This academic year saw the publication of two articles by Rebecca Hasselbach. “External Plural Markers in Semitic: A New Assessment,” which was published in the festschrift for Gene Gragg (Studies in Semitic and Afroasiatic Linguistics in Honor of Gene B. Gragg. Cynthia L. Miller, editor. SAOC 60), Hasselbach's predecessor in the department, is a detailed study of the attested external plural markers in Semitic and other Afroasiatic language families, such as Egyptian, Cushitic, Chadic, and Berber, and suggests a new Proto-Semitic reconstruction of these morphemes. Furthermore, a review of Florence Malbran-Labat's “Pratique de la grammaire akkadienne: Exercises et corrigés” written by Hasselbach was published in Maarav (13.2: 261–68).

The main research done by Hasselbach this academic year focused on her book project “Case and Grammatical Roles and Relations in Semitic,” for which she investigated previously proposed reconstructions, such as an original ergative alignment as opposed to the accusative alignment found in Classical Semitic languages. The results of this preliminary investigation were presented at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society in Chicago in March 2008. Hasselbach further gave a lecture about early Semitic writing systems at the Humanities Day of the University of Chicago (October 2007), and about her current research, entitled “Semitics and Language Typology,” at the Franke Institute for the Humanities in November 2007. In addition, Hasselbach finished an article about the application of the comparative method in Semitic linguistics that will be published in an encyclopedia for Indo-European linguistics. This article discusses the history of Comparative Semitics and the development of the methodologies used in the field.

Besides her research projects and lectures, Hasselbach co-organized the Annual Meeting of the North American Conference on Afroasiatic Linguistics that was held in Chicago in March 2008. Attended by a great variety of scholars from North America, Europe, and the Middle East who work on Semitic and other Afroasiatic languages from a linguistic perspective, the conference, co-sponsored by NELC and the Oriental Institute, provided many new insights into the work that is currently done in the field of Semitic and Afroasiatic linguistics.

Hasselbach also continued her work as book review editor for the ancient fields for the Journal of Near Eastern Studies throughout the year.

Harry A. Hoffner, Jr.

The big news publication-wise this year is the long-anticipated appearance on July 15, 2007, of the two-volume A Grammar of the Hittite Language, by Harry A. Hoffner, Jr., and H. Craig Melchert, published by Eisenbrauns of Winona Lake, Indiana. It is the first comprehensive grammar of the Hittite language in English since the classic Comparative Grammar of the Hittite Language by Edgar H. Sturtevant and Adelaide Hahn in 1933 (2nd rev. edition, 1951). The first volume comprises an exhaustive grammatical analysis of the Hittite language with copious citations and references to the texts. The second volume is a series of graded lessons for beginners in the study of the language. The timing of its appearance is appropriate since, as announced in the Summer 2008 issue of News & Notes, this year marks what would have been the 100th birthday of Oriental Institute Professor Hans G. Güterbock. For the authors of this two-volume grammar have dedicated it to three giants of Hittitology in whose shadow we all stand: Hans Güterbock, Emmanuel Laroche, and Heinrich Otten. Of the three, only Heinrich Otten is still living.
Congratulations to the Güterbock family on this milestone and many thanks to them for their continuing generous support for the Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute, which Hans and Harry Hoffner founded.

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Janet Johnson

This year Janet Johnson attended two major conferences: the Annual Meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt (held this year in Seattle) and the 25th International Congress of Papyrology (held in Ann Arbor, Michigan); she was one of the regional coordinators for the Papyrology meetings, organizing a side trip from Ann Arbor to Chicago for about thirty participants, enabling them to visit both the Field Museum and the Oriental Institute Museum, where a special exhibit on Greek and Egyptian papyri was set up for them. She also gave lectures on "Women in Ancient Egypt: Legal Equality, Social Differentiation, and Symbols of Sexuality and Fertility" (for the Chicago chapter of the American Research Center in Egypt) and "Cleopatra as CEO: Bureaucracy and Scandal in the Hostile Takeover of a First Century (BCE) Multinational" (for the Illinois Classical Conference). She submitted the manuscript of her article "Gender and Marriage in Ancient Egypt," which will appear in the proceedings of a conference on marriage organized by the theological faculty of the University of Würzburg in 2007. She collaborated with Wendy Ennes and others in the Museum Education Office working on a Web site tentatively entitled Teaching the Middle East aimed at high school students and teachers; Jan's portion of the project discusses "Self-identity in Ancient Egypt." The work on the Web site is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. She was appointed Associate Editor of the Journal of Near Eastern Studies, published by the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations of the University of Chicago, and has learned first-hand the detailed efforts involved in bringing such a journal to press. While serving as the Oriental Institute representative on the Board of Governors of the American Research Center in Egypt, she also served as co-chairman of its Ad Hoc Committee for Governance and Ad Hoc Governance Implementation Committee, working to restructure this growing organization. As usual, much of her time was spent working on the Demotic Dictionary, detailed in a separate report.

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W. Raymond Johnson

This year W. Raymond Johnson completed his thirtieth year working in Egypt, his twenty-ninth full year working for the Epigraphic Survey in Luxor, and his eleventh season as Field Director. This spring he wrote a chapter for the catalog of the exhibition Akhénaton et Néfertiti. Soleil et ombres des pharaons to be shown in Geneva, Switzerland, from October 16th, 2008, to February 1st, 2009, and then in Turin from February 26th to June 14th. He also wrote an article for the Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter with Luxor SCA Director Mansour Boraik entitled "Western Thebes: History, Change, and Challenges." Branching out a bit from his work reuniting pharaonic stone sculpture and relief fragments, he recently identified the back of a marble, second-century a.d. Roman bust of the deified Antinous in the Pallazzo Altemps, Rome, which joins a marble face of Antinous in the Chicago Art Institute.

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