

CHICAGO ASSYRIAN DICTIONARY (CAD)

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In 2006/2007 we truly entered the final phase of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary Project. In December, two volumes, T and 𐎶, were published. Both volumes are dedicated to the memory of Erica Reiner, who died one year earlier, on December 31, 2005.

The resident staff continued preparing the final volume, U/W, for press. The crucial task of “checking” a volume provides two benefits. First, the accuracy of all entries is secured by confirming the Dictionary citation against the original publication. Second, as the checkers examine texts by genre, often concentrating on their own areas of expertise, the entire volume is viewed through a series of unique cross-sections, quite different from that seen by the draft writer or by the editor who works on one article at a time. For example, in checking all the medical texts, or all the Neo-Assyrian letters, or all the Old Babylonian real estate contracts, the checker often rectifies inconsistencies across the articles or discovers new correlations between texts. Checking was accomplished by Jacob Lauinger and John Nielsen, graduate students in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, along with Robert D. Biggs, Gertrud Farber, and Martha Roth. Jake checked texts from Mari, Alalakh, and Old Babylonian letters and legal texts; John concentrated on historical texts and Neo-Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian letters and administrative texts; Gertrud checked all the lexical and bilingual texts; Bob checked medical texts, omens, and literary texts; and Martha checked Nuzi, Old Assyrian, and peripheral texts. Then Bob, Jake, and Martha combed through the binders of manuscript pages verifying every remaining or problematic citation.

Simultaneously, we received comments, corrections, and additions from our outside consultants: Professors Wilfred G. Lambert (Birmingham, England), Simo Parpola (Helsinki, Finland), and Klaas R. Veenhof (Leiden, The Netherlands). In the past these consultants’ input was primarily at the galley stage. For this final volume, we decided to ask for their input at the manuscript stage, better utilizing the available staff and making the intensive work of incorporating their suggestions at an earlier moment more economical. After making all corrections in the electronic manuscript, including all cross-references, and verifying all headings and discussions, the final manuscript was printed out and prepared for the compositor. We mailed off more than 1,200 marked manuscript pages for typesetting to Eisenbrauns, Inc., by the end of June 2007 and will mail the remaining 1,400 pages by the end of July.

While preparing this final volume for press, we also finished the last stage of space consolidation of the CAD files and materials. At one time, the CAD staff occupied several offices on the

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third floor. In addition to the several faculty members' offices, there has been a room for CAD research associates (320), a room for the CAD books and manuscripts (315 and then 324), a supply closet for CAD back files and stored manuscripts of published volumes (321), and — most notably — the “dictionary room” for the CAD card files and the manuscript editors. This last room (323), the largest in the Oriental Institute, was constructed with the CAD in mind when the Oriental Institute was built in 1931, with a floor specially reinforced to hold the weight of the millions of file cards that form the primary resource for writing the dictionary articles. Over the last twelve years, we consolidated materials and people in order to free up valuable space for other projects. Now, by the end of June 2007, all the CAD files and manuscripts are in the storeroom (321) and a corner of 323. This Herculean task — sorting, discarding, and consolidating more than eighty years of accumulated matter, was accomplished thanks primarily to the labor and organizing skill of Jake Lauinger, assisted by Erin Guinn-Villareal, Joseph Rosner, and Lillian Rosner, and thanks to the good will and facilitation of Steve Camp.

But room 323 is still distinguished in the building as a “dictionary room” — now, however, it is the new home of the Hittite Dictionary project (CHD), headed by Prof. Theo van den Hout. Theo and his CHD team, eagerly anticipating the move to their new and more spacious quarters, were ever graceful and patient. The CHD project and staff are worthy successors to the space and are now welcome neighbors on the third floor.

With the project's end truly in sight, the amazing support team that has helped us get to this point has begun to find new interests and employment. Linda McLarnan, the manuscript editor since 1986 and a valued colleague and friend, accepted a position in the office of the President. Linda is not abandoning us, however; she will continue overseeing the final stages of publication of the last volume. Jake Lauinger finished his Ph.D. dissertation, defended his thesis in June, and accepted an assistant professorship at Roanoke College. John Nielsen decided to devote all his energy to completing his Ph.D. by the end of 2007. And I, after three years half-time in the Provost's office, have accepted the deanship of the Humanities Division beginning July 1st. The responsibilities of that position will keep me occupied while I await the arrival of galleys for the last volume of the CAD.

During the year we were aided by graduate student Katie L. Johnson, whose keen proofreading and inputting skills have been of immense assistance to us, and by college students Elliott Goodman and Erin Guinn-Villareal, who willingly and eagerly have undertaken all manner of tasks. Additionally, volunteer Brittany Piovesan has been working to complete a full bibliography for works cited in the CAD.
