

In the past year, **Robert Ritner's** research has covered a broad spectrum of Egyptian social and religious history, ranging from investigations of Libyan influence during the Third Intermediate and Saite Periods (ca. 946-525 B.C.) to late manifestations of Egyptian magic under the Roman Empire (Third - Fifth centuries). Ritner's public lectures have been correspondingly varied. At the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, he presented an overview of "Curses, Love Charms and Magic in Ancient Egypt."

At Yale, he delivered a lecture on "The Libyan Anarchy in Ancient Egypt Re-evaluated." "Ancient Egyptian Medical Practice" was the subject of his presentation at Rodef Shalom Biblical Botanical Garden in Pittsburg, while a lecture in Berkeley identified "The Last Meshwesh Chieftain." Most recently, Ritner was a co-host for the Fourth International Congress of Demoticists held at The Oriental Institute, and delivered a lecture entitled "Implicit Models of Cross-Cultural Interaction: A Question of Noses, Soap and Prejudice." This "grim catalogue of past speculation" detailed the influence of modern prejudices and false assumptions upon historians of Ptolemaic Egypt, who have been too quick to dismiss late Egyptian culture as moribund, and who have viewed the Greeks in Egypt variously as Nineteenth-Century European imperialists, "quasi-Marxist" totalitarians, or culturally superior practitioners of racial "apartheid."

Articles published or in press include "Egyptian Magical Practice under the Roman Empire: the Demotic Spells and their Religious Context"; "Egyptian Magic: Questions of Legitimacy, Religious Orthodoxy, and Social Deviance"; "O. Gardiner 363: A Spell against Night Terrors"; "The End of the Libyan 'Anarchy' in Egypt: P. Rylands IX, cols. 11-12"; and "Multiple Meaning and Ambiguity in the Demotic Chronicle" (with Janet Johnson), as well as a number of reviews of recent volumes on Egyptian religion and medicine.

Ritner has also completed an analysis of "magical spitting" for his volume on *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, soon to be published by The Oriental Institute.

In March, Ritner led his Oriental Institute tour of Egypt for the third consecutive year, and he is scheduled to repeat the highly successful tour again in March of 1991. In the summer of 1990, Ritner was asked to compose a hieroglyphic text for an Egyptian-style stela commissioned by the Dallas city council. This stela commemorates the Ramses II exhibit in that city, and the text describes the visit of Ramses to the "great foreign land named Texas." A copy of this "latest" hieroglyphic inscription appeared in the summer *Docent Digest*.

In addition to these activities, Ritner continued his role as Senior Lecturer in Egyptology, offering courses on such subjects as Coptic Monasticism, Demotic Papyrology, and Nubian royal inscriptions, and he oversaw production of the final manuscript and text facsimiles in his capacity as Associate Editor of the Demotic Dictionary Project.