

CHICAGO DEMOTIC DICTIONARY (CDD)

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This year the staff of the Chicago Demotic Dictionary consisted of Janet Johnson, François Gaudard, Jonathan Winnerman, and Kate Lockhart; Brian Muhs and Robert Ritner were consulted regularly. Oriental Institute docent Larry Lissak continued helping us by scanning photographs of various Demotic texts as well as documents from Wilhelm Spiegelberg's papers and notebooks which are in our collection. The original plan of this project, to prepare a supplement to the first published glossary of the stage of the Egyptian language and script known as Demotic (Erichsen's *Demotisches Glossar*, published in 1954), is now almost complete after approximately forty years.

During the past year, Jan and François focused on taking care of the remaining details of the Dictionary. Among other things, they both proofread the letter S (540 pages) as well as the Days (47 pages), Months (61 pages), and Numbers (316 pages) files; the PDF files of these entries were posted online on April 23 and June 16. It is now possible to download for free all the files of the completed Chicago Demotic Dictionary from the Oriental Institute website with two exceptions: "Text Information" and "Abbreviation Authors" with Bibliographical Information, which provide bibliography, text abbreviations, and basic information about every text cited in the Dictionary; they are still being checked by Jonathan and Kate, and we hope to have them ready to post by the end of 2014.

The next step of the project will be the conversion of the Word files and online PDFs into a searchable online database (eCDD). This database will not only reproduce current Dictionary pages, but it will also allow independent queries able to take advantage of all the categories of information included in the CDD (e.g., earliest or latest attestation of a word or group of words, provenience of texts including a word or phrase, provenience of texts displaying an unusual writing of a word or phrase, words falling into specific categories such as magical name or astronomical or astrological terms, citations from specific texts by column and line number or by lexical entry). The searches will be possible in Demotic transliteration or in translation into English or ancient Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic. This search capacity, especially, will enhance the accessibility and utility of the CDD for scholars and others interested in the history and cultures of the ancient world. To achieve this, the CDD staff is working with Sandy Schloen and Miller Prosser, who run OCHRE Data Service (see the *Research Support* report), in order to design the database format and oversee the transfer of both text and image data from the current PDF/Word documents to the database. Students will be hired to carry out the actual data transfer. A preliminary step is the conversion of the existing files and fonts to the Unicode standard, so that they can be easily maintained and integrated into the OCHRE database. This task has proven to be more complicated than first anticipated, however, because of the number of specialized fonts used by the CDD. Not only has the Dictionary used customized versions of standard fonts, but it has also employed separate Demotic, Coptic, Hieroglyphic, Greek, Semitic, and transliteration fonts. In order to expedite the conversion process, Jonathan created Excel spreadsheets for each font that list each character's old input code and its corresponding input according to the Unicode standard. Once this was completed, the OCHRE staff created a program that will convert the

existing Word documents automatically to the new Unicode font. By the beginning of June, the program has been extensively tested, and conversion of the first file, namely, the Y letter file, is already in progress.

We hope that, once completed, this database, designed to be available for free on the web, will encourage even more scholars, students, and other interested parties to investigate for themselves the vast range of cultural and linguistic material that is available through the study of Demotic texts. As those of you who have read the *Oriental Institute Annual Report* over the years know, this material ranges from religious texts through scientific texts and literary texts to documentary material including personal letters, tax receipts, legal and economic documents, graffiti, and inscriptions on statuary and stelae, including, for example, the Rosetta Stone (http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aes/t/the_rosetta_stone.aspx).

We would like to thank all of our colleagues worldwide who regularly have sent us their useful comments and suggestions or have provided us with various references in order to improve the Dictionary. We are grateful to all of them and in particular to Eugene Cruz-Uribe, Mark Depauw, Elisabeth Veena, Frank Jørgensen, Friedhelm Hoffmann, Richard Jasnow, Joachim Friedrich Quack, and Kim Ryholt. We would also like to acknowledge the support and help of several Oriental Institute staff who deserve our thanks, especially Thomas Urban and Leslie Schramer, respectively managing editor and editor of the Oriental Institute Publications Office, as well as Paul Ruffin and John Sanders, our current and recently retired IT support specialists.

At the end of June, François took the opportunity of the completion of the original Dictionary project and our switch from Dictionary creation to conversion to online searchable database to step down from his position as the associate editor of the CDD in order to focus on his own research. He began working on the CDD as a graduate student in 1996. Shortly after he received his PhD in 2005, he was hired as a full-time research associate after an international search. He was formally named associate editor in 2013 after having served effectively in that position for many years. He has literally “carried” the Dictionary for many years, writing and checking entries, researching problematic words, preparing scans and hand copies, and supervising the work of the student employees. François, his wealth of knowledge, his friendliness, his excellence as a member of a team — all of these will be sorely missed. After working with him and relying on him for eighteen years, Jan will miss him deeply, but we all wish him the best as he travels his new road. He will remain affiliated with the Oriental Institute as a co-founder and co-editor of the Mummy Label Database (MLD) (see separate report) and as a research associate.
