

## THE HITTITE DICTIONARY PROJECT

HARRY A. HOFFNER, JR.

In the offices of the Hittite Dictionary these days we are watching our P's and Q's, well, at least our P's, since Hittite does not have a letter Q. That is right—the manuscript for our P volume is in the reference-checking stage. This is a somewhat tedious, but for a reference work absolutely indispensable, stage of the work. We have essentially finished the creative part, the composition of the articles. Now it remains to ferret out the typographical errors and the inconsistencies of style and organization, so that our users may use the fruits of our creative labors without the distractions and the wasted time of "dead-end" cross-references, incorrect text references, and contradictory dates assigned to the same composition. You would think that in the age of computers there would be automated shortcuts to all this painstaking checking. Do not think we have not looked for them—with zeal! In fact, there are a few ways in which we now use the computer to ensure a consistent presentation of the data, but there are still many areas where it takes the alert eyes and mind of a trained Hittitologist to see that something is just not right! So you might express your sympathies to Rich Beal and Billie Collins when you see them in the halls. They are bearing the brunt of the thankless labors. "How much longer until the P volume is completed?" We estimate until well into the summer of 1993.

"But what about newer articles?" you ask. "Has the project just ground to a halt, while this checking is going on?" Production of first drafts for future volumes in fact has been suspended for the time being, but Professors

Hoffner and Güterbock are continuing to revise, augment, and improve the articles on the S words. "What sort of words will I find in the S volume?" Well, there are all sorts of emotional words—loads of them just bubbling over with anger and rage (*sa-*, *sant-*, *sawar*). A Rip van Winkle-type god named Telipinu was rudely awakened by the sting of a bee and complained: "Why did you wake me, when I was sleeping so soundly? Why are you making me talk, when I enjoy pouting (*sant-*)?" Ever feel like that when the alarm goes off? There are clever and bright words like *sakk-*, "to know." Lovely put-downs like "You are just like a woman: you do not know (*sakk-*) anything at all!" (I am sure you did not expect such a remark from the Hittites, now did you?) There are up-tight words like *saklai-*, "law, custom, rule." Here too are some marvelous insults: "In Hatti we have an important law: No man shall sleep with his sister or female cousin. But your land is barbaric: there men sleep with their sisters and cousins!" Have I already sold you on this volume? Better get your order into the Publications Office!

"Any new texts being discovered?" Sure. In fact, we are busy adding new occurrences of many words to the first drafts of articles written only three years ago. The newest texts are the letters found at Masat Höyük, now published in a definitive, two-volume edition by Sedat Alp in 1992, and the Hurrian-Hittite bilingual from Boghazköy. The cuneiform copies of the latter were published during the past year, but the edition by Erich Neu has still not appeared. We are able to use the Hittite version from the published hand copies, but the Hurrian version will remain elusive to most of us until Neu's edition appears. It is a fascinating text, full of unexpected things, including some remarkable parallels to social and religious institutions previously known principally from the Hebrew Bible.

On July 1, 1993, we will begin the second year of our current three-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Money is still tight, but we are grateful that this time around the National Endowment for the Humanities gave the project a three-year grant, instead of the usual two-year grant. This means less unproductive time making renewal applications. Our staff remains what it was before the current grant. Professor Güterbock's eyesight continues to deteriorate, but thanks to his own determination not to quit and the willingness of staff to read material to him for comments, we are able to benefit from his astute and extremely valuable contributions. Did you know that he and Frances now have a Macintosh computer? This enables him to work at home writing articles for *Festschriften* of much younger people! Thankfully, we still have the valuable services of Dr. Rich Beal, whose dissertation (a fundamental study of the organization of the Hittite military) has now been published in Germany in a clothbound volume which will cost you all your Microsoft stock to buy. I was lucky: as the first reader I received

a free copy from the author. Do not wait for it to be discounted at Crown Books. Dr. Billie Collins is editing her dissertation on wild animals in Hittite texts for publication. It should be a great contribution to the field. We are happy to have her with us on the project for another term. Joseph Baruffi, who is in the "all but dissertation" stage of his graduate work, continues to keep our files up to date and to key textual material into the project's computer. Volunteer Irv Diamond keeps our computers supplied with data he has scanned in on our flatbed scanner. He also calms down Dr. Hoffner when the latter is tempted by computer system crashes to rip out the remaining few hairs on his head.

"When are you guys going to be finished with this project?" What an impudent question! We have already done the L, M, and N volumes, and P will go to press in 1993. I do not think we will make it through S (I warned you there was not a Q), T, U, W, Z, A, E, H, I, and K next year. Seriously, it is obvious that a project like ours cannot and should not be rushed through in ten or fifteen years. If it is worth doing at all, it must be done thoroughly and carefully. With the present staff level we will probably need about twenty more years. Since the project is firmly planted in the Oriental Institute, its completion happily does not depend entirely upon the continuance of the present directors. Even in its present incomplete stage its volumes are part of the indispensable tools for Hittitology. The importance and centrality of the project can only become more pronounced as additional volumes of the dictionary appear.

---