Matthew 10:16)

41. Jebb, *Sacred Literature*, 245, letters added. See also a-b-c-c-b-a, Matthew 11:28–30 and Hebrews 9:11–12; *ibid.*, 208, 350.

42. *Ibid.*, 336.

43. *Ibid.*, 336, 338, 340, 342, 343; see also 344, 345, 350, 351.

Behold therefore the gentleness,  
And the severity of God;  
Towards those indeed who have fallen, severity;  
But towards thee, gentleness.  
(Romans 11:22)

But ye are sanctified;  
But ye are justified;  
By the name of the Lord Jesus;  
And by the spirit of our God.  
(1 Corinthians 6:11)

Along with these and other examples, Jebb offered the following explanation of the rationale behind introverted parallelism:

Two pair[s] of terms or propositions, conveying two important, but not equally important notions, are to be so distributed, as to bring out the sense in the strongest and most impressive manner: now, this result will be best attained, by commencing and concluding, with the notions to which prominence is to be given; and by placing in the centre the less important notion.<sup>44</sup>

Jebb also stated: “Some are disposed to maintain that [introverted parallelism] is purely classical; and it does *sometimes* occur in Greek and Latin authors; but it is so prevalent, and so peculiarly marked, in the Sacred Volume, that it may be justly accounted a Hebraism; and, as I am disposed to believe, a feature of Hebrew poetry.”<sup>45</sup> Despite the extensive work he had done, Jebb still did not wish “to recommend *theory*, but *experiment*.”<sup>46</sup> He felt that even if his theories should not prove to be immediately profitable, they would lay the foundation for future interpretations of scripture.<sup>47</sup>

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44. Ibid., 60.

45. Ibid., 65, emphasis in original. Jebb discusses Greek and Latin works on pp. 70–74.

46. Ibid., 59.

47. Ibid. The copy of this book in Harvard’s Hollis Library was not acquired until 1910, as discussed below.



## A Bolder Effort

Soon after Jebb published *Sacred Literature*, the Reverend Thomas Boys (M.A., Trinity College, Cambridge, and Curate of Widford, Hertfordshire) pushed the theory of “mutual correspondence in the members of sentences,” as he termed parallelism, even further. E. W. Bullinger apparently believed that Boys developed his own theories on parallelism independently of Jebb,<sup>48</sup> but, in his 1824 publication, Boys openly acknowledged his indebtedness to Jebb, considering it “satisfactorily proved [by Jebb], that the rule of composition, recognized as prevailing in the Old Testament, prevails also in the New.”<sup>49</sup> He also displayed Jebb’s six basic Old Testament examples of introverted parallelism, followed by twenty-nine New Testament examples that Boys himself had noticed.<sup>50</sup>

In two separate volumes,<sup>51</sup> Boys discussed and demonstrated the principles of *correspondence*, his appellation for the notions of parallelism. He sought to apply these principles to longer, complete prosaic compositions or books within the Bible, not just individual verses or short passages.

Not widely circulated,<sup>52</sup> Boys’s first volume, *Tactica Sacra*, consists mainly of hard-to-follow tabular arrangements—complete with parallel-columned Greek and English texts—of the epistles of 1 and

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48. In a memoir by Reverend Sidney Thelwall appearing in Bullinger’s 1890 edition of Boys’s *Key to the Book of Psalms*, ix, we read: “What led to his Boys’ [sic] discovery of the great principle of Parallelism, or (as he preferred to call it) Correspondence, I know not.”

49. Boys, *Tactica Sacra*, advertisement before p. 1.

50. *Ibid.*, 3–7.

51. Boys, *Tactica Sacra* and *Key to the Book of Psalms*.

52. BYU’s Interlibrary Loan office was unable to locate either of these books in any library in the United States at the time I wrote my thesis. I first saw these volumes in the Bodleian Library when I was studying at Oxford in 1970–72. I am aware of no evidence that these books or any knowledge of them reached America before 1829, although in theory that is possible. Recently one of my assistants found that Harvard’s Hollis Library holds *Key to the Book of Psalms* (no acquisition date available) but has no copy of *Tactica Sacra*, “which seems to be entirely unknown in America,” according to Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 38.

2 Thessalonians, 2 Peter, and Philemon.<sup>53</sup> The most impressive is the last, which is displayed as a complete structure with nine paired elements in inverted order.<sup>54</sup> His conclusion is nicely presented:

So far as parallelism prevails in a book, everything is *double*. Ideas are taken up twice over. The leading topic of a passage reappears in another passage: with so much of variation, that there is no tautology; yet with so much of correspondence, that the mutual reference is unquestionable. Thus, whether the parallelism be a verse or two, or a whole epistle, it may always be reduced to the simple form of two passages parallel to one [an]other.<sup>55</sup>

Boys's second volume was entitled *A Key to the Book of Psalms*. Chapter 1 comprises a large portion of the book and deals with alternate parallelisms, although it also offers numerous examples of a-b-b-a and more complicated introverted arrangements in its lengthy introduction. Chapter 2 gives copious examples, including the Hebrew text, of short a-b-b-a word patterns in the psalms while suggesting a few larger patterns (usually involving large blocks of undifferentiated and unbalanced text). Thus, Boys viewed Psalm 25 as having an overall A-B-C-B-A structure; Psalm 30 is presented as A-B-C-C-B-A; and Psalm 135 is A-B-C(a.b.)-D-D-C(a.b.)-B-A.<sup>56</sup> Boys was aware of passages containing correspondences that can be described as chiasmic, yet his work had limitations. In the opinion of Nils Lund,

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53. The epistle of 1 Thessalonians is arranged overall as A-B(a.b.)-B(a.b.)-A, but the details are difficult to follow. The letter of 2 Thessalonians is mapped out as A-B(a.b.c.)-B(a.b.c.)-A, labeled unimpressively as epistolary-thanksgiving-prayer-admonition-thanksgiving-prayer-admonition-epistolary. Boys, *Tactica Sacra*, 21. Second Peter is slightly more complicated than 2 Thessalonians but is essentially similar to it. *Ibid.*, 37.

54. Boys, *Tactica Sacra*, 67. This double nine-part inverted system is displayed and discussed in my chapter "Chiasmus in the New Testament," in *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, 225–26, published in 1981.

55. Boys, *Tactica Sacra*, 72.

56. Boys, *Key to the Book of Psalms*, 122, 127, 138.

While Boys must be given credit for having uncovered many facts concerning chiasmic structures in the Psalms, he failed to make the most of the principle with which he worked. He often observed terms and phrases which recur in a psalm, and rightly concluded that they had something to do with the literary structure of the psalm. He did not, however, subject each psalm to a minute analysis and made no attempt whatsoever to ascertain the principle of the Hebrew strophe. What he found of chiasmic structures is, as the reader may suspect from the brief passages already presented, only a small part of what may be discovered in the Psalms by a minute analysis. The literary artistry of the Psalms is much more minute and intricate than Boys's method reveals.<sup>57</sup>

In 1890 Bullinger enlarged and to some extent completed Boys's work on the psalms. In that year, he combined the printed works of Boys with the scattered notes written in the margin of Boys's Bible. Whereas the 1825 volume discussed only sixteen psalms, the 1890 edition contained illustrations from all the psalms and, according to Bullinger, was "the first time that such a [comprehensive] work had been laid [effectively] before the public."<sup>58</sup>

### Dissemination of Information about Jebb by Horne

Contrary to what I had previously thought, and as Michael Quinn has shown,<sup>59</sup> Thomas Hartwell Horne (1780–1862) adopted Jebb's basic terminology and presented a few of Jebb's examples of introverted parallelism in Horne's 1825 edition of his *Introduction to*

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57. Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 39.

58. Lund, "The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament," 105.

59. D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, rev. and enl. ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998), 500–501 n. 108. This work has been reviewed by John Gee, William J. Hamblin, and Rhett S. James in *FARMS Review of Books* 12/2 (2000): 185–414; and by Douglas D. Alder in *Church History* 69/1 (March 2000): 225–26.

*the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*.<sup>60</sup> In thinking that Horne had not done this until the 1836 edition, I followed the views of Bullinger and seemingly also of Lund. In his 1942 *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, Lund states that “Horne gives several pages to [the chiastic form] in *later* editions of his famous work,” citing the eleventh (1860) edition in contrast to the first edition of 1818.<sup>61</sup> In writing my 1969 article on chiasmus, I followed Lund in this regard.<sup>62</sup> During the ensuing research for my master’s thesis a few months later, however, I found that Jebb was in fact discussed in Horne’s seventh edition, published in 1836, which was in the BYU library, and thus my thesis states that Horne “had adopted the terminology and formulations of Jebb in 1836.”<sup>63</sup> Based on that new but still incomplete information, I removed the reference to Horne’s 1860 edition when the 1969 article was reprinted in 1982.<sup>64</sup> From Quinn’s work, I became aware of the date and contents of Horne’s fourth edition, published in 1825. The following description updates and corrects my previous statements in this regard. I regret that previous point of misinformation.

Horne’s encyclopedic two-volume work covers a vast array of topics about the Bible, ranging from its history, culture, and contents to the original languages, manuscripts, editions, versions, variants, quotations, poetry, interpretation, metaphors, figurative language, typologies, morals, and inferential or practical readings. He also produced a “Reader’s Digest” version or “compendium” of the longer treatise. Both works went through several editions, and they stood beside his many other early publications on bibliography (1808–1812,

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60. Thomas Hartwell Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures* (Philadelphia: Littell, 1825).

61. Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 25, emphasis added. On Bullinger, see the text accompanying note 58 above.

62. Welch, “Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon,” 73.

63. Welch, “A Study Relating Chiasmus,” 110.

64. John W. Welch, “Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon,” in *Book of Mormon Authorship*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1982), 38.

1814, 1827),<sup>65</sup> anti-Deism (1820),<sup>66</sup> anti-Catholicism (1827),<sup>67</sup> the authenticity of scripture (1828),<sup>68</sup> and parochial psalmody (1829).<sup>69</sup> He earned his M.A. from St. John's College, Cambridge, and served as Curate of the United Parishes of Christ Church, Newgate Street and Saint Leonard, Foster Lane.

The first edition of his main work, *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, was published in 1818 in London by Cadell and Davies. This edition contains a discussion of Hebrew poetry,<sup>70</sup> based largely on the work of Lowth, who knew nothing of chiasmus, as has been pointed out above. A second 1821 edition and a third corrected 1822 edition of this work exist, but I have not been able to locate a copy of volume 2 of either of them, so I am unsure if they mentioned the 1820 work of Jebb in their section on Hebrew poetry.

A printing of the fourth corrected edition (and first American edition) of Horne's *Introduction to the Critical Study* appeared in London and Philadelphia in 1825 (parenthetical page numbers in this and the next paragraph refer to this edition) and offers an enlarged section on Hebrew poetry,<sup>71</sup> which contains several pages that mention Jebb on many points of parallelisms. This material

65. Thomas Hartwell Horne et al., *A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: Eyre and Strahan, 1808–12); *An Introduction to the Study of Bibliography* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1814); *A Catalogue of the Library of the College of St. Margaret and St. Bernard, Commonly Called Queen's College, in the University of Cambridge* (London: Bentley, 1827).

66. Thomas Hartwell Horne, *Deism Refuted* (Philadelphia: Littell & Henry, 1820).

67. Thomas Hartwell Horne, *Romanism Contradictory to the Bible* (London: Cadell, 1827).

68. Thomas Hartwell Horne, *Gnesiotes tes Palaias kai Kaines Diathekes* (Miletus: [American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions], 1828).

69. Thomas Hartwell Horne, *A Manual of Parochial Psalmody: Comprising Select Portions from the Old and New Versions of the Psalms, Together with Hymns, for the Principal Festivals etc. of the Church of England* (London: Cadell, 1829).

70. Thomas Hartwell Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures* (London: Printed for Cadell, 1818), 2:101–14.

71. Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study* (1825), 2:446–73.

appears in volume 2, toward the end of chapter 10, “On the Poetry of the Hebrews,” and under the subheading “Parallel Lines Introverted.” Horne notes that many of Lowth’s arguments “are successfully controverted by Bishop Jebb,” to whose book “the reader is necessarily referred, as the discussion of this very difficult question would extend this chapter to an inordinate length” (2:447). Jebb’s work receives high praise as being “elegant and instructive” (2:448) in showing especially that parallelism of all kinds “pervades the New Testament as well as the Old” (2:451). At the same time, Horne accepted one reviewer’s criticism of Jebb’s terminology, citing the review of *Sacred Literature* that had appeared the year of its publication in the *British Critic*,<sup>72</sup> but he concurred with that reviewer’s approval of Jebb’s designation of introverted parallelism as a distinct class of parallelism (see 2:451 n. 1). Throughout most of this chapter, the emphasis is on Hebrew line structure and various types of poetry.

Four pages in this twenty-eight-page chapter introduce the basic idea of introverted parallelism (2:456–57, 466–68). Jebb’s definition, “from flanks to centre,” and three of his examples of “parallel lines introverted” are given (2:456–57), but the examples are not Jebb’s best; they are either unremarkably simple (Proverbs 23:15–16, a-b-b-a), somewhat unclear (Isaiah 27:12–13, a-b-c-c-b-a, whose elements are not transparently connected: in that day / in Jerusalem; trump sound / bow down), or unconvincing (Psalm 135:15–18, a-b-c-d-d-c-b-a, which is presented in two alternative formats), and the case is weakened or obscured by a poor job of typesetting. Jebb’s definition is quoted on page 456: “These are stanzas so constructed, that, whatever be the number of lines, the first line shall be parallel with the last; the second with the penultimate, or last but one; and so throughout, in an order that looks inward, or to borrow a military phrase, from flanks to center. This may be called *introverted parallelism*.” Later, on page 466, Horne quotes another definition offered by Jebb: “speaking first to the second of two subjects proposed; or if the subjects be more

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72. *British Critic* 14 (1820): 585–86.

than two, resuming them precisely in the inverted order, speaking first to the last, and last to the first.” Two short confirming examples of chiasmus are given at the end of this chapter (2:467): one comes from Matthew 7:6 and the other is an unbalanced example from 2 Corinthians 2:15–16. At this point Horne concludes with very high praise for Jebb, commending his work to “every biblical student for its numerous beautiful and philological criticisms and elucidations of the New Testament” (2:468). An appendix at the end of this massive volume offers an extensive, annotated bibliography, listing numerous titles, among which is Jebb’s, which is called “admirable” in the 1825 edition (2:716).

A sixth edition of the *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures* appeared in 1828, and the seventh in 1836. The section on Hebrew poetry was then entitled “On the Interpretation of the Poetical Parts of Scripture,” and although the type was reset, the text remained essentially the same as it had appeared in 1825. This material on Hebrew poetry appears in volume 2 on pages 419–46 in the sixth edition, and in volume 1, part 2, pages 373–82 of the seventh, which also features an impressively wide-ranging bibliography.

Although the writing of John Jebb figured into Horne’s 1825 and subsequent editions,<sup>73</sup> the works of Thomas Boys, published in 1824 and 1825, were apparently too obscure to be mentioned in that publication. Even in Horne’s discussion of the psalms in his 1836 edition, the concept of “structure” continues to refer only to “choral structure,”<sup>74</sup> so the work of Boys on the structure of the Psalms had evidently made no impression on Horne in this regard. In the 1836 edition, Boys appears only amid Horne’s massively comprehensive bibliography;<sup>75</sup> that annotated bibliography contains 2,133 titles on all aspects of biblical studies. Only nine of those titles are listed under

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73. The text remained essentially unchanged thereafter; see, for example, the seventh edition, printed in Philadelphia in 1836, 1:373–82, and the unabridged edition of 1868, 2:446–73.

74. Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study*, 2:245, 1836 edition.

75. Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study*, 2:76 and 120, 1836 edition; note: numbering begins over again after page 490.

the topic of Hebrew poetry even in 1836 (three by Lowth and one each by Boys, Eichhorn, Herder, Jebb, Sarchi, and Vogel),<sup>76</sup> so finding Boys even then would be like looking for a needle in a haystack.

Horne's second work, *Compendious Introduction to the Study of the Bible*, is a condensed version of the *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*. I am still unsure when and where the compendium first appeared, but in May 2001, I saw in the Bodleian Library at Oxford University a second edition, published in London in 1827, and a third edition, which appeared in London in 1829; printings that I know of appeared in New York in 1833 and 1835. This work uses Psalm 84:5–7 as an example of how introverted parallelism clarifies a confessedly difficult passage<sup>77</sup> and mentions Jebb briefly, giving his basic definition and one example (Isaiah 27:12–13) from the larger study and concluding: "Until very recently, the poetical parallelism was supposed to be confined to the Books of the Old Testament: but Bishop Jebb has shown that this characteristic of Hebrew Poetry, also exists, to a considerable degree, in the New Testament."<sup>78</sup>

### Reviews of Jebb and Boys in the 1820s

Horne benefited in his evaluation of Jebb from a lengthy review of *Sacred Literature* that had appeared in England shortly after its publication. Jebb's claims, which had challenged the completeness and correctness of the received wisdom of the famous Bishop Lowth, were carefully and cautiously examined in a lengthy two-part review in the December and January issues of the *British Critic* in 1820–21.<sup>79</sup> The first installment was devoted entirely to presenting several prima facie arguments against Jebb's main thesis that parallelisms of four types are to be found in the Greek New Testament as

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76. I thank Katy W. Pulham for her assistance in establishing this information.

77. Thomas Hartwell Horne, *Compendious Introduction to the Study of the Bible* (New York: Arthur, 1829), 145.

78. Horne, *Compendious Introduction* (1827), 191; (1829), 144; and (1833 and 1835), 110.

79. *British Critic* 14 (December 1820): 580–96; 15 (January 1821): 1–22; found in the Bodleian Library, Oxford; condition too poor to allow copying. I thank John B. Fowles



they are in the Hebrew Old Testament. The second installment was composed largely of displaying various evidences presented by Jebb, which ranged from New Testament quotations of assorted types of Old Testament parallelisms to New Testament compositions of original parallelisms. Finally, after admitting that he had been originally “prepossessed” against Jebb’s basic argument, the reviewer found “there are practical advantages to be derived from it, which are far too important to be passed over in a hasty manner” and praised Jebb for elucidating “the interpretative value of parallelism” in general,<sup>80</sup> an assessment that Horne would share.

Relatively little attention, however—only the last three pages—was given in this thirty-nine-page review to introverted parallelism or epanodos, even though the reviewer had initially found this innovative form to be “the most important of all the varieties of parallel lines . . . with regard to its interpretive value.”<sup>81</sup> Near the end of the review of this “important volume,” the critic extolled Jebb as having “thrown more light than all the commentators, on the very obscure passage, Matt. xv. 3–6, by exhibiting it in the form of an introverted stanza.”<sup>82</sup> However, he then cautioned,

The obvious danger to which this mode of interpretation is liable, is that it may be extended too far, and that opinions may be founded, or doctrines built upon a nicety of verbal collocation which is not immediately obvious, and far too subtle to admit of the deduction of such important inferences. Mr. Jebb, in general, applies his system [of parallelisms] cautiously, as well as acutely, but we think that in a few instances he has drawn some conclusions which his premises scarcely appear to warrant.<sup>83</sup>

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for taking notes on these reviews in March 2001, which I was able to read and confirm in May 2001. In 2002, Katy Pulham was able to obtain for me a copy of these difficult-to-find pages from the British Library.

80. *Ibid.*, 15 (1821): 14–15.

81. *Ibid.*, 14 (1820): 586.

82. *Ibid.*, 15 (1821): 19.

83. *Ibid.*

This criticism was leveled particularly at his chiasmic analyses of Matthew 11:17–19 and Acts 20:21, where his method of reasoning was found to be “so refined and recondite” and “too subtle, at least in the concluding remark, to answer any good purpose.”<sup>84</sup> Again, Horne’s 1825 *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures* would concur, however, with the positive prospect of this review in identifying introverted parallelism as a distinct class of parallelism.<sup>85</sup>

The critical reviewers of the works of Boys, on the other hand, were much less receptive. They pointed out that Boys had focused too narrowly on the identification of inverted correspondences and thus lacked the broader base of support enjoyed by Jebb. In 1824 the *British Review* devoted seven pages to this topic, largely quoting passages and examples from Jebb, mainly with approval, and then turning attention for ten pages to *Tactica Sacra* and opining, “We are not yet prepared to go the whole length with Mr. Boys, or to persuade ourselves, that the apostles, having wound up their thread, as it were, to the middle of an epistle, had it constantly in view to unwind it again with exact retrogradation to the end of it.”<sup>86</sup> The reviewer described the newly asserted style of composition, when applied to entire books, as “a model so purely artificial” and requiring “painful constraint and a degree of artifice, destructive to all freedom of thought,” that he felt compelled to conclude, “we cannot bring ourselves to receive Mr. Boys’s statement with implicit confidence, except upon the most solid evidence.”<sup>87</sup> While admitting “that evidence of this kind has to a certain extent been brought forward,” and that the New Testament letters “certainly do bear traces of the introverted parallelism,”<sup>88</sup> the review ended by noting that “a case is made out, which deserves the attention of all,” that parallelism should now be

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84. *Ibid.*, 15 (1821): 21.

85. Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study* (1825), 451 n. 1.

86. *British Review* 22 (August 1824): 176–85, quotation on 178; Bodleian Library, condition poor; British Library, good condition, copy obtained.

87. *Ibid.*, 178–79.

88. *Ibid.*, 179.

viewed as a characteristic of Hebrew prose as well as poetry and by encouraging “every biblical student to examine this whole question,” for “the extent of benefit, which may arise from their researches, cannot now be estimated.”<sup>89</sup>

In that same year, an eight-page report in the *Eclectic Review* likewise acknowledged the “curious and interesting” contents of *Tactica Sacra* and even granted to Boys “the reality of the arrangement which he contends for,” but seriously doubted its value: “What benefit, it may still be asked, is to be derived from the knowledge of the Author’s discoveries?”<sup>90</sup> Boys complained to the editors of this meager assessment of his work, but they held their ground; two years later the *Eclectic Review* commented similarly in their eight-page coverage of his *Key to the Book of Psalms*:

Allowing all that Mr. Boys may contend for in these respects, it may still be questionable, whether any other reason is to be assigned for the peculiarity, than the national character of the writers, or whether any purpose was contemplated, which might not have been answered by a different method. . . .

We concede to Mr. Boys all that he requires in respect to the existence of the arrangements for which he contends; and had he furnished us with evidence equally conclusive in support of the strong assertions which we find in his works, respecting the value and importance of his discoveries, we

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89. *Ibid.*, 185. In its concluding paragraph, this review projects an overall cautious hope in using this novel approach: “It is clearly the object of both the writers [Jebb and Boys], whose works stand at the head of this article, rather to invite the consideration of impartial, judicious, and competent persons to a new and important subject, than to gain proselytes to a system. They have brought a new light to the page of revelation, the existence of which was unsuspected before; and they have also by means of it detected many latent beauties, and rescued some difficult passages from the obscurity, which involved them. . . . A steady and sober use of the hints, which they have afforded, may possibly lead to results, on which even they have not calculated.” *Ibid.*

90. *Eclectic Review* 22 (1824): 359–66, quotations on 365; found in the Bodleian Library, good condition, copy obtained.

should as readily concede to him in this particular. But we find no such evidence.<sup>91</sup>

Thus, it comes as no surprise that in his annotated bibliography in 1836, Horne gave Boys faint praise, calling his efforts “an ingenious attempt”<sup>92</sup> and citing this last reviewer only as “not [feeling] at liberty to award to Mr. Boys’s labours the full measure of value which he claims for them.”<sup>93</sup> Obviously, the idea of chiasmus, epanodos, introverted parallelism, or correspondence was not warmly embraced by all scholars, as Forbes would lament and try to correct a few years later.

### The Promotion of Chiasmus by Forbes and Others

In spite of (and perhaps because of) the publicity given to Jebb by Horne and the caution or criticism given to Jebb and Boys in the reviews that appeared in the *British Critic*, the *British Review*, and the *Eclectic Review*, the volumes of Jebb and Boys themselves seem to have remained obscure, especially in America. From the evidence now available, one may surmise they were not widely circulated,<sup>94</sup> and where these books were available, their interest in symmetrical structures seems to have met with opposition or indifference. The situation was such that in 1854, John Forbes, a Scottish theologian, wrote a book with the stated purpose “to attempt to rescue the study of parallelism from the disrepute into which it has fallen.”<sup>95</sup> One

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91. *Eclectic Review* 26 (1826): 17–25, quotations on 18–19, 24; found in the Bodleian Library, good condition, copy obtained.

92. Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study* (1836 ed.), bibliography, 2:76, quoting the review of *Tactica Sacra* in *British Review*; see notes 86–89 above.

93. Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study* (1836 ed.), bibliography, 2:120, quoting the review of *Key to the Book of Psalms* in the *Eclectic Review*, n. s., 26:25 (= 24 [1826]).

94. Lund, “The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament,” 105. Jebb was better received at first, but today the world still knows virtually nothing about Boys; copies of his *Tactica Sacra* and his *Key to the Book of Psalms* seem to be very rare or nonexistent in the United States, as discussed on page 77 below. Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 38, states that the first of these “seems to be entirely unknown in America.”

95. John Forbes, *Symmetrical Structure of Scripture* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1854), 3. He also asserts that “the importance of the study of parallelism . . . [has] been hitherto but very inadequately apprehended” (ibid., 2).

of the more outspoken critics of the study of parallelisms was an American professor, Joseph Addison Alexander. Alexander accused the study of rarely, if ever, having “been the means of eliciting any new sense in Scripture not known before” and strongly protested against what he called “the fantastic and injurious mode of printing most translations of Isaiah, since the days of Lowth.”<sup>96</sup> Forbes’s volume undertook to answer these objections and to promote the study of parallelism.

Forbes’s *Symmetrical Structure of Scripture* is an extensive, definitive restatement and reinforcement of the arguments for the presence of parallelisms in the Old and New Testaments. Although only 9 of its 345 pages deal with introverted parallelisms and epanodos, this short section is compact. Forbes not only quotes examples from Boys and Jebb, but he improves on them. For example, Jebb had arranged Matthew 6:24 as

No man can serve two masters:  
     Either he will hate the one and love the other,  
     Or he will adhere to the one and neglect the other;  
 Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

Forbes carried the introverted parallelism in this passage even further by exposing the epanodos in the two central lines:

No man can serve two masters:  
     For either he will hate the one  
         And love the other  
     Or he will adhere to the one  
         And neglect the other;  
 Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.<sup>97</sup>

Forbes also quotes eight examples from Boys, the most complicated of which is Boys’s analysis of structure in Paul’s Epistle to

96. From Joseph A. Alexander’s *Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah* (Glasgow edition), 11, quoted in Forbes, *Symmetrical Structure of Scripture*, 2.

97. Forbes, *Symmetrical Structure of Scripture*, 42.

Philemon.<sup>98</sup> Forbes considers Jebb's revisions and criticisms of Lowth fitting, and he uses the composite knowledge of Lowth and Jebb to analyze a great number of passages in the New Testament, paying special attention (as had Jebb) to the Sermon on the Mount. Forbes's book is significant, if not as the cause of the academic acceptance of the principles of introverted parallelism, at least as a reflection of the fact, signaled by its title, that the study of symmetrical structure finally received attention in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>99</sup>

Since the time of Forbes, several biblical studies that reflect similar interests have appeared. Some of them seem well informed about their predecessors; others do not. On the one hand, William Milligan's 1892 book, *Lectures on the Apocalypse*,<sup>100</sup> makes contributions of its own about chiasmus but never refers directly to any predecessors. On the other hand, Bullinger's 1898 treatise, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*,<sup>101</sup> offers many fine examples of chiasmus, summarizing and adding in considerable detail to the works of Jebb,<sup>102</sup> Boys,<sup>103</sup> and Bengel.<sup>104</sup> He brings clarity, especially to the display of complex correspondences.<sup>105</sup> George B. Gray's 1915 *Forms of Hebrew Poetry*,<sup>106</sup> though it builds on Lowth's *Lectures* and displays interest in various rhythmic configurations of parallelism, does not reveal any knowledge of Jebb, Boys, or Forbes. Only in 1942, with the publication by the University of North Carolina Press of Nils W. Lund's *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, did information about the initial work on chias-

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98. Ibid., 37–40; Boys, *Tactica Sacra*, 61–68.

99. Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, viii.

100. William Milligan, *Lectures on the Apocalypse*, 3rd ed. (London: Murray, 1892), cited in Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 39.

101. E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1898). Bullinger's influence on Oxford's *Companion Bible* is noted by Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 40, who is grateful that "it embodies a sound literary principle which has waited too long for recognition."

102. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 349, 358–62.

103. Ibid., 363, 379.

104. Ibid., 374.

105. Ibid., 379–93.

106. George B. Gray, *The Forms of Hebrew Poetry* (London: Hodder & Stroughton, 1915).

mus in the early nineteenth century finally become generally accessible in the twentieth century.

### Joseph Smith and the Emergence of Chiasmus

Returning now to the questions posed at the outset, What can we know about the possibility of Joseph Smith's awareness of chiasmus in the 1820s? Obviously, in light of this recent research, I wish I had found or learned of Horne's 1825 edition earlier, and I wish that I could modify certain parts of my previous statements,<sup>107</sup> as I would hope everyone would always do as more information becomes available. In light of what I now know, I would qualify or clarify my position simply to assert a *very low probability* that Joseph Smith knew anything about chiasmus in 1829, being careful not to imply, claim, or suggest complete ignorance of this literary form in America at that time. More than Lund believed and more than I realized, Jebb's work received greater and earlier attention, especially in the 1825

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107. Thus, in 1969 I wrote, "Even though all knowledge of this form lay dormant for centuries, it was rediscovered in the nineteenth century when formal criticism became popular. But by that time the Book of Mormon had long been in print." Welch, "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon," 84. Although it is true that form criticism did not become popular until after 1830, one should not understand that chiasmus was completely unknown at that time, as my reference to Jebb's *Sacred Literature* in note 3 in my 1969 article recognizes.

In 1978 I wrote, "No one seriously contends that Joseph Smith or anyone associated with him knew or could have known of chiasmus or had the training to discover this principle for himself. The evidence is overwhelming against such a claim." Welch, "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon," in *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, 208; restated in 1997 in "What Does Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon Prove?" in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited*, 219. Today, I acknowledge that people in Joseph Smith's environs 1829 *could* have known of chiasmus, but I still doubt that Joseph Smith actually did.

While it remains true that the works of Jebb and Boys were not "published in the United States," and while one still "cannot assume that Joseph Smith would have had access to any of [these] British books," as I stated in "What Does Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon Prove?" 217–18, it should be clarified that he might have had access to Horne's 1825 treatise. It is also evident that information was available in the 1820s on various forms of parallelism in the Hebrew Bible, but this has never been an issue. I have not wanted to overstate or understate the case on behalf of Joseph Smith, but I see how such statements clearly could unwittingly be misunderstood. Others have made similar statements also without, I am confident, any intent to misrepresent.

Philadelphia edition of Horne's impressive volumes introducing the critical study of the Bible.

Still, for many reasons I do not think that these new developments significantly change the conclusion concerning Joseph Smith's actual knowledge of chiasmus or concerning its presence in the Book of Mormon. Although further information may yet come forth to change this view (and I welcome any other information that may come to light), I do not believe that Joseph Smith knew anything about chiasmus from these publications, even though it is remotely possible that he could have. While one cannot be sure on such matters, and more work probably remains to be done on this topic, I know of no evidence that the 1820, 1824, or 1825 works of Jebb or Boys themselves reached America, let alone Palmyra or Harmony, in the 1820s; and no copy of Horne was found on the book lists of the Manchester library, which contained very few religious books of any kind (only 8 of its 421 titles were religious).<sup>108</sup> I do not know how many copies of the 1825 edition of Horne were printed in Philadelphia. Judging by the large size of this work and the frequency with which it was reprinted, individual print runs may have been fairly modest in size.

My research assistants have contacted, where convenient, most of the libraries that hold any of these titles to see if they know when they acquired them. The preliminary results support the idea that very few, if any, copies of Jebb or Boys actually reached America before 1829. If anyone in the vicinity of any such libraries as Princeton, Dartmouth, Yale, Brown, Andover, William and Mary, Virginia, or Pennsylvania wishes to stop in to see if any more can be learned about their possible holdings of any of these works, any further information along these lines would be welcomed.

Regarding Jebb's *Sacred Literature*, Jed Woodworth, a student, found that the bookplate in the copy held in the Hollis Library dates its acquisition there to 1910. I thank Lance Starr for learning that the

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108. For a complete listing of the titles in this library at the time, see Robert Paul, "Joseph Smith and the Manchester (New York) Library," *BYU Studies* 22/3 (1982): 343-56. Joseph moved to Harmony in 1827.



Columbia College Library holds a copy that bears the inscription, “To the library of Columbia College, New York, part of the legacy of the late Rt Rev John Jebb, DD, Bishop of Limerick, Ireland” (apparently Jebb still had copies at his death and bequeathed some of them to libraries); because the bookplate shows an address that was not used before 1849, one may conclude that Columbia obtained its copy after 1849; it was catalogued in 1885. Emory University holds a copy of the 1820 and 1831 editions of Jebb, the later of which could not have been in the country before 1831. The New York Public Library has unsuccessfully searched for evidence of when it acquired this title.

Concerning Boys’s *Tactica Sacra*, one copy has been located at Dallas Theological Seminary, established in 1924. No accession information is available. The book is not listed at Harvard or the New York Public Library.

Harvard and Yale each hold a copy of Boys’s 1825 edition of *Key to the Book of Psalms*, but no acquisition date is apparently indicated. The Jewish Theological Seminary of America has a copy of that edition that was acquired on 9 June 1918 for 2 shillings and 6 pence—evidently it was purchased in England near the end of World War I. This title is more common in libraries because it was reprinted in 1890 by Bullinger.

Only the 1805–1807 volumes of the *Eclectic Review* were listed in the Brown University catalogue as of 1843. Dartmouth holds the *British Critic* and the *British Review*, but only on microfilm. The University of Pennsylvania holds copies of all three, but, as is typical, without physically checking the shelves it cannot be determined which volumes are in that collection or when they were acquired.

Both the bookplate and verso of the title page of Horne’s 1825 treatise say that Harvard acquired its copy of that work in 1860. Nevertheless, Horne’s treatise would have been available for purchase in bookshops or from traveling salesmen, and such merchants would have been the most likely sources for Joseph Smith to have obtained a fledgling knowledge of the five examples and a few pages about introverted parallelism buried in those two massive tomes.

Interestingly, Joseph Smith did possess a copy of the second half of the 1825 edition of Horne's *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Scriptures*. This volume is owned today by the Community of Christ (formerly Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) and is stored in its historical archives in Independence, Missouri. In fair to poor condition, it has a linen binding; a bookplate shows that it was passed down through Frederick Madison Smith. Written on the right front endpaper (but not in Joseph Smith's handwriting) are the words "Joseph Smith Jun. Kirtland O. Jan. 1834" and on the left endpaper (partially under the bookplate) are the words "J. D. Hughes. Magadore. Summit Co. Ohio," apparently indicating the name of the previous owner from whom Joseph Smith acquired the book on that date. We therefore know that Joseph Smith obtained his copy of Horne's book four and one-half years after the translation of the Book of Mormon had been finished.

Moreover, there is no evidence on any page that this copy of this book was ever read by anyone. The book is completely clean: there are no notes, no marginalia, no smudge marks, and no creased pages.<sup>109</sup> It would appear that Joseph did not study this kind of reference material. Horne's work is massively intimidating. In four substantial volumes bound in two, it mentions virtually everything in the then-known world of biblical scholarship. Merely locating the discussion of chiasmus, epanodos, or introverted parallelism in this vast array is difficult, even when one knows what to look for. One finds it in the index only under "Parallelism, introverted."

And even if Joseph Smith had read Horne or Jebb, he still would have known little about structural chiasmus. In Jebb's work, epanodos, or introverted parallelism, played mainly a supporting role in the overall argument for which he was best known—namely, for extending the study of parallelism in Hebrew lines from the Old Testament to the New. From Horne's volume, Joseph Smith would have had available only a brief discussion of Jebb's work on "parallel lines

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109. I am grateful to Ron Romig, church archivist of the Community of Christ, for allowing me to inspect this volume in September 2000.

introverted,” illustrated by three examples from the Old Testament, and two short examples from the New Testament ten pages later. All of this was tucked into twenty-eight pages on the characteristics of Hebrew lines, with one reference to Jebb in the bibliography. In addition, the tabular arrangements of Boys (none of which was mentioned in 1825 by Horne) are technical and in most cases hard to follow. Even in later editions, Horne’s summaries of the scholarship on each of the four New Testament epistles analyzed in *Tactica Sacra* completely ignore Boys.

Furthermore, one may well ask, if Joseph Smith had known of these works, would he have followed them? The ideas of Jebb and Boys were bold, new ideas, and as discussed above, the reviewers were critical, especially of the conclusions drawn by Boys. Could people in the 1820s have been confident that these notions would withstand the test of time?<sup>110</sup>

In addition, even if Joseph had dared to follow the lead of Jebb and Boys, he would have been misguided by their rule that these structures placed “in the centre the *less* important notion.”<sup>111</sup> Chiasms in the Book of Mormon typically do the opposite. And he might well have hesitated to use chiasmus in prose and not merely in poetry, where all varieties of parallelism were more acceptably located.

The idea of Joseph’s ferreting out a knowledge of chiasmus from the Bible on his own initiative also seems unlikely. Of course, he knew the Bible, but many original word orders get straightened around when the Hebrew or Greek is translated into English, as Jebb often complained. But even in the original language, the inverted patterns are not obvious to unattuned readers. My experience in demonstrating the strong chiasm in Leviticus 24:13–23 to the Jewish Law Association in Boston in 1988 shows that obvious chiastic structures do not jump out at erudite readers, even though they might have read the Hebrew text

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110. I have emphasized this point in a videotaped lecture, “Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon,” produced by FARMS in 1994, transcript WEL-T1, p. 18.

111. Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study* (1825), 2:467, emphasis added.

many times.<sup>112</sup> Thus, the likelihood that Joseph Smith could have discovered this principle for himself or ever actually knew anything about chiasmus in 1829 remains very small.

And finally, even assuming that Joseph Smith had known of chiasmus, the following observation, which I made in 1981, still stands: “There would still have remained the formidable task of composing the well-balanced, meaningful chiastic structures . . . which are found in precisely those portions of the Book of Mormon in which one would logically and historically expect to find them.”<sup>113</sup> To me the complexity of Alma 36 seems evidence enough of this point.<sup>114</sup> Imagine the young prophet, without notes, dictating “extensive texts in this style that was unnatural to his world, while at the same time keeping numerous other strands, threads, and concepts flowing without confusion in his dictation.”<sup>115</sup>

In 1970 I ended my master’s thesis on a note of caution: “Since it is precarious to be overly positivistic in ancient studies when the obscure origins of literary ideas are under discussion, this thesis has avoided making a vast number of subjective judgments.”<sup>116</sup> I still wish to do the same today. Caution is always advisable in speaking on such topics, in spite of and in light of all we know and do not know.

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112. Welch, “What Does Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon Prove?” 218–19.

113. Welch, “Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon,” in *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, 208.

114. John W. Welch, “A Masterpiece: Alma 36,” in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991), 114–31; John W. Welch, “Chiasmus in Alma 36” (FARMS, 1989), 45 pp. See also the statistical analysis in Edwards and Edwards, “Did Chiasms Appear in the Book of Mormon by Chance?”

115. Welch, “What Does Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon Prove?” 218.

116. Welch, “A Study Relating Chiasmus,” 155.