

fourth millennium BC provides a fascinating starting point. Normally interpreted as a depiction of the head of the city's administration, he disappears from the visual record in the early third millennium BC. Marchetti suggests that the priest-king is actually a deity who leaves no trace in later royal iconography. What is missing from this discussion is the nuanced reading of the priest-king imagery by Zainab Bahrani ("Performativity and the image: narrative, representation and the Uruk vase", in E. Ehrenberg (ed.), *Leaving No Stones Unturned: Essays on the Ancient Near East and Egypt in Honor of Donald P. Hansen*. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2002, 15–22).

Drawing on a careful study of the iconography and themes of Early Dynastic art as set within their proposed chronology, the authors conclude that in the early centuries of the third millennium BC the ruler is invisible. This is because, it is argued, he is part of the state's administrative structure which is represented visually by scenes of banqueting – a ritualized and public event. During the ED IIIa period, however, a language is being formulated to celebrate and represent kingship as the central institution of society, including scenes of battle. By ED IIIb this language is firmly established and would lead ultimately to the royal artistic masterpieces of the Akkadian Empire (about 2300–2150 BC).

The statues of the Mesopotamian elite were dedicated in temples, and the characteristics of Early Dynastic sanctuaries as well as their names are reviewed in the first of three appendixes. The second appendix explores the evidence for royal statues in administrative texts (these all come from Lagash). Appendix C explains the methodology adopted by the authors in the transliteration of inscriptions and proper names; the non-conventional transcriptions of proper names introduced in the work are initially jarring, for example, Sarrumken rather than the more familiar Sargon; Enmetennak rather than Enmetena. The plates at the end of the book are designed well with clear black-and-white photographs.

In conclusion, this book is an important, engaging and multifaceted account that is sure to provoke discussion and debate. It deserves to become a classic interpretation of the archaeology and royal iconography of third millennium BC Mesopotamia and should be the first port of call for anybody interested in a detailed understanding of the period. Marchesi and Marchetti deserve our congratulations and thanks.

**Paul Collins**  
Ashmolean Museum

NATHAN WASSERMAN:

*Most Probably: Epistemic Modality in Old Babylonian.*

(Languages of the Ancient Near East.) xiv, 245 pp. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2012. \$49.50. ISBN 978 1 57506 198 6.  
doi:10.1017/S0041977X12000626

Epistemic modality, – simply put, a certain marked relation of the speaker to the certainty of his words – has never been the subject of systematic research in Assyriology. Better studied is deontic modality, which deals with volition and obligation, expressed in Akkadian mostly by means of verbal mood (cf., for instance, E. Cohen, *The Modal System of Old Babylonian*, Winona Lake, 2005). The book under review, a result of Wasserman's fifteen-year study of the subject, aims to reveal the available part of the epistemic modality kit of Old Babylonian Akkadian in its variety. Linguistic studies of dead languages are inevitably limited to material from

written sources. It is important to remember though, that the Old Babylonian texts are a reflection of the actual synchronic spoken language.

The corpus of Old Babylonian Akkadian is large enough to provide sufficient evidence on the apparatus of lexical epistemic modality, which could apply to both direct and indirect communication. The research is based mainly on the Old Babylonian epistolary corpus (1900–1500 BC), which obviously supplies most of the material for epistemic modality, though many of the literary texts are examined too. The geography of the texts covers all the main archives from Ur in the South to Mari in the North.

Epistemic modality in Akkadian is governed by grammaticalized modal particles with various origins. The study consists of analyses of the ten main particles, namely *pīqat*, *midde*, *wuddi*, *anna*, *lū ittum*, *tuša*, *-man*, *kīša*, *assurrē* and *-mi*. Each chapter on a separate modal particle (*wuddi* and *anna* are treated together because they are similar in nature) forms a separate essay – nine in total. Every essay, apart from the main discussion of semantics and syntax, consists of a review of previous research, orthography, an etymological discussion, a naming of all the attestations and statistical data. The author collected *c.* 660 attestations of modal particles, but for obvious reasons only a few of the contexts are quoted (the complete list of attestations of each particle is given at the end of the relevant chapter). It is important to mention that the bulk of the quoted passages were collated and show essential corrections. Some rare modal particles, which were not considered worthy of a separate section (*ra'i*, *rabtat*, *šurrunna*, *surramma*, *ūKa*, *minus*, *ali*, *-mē*, *-me*, *-māme* and *-māku*) are very briefly examined in the final, tenth, chapter.

Though many of the modal particles examined here have been the subject of previous discussion, the approach to Old Babylonian epistemic modality as an integral system is new and most valuable. The system, as summarized in the outline on pp. 215–7, includes particular instruments for expressing possibility vs. probability vs. certainty, refutation vs. affirmation, improbability vs. reality, and subjectification vs. perspectivization. In the vein of studies on Akkadian grammar, it is important to highlight among the author's conclusions (pp. 208–15) the correlation between the usage of specific modal particles, the verbal tenses and the negation particle in the sentence, as well as the tendency of most modal particles to follow a topicalizing phrase. It is remarkable that the distinctions between the Old Babylonian subdialects seem to be slight, while usage of particles (such as *-mi*) in the epistolary genre and the literary texts shows much greater diversity. The author's conclusion about the existence of two mechanisms for creating modal particles in Old Babylonian Akkadian: welding smaller elements to a particle and adapting existing verbal forms (p. 143) is noteworthy. This principle, however, does not cover the enclitic particles, whose etymological origin remains obscure.

The author's deep linguistic approach reveals itself in the theoretical excursions, where he explains the function of the Old Babylonian system of epistemic modality and its particular elements through generalized theory. The typological parallels from various modern languages, including English, French, German, Arabic, Hebrew, Russian and Hindi, are noteworthy.

The book includes a bibliography, a list of the cited texts with modal particles, and three indexes – of topics discussed (including personal names), Akkadian and Sumerian lexemes, and texts – which make its use very convenient. It is necessary to note a slight confusion in the Contents (p. xi, the titles of the indexes), as well as some minor lapses in transliteration (like that with the determinative in the example from ARM 28, 145 on p. 183).

Last but not least, one cannot avoid mentioning the wonderfully lively style of the book, which is (almost paradoxically) very simple, scientific and yet at the

same time almost literary. Wasserman's monograph is highly recommended to all who are interested in Akkadian and Semitic linguistics, as well as those interested in studies of modality in general.

**Ilya Khait**  
Universität Leipzig

T. MURAOKA:

*A Grammar of Qumran Aramaic.*

(Ancient Near Eastern Studies, Supplement 38.) xiv, 285 pp. Leuven:

Peeters, 2011. €70. ISBN 978 90 429 2559 5.

doi:10.1017/S0041977X12000638

The Dead Sea Scrolls are the most important source for the history of the Aramaic language between the fall of the Persian Empire and the rise of the golden age of Aramaic religious literature in Late Antiquity. This has not been overlooked by researchers in the field, and since their initial discovery the Aramaic scrolls have attracted the attention of some of the greatest scholars in the field. The fragmentary nature of much of the material has naturally led to more attention being paid to the better preserved scrolls, though the broken scrolls too can provide valuable information.

In this volume, Muraoka provides the most comprehensive account yet of the Aramaic of the Qumran scrolls and beyond, while graciously acknowledging, supplementing and correcting the work of his predecessors. His analysis throughout reflects his wide knowledge of Aramaic and, in particular, his expertise in the Aramaic language of the Persian period and Classical Syriac, as evident from the large number of comparative notes that accompany the relevant discussions. Within the limited scope of this review it is impossible to do justice to this rich work, and the comments here will relate to selected issues only.

Since much of the Qumran corpus is fragmentary, there is a natural desire to expand the scope of the corpus to include related material. Muraoka has included two significant corpora that are cited frequently within the work. The first is the Aramaic Levi Document (ALD) from the Cairo Geniza. As has already been demonstrated by Greenfield and Stone, this medieval copy shows secondary influences of other Aramaic dialects – Biblical Aramaic, Targum Onkelos/Jonathan (TOJ) and Palestinian Aramaic (PA) – we must treat it with care as a linguistic source for the Aramaic of the Second Temple Period. For example, *מהנעל* ALD-G 13:3 is cited on p. 10 as an example of determination by means of /n/, but the parallel text found at Qumran, 4Q213 1i8, reads *מעל*. On p. 30, *שאר* “he began” (ALD-G 5:8) is hesitatingly cited as “an unusual case of compensatory lengthening”, but it might simply be the influence of the common JBA *שאר* “it is permissible” on this late document.

Aramaic documents from other sites in the Judean desert are also included in the book. It should be borne in mind that these do not date from the same period of Aramaic as the Qumran documents, and differ in orthography, morphology and syntax. This difference in corpus is sometimes explicitly noted in the grammar, e.g. in the discussion of pronouns, where it is clearly marked that *את* “you (m.s.)” is from NH57.3, a document from 132–35 CE. Often, however, data from these various sources are cited together without sufficient attention to the linguistic level under discussion.

For example, Muraoka writes (p. 26) “An etymologically short *i* is also occasionally spelled *plene*”. The examples cited in this section are predominantly from the late texts, including the Geniza copy of the Aramaic Levi document. Examples