CHICAGO DEMOTIC DICTIONARY

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The staff of the Chicago Demotic Dictionary Project, Thomas Dousa, François Gaudard, and I, have continued the time-consuming job of checking and double-checking every entry and every reference included in the Dictionary. We have been ably assisted this year by several volunteers. Anne Nelson, David Berger, and David Frankhauser verified and corrected bibliographic entries for us; David Berger also began the laborious job of "reading" the thousands of cards in the dictionary files to make sure that they are all still in alphabetical order. Alejandro Botta has continued to be our expert on interconnections between Demotic and various Northwest Semitic languages.

As noted in previous *Annual Reports*, discussions with Gene Gragg, then Director of the Oriental Institute, and with Thomas Urban, of the Oriental Institute Publications Office, led us to decide to post completed files on the Internet in order to make them available around the world without waiting for the completion of the rest of the dictionary. There are at present eleven letter-files posted on the web, each containing the full entry for one letter of the Demotic "alphabet." In addition, there is an introduction to the dictionary, explaining its layout and the conventions used in preparing individual entries. Also included are supplementary files providing lists of abbreviations, including bibliographic abbreviations and abbreviations used in referring to individual texts. Last year, we added a file called "Problematic Entries," calling on colleagues around the world to help us resolve problems of reading and meaning.

I am delighted to say that this is beginning to happen. At the beginning of this academic year, the 8th International Congress of Demotists was held in Würzburg. My status report on the dictionary highlighted how much we have accomplished and stressed our need for assistance to resolve the numerous problems which remain. I illustrated this point with several specific examples on which we were currently working. I received some immediate feedback from participants about those particular questions. Even more importantly, we are now regularly receiving comments and suggestions for additions or corrections to the letters (and problems file) which are posted online. Indeed, two of our German colleagues, Friedhelm Hoffmann and Joachim Quack, have been extremely helpful in pointing out typos, noting alternatives, and providing unpublished or recently published references. All additions and corrections are entered into the "master" file kept on the Macintosh computer in the Demotic Dictionary office. Eventually, updated Portable Document Format (PDF) files of letters which have been posted will be prepared and the old files archived electronically (so that they can be accessed on request, to check the original version).

In addition to the eleven letter-files currently online, there are four more files prepared for electronic publishing for which all the problems which had been identified over the years have now been addressed and resolved, if possible; all the scans and hand copies have been prepared; all the cross-references have been entered; and the final proofread has been completed. The "Problematic Entries" file continues to grow and an updated version of that file is also ready to be posted. Those five files will be posted beginning this summer, as the Publications Office finds time to do their checks and prepare the online documents. Perhaps a few statistics would be useful. The thirteen files which are online amount to almost 825 pages: the introduction and lists of abbreviations are 65 pages long, the eleven letter-files are almost 700 pages total,[1] and the file containing problematic entries is almost 60 pages long. There have been over 7,000 "hits" on the CDD (Chicago Demotic Dictionary) web-page during the last year and over 1,500 people have

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downloaded the "prologue" (introduction and abbreviations) during that time. The nine letter-files which have been up for over a year have been downloaded an average of 700 times during the current academic year (and, on average, about 1,700 times overall). The two letter-files posted in the fall of 2002 have been downloaded 1,500 and 850 times, respectively. But what is very heartening for us is that the "Problematic Entries" file, which was posted last spring, was downloaded over 1,400 times this year (and over 2,100 times in total). That means that a lot of people are thinking about our problems, and there is a good chance some of them will be solved.

The four letter-files which are ready for the Publications Office are larger, on average,[2] and amount to another 475 pages. That means that, once these four letter-files are posted, we will have over 1,150 pages, accounting for over half the letters of the Demotic alphabet, completed and available. For practical reasons, many of the first letters to be finished were the letters with the smallest number of entries, and the letter-files for several of the remaining nine letters will be much bigger than the letter-files completed so far — they range from 150 to 260 pages each as they currently stand and amount to another 1,150 pages overall. And so we will continue to work our way through these nine long letter-files, trying to resolve problems, incorporate all the scans and hand copies, make all the cross-references, and generally proofread one more time.

I have, over the years, talked about different aspects of dictionary making and of the range of vocabulary attested in Demotic. Many of you may find it interesting to know how the Egyptians conceptualized their own language/writing systems. At the end of the Decree of Canopus, one of the so-called "trilingual" decrees set up by the Egyptian priesthood to honor various Ptolemaic rulers, it is stated that various officials are supposed to write the text of the decree on a monument of stone or copper to be posted in the open areas of the first, second, and third class temples of Egypt. It further indicates that the text is to be written in the "writing of the 'house of life,' document-writing, and the writing of the Greeks." The "house of life" was an institution associated with temples, serving as a scriptorium, library, and center for performance of rituals. The writing of the "house of life" was hieroglyphs, the script used in the topmost inscription of the trilingual. In the Rosetta Stone, another of these trilingual decrees in honor of Ptolemaic rulers, the hieroglyphs are called the "script of the divine word." The Demotic section, in the middle of the decree, is here, and elsewhere, referred to as "document-writing." This name reflects the fact that Demotic, when it first came into use, was used exclusively for personal documents (letters, contracts, and so on). Gradually Demotic replaced hieratic (a cursive script derived from hieroglyphs) for administrative documents and then for literary, including religious, texts. Hieroglyphs continued to be used for formal monumental inscriptions. Most classical Greek authors who discussed Egyptian scripts distinguished between a "sacred" script (hieroglyphs and hieratic) and a "popular" (Herodotus's δημοτικά) script. Greek texts written in Egypt usually distinguished two Egyptian scripts, the sacred and the "Egyptian" (as in the above-mentioned Canopus Decree). Clement of Alexandria, writing in the second or third century of our era, distinguished all three Egyptian scripts: ἱερογλυφική "hieroglyphic," ἱερατική "hieratic," and ἐπιστολογραφική "epistolary."

Greek was not, of course, the only non-Egyptian language and script with which Demotic-writing Egyptians came into contact. During the time of the Persian Empire, before 330 B.C. and before Alexander and the Ptolemies, Aramaic was the lingua franca of the Near East. Numerous

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1. And range in size from F, only ten pages long, and Y, only fifteen pages, to ꜣ (*aleph*), 110 pages long, and Ḏ, 100 pages.

2. Although G is only 75 pages long, Q is 100 and ꜥ (*ayin*) and N are 150 each.

documents written in Aramaic have been found in Egypt. Many of these were personal documents written by or for Persian administrators or Aramaic-speaking immigrants or settlers in Egypt, especially the communities of mercenaries settled at various posts throughout Egypt (including the Jewish colony at Elephantine). But some official documents were also written in Aramaic. One such document was a summary of the laws of Egypt, drafted by senior Egyptian "soldiers, priests, and scribes" at the request of the Persian King Darius. Although no copy of this "code" of the laws of Egypt has been preserved, a reference to its composition is found in a short Demotic text (currently in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris) which notes that copies were prepared in the "writing of (As)syria" (i.e., Aramaic) and in "document writing" (i.e., Demotic). One assumes that this compilation was made to enable Persian administrators to run Egypt, but it is important to note that they were to do so according to Egyptian law and custom.

I must end this report on what is, for the Demotic Dictionary, a sad note. Tom Dousa, who has been the mainstay of the Dictionary for many years, has now moved to Indiana to pursue a career in library science. Tom's mastery of the difficult Demotic script, his intensive and extensive bibliographic knowledge, and his meticulous attention to detail have helped make the Dictionary the great resource it has become. He will be greatly missed for his academic contributions and for himself — his warm collegiality, his generosity, and his great sense of humor. We wish him all the best as he moves forward in his new career.

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