

## P H I L O L O G Y

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**Miguel Civil****Materials for the Sumerian  
Lexicon**

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Last year's annual report included the optimistic statement that I hoped at this time to be writing what would be the last progress report on MSL. It appears now that that statement is almost true insofar as editorial activities are concerned. Only the last volume (MSL XVIII) is not completely ready in manuscript form. But there are going to be reports on the progress of the printers for quite some time. The printing of volume XVII (*Alan = nabnitu*) is taking longer than expected, although there are hopes that it will appear before the end of 1980. Antoine Cavigneaux's draft of volume XVI (*Erimhuš* and *Antagal*) has finally been received and has been capably revised by Martha Roth. Volume XVIII ("Group" and miscellaneous vocabularies) needs only some collations of the tablets that Ms. Roth has been able to do this summer in London. For all practical purposes the main MSL project is over, but it will be at least four years before the scholarly community will be able to see the final volume.

There is no end, however, to the pursuit of learning. The reconstruction of the lexical series, like that of cuneiform literature in

general, is a constant process of accretion and crystallization: new texts are discovered each year, old texts are seen in a new light, and many details previously obscure are understood, and thus parts of the earlier MSL volumes become obsolete. To keep these lexical archives up to date—a matter of some importance for the preparation of the Assyrian Dictionary volumes and essential for the forthcoming Sumerian Dictionary being prepared in Philadelphia—we plan to publish a Supplementary Series to MSL, already announced in the last annual report. The first fascicle of the series has been delayed because of discoveries made by Irving L. Finkel, who was until last year research associate on the MSL project in the Oriental Institute and is now Assistant Keeper at the British Museum; these include an impressive number of ancient commentaries to the Series Aa = *nâqu* of such philological interest that their publication should not be deferred.

For several months we had working with us Douglas A. Kennedy, from the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris; and, as a result, a complete corpus of all lexical texts found in Ugarit (Ras Shamra) is now ready for publication. Martha T. Roth, who obtained her Ph.D. in 1979 from the University of Pennsylvania, has replaced Irving L. Finkel on the project; and it is thanks to her hard work and enthusiasm that we have been able to make such good progress.

We have been approached by the Computer Center of the University of Minnesota to work on the production of a complete index to all MSL volumes. The results so far are encouraging and should help users enormously.