



"2 slave(s) (held by) GAL-SAL, (their names are) ENPAP-X and SUKKALGIR"

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT

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Cover illustration: Tablet with lists of Sumerian conjugations for the verb *gub*, and the equivalent Akkadian forms, nearly always a form of the verb *i/uzuzzu*, treated at length in CAD U/W, the final volume of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary (2010). OIM A24186. Clay. Acquired from Crozer Theological Seminary. Old Babylonian(?). Ca. 10.5 x 9.0 cm. Photo by Andrew Dix

The pages that divide the sections of this year's report feature the various stages in the life of the cuneiform script

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*Overleaf: This text appears to identify two named slaves in the possession of a third individual. The sign for "slaves" in fact derives from two distinct signs, one for male (𒄠) and one for female (𒄡) slave. Typical of proto-cuneiform texts, the inscription does not include a preposition or verb, which would clarify the roles of the participants. This ambiguity is, in part, resolved by tablet format and the organization of information into cases. OIM A2513. Clay. Purchased (Jemdet Nasr?). Ca. 3100 BC. 4.6 x 4.6 x 2.4 cm. After Christopher Woods, "The Earliest Mesopotamian Writing," in *Visible Language: Inventions of Writing in the Ancient Middle East and Beyond*, edited by Christopher Woods, p. 39, fig. 2.6 (*Oriental Institute Museum Publications 32*; Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 2010). Photo by Jean Grant*

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*Overleaf: This lexical list includes the names of various gods. Organized by sign form and theme, this list has parallels in somewhat earlier lists from the site of Fara (ca. 2600 BC). Lexical lists, essentially ancient dictionaries, were the primary scholarly means of organizing and presenting information. This text illustrates the physical characteristics the cuneiform script had assumed by the middle of the third millennium. OIM A3670. Clay. Iraq, Tello(?). Early Dynastic IIIb period, ca. 2500 BC. 9.3 x 10.0 x 3.2 cm. After Christopher Woods, "56. Early Dynastic III Lexical List," in *Visible Language: Inventions of Writing in the Ancient Middle East and Beyond*, edited by Christopher Woods, p. 82, no. 56 (Oriental Institute Museum Publications 32; Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 2010). Photo by Anna Ressler*

INTRODUCTION

Gil J. Stein

I am honored to present you with this year's *Oriental Institute Annual Report*. Looking through its various sections, you will see that the past year has been one of extremely important changes within the Oriental Institute — both milestones to celebrate and losses to mourn.

This year, I am sorry to report that we lost four dear members of the Oriental Institute's Visiting Committee — Alan Brodie, Janina Marks, David Kipper, and Marjorie Webster. Early this summer, we were all saddened to hear of the death of Oriental Institute Director Emeritus William Sumner. Bill was an internationally recognized scholar of Iranian archaeology and a Director who quite literally transformed the face of the Oriental Institute. Through his regional surveys of the Marv Dasht Plain around Persepolis, and his pioneering excavations at Malyan, Bill made a lasting contribution to our understanding of the civilizations of highland Iran. As Director of the Oriental Institute, Bill Sumner was one of those rare people who combined sweeping, creative vision with the nuts-and-bolts organizational skills to re-make the Oriental Institute by adding the new wing and undertaking the complete reinstallation of our permanent Museum galleries. Bill Sumner also was the guiding force behind the computerization of the Oriental Institute and the development of our website — now the most frequently visited Internet portal for the civilizations of the ancient Near East. Bill Sumner was the architect of the modern Oriental Institute, and we will miss him.

At the same time, we are proud to celebrate an extraordinary milestone in the completion of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary (CAD), after an epic scholarly effort that lasted ninety years from inception to the publication in 2010/2011 of the final volume. The Oriental Institute is one of the very few places with the expertise and the intense institutional commitment necessary to undertake an enterprise of this magnitude. Editor-in-Charge Martha Roth and her colleagues deserve our thanks for having brought to fruition the work of her predecessors such as I. J. Gelb, A. Leo Oppenheim, and Erica Reiner. Thanks to the talents of these scholars who worked on the CAD for so many years, the world now has a true encyclopedia of Mesopotamian culture, as seen through the deep richness of the Akkadian language.

This past year has also been a time of momentous changes across the modern Middle East, as the revolutions of the “Arab Spring” overthrew long-standing regimes in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya. In these upheavals, Egypt was a major focus of our concerns. It was inspiring and reassuring to see crowds in Cairo forming a human chain to surround and protect the Egyptian National Museum from the threat of looting. At the same time, the professionalism and support of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities made it possible for Epigraphic Survey Director W. Ray Johnson and his colleagues at Chicago House in Luxor to continue their work in complete safety and without interruption at Medinet Habu, Luxor, Karnak, and in the tombs of western Thebes.

Within the Oriental Institute, another major change has been the establishment of the Public Education Department as an independent unit with a broadened and ambitious mission of outreach to several “publics” — the University community, K-12 students, families with children, and the educated lay public. Carole Krucoff and her colleagues have embarked on an impressive variety of new initiatives in docent training, programming for the Kipper

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Family Archaeology Discovery Center, new docent tours, outreach to the Latino community, public symposia, websites to help provide high school teachers with curricula for teaching about the Middle East, and the first of what we plan to be a full array of Internet-based adult education courses.

Our Museum also saw major changes with the departure of Chief Curator Geoff Emberling, and the arrival of our new Chief Curator, Jack Green, who comes to us from the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford University. It is a tribute to the abilities of the talented people on the Museum staff that this transition went so smoothly. During the 2010–2011 academic year, the Museum mounted two highly successful special exhibits. *Visible Language*, guest curated by Christopher Woods, told the fascinating story of the multiple inventions of writing in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Maya world, and China, while exhibiting — for the first time in the United States — the world’s earliest-known examples of writing from the fourth-millennium BC Mesopotamian city of Uruk. Our second special exhibit, *Before the Pyramids*, curated by Emily Teeter, gave a unique view of the Pre-Dynastic period, when Egypt first coalesced into a unified, centralized state during the fourth millennium BC.

A final major change in the Oriental Institute over the past year has been the implementation of the first stage of the Integrated Database, or IDB. This long-term project aims to connect all the major archives of objects, images, and data records in the Oriental Institute into a single searchable digital resource. We estimate (perhaps over-optimistically!) that it will take us ten years to complete this project. After an extended search process, John Sanders, Scott Branting, Foy Scalf, and others on the IDB committee ended up selecting KE Software’s Electronic Museum (EMu), an advanced collections-management software system, as the platform for this ambitious database. This year, we finally began the actual creation of the database. The first data archives to become part of the IDB are the Museum’s registry with its hundreds of thousands of objects, and the catalog of the Research Archives. The IDB is a tremendous advance that will transform the way we do research.

During these transformations at the Oriental Institute, our archaeologists have continued their important work of excavations across the Near East, at Edfu (Nadine Moeller), Giza (Mark Lehner), Hamoukar (Clemens Reichel), Kerkenes (Scott Branting), Marj Rabba (Yorke Rowan), Zeidan (Gil Stein), and Zincirli (David Schloen), while Don Whitcomb started a new joint Palestinian-American excavation project at Islamic Jericho-Khirbet al-Mafjar. Our text-based research flourishes as the Demotic Dictionary, under Janet Johnson’s editorship, and the Hittite Dictionary, edited by Harry Hoffner and Theo van den Hout, continue their progress. Concurrently, the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project, directed by Matthew Stolper, moves toward completion of its urgent task of recording the texts and seal impressions in this endangered trove of tablets from the Persian empire.

Taken together, this is an extraordinary set of innovative research projects and programs of public outreach. In these times of major transitions, I am proud that the Oriental Institute remains true to the heart of its mission, while at the same time embracing change and seizing the opportunities and challenges it presents.
