CHICAGO DEMOTIC DICTIONARY (CDD)

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During 2019–20, the staff of the Chicago Demotic Dictionary consisted of Jan Johnson, editor, Brian Muhs, associate editor, and Brendan Hainline, Ariel Singer, and Theresa Tiliakos, all senior graduate students in Egyptology working on conversion of files, as well as Thomas Urban (retired managing editor of the OI Publications Office) and Alex Cornacchia, from the OI Publications Office, also working on conversion of files; Charissa Johnson, managing editor of the OI Publications Office, has been generous with her time and knowledge, as well. We especially want to thank Tom Urban for coming back after retirement to help us finish this project, for which he has contributed so much time, effort, and logistical know-how over the many years it has been in progress. And a word of congratulations both to Tom, for his second retirement at the end of this fiscal year, and to Brendan for his successful defense of his PhD dissertation (he will graduate at the end of the summer).

The labor-intensive transfer of files from Microsoft Word, which no longer can display the thousands of scanned images correctly, to Adobe InDesign, which can, was the major focus of the CDD staff this year. All images (well over forty-five thousand) in the Microsoft Word documents were saved as individual images and are now being re-incorporated into the newly designed InDesign files. The final product will have a cleaner layout, avoiding large, empty spaces required by Microsoft Word's formatting system. But the transfer of all data means that once the new documents have been successfully re-created as InDesign files, they must be proofread (yet again!) for any errors that crept in during the transfer. This review/checking has begun (for the letters M and N), and we are pleased that there are, so far, rather minimal numbers of errors to correct, most of which would not harm the content (only the display) if left uncorrected.

Last year, in May 2019, there were forty-two files, of which twenty (48%) had been converted to InDesign, eight (19%) were in progress, and fourteen (33%) had not been started. This year, in June 2020, twenty-seven (64%) of those forty-two files have been converted, nine (22%) are in progress, and only six (14%) have not been started. The twenty-seven converted files have been reduced to seventeen, however, as multiple files belonging to the same letters have been merged. The seven new converted files are Ayin (one file), the first half of W (one file), the first half of third H3 (one file), S (three files), and the second half of SH (one file). It is worth noting that the size of a file, and the work involved to convert it, may vary drastically (from one hundred to three hundred pages among those we worked on this year). This leaves us with relatively minor formatting issues in several files, as well as converting the remaining portions of nine files to InDesign together with the six files that still have not yet been started (L, H, H4, days of the month, months and numbers, three relatively small letter files and three larger files that give samples of spellings of days of the month, months of the year, and numbers in general). Since the format of these last three files is quite simplified (although the average number of scans per page increases from ten to fifteen), we hope the conversions will go much faster.

As noted in previous annual reports, when all the conversions are done and proofread, the files will be put online, replacing the old Microsoft Word files, and will form the basis, along with the PDFs of the introduction, explanation of dictionary organization (what we've called the "Prologue"), bibliography and abbreviations used, and text information (current location, date, place of origin, and publication data for all documents cited in the dictionary), for the print version of the Dictionary.

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