THE MUMMY, THE BOOK, AND THE TOMB:
REreading Early Egyptian Christianity Through Its Artifacts

A Lecture by the American Research Center in Egypt – Northwest Chapter
Co-sponsored by the UW Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization
And the Comparative Religion Program of the Jackson School of International Studies

FREE and Open to the Public
Wednesday, 29 February 2012
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Communications, Room 226, UW Campus

In 1945, the world of early Christian studies was changed forever by the discovery deep in the Egyptian desert of a cache of twelve ancient books containing writings that had literally been “lost” for 1,600 years. Those writings – including the only complete copy of the Gospel of Thomas purporting to record the “secret words” of Jesus – profoundly altered our understanding of early Christianity. But have their nature and purpose been widely misunderstood? This lecture offers a radical new interpretation of how and why these ancient Egyptian books were buried and uncovers a tale of Christian mummies, magical books, and a tomb robbing that changed the world.

Nicola Denzey Lewis (Ph.D. 1998, Princeton University) is Senior Lecturer in Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean in the Department of Religious Studies at Brown University, where she also holds an affiliated faculty status with the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World. The author of The Bone Gatherers: The Lost Worlds of Ancient Christian Women (2007), Denzey Lewis also has two books forthcoming, both on Nag Hammadi and Gnosticism. She is an associate editor of the Cambridge Dictionary of Ancient Mediterranean Religion and currently at work on a Cambridge Companion to Gnosticism.