cycle are more or less fragmentary and their arrangement according to the original narratological sequence has thus been a matter of much discussion over the past eighty years. Pardee has established that a small fragment (RS 3.364) of which the place in the Baal stories was uncertain once belonged to the tablet that the majority of scholars have identified as the third of the principal tablets of the six-tablet cycle. What might appear superficially to be a minor join has in fact far-reaching implications because it confirms the placement of the tablet in question before the tablet conventionally identified as the fourth and thus resolves a long-standing controversy on this point. Though the new join does not fill the gap between the third and fourth tablets (the small fragment fits at the beginning of the last column of the text on the larger fragment), the presence in the new composite text of a few rare terms that re-appear near the beginning of the text on the fourth tablet leave no real doubt as to the proper sequencing of these tablets. The full details of this join will appear in an article that has been submitted to a festschrift in honor of one of our former Oriental Institute colleagues.

The study of the Ugaritic texts from Ras Ibn Hani has led to another striking discovery. One of the most interesting texts from that site is a new song to the goddess Astarte (ªAt≤tartu in Ugaritic). A preliminary presentation of the text, RIH 98/02, will appear in the acts of a conference celebrating the 75th anniversary of the discovery of Ugarit (Ugarit at Seventy-Five, to be published by Eisenbrauns). Shortly after completing the copy and preliminary analysis of this tablet, Pardee, while working in the museum in Damascus, happened across a tablet excavated in 1955 at Ras Shamra (RS 19.039) and was struck by the physical similarity between the two tablets, both exhibiting an extreme “cushion” form, very thick in the middle and rounded at the edges and the corners. It was too late in that year’s program to take up the detailed study of RS 19.039, but he returned to it in 2006 and is currently in the process of writing up his report comparing the two tablets. A series of epigraphic and paleographic features leave little doubt that the two tablets, both of which deal with the goddess Astarte, were the work of one and the same scribe — the first clear example of texts from the hand of a single scribe occurring at both sites. This case is decided by an important number of rarely attested characteristics shared by the two tablets; it may be hoped that future paleographic research will make it possible for such identifications to be established on the basis of a greater number of less striking points of similarity.

Following the 2006 excavation season at Hamoukar in September and October, and its press release in January 2007, Clemens D. Reichel was busy with lectures on the new discoveries at Hamoukar. They included presentations at the University of Pittsburgh in December 2006, a symposium “Archaeology of Conflict” held at George Mason University (March 2007), at Brown University (March 2007), a membership lecture at the Oriental Institute, the Illinois Arab-American Medical Association (April 2007), the Mid-America Club, and the South Suburban Archaeological Society (June 2007). In March, he participated in the symposium held on the occasion of Ray Tindel’s retirement, presenting a lecture (“Digging Old Data”) on the work of the Diyala Project. In May he gave a lecture on the history of the Diyala expedition called “Lobster for Dinner, Ransom Money Assured” to the Breasted Society. He also presented two lectures on the topic of divine kingship in Mesopotamia: “King and Cult: Temples to Deified Kings in Mesopotamia” at the annual meeting of the Midwest Chapter of the American Oriental Society in Beaurbonnais, and “The King is Dead — Long Live the King: The Last Days of the Shusin Cult at Eshnunna and Its Aftermath” at
the Oriental Institute’s post-doc conference, “Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond.” Both conferences were held in February, 2007. During 2006/2007, Reichel continued his cooperation with ARCANE (www.uni-tuebingen.de/arcane/) as Regional Coor-
dinator for Central Mesopotamia.

Reichel is overjoyed by having received a $337,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to complete the work on the “Diyala Virtual Archive.” This grant will start in July 2007.