

cultural commentators who are at a personal, religious, and academic remove from Utah's mainstream LDS majority. This distancing, together with the topographical overlay, enables a fresh look at the breadth of Utah's scenic and human landscape, 1776–1996. Such distancing, however, also affects the spirit of this collection, and some readers will find the book goes awry in failing to capture the dynamic spiritual and religious power of the Mormon faith, a shortfall which can be explained more by editorial predilection and selectivity than by the fact that barely half of the book's selections were written by Latter-day Saints, in a state where Mormons still comprise more than 72 percent of the population.

While the editors bemoan the unfortunate necessity of omitting drama, science fiction, children's or young adult literature from the collection—some of which are among Utah's strongest genres—other unacknowledged and unexplained editorial omissions further alter the tone and lessen the representative nature of the book. Missing are LDS hymns, poetic touchstones of Mormon theology and Utah history; LDS sermons, represented here only by Orson Hyde, not Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, or others to be found in the *Journal of Discourses* (arguably the most important collection of Utah literature); or LDS journals, too sparsely represented (although Mary Goble Pay is there), with their invaluable glimpses into applied Mormonism. Beyond many appreciated inclusions in the book

are equally important exclusions of contemporary Utah writers whose presence would help balance the offering and brighten the mosaic: Samuel Woolley Taylor, Hugh Nibley, Eileen Gibbons Kump, Marilyn Miller Brown, Louise Plummer, anthologized poets Arthur Henry King and John Sterling Harris, Gerald N. Lund (Utah's all-time, best-selling author), and Utah's best-known, prize-winning author, Orson Scott Card. There are other oversights as well: sundry typos; misspellings of at least a half-dozen authors' names; an introduction which repeatedly refers the reader to a nonexistent "Volume 2," apparently reflecting an earlier, abandoned format; and a clutch of quirky, inconsistent, and imbalanced endnotes.

In lamenting such omissions and errors, however, let me not be guilty of my own distortive skewings. In fact, *Great and Peculiar Beauty: A Utah Reader* is a cultural landmark in the 150-year history of Utah arts and letters, a literary hymning of the "great and peculiar beauty" of this good place and its good people.

—Richard H. Cracroft

Searching for God in America,
by Hugh Hewitt (Word Publishing,
1996)

Through interviews, writings, hymns, and brief histories of individuals who have shaped Americans' religious lives, this book showcases many "spiritualities" from such figures as Jonathan Edwards, Joseph Smith Jr., Samuel

Clements, William James, Black Elk, Dalai Lama, George S. Patton, and Albert Einstein.

Hewitt first presents transcriptions of a series of interviews he conducted for PBS with Chuck Colson (who tells the story of his psychological rebirth and his committed love in service to prisoners), Harold Kushner (who suggests that we must substitute service for an absent God, that freedom includes random tragedy, and that functional truth is higher than factual truth), Roberta Hestenes (who proclaims a Presbyterian social gospel in the third world as well personal peace gained from the Word and Spirit), Seyyed Hossein Nasr (in whose philosophy the secular fades, the Truth remains, and, in the alternative “science” of Islam, Sufism, world forms allow the true “hidden” to appear), and Cecil Murray (an African Methodist Episcopal pastor in Watts, who believes that social salvation is the only real salvation and presents a “Marshall Plan” for American cities).

His sixth interview is with Neal Maxwell, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, who teaches us that “recognizing the Spirit” is learned behavior, that the ultimate challenge is loving our enemies, that secularism is our major social problem, and that freedom costs security. He also bears a Latter-day Saint testimony about meekness. The final interviews are with Thomas Keating (a Benedictine mystic and monastic who believes that meditative prayer effects social change, teaches that the “false self” hungers for security, control, affection, and esteem, and affirms that

freedom requires God’s absence), and Dalai Lama (whose Tibetan Buddhism teaches interrelatedness, reincarnation, the risk of violence creating violence, and the virtue of compassion, which is analogous to Christian love).

The interviewer’s two questions for all his selected participants were, How did you come to your faith? and Why do you think there is so much innocent suffering in the world? They answered with sincerity and verve.

Elder Maxwell’s touchingly personal interview displayed how the articulate Apostle developed faith and courage at a young age by meekly facing embarrassing acne problems in his teens. He discloses his feelings of inadequacy about giving apostolic blessings to the sick, when many are healed and many not, and about his responsibility to witness to all the world: “It is overwhelming. One cannot be in an Islamic country and not be conscious of the tremendous challenge it is to bear a witness of Jesus’ name in a nation where there may be hostility towards Jesus, per se.”

Regarding agnostic divine children, Elder Maxwell states, “They don’t know who they are, but I do: and I must learn to love them, even if . . . they are critical of me, because they are my brothers and sisters.” Regarding government and social ills: “I’d rather have ten commandments than ten thousand federal regulations. . . . And unless we rebuild marriages and families, we are really straightening deck chairs on the Titanic.” Regarding the hardest thing of all: “The act of

loving one's enemies and submissiveness are the greatest and the crowning things in discipleship. It shouldn't surprise us that they don't come early in one's discipleship. Instead they come near the end of the trail when we are less caught up with ego, so I don't think we should expect to arrive there quickly."

The book next presents historical writings with many riveting testimonies. Hymns end the compilation as beautiful witnesses to less effable spirituality. This beautiful book of saintly testimonies should be read by anyone feeling cynical or alone.

—Charles Randall Paul

The Morning Breaks: Stories of Conversion and Faith in the Former Soviet Union, by Howard L. Biddulph (Deseret Book, 1996)

Written by the president of the Ukraine Kiev Mission 1991-94, this book is more than a collection of inspiring accounts of spiritual conversion to Christ and his restored gospel and more than an engrossing account of the opening of nations previously closed to the preaching of the gospel. This volume raises hymns of praise, rejoicing, and awe at the workings of the Lord in the lives of individuals and families living in Ukraine and Belarus. The title of the book is taken from Parley P. Pratt's famous hymn of the restoration:

The morning breaks, the shadows flee;
Lo, Zion's standard is unfurled!

The dawning of a brighter day
Majestic rises on the world.

Relating a remarkable if minute part of the unfolding story of God's hand at work among peoples once imprisoned in oppressive regimes, *The Morning Breaks* includes first-person accounts of individuals' spiritual struggles to find answers to fundamental questions of life, of their God-led discovery of the truth, and of the opening of their hearts to receive the blessings of light and hope and salvation through Jesus Christ. The testimonies borne by these people, whose lives and minds and souls have been so miraculously unshackled and transformed through spiritual conversion and activity in the Church, should touch many hearts.

Coming from a part of the world that not long ago seemed unreachable, *The Morning Breaks* is told by a man who was prepared in many ways from his youth for a mission that he and we could hardly have imagined.

—Robert W. Blair

Etruscan Italy: Etruscan Influences on the Civilizations of Italy from Antiquity to the Modern Era, edited by John F. Hall (Museum of Art, Brigham Young University, 1996)

The first book to be published by Brigham Young University's Museum of Art is a result of that museum's inaugural exhibit, *The Etruscans: Legacy of a Lost Civilization*. John Hall has brought together fourteen essays presented by international scholars at the