

## THE CHICAGO HITTITE DICTIONARY

Theo van den Hout

In January of this year the latest installment of the Chicago Hittite Dictionary (CHD) appeared, the second fascicle of the letter Š. It runs from *šappu-*, an unidentified body part shared by such diverse animals as lizards and goats, to the possessive pronoun *-ši-* “his, her, its.” In between it covers everyday words like “to sip” (the onomatopoeic *šarap-* or *šarip-*, compare English “slurp”) and “shoe,” but also lofty notions like “kingship” or “eminent, outstanding, illustrious.” We are again grateful to the Publications Office of the Oriental Institute for their wonderful support in getting this part of the CHD out and it looks as beautiful as ever.

Meanwhile, our work on finishing Š and on preparing for the letter T did not stop. Senior Editors Harry Hoffner and Theo van den Hout continued establishing the final text for what will be the third and last part of Š and our outside consultants Gary Beckman (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor), Craig Melchert (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), and Gernot Wilhelm (Julius-Maximilians Universität, Würzburg) are reading those pre-final drafts. Research Associates Richard Beal and Oğuz Soysal have long since left Š and are working on first drafts of words starting in *t-*. Soysal has already ventured into the realm of words in the *te-/ti-* range!

One of our tasks is also to keep up with the steady publication of new texts. We aim to write our articles on the basis of all published material, so we need to transliterate and file all new texts that continue to be published. Staff member Kathleen Mineck oversees this effort. Mineck, Soysal, and van den Hout all contribute transliterations and Mineck sees to it that they are made into cards. We were extremely fortunate this year in having undergraduate Anna MacCourt working for us. She did a wonderful job in filing cards and worked away most of the backlog we had.

The electronic dictionary or eCHD made great progress. After they had completed the transition of the letter P from printed to electronic version last year, programmer Sandy Schloen and students Dennis Campbell and Edward Stratford worked very hard over the past year doing the same for the older material L, M, and N. Right now the letters L, N, P, and most of M are up and accessible online through the Oriental Institute Web site. Their efforts were recognized by the Provost’s Program for Academic Technology Innovation that awarded us \$28,000 to further de-

## CHICAGO HITTITE DICTIONARY



**Student Dennis Campbell inscribing a large Hittite tablet with a cuneiform text**

velop and enhance this tool. In order to improve and expand the eCHD we invited Dr. Gerfrid Müller from the Universität in Würzburg in Germany. Both a cuneiform scholar and computer programmer, he is the technical brain behind the Hethitologie Portal Web site run by the Mainzer Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, the most important part of which is a concordance of all Hittite fragments ever found. In it Silvin Košak, who worked for the CHD in the late 1970s and 1980s lists for every single piece the museum or excavation number, its findspot (if known), and other information that is very complementary to what we do in the Dictionary. With Dr. Müller we discussed plans to incorporate that information directly into our eCHD, thus providing the user with additional important information. One of the most important features of the German project is their plan to

post online all photos of fragments and tablets they have. Currently some 5,000 photos are already available. In this way we hope that in the near future by clicking on a reference to the cuneiform edition in the eCHD, the Dictionary user will not only be able to find information on findspots and joins but can also see the tablet itself! This is just the beginning of what will hopefully grow into a close relationship between the two digital projects. While here, Dr. Müller also gave a lecture with a behind-the-scenes look at the Mainz Web site and he talked extensively on the problems and possibilities of three-dimensional viewing of clay tablets.

Speaking of lectures, this was a busy year because of the search for a new Assistant Professor in Hittitology. This gave us the opportunity to listen to excellent lectures by three young scholars from Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands. As a result, we are happy to report that Dr. Petra M. Goedegebuure from the University of Leiden will join the Oriental Institute in the fall of 2006. Petra is a linguist and well familiar with the Dictionary, as she visited in 2002 when she was still working on her dissertation (you can see a photo of her in the 2002/2003 *Annual Report*, p. 42).

In fall 2005 Willemijn Waal, a Dutch Ph.D. student from the University of Leiden, visited us for further work on her dissertation project. She studies tablets and tablet use in Hittite society. In the course of her stay here we organized a little experiment with the invaluable help of Gallery Preparator, but also artist and ceramicist, Erik Lindahl. Willemijn made a large tablet, as we know the Hittites often used of about 14 × 8 inches, about one inch thick at the short ends but rising to some two and a half inches in the middle. Questions were: how long does it stay inscribable, at what point does it reach the leather-hard stage and can it be handled and written on without changing shape; what is the shrinkage; what is the best way to write on it; how to draw paragraph lines; etc. Another question concerned baking the tablet. Erik placed it in his oven but, unfortunately, it exploded — which was also a learning experience! One sometimes wonders how fragments of tablets got so dispersed, but we now know that an explosion of tablets baked in the destructive fire of a building can go a long way.



**Visiting student Willemijn Waal working in the CHD office on her dissertation**

We have been very fortunate in the past year in our fund raising efforts. The Provost's ATI grant was already mentioned above. Besides that and other smaller gifts, we received another very large gift of \$100,000 from the Salus Mundi Foundation and a repeated generous gift from Mr. Howard Hallengren in New York. We are deeply grateful to all those great sponsors and determined to build further on the endowment we are seeking! We always used to say that the CHD needed another forty years to finish. Actually, with the corpus of our electronic dictionary expanding we have come to realize that we are changing from a printed dictionary with an electronic version, to an electronic diction-

ary with a printed version. The combination of our basic commitment to keep our files current with the ongoing stream of newly published Hittite texts and the fact that in the coming academic year the eCHD will have caught up with the printed dictionary, has brought an increased awareness that our task is not finished when a first run of the CHD (A–Z) is finished. With the eCHD we do not have to face the inevitable decision of any dictionary project: whether we will engage in addenda et corrigenda or just stop. While the printed version will indeed stop and slowly become outdated, the eCHD does not have to suffer this fate and we can continuously update it. In this way the CHD will remain the center for Hittite lexicography long after the alphabet has been finished. As it was put recently: “It is in the nature of philology to explore every avenue of human knowledge” (John Garth, *Times Literary Supplement*, June 23, 2006, p. 28). It is in our nature to try to do so for Hittite society and that work will never finish.

---