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BYU Hosts Papyrology Summer Institute

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the Church might look like in another generation, or three, or more? If we could view ourselves today from the perspective of half a millennium of growth and effort and cultural evolution, how might we characterize our particular “Mormon moment” in history? Perhaps what we are witnessing is not so much the culmination of our history as a people but an adolescent coming-out event. And perhaps we may yet find something instructive in the experience of another prophetic

tradition with a fantastic story to tell the world—a tradition that was once as young as we are now.

The Proofs of Prophecy is available for purchase through the University of Chicago Press and www.byubookstore.com. ♦

By D. Morgan Davis

Director, Middle Eastern Texts Initiative

1. Boyd K. Packer, “Counsel to Youth,” *Ensign*, November 2011, 16–19.

BYU Hosts Papyrology Summer Institute

This past summer Brigham Young University, in collaboration with the American Society of Papyrologists (ASP), hosted the Seventh International Papyrology Summer Institute (June 20–July 29, 2011). The ASP began hosting these institutes in 2003 and plans to continue through 2015. The objective of the seminar is to teach participants how to read and use papyri and to provide them with the kind of practical experience that would enable them to make productive use of papyrus texts in their own research. Fields of study include Classics, ancient history, Egyptology, archaeology, ancient religions, and biblical studies.



Courtesy of the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri, University of California, Berkeley

During this six-week seminar, nine doctoral students and one junior faculty member from universities in the United States, Canada, Egypt, Austria, Belgium, and Germany gathered at BYU to hone their skills in deciphering Greek papyri. The on-site coordinators of the seminar from BYU were Roger Macfarlane, Lincoln Blumell, Thomas Wayment, and Stephen Bay. John Gee, the William “Bill” Gay Research Professor of Egyptology at the Maxwell Institute, taught classes during the seminar. Additionally, a number of world-renowned papyrologists attended

and helped run the seminar. These included Peter van Minnen (University of Cincinnati), Roger Bagnall (New York University), Josh Sosin (Duke University), Nikos Litinas (University of Crete), Todd Hickey (University of California, Berkeley), Maryline Parca (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Klaas Worp (University of Amsterdam), Rodney Ast (Heidelberg University), and Arthur Verhoogt (University of Michigan).

This most recent seminar’s theme was Roman Egypt. Since BYU’s papyrological holdings are rather small, UC Berkeley generously loaned BYU a number of papyri from its Tebtunis collection. All the documents from the Berkeley collection were written in Greek and dated between the first and third centuries AD. As a result of the work done on these texts during the seminar, participants in the seminar will publish these papyri in full editions with translations over the course of the next few years. Among the various texts edited were a couple of ancient letters, including one from a soldier serving in Pannonia and sent back to his family in Egypt, two land registers, a few contracts, some first-century court proceedings, and some land leases.

BYU’s reputation in the field of ancient texts and manuscripts has been greatly bolstered. BYU now joins an elite group of universities that have previously held this seminar (Yale, Berkeley, Cincinnati, Columbia, Stanford, and Michigan). Funds to host the seminar were provided by Religious Education at BYU as well as by the College of Humanities and the Maxwell Institute. ♦

By Lincoln Blumell

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