

**Robin Scott Jensen and Brian M. Hauglid, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Volume 4: Book of Abraham and Related Manuscripts, Facsimile Edition.*** Volume 4 of the Revelations and Translations series of the Joseph Smith Papers. Ronald K. Esplin, Matthew J. Grow, Matthew C. Godfrey, and R. Eric Smith, general editors. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2018. xxxviii, 381 pp. Hardback: \$89.99. ISBN-13: 978-1-62972-480-5.

*Reviewed by H. Michael Marquardt*

**T**HE EDITORS of this volume are Robin Scott Jensen, a historian with the Joseph Smith Papers, who has worked on prior volumes in the Revelations and Translations series. He holds two MA degrees and is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of Utah. Brian M. Hauglid received his PhD in Arabic and Islamic studies at the University of Utah. He is an associate professor and visiting fellow at the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship at Brigham Young University.

This book is a superior publication supplying for general readers and scholars color photographs of all the English and Egyptian documents relating to the Book of Abraham as well as transcriptions of the English texts. The volume includes photographs of the Egyptian fragments recovered from the New York Metropolitan Museum in 1967, including the original fragment of Facsimile 1.

In April 1966, Jerald and Sandra Tanner, former members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter LDS church) and founders of Modern Microfilm Company, published two versions of the Egyptian material under the title *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. Their publication came from a 1956 black and white microfilm copy made by the Genealogical Society of Utah and included two of the four manuscripts of the Book of Abraham. They made their publications available to the public.

After the papyri were presented to the LDS church in November 1967, photographs of the Joseph Smith Papyri became available to the public in the January and February 1968 issues of the LDS church's magazine *The Improvement Era*. Included were all of the fragments recovered from the New York Metropolitan Museum, including one that had been in continual custody of the Church Historian's Office.

In 1992 color prints of the papyri fragments appeared in Charles M. Larson's book *By His Own Hand Upon Papyrus: A New Look at the Joseph Smith Papyri*.<sup>1</sup> In 2010, Brian Hauglid published black and white and some color images of the Book of Abraham English manuscripts in his book *A Textual History of the Book of Abra-*

1. Charles M. Larson, *By His Own Hand Upon Papyrus: A New Look at the Joseph Smith Papyri*. Grand Rapids, MI: Institute for Religious Research, 1992.

ham: *Manuscripts and Editions*.<sup>2</sup> University of Chicago Egyptologist Robert Ritner also published color images of the papyri in 2011 to accompany his translation of the Joseph Smith Papyri which confirmed that the papyri were funerary texts.<sup>3</sup>

It has long been felt that such a publication was needed to supply the public with the documents. With the publication of *Revelations and Translations, Volume 4*, we finally have readable transcriptions of the handwritten English text of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar documents. The editors have confirmed many of the conclusions of the critics that have been published concerning the Egyptian papers and papyri once in the possession of Joseph Smith. Better transcriptions give us a clear understanding of the process these documents went through. The editors do not cite Dr. Hugh W. Nibley who published in the *Improvement Era* and other places defending the historicity of the Book of Abraham.

*Volume 4* includes color photographs of the Egyptian Papyri, two small notebooks, copies of Egyptian characters, Egyptian alphabet documents, and the bound Grammar and Alphabet (thirty-four handwritten pages). It also includes the four Book of Abraham manuscripts produced in Kirtland, Ohio, and Nauvoo, Illinois. The publication in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842, including the three Facsimile orienting plates, are reproduced. Finally, reference material is added to assist the reader.

The notes for the introduction to the volume are included as footnotes. For the major parts of the book there are endnotes located at the end of each section. It would have assisted readers to have included the names of the individuals in whose handwriting is on the manuscript page on the transcription page. This would have been like the other facsimile editions in the *Revelations and Translations* series.

Contrary to the assertions of John Gee and Kerry M. Muhlestein that the entire Book of Abraham was dictated by Joseph Smith in 1835, including chapters 3-5, Robin Jensen and Brian Hauglid state in the introduction to a two-page fragment of Abraham 3:

That this text was inscribed in Nauvoo, Illinois, and not earlier in Kirtland, Ohio, is evident from an 8 March 1842 entry in JS's journal, which states that JS "commenced Translating from the Book of Abraham, for the 10 No of the Times and seasons." The following day, JS "continued translating & revising with the "Re[c]order," Willard Richards. (285; see also 304)

On pages 243 and 303-305, a draft editorial for the *Times and Seasons*, presumably authored by Joseph Smith, is referred to but Jensen and Hauglid do not mention that the draft also included: "In the present no. [number] will be found the

2. Brian M. Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham: Manuscripts and Editions*. Provo, Utah: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, Brigham Young University, 2010.

3. Robert K. Ritner, *The Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyri: A Complete Edition*. Salt Lake City: Smith-Pettit Foundation, 2011.

commencement of the Records discovered in Egypt Some time since as penned by the hand of Father Abraham.”<sup>4</sup> That one of the papyrus scrolls was written by the hand of Abraham was one of the reasons why it was purchased.

On page 193, it is explained that the Book of Abraham text “points readers to the vignette, or illustration, from the Book of Breathing for Horos.” The Frederick G. Williams manuscript includes above the line “(commencement of this record” (194). The Warren Parrish manuscript has at this point “that is lying before you at the commencement of this record” (206). This is an example of both scribes taking dictation simultaneously as Joseph Smith dictated the text to them in November 1835. The reference to Facsimile 1 was contained in the story line.

In addition to color photographs and transcriptions of the documents related to the Book of Abraham and related manuscripts, Jensen and Hauglid have provided scholars with a reference section containing “Book of Abraham Chronology for the Years 1835 and 1842,” which is not complete; “Works Cited,” which is a selected list; and a “Comparison of Characters,” which is helpful. This last item allows readers to compare how the same character is rendered in parallel documents as well as their definitions or translations as suggested no doubt by Joseph Smith. However, there is no English text included for the three Book of Abraham manuscripts.

Despite these shortcomings, Robin Jensen and Brian Hauglid should be commended for providing readers with a scholarly edition of the English texts related to the production of the Book of Abraham. It is an indispensable volume and no doubt will accelerate the scholarly examination of these texts. I recommend the book.

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4. “Times & Seasons,” Joseph Smith Collection, MS 155, Box 5, Folder 17, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.