

**Association Internationale de Papyrologues
Working Party on the Commerce in Papyri¹
Recommendations**

The Working Party's terms of reference from the Comité International de Papyrologie, as approved by the Assemblée Générale of 4 August 2007, are "to study the complex legal, ethical and scholarly questions connected with the commerce in papyri and to make recommendations ... on measures that may appropriately serve the purposes of scholarship, support the development of papyrological studies in Egypt and further the preservation of the documentary heritage of Egypt and other countries." The Working Party has recommended:

(1) That the AIP create a section of its web site containing copies of as many relevant legal texts as possible, or links to those texts elsewhere on the Web [this has been done];

(2) That its membership familiarize itself with Egyptian law, the UNESCO convention, and all relevant legal texts of their own country or countries;

(3) That all members observe scrupulously not only the laws applicable to them in their home countries, including those implementing the UNESCO convention, but also the laws of Egypt and other countries from which ancient textual artifacts come;

(4) That all papyrus collections should work as expeditiously as their resources permit to make their collections available on the Web in digital form;

(5) That all images of papyri and ostraca put on the Web should be governed by general licensing principles allowing them to be reproduced for scholarly and non-commercial use without the need for specific permission or the charging of fees;

(6) That all collections should adopt policies concerning the publication of unpublished papyri that (a) limit individual exclusive publication rights to a period of five years and (b) make unreserved and unpublished papyri otherwise available to any qualified prospective editor;

(7) That any public collection intending to deaccession all or part of a collection of papyri should transfer or sell papyri only to another public collection where it will be available for education and research;

(8) That the AIP should launch, in collaboration with Egyptian colleagues and the Supreme Council for Antiquities, a 21st-century equivalent of the International Photographic Archive of Papyri, aiming to gather or create digital images and metadata for all papyri in Egyptian museums and magazines, whether coming from formal excavations or not, and to conserve these collections;

(9) That the AIP should explore with all relevant parties the possibilities for the creation of an Egyptian National Center for Papyri to be located in Cairo, which could help serve the research needs of Egyptian and non-Egyptian scholars for access to scholarly information and for facilities for scholarly interchange of all kinds. Such a center should

¹ The Working Party consists of Roger Bagnall (President), Guido Bastianini (Vice President), Alain Martin (Secretary-Treasurer), Alan Bowman, Jean-Luc Fournet, Todd Hickey, Rosario Pinaudi, Cornelia Römer, and Paul Schubert.

- provide access to material for authorized scholars without the burden of separate permits and security clearances;
- have a teaching function involving academic staff cross-appointed from universities in Egypt;
- have a scientific board that includes international scholars and the directors of at least some of the foreign research institutes in Egypt;
- provide a means for centralizing flows of external funding for papyrological research and education in a fashion that will be transparent and avoid any suspicion of favoritism or patronage.

(10) That the AIP should explore possibilities for helping the Egyptian Museum improve facilities for storage and conservation of papyri in its collections [this is to some extent already happening];

(11) That the AIP urge its members to consider seriously the possibility of excavating sites in Egypt where written texts may be found, particularly where these sites are endangered by rising ground water or property development. Material discovered in excavations should be accorded a longer period of exclusive publication rights reserved to the excavators than the five years recommended for papyri in museum and library collections;

(12) That papyrologists who identify material for sale or held in private collections as having been stolen from Egyptian museums or magazines should so advise its owner and urge the owner to return it to the Egyptian authorities; they should not assist in the marketing of such material in any way;

(13) That a database be created, open to submission of information by any authentic and legitimate contributor, of information about papyri offered for sale, whether by auction, fixed-price catalogue, or on-line auction;

(14) That as far as possible volumes of papyri should be made freely available on the Internet no later than five years after the date of publication, and a retrospective effort to make existing volumes of papyri freely available in digital form should be undertaken;

(15) That the AIP should sponsor an ongoing series of lectures and seminars in Egypt, coordinating the presence of international scholars visiting or working in Egypt and willing to give such lectures or seminars, which could be held in rotation at a variety of institutions in Cairo and Alexandria. The working party envisages such lectures being given without payment to the lecturer and without charge to the audience, with coordination both internationally and in Egypt.

(16) That the AIP should seek funding for a program of competitively-awarded scholarships for Egyptian students to study papyrology abroad for a year, whether in connection with a master's degree program or as part of a continuing doctoral program. This program would be administered by the AIP. The working party recommends a level of 2-4 such grants per year at a level sufficient to allow residence at a foreign center of papyrology for a full academic year. Such grants might be linked to the availability to Egyptian students of suitable unpublished material from Egyptian collections and the digitization of that material.