

Miguel Civil

Miguel Civil has been working mainly on lexical projects, updating the Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon with the new tablets appearing every year, and writing monographic studies about interesting, little known, or difficult words. For instance, he has shown that *dīm-sáh*, a word customarily translated “bear,” is in fact a loan from Semitic *timsāh* “crocodile,” also found in Egyptian as *(t)-msh*; in Mesopotamia, however, the word ended up meaning “hippopotamus,” by confusion of the names of two exotic aquatic animals. These lexical studies may lead at times to unexpected conclusions, and thus the name of the capital of Anshan, read usually Adamdun, turns out now to be better read Adamshah, as a result of a study on the names for “bear.” A collection of such lexical notes, intended as an international,

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informal forum for the discussion of Sumerian lexicography, has been posted on the Internet under the title Sumerian Lexical Archive (SLA):

<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/PROJ/SUM/SLA/SLA1.html>

He has continued the preparation and study of text editions of Sumerian literary texts, some for the old Sumerian Hypertext Project, others for planned forthcoming volumes. Some neglected aspects of Sumerian grammar, especially modal and voice affixes, have also been systematically studied with surprisingly good results. Minor articles, independently published or in press, deal with a new Lipit-eshtar cone, dedicated to Nanaia, “beloved daughter of Inanna,” venerated in the E-Tilmun temple in Ur; with a short laudatory text about King Ur-Namma (2112–2095 BC), written on a contemporary tablet; and with a tiny fragment from Emar (ca. eighteenth century BC) with an unexpected syllabic duplicate of an Old Babylonian letter of King Sin-iddinam (1849–1843 BC). As a result of a course on the Sumerian Gilgamesh epic, he is publishing a series of remarks and comments under the title “Reading Gilgamesh” In a panel session on food in the Near East, during the AOS Annual Meeting in Miami, Civil was invited to present the Mesopotamian material. He has had accepted for publication eight articles, most of them announced in previous *Annual Reports*, since 1994. He has seen some proofs, but nothing has come to light. He expects to be able to announce at last the publication of some of them in next year’s *Annual Report*.
