New Perspectives on Joseph Smith and Translation

10/05/2017

A CONFERENCE TO EXPLORE JOSEPH SMITH’S TRANSLATION PROCESS

One key to understanding Mormonism’s prophetic founder, Joseph Smith, is to grapple with his sharply distinctive practice of “translation.” Come take advantage of a unique, day-long conversation by some of Mormon Studies’ leading minds on this challenging issue.

Richard Bushman

Richard Bushman is professor of history emeritus at Columbia University and currently holds the Howard W. Hunter Chair of Mormon Studies at Claremont Graduate University. His acclaimed biography, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (Knopf) earned many awards, including the Best Biography Award from the Association of Mormon Letters.

Terryl Givens

Terryl Givens is a professor of English literature and religion at the University of Richmond, where he holds the James A. Bostwick Chair in English. He has written multiple books exploring LDS thought, including *The God Who Weeps: How Mormonism Makes Sense of Life* (Ensign Peak, with Fiona Givens) and the forthcoming *Wrestling the Angel: The Foundations of Mormon Thought* (Oxford).

Jared Hickman

Jared Hickman is assistant professor of English as Johns Hopkins University. He researches the historical intersections of literature, religion and race in the U.S. His most recent book is *Black Prometheus: Race and
Radicalism in the Age of Atlantic Slavery (Oxford). Also forthcoming from Oxford is Americanist Approaches to the Book of Mormon.

Jana Riess

Jana Riess is a senior columnist for Religion News Service. She is the author of The Twible: All the Chapters of the Bible in 140 Characters or Less... Now with 68% More Humor! and Flunking Sainthood: A Year of Breaking the Sabbath, Forgetting to Pray, and Still Loving My Neighbor. She has a Ph.D. in American religious history from Columbia University.

Samual Brown

Samuel Brown is the author of In Heaven as It Is on Earth: Joseph Smith and the Early Mormon Conquest of Death (Oxford). In his day job, he’s an assistant professor of pulmonary and critical care medicine at the University of Utah Intermountain Medical Center. He earned his M.D. from Harvard Medical School and seeks to understand how believers have employed religious concepts regarding death and sickness.

Rosalynde Welch

Rosalynde Welch writes on interreligious issues for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and blogs at Times and Seasons. She’s received degrees from Brigham Young University and her Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego. She lives in St. Louis, Mo.

LOGAN LUNCH IDEAS

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For more information: philip.barlow@usu.edu

Day-long conference was held March 16, 2017, Utah State University Perry Pavilion Hall (4th floor), Jon M. Huntsman School of Business

4/11/17 NOTE: VIDEOS OF THE SESSIONS WILL BE RELEASED SOON. WE’LL POST THEM HERE, SO CHECK BACK.

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The conference is open to students, scholars and community members. The proceedings will be videotaped for broad distribution. The conference is free to attend.

AGENDA

Morning Session: 9 a.m. –1 p.m.
Each panel participant will offer a summary of a longer paper that other participants have read in advance.
9 a.m. Welcome remarks by Philip Barlow
9:15 a.m. Presentation by Richard Bushman, followed by questions and discussion led by Jana Riess
10 a.m. Presentation by Sam Brown, followed by questions and discussion led by Rosalynde Welch
10:45 a.m. 15-minute break
11 a.m. Presentation by Jared Hickman, followed by questions and discussion led by Rosalynde Welch
11:45 a.m. Presentation by Terryl Givens, followed by questions and discussion led by Jana Riess
12:30 p.m. Wrap-up of morning session, Philip Barlow
Lunch: 1 p.m.-2 p.m.
Afternoon session: 2 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
Afternoon sessions are round-table discussions among Richard Bushman, Terryl Givens, Jana Riess, Samuel Brown, Rosalynde Welch, Jared Hickman and Philip Barlow. Topics of discussion listed below by hour.
2 p.m. Strengths and weaknesses of traditional linguistic translation approaches.
2:50 p.m. 10-minute break
3 p.m. Is an emerging, coherent translation paradigm reflected in these papers and the morning’s deliberations? If so, can this paradigm and the more conventional paradigm co-exist? To what extent can Joseph Smith be said to have practiced a single mode of translation?
3:50 p.m. 10-minute break
4 p.m. Is there some broad sense in which “translation” applies to the foundations and practices of Mormonism? Is there a sense in which Joseph Smith’s idea of translation is alive (standing as a model and an invitation to greater spiritual and moral imagination) in today’s Mormonism? What practical consequences are there to our day’s work?
4:45 p.m.-5:30 p.m. Final remarks by Philip Barlow