

Rebecca Hasselbach

This academic year saw the publication of several articles by **Rebecca Hasselbach**: “Interpreting Early Akkadian Orthography — A Note on Pronominal Suffixes in Sargonic Akkadian” in the *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*; “The Ventive / Energic in Semitic — A Morphological Study” in the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*; and “The Affiliation of Sargonic Akkadian to Babylonian and Assyrian — New Insights Concerning the Subgrouping of Akkadian” in the *Journal of Semitic Studies*. She also wrote several book reviews on books dealing with Akkadian grammar and Comparative Semitics in general. In addition to these publications, Hasselbach started to work on a new research project — a detailed study of Semitic case and grammatical relations — that will be the subject of her next book. This project will make use of typological studies — studies that establish cross-linguistic tendencies on the basis of large samples of the world’s languages — regarding case marking, grammatical relations, head and dependent marking, and word order, and compare these to Semitic languages in order to determine whether Semitic languages conform to typological tendencies, and whether it is possible to use typological studies to reconstruct the earliest stages of the Semitic nominal system and case inflection, which until today remain a matter of dispute.

First results of Hasselbach’s ongoing investigation of the Semitic case system have been presented in March at the *Colloque Cas* in Paris, where she gave a talk about the development of case marking in Phoenician, concluding that the process underlying the loss of case inflection in this language can be explained by functional and typological tendencies. This study will be published in the conference proceedings. A similar discussion of the Akkadian case system will be presented at the *Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* in July, which shows that Akkadian underwent the same basic processes in the loss of case inflection as Phoenician. The results of these two preliminary investigations strengthen the assumption that language typologies can complement internal Semitic evidence.

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH

In April, Hasselbach took over as Book Review editor for the Ancient Near East for the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* from Robert Biggs, who retired as editor of the journal.

In addition to these projects, Hasselbach was involved in a grant proposal submitted to and approved by the Joint Theory Institute entitled “Simulating Language Evolution in a Dynamic Social and Environmental Metamodel.” This project, which is a joint project between the Department of Linguistics and the Oriental Institute, attempts to integrate language data in a previously created computer simulation of ancient Mesopotamia that works with economic and environmental factors, in order to trace language change. Hasselbach will be responsible for providing the language data for the project.
