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Gerrit Bos Lecture Series

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(Seminar from page 1)

Paul Cheesman was only the most zealous of the searchers for parallel plates. They are of interest to modern feminists because Emma Smith played a prominent role in recovering and translating the plates, and they are of interest to scholars who study literary hoaxes.

The problematic of the seminar (and of my book) is, why this inextinguishable interest? Considering that the plates are no longer accessible and for many are beyond belief, why do they still arouse the imagination? The idea of a gold book recovered from a stone box buried in a hill, inscribed with ancient characters describing a lost civilization, and cared for by an angel seems to hold endless fascination. The plates' story is often ridiculed or used as evidence of Joseph Smith's imagination and cunning—but ridiculed or not, the plates survive. Mormons have not wavered in their belief, and artists and writers of all stripes deploy the plates for their own purposes. Even our seminar this past summer attests to their enduring interest.

The seminar culminated with a public presentation of the participants' papers: Richard Bushman, "The Gold Plates in Mormon and American Culture"; Ruth Eldredge, "Sacred Materiality and the Holy Past: the Gold Plates and Christian Relics"; Austin Walters, "Hisses from the Dust: The Gold Plates and the Recovery of Sacred Records"; Craig Rossell, "Gold Plates and the Cave Myths"; Jeremy Walker, "Hoaxes, Gold Plates, and the Discourse of Authenticity"; Michelle Mueller, "Women and the Plates: Emma Smith and Gender in Mormonism"; Jeremy Talmage, "The Other Plates: Déjà vu or Something New?"; Bryan Cottle, "The Moroni Principle: The Mormon Quest for Metal Plates in the Paul Cheesman Years"; and Saskia Tielens, "The Gold Plates in the Contemporary Popular Imagination."

For those interested in learning more, papers from the seminar will soon be available on the Maxwell Institute website.

Richard Bushman, Gouverneur Morris Professor of History Emeritus at Columbia University, held the Howard W. Hunter Chair of Mormon Studies in the School of Religion at Claremont Graduate University from 2008 to 2011.

Gerrit Bos Lecture Series

The Maxwell Institute is proud to sponsor a lecture series at Brigham Young University by Dr. Gerrit Bos, editor and translator of the *Medical Works of Moses Maimonides* and chair of the Martin-Buber-Institut at Cologne University.

Monday, 1 Oct., 1:00–2:00 p.m., 3716 HBLL (entry through the south doors): Synonym literature in Hebrew manuscripts and the innovation of a Hebrew medical terminology by Shem Tov Ben Isaac of Tortosa (fl. 13th century) in his translation of al-Zahrawi's *K. al-Tasrif*.

Tuesday, 2 Oct., 12:00–1:20 p.m., 3714 HBLL (south doors): Moses Maimonides, *Medical Doctor and Author: Some aspects of his work, medical training, theory and practice*.

Wednesday, 3 Oct., 12:00–1:00 p.m., 3716 HBLL (south doors): Medieval stone lore in a Hebrew garb: Berekhiah Ben Natronai ha-Nakdan and the *Sefer Ko'ach ha-Avanim* (On the Virtues of Stones).

INSIGHTS

The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute
for Religious Scholarship

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