

IPTANARRAS Can Render the “Basic” Present (Akkadian Sentences about the Present Time. III/1)*

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For Bert Kouwenberg

In this note, I am trying to show that the present-time sense of the G-stem verbs can be rendered by one of the three exponents: IPARRAS, PARIS, or IPTANARRAS, depending on the verb's lexical meaning. The corpus of my study in progress consists of both OB and OA.

I will now put forward a preliminary observation that is important in order to understand what follows.

We do not know for sure which verb forms were used in spoken OB and OA to say “He is now crossing the river,” or “He is now felling a tree,” because the epistolary sources did not preserve enough instances of clear-cut telic events in progress that are contemporaneous with the speech time or another temporal reference point. This is partly due to the nature of the sources: for communication via letters, “quick” actions are irrelevant; and partly because Akkadian does not have a FUTURE conjugation neatly opposed to a PRESENT conjugation (unlike e. g. *te lo digo* vs. *te lo diré* or *te lo voy a decir* in Spanish: Spanish has two unambiguous futures, while Akkadian has none). Consequently, nearly all the examples of present-time sentences available to us in the Akkadian corpus are of a more or less semantically “**stative**” nature: there is no change, no action under way just when the writer is penning his sentence about the present time.

* In this note, SMALL CAPS stand for universal semantic notions (e. g., PRESENT). Terms for language specific morphological paradigms are written with first capitals: the (German or Akkadian) Preterit, the (English) Present Progressive, etc. The morphological shapes of Akkadian finite verb forms are written in ALL CAPS: IPARRAS, PARIS, IPTANARRAS, etc. The SC = the Suffixing Conjugation. This is my label for the Akkadian Stative. I do not use the latter term because the word “stative” often appears here as a semantic notion.

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At this early stage of research into the meaning of *tan*-stems,¹ I tentatively propose that a given G-verb usually (but not always) has only one exponent for the present-time sense (IPARRAS, PARIS, or IPTANARRAS), unlike e. g. in English: “He **is building** a house these days” vs. “Each time he gets divorced he **builds** a house.” Thus IPTANARRAS is arguably the only morphological hardware to render the present-time sense for certain verbal notions. This suggestion will help explain the high frequency of Gtn. In the whole of Akkadian corpus, the ratio of G-stem to Gtn-stem is almost 4:1, 1316 G-verbs vs. 312 Gtn-verbs in AHw., as reported in Kouwenberg 2010:246. (Kouwenberg observes that the Present IPTANARRAS is the most frequent among the morphological shapes of Gtn.)² Building on the time-honoured tradition, Kouwenberg defines the function of *tan*-stems as “verbal plurality,” or “pluractional” sense, most often materialized as habitual and iterative readings (Kouwenberg 2010, §§ 10 and 14). After I came to the idea that IPTANARRAS can render the G-stem PRESENT, I suspected that the traditional interpretation is vulnerable from the statistical point of view: a fine-tuned aspectual nuance like verbal plurality should not require so much derivational effort from Akkadian, *because the G Present IPARRAS itself can have the very same force* (i. e., habitual/iterative) in the non-future domain.³

¹ In this preliminary report, I speak about the Gtn-stem only, simply because this is the natural starting point. Kouwenberg 2010:416 observes that “the Gtn-stem ... is by far the most frequent *tan*-stem, but the other *tan*-stems have the same function vis-à-vis the corresponding primary stem.”

² He states that this is also true of other *tan*-stems: “A noteworthy feature of the *tan*-stems is that the imperfective (= the Present.—S. L.) is far more frequent than we would expect on the basis of the normal frequency rates among the tenses. <...> [T]he great majority of *tan* forms are imperfective forms” (Kouwenberg 2010:417). For Kouwenberg, the reason is a semantic one: the Preterit “has a strong association with one-off, real, and completed events in the past, which poorly matches the pluractional function of the *tan*-stems and causes a tendency to switch to **the imperfective, which, after all, can be used in past contexts to underline the non-completed or repetitive nature of the event**” (ibid., boldface added).

³ See also the previous footnote on “imperfective ... used in past contexts.” The iterative-frequentative derivational rules do exist in certain well-understood languages, such as Russian (*ходить—хаживал*) and Latin (*traho—tracto; dico—dicto*). These rules are/used to be productive for some semantically defined parts of the verb lexicon. An immediate comparison of these word-formation patterns in Russian and Latin with the Akkadian *tan*-stems is hardly viable. The inflectional and derivational morphologies of the three languages are very different as far as the semantic side goes. In particular, both Russian and Latin (unlike Akkadian) do

This is not to deny that Gtn *can express* “verbal plurality,” along with other *tan*-stems. Yet my current task is to suggest that the picture may be more complex than we are accustomed to believe.

Now, I will briefly put down three kinds of observations that prompted me to forward this claim.

1. For certain G-verbs, IPARRAS usually has future reference, while IPTANARRAS has the present-time meaning. An example is *šakānum* in the meaning ‘to store.’ The following OA text will demonstrate my point:

miššu ša ina bē[tīya] tibnam u eššī taštanakkun-u bētāti-kumu lā tadaggalā

‘Why is it that you (ms) **store** straw and wood in my house? Don’t you (pl) **own** houses of yourselves?’ (BIN 6, 119:17ff.).

To avoid misunderstanding, I can paraphrase: ‘Why is it that you keep straw and wood **stored** in my house?’ I believe that a sentence *miššu ša ina bētīya tibnam tašakkun-u* would hardly render this idea. The verb is extremely frequent in the corpus, and all the G-stem Present forms I have checked have the future value. Thus, *miššu ša ina bētīya tibnam tašakkun-u* would probably mean ‘Why **are you going** to store?’

From the above reasoning it follows that the morphological contrast of *taštanakkan* (Gtn) and *tadaggalā* (G) ‘you own’ in BIN 6, 119:17ff. corresponds to the fact the two verbs belong to different semantic (= *Aktionsart*) classes, i. e. *šakānum* in the meaning ‘to store’ is probably considered by OA as more dynamic than *dagālum* in the meaning ‘to own,’ though at this stage of research I cannot pinpoint the culprit parameter of lexical meaning. This would mean that **for certain semantic classes of verbs** IPTANARRAS was perceived by the language as more expressive (and therefore appropriate) exponent of the present-time sense (within the G-stem paradigm) than IPARRAS or PARIS.

In a preliminary way, I suggest the following hypothesis. If there is a likelihood that a present-time situation encoded by IPTANARRAS is not thought of as **cyclic** (i. e., regularly repeated = “immer wieder” of AHW. or “iterative” of CAD) but rather **durative** (denoting a continuing action), then there is a chance that this IPTANARRAS token, semantically, is part of the G-stem paradigm. This likelihood increases if IPARRAS of this root always refers to the future, while its IPTANARRAS is not attested with future-time readings and other Gtn forms of this root are appreciably

not use their basic-stem Present (Kouwenberg’s “imperfective”) in the past-time domain with the iterative force.

rarer than IPTANARRAS (especially, if IPTANARRAS is frequent while the Precative and Imperative are rare or not attested).⁴

The principal reason of this shift may have been the desire to renew (and to make more semantically sensitive) the morphological expression of the present-time meaning. Concomitantly, the language came across a way to oppose FUTURE to PRESENT for a part of the verb lexicon (*išakkan* vs. *ištanakkan*). As Ilya Arkhipov tells me, the assumed inclusion of the Present of the *tan*-stems into the paradigms of their respective motivating stems has a partial parallel in the history of Akkadian: consider the *t*-Perfect IPTARAS which is formally identical to the Preterit of the Gt-stem, etc. The differences are of course also obvious. In particular, the *t*-Perfect is a brand-new “tense,” probably an East-Semitic innovation vis-à-vis the Proto-Semitic, and it is supposed to be formed freely for all verbs of G-, D-, and Š-stems, with no serious semantic limitations.⁵ As for the G-stem IPTANARRAS of certain roots, as a present-tense form it is grammatically synonymous to both IPARRAS and PARIS of some other roots, and it is lexically restricted. Yet if we think through this striking parallel, it will probably shed new light on the historical ways of the Akkadian verb. Note that both IPTARAS and, admittedly, IPTANARRAS became elements of the G-stem paradigm due to semantic developments (one is almost tempted to say, “semantic decisions”) rather than as a result of phonological processes or other diachronic shifts that are blind to the meanings of morphological shapes.

Now consider an example from an OB diagnostic text:

šumma maršum ... libbašu iš-ta-na-ḫi-iṭ-ma qātam i-sà-ki-ip maršu šū ul iballuṭ

‘If ... a patient’s heart **is fluttering** and he **is thrusting aside** his hand, this patient will not get well’ (TLB 2, 21:11ff.; cf. Heeßel 2000:97f.).

⁴ Clearly, this hypothesis can be applied only to frequent roots with well-attested Gtn.

⁵ Kouwenberg 2010:141, fn. 8 notes that “the *t*-perfect is not, like the stative, restricted to telic verbs: prototypically atelic verbs, such as *to dance* and *to walk around*, are also used in the *t*-perfect.” There are of course a few well-known exceptions in the basic verb lexicon (Goetze 1936:317). It would be worth-while to compile a list of basic roots denoting properties (‘to be good/bad,’ ‘to be wide’), as well as a list of common stative and atelic dynamic roots, and then to look at their *t*-Perfect.

Let us assume that the above English glosses (found in CAD) are appropriate in terms of lexical semantics. The situations of “fluttering” and “thrusting aside” are simultaneous to the moment of observation. Most probably, none of them was thought of as conspicuously cyclic, “immer wieder.”⁶ My only point here is that this co-occurrence of IPARRAS and IPTANARRAS in TLB 2, 21:12 (as in so many other texts) is something that needs explanation, while most of the time we manage to overlook the problem by maintaining conventional Assyriological translations, something like ‘*keeps* fluttering’ (CAD Š₁ 92a) vs. ‘*is* thrusting aside.’⁷

Now, the *sakāpu* A of CAD (S 70–74)⁸ does not have *tan*-stems at all. According to CAD, it has G, Gt, D, Dt, and N-stems (AHw. 1011 does not mention Gt), all of the derived stems are only marginally attested in OB and in the whole of our Akkadian records.⁹ To my knowledge, the root is not attested in Assyrian.¹⁰ Kouwenberg 2010:252 thinks that *all* G-verbs “can have a pluractional Gtn-stem, although it is attested only for a minority of them.” If this suggestion is generally speaking correct, it would be worthwhile to explain why a given root that is frequent in the G-stem has no Gtn (or D as another possible pluralic derivate for transitive roots, see presently).¹¹

The data about *šahātu* A (CAD Š₁ 88–92) are quite different. Its basic meaning is probably ‘to jump.’ It is almost unknown in the OA corpus, but well-represented in OB. In OB corpus, the distribution of *išahhūt* (future) and *ištanahhūt* (non-future) roughly agrees with my zero approximation prediction. Consider the examples:

⁶ Both the patient’s heart beating and something like the tremor of his hand cannot be either cyclic or otherwise.

⁷ They are “conventional” because if we say ‘*is* fluttering’ vs. ‘*keeps* thrusting aside,’ nothing will really change from the point of view of English.

⁸ Its basic meaning is something like ‘to push.’ All the G-stem meanings are transitive.

⁹ E. g., the D-stem has only one reliable (and semantically transparent) token ‘to refuse, to reject’ (AbB 1, 29:22) out of the three possible ones (CAD S 73f.).

¹⁰ In this note, much of my data on the OA verb depend on Kouwenberg’s unpublished “List of OA Verbs” (see also Loesov 2011:75–147).

¹¹ When I say “If this suggestion is generally speaking correct,” I mean that as a matter of fact we are not going to take Kouwenberg’s words all too literally. If a property verb like *damāqu* ‘to be(come) good’ or a stative verb like *edû* ‘to know’ has no Gtn, this comes as no surprise. By contrast, if a number of frequent dynamic roots do not have a pluractional derivate (Gtn or D), this leads to questions both about the nature of verbal plurality in Akkadian and the functions of Gtn.

F u t u r e: *nēšum ana tarbaš awilim i-ša-aḫ-ḫi-iṭ* ‘a lion will raid the man’s fold’ (YOS 10, 25rev.:70; for additional OB omen apodoses with this verb form, see CAD Š₁ 90).

N o n - f u t u r e: *wa-ar-ki ši-iḫ-ṭi-im ša a-lim Nu-sa-ar^{K1} <ša> iš-ḫi-ṭū^{L1} ša-bu-um a-na sa-ak-bi-im it-ta-na-^{raš-šū} ṽ a-na Ka-ra-na-a^{K1} {x} i-tu-ur-ra-am [DU]MU ši-ip-ri-im ša Iš-me-^dDa-gan il-li-kam-ma [u]m-ma-a-mi ú-ul ni-nu **ni-iš-ḫi-iṭ** mi-id-de sà-ar-ra-ru **iš-ta-na-aḫ-ḫi-ṭū***

‘[Now,] after they (= the inimical forces in question) raided the town of Nusar, the troops go out for patrolling¹² and come back [*iturr-am*] to the town of Karana.¹³ A messenger of Išme-Dagan came here with the following news, “It is not us who **did the raiding**. Perhaps it was certain criminals who **were raiding**” (ARM 26/2, 515:4–9; Iddiyatum to Zimri-Lim; for additional OB examples, see CAD Š₁ 91f.).¹⁴

From the letter’s contents, it is likely that both verb forms, *nišḫiṭ* and *ištanahḫiṭū*, refer to the same real-life event in the writer’s past. The only difference is the speaker-dependent viewpoint: for certain semantic classes of verbs, Akkadian allows to interpret the very same past-time fact as either punctual (*nišḫiṭ*) or possessing an internal duration (*ištanahḫiṭū*). In the latter case, both IPARRAS and IPTANARRRAS can be used, once more depending on the root’s meaning.

It lies near at hand to ask if *šaḫāṭu* A is frequentative by the very nature of its semantics, with the result that OB deemed it useful to employ this root as a Gtn-tantum in the present-time domain. In this case, one would have to speculate (perhaps with a good reason) that this frequentative semantics of the root was cancelled in the future-time sphere. Some such conclusion, if it be correct, would contribute to our understanding of the verb in Akkadian anyway. In particular, this would mean that *šaḫāṭum* ‘to jump, to attack, to raid’ and e. g. *šapārum* ‘to send a message’ belong to different Aktionsart classes, which follows from the difference in their morphosyntactic behaviour: unlike in the case of *šaḫāṭum*, the G-stem of *šapārum* can be used as frequentative in the non-future domain. Consider the examples:

aššum mīnim ana šeim i-ša-ap-ḫa-ru-ni-ku-ma šeam lā tanaddin

‘Why do they write you concerning barley but you do not give any barley?’ (Goetze 1958, No. 12:4ff.).

¹² See LAPO 18:583 with further references. Cf. CAD S 22f.

¹³ The writer’s location is supposed to be this very town of Karana.

¹⁴ The reading, including the emendation <ša>, follows the Edition, see ARM 26/2, p. 487, note a.

*panānum awilū ša lā idū-ninni a-ša-ap-ḫa-ar-šu-nu-ši-im-ma šabiātīya
iḫpušū*

‘Formerly, (even) people who did not know me—I had (only) to write to them, and they used to act according to my wishes’ (AbB 10, 1:13–16).

One then would have to ask why the Present Gtn of *šapārum* is also productive in OB (see AHw. 1171). I am not ready to compare right now all the non-future *išappar* tokens to all the *ištanappar* ones, because the evidence is both huge and perhaps not really very dramatic: both forms are probably frequentative, as one would expect. Instead, I will try to produce a putative example of IPARRAS **and** IPTANARRAS of the same root in the non-future domain, both shapes being non-frequentative and either synonymous or possessing a certain fine-tuned differentiation that is difficult to grasp with any certainty for this dead language. The verb is *adāru* B ‘to fear’ of CAD A₁ 108, *adāru* B ‘(sich) fürchten’ of AHw. 11.¹⁵ Consider two well-known passages from the OB Gilgamesh (tr. A. George):

*a-wi-lu-tum-ma ma-nu-ú u₃-mu-ša
mi-im-ma ša i-te-né-ḫu-šu ša-ru-ma
at-ta an-na-nu-um-ma **ta-dar** mu-tam*

‘As for man, his days are numbered
whatever he may do, it is but wind
Here are you, **afraid** of death!’ (George 2002:200, 142ff.).

*i-na-an-na sa-bi-tum a-ta-mar ḫa-ni-ki
mu-tam ša **a-ta-na-ad-da-ru** a-ia a-mu-ur*

‘Now, ale-wife, I have seen your face,
but I would not see death, that **ever I fear**’ (George 2002:278, 12’f.).

This *a-ta-na-ad-da-ru* seems to be the only Pres. Gtn token of the root attested in the core OB (AHw. has a few more tokens, all of them are jB, there are no examples in OA). I am tempted to suspect that the reason of its appearance may be metre-related: in the surrounding text, the number of syllables pro line is 11–14, being exactly eleven more often than otherwise (and compare von Soden’s transcriptions in ZA 71:184f.). It looks like *mū-tam ša ad-da-ru ay-yā-mur* (nine syllables only, if *ay-yā-mur* is the correct rendering) would be too short a line.¹⁶

¹⁵ For the etymologies of *adāru* A ‘to be worried’ and *adāru* B ‘to fear,’ see Kogan 2001:279f.

¹⁶ Generally speaking, isosyllabism is not considered to be a relevant feature of metre in the Akkadian poetry (see Wasserman 2003:159–162, with a literature overview). I am grateful to Rim Nurullin for discussing this point with me.

The only other example comes from the OB Mari (courtesy Ilya Arkhipov):

šābum šū ... bēlī i-ta-na-ad-da-ar ‘These soldiers ... fear my lord’
(Charpin 1993, 200:53).

If we do not discard the Gilgamesh example as poetry and the Mari example as a barbarism,¹⁷ and if we are not ready to conceal the problem by simply translating ‘fear very much,’ ‘experience great fear,’ etc., then I would tentatively suggest that *ūnaddar* is different from *iddar* in that the former represents the situation of fearing as more dynamic and progressive.¹⁸

Another manifestation of the fact that “the problem of Gtn” does exist is the lexicalization of Gtn. An example is *nagāšu* of CAD N₁ 108. Its G-stem Preterit is attested a couple of times in SB with the meaning ‘to leave, to go away.’ (The only other form of the G-stem mentioned in this CAD entry is the Infinitive appearing in a Sumero-Akkadian lexical list.). The Gtn-stem of this root is attested by a dozen of tokens in the Present and Preterit, mainly in OB and SB. The CAD glosses are ‘to wander around, to run about, to rove, stroll.’ The best-known example runs as follows:

at-ta-na-ag-gi-iš ki-ma ḥa-bi-lim qá-ba-al-tu še-ri
‘I was wandering like a criminal in the midst of the steppe’ (George 2002:278, 11’).

The sense is most probably not cyclic (i. e., unless the speaker presents himself as the one who used to run to and fro along the same path); it is simply durative, fully in agreement with the plot of the Gilgamesh-epic. Consider another example (courtesy Ilya Arkhipov):

lā bēl isqim ana kussi bīt abīya irub u anāku at-ta-na-ag-gi-iš
‘The one who has no share (= no inheritance right) entered the throne of my father’s estate, and as for me I keep wandering [≈ I

¹⁷ This letter of the provincial governor Yaqqim-Addu has a nice example of the adstrat-conditioned verb morphosyntax: *ša-bu-um ... e-pé-ri a-li-ku-tim a-na a-lim^{K1} i-ša-ap-b[a]-ak* ‘the soldiers ... are heaping up a mound that is advancing towards the city’ (ibid. l. 25). The participle *ālik-* here is not an agent noun (as it should be in good Akkadian) but rather something very similar to the Hebrew or Aramaic participial Present.

¹⁸ Kouwenberg 1997:293 says that *adāru* B ‘to fear’ “is basically a fientive verb,” unlike *adāru* A ‘to be dark, worried.’ (Kouwenberg’s “fientive” is my “dynamic.”) Note, however, that at least the English verb ‘to fear’ is stative in terms of Vendlerian classes: one can say “Right now, I fear him,” but it is wrong to say *“Right now, I am fearing him.”

am still dispossessed]’ (Charpin–Durand 2004:100, 27ff.; see a historical commentary *ibid.* 106f.).

To sum up: it would be important to understand by which factors the choice of form (IPARRAS vs. IPTANARRAS) in the present-time domain is determined. Ideally, if we want our picture of Gtn to be more than impressionistic and textbook-dogmatic, we need to work with a complete list of verbs that have both G and Gtn + to register systematically the attested forms of Gtn (is there the Imperative? the Precative? the Prohibitive? the Preterite?) + to identify wherever possible the IPTANARRAS forms with future reference. We will probably come across a certain number of minimal pairs IPTANARRAS = present-time reference, IPARRAS = future reference.

To complicate things even more, there exist frequent G-verbs that use PARIS rather than IPARRAS or IPTANARRAS to render the dynamic present-time sense.¹⁹ An OB example is *qerēbum* ‘to be near; to get nearer; to approach.’ Its Present *iqerrib* is used only for future references,²⁰ while the real-life situations ‘it is near’ **and** ‘it is getting nearer’ are rendered indiscriminately by the SC *qerub* (OA *qurub*). Consider an example where the real-life situation is probably dynamic:

^dUTU-šī-^dIM u ummānātū-šu qé-ru-ub ʔēmum annūm liḫmuʔ

¹⁹ See Loesov 2005 and 2010 for various attempts to single out such verbs.

²⁰ The only OB token I know of comes from an apodosis in YOS 10, 11 ii 14–17: *tu-ru-ku-tum ana šarrim i-qé-er-ri-bu-nim* ‘the Turukkeans **will approach** the king.’ See my analysis of the morphosyntax of *qerēbum* in Loesov 2010:775–779. Note that according to my description, the finite forms of *qarābum* in OA are limited to two tokens of the Precative + five tokens of the SC (Kouwenberg’s list of OA verbs has seven tokens of the SC but no additional prefixing forms). The Preterit of *qerēbum* is also in very short supply in OB (*ibid.* 777). In Loesov 2010, I try to explain these remarkable data by the following suggestion: *qerēbum* is a hopelessly atelic root, therefore it is ill compatible with the prefixing tenses which by default process motion events from the perfective aspectual viewpoint. It looks like even the intransitive D-stem (‘to approach’ + *ana* and *adi* to introduce the endpoint of intransitive motion) does not really help: according to CAD Q 239b, its prefixing tenses appear but twice in the corpus, both times in Mari letters: *ana* GN *ú-qé-ri-ba-am* (ARM 4, 26:29), *ša adi* GN *ú-qa-ar-ra-bu* (ARM 2, 134:15). Note that even the prefixing indicative tenses of *damāqum* ‘to be(come) good’ (a property root that expresses evaluation) are represented in the letters from the corpus better than those of *qerēbum*, which is generally agreed upon to be a motion verb. The instances I have found are as follows: *i-da-am-mi-qú* (AbB 14, 165:9); *ad-mi-iq* (AbB 3, 39:19); OA: *ni-dam-mi-iq* (RA 60:120, 28); *i-da-am-qa* (CCT 5, 1b:11); *ad-mi-qa-ku-ma* (ATHE 44:26). (The OA data are from Kouwenberg’s Verb List.)

‘Šamši-Adad with his troops *is approaching/is near*; (therefore) this message is to be delivered rapidly’ (AbB 8, 15:40–45).

An OA example is the SC of *našārum* + vent. ‘to bring,’ discussed in Loesov 2005:128f.: *naš’am/naš’akkum* = ‘he is bringing to you/he is supposed to bring to you.’

Thus, *ištanakkan*, *idaggal*, *qerub* are the only exponents of the present-time sense for the corresponding G-verbs in their meanings ‘to store,’ ‘to own,’ ‘to approach.’

2. As we have just seen, the meanings of *tan*-stems of the Akkadian verb remain to be described in detail,²¹ so we do not know for a fact whether the Present of the *tan*-stems invariably expresses the “verbal plurality” as opposed to a “non-plurality” of the Present of the respective simple stems for the same roots (i. e., for the same verbal concepts). Our translations in text editions, textbooks, dissertations, and dictionaries are based on an ingenuous faith in this plurality. We hardly ever try to ask ourselves if this semantic element is indeed there in a given case.

Regarding the assumed productivity of the Gtn-stem in the pluralic sense, I observe that all common verbs that show the regular “competition” of the Present and the SC in the present-time domain²² do not really have the Gtn-stem in the corpus. This is hardly incidental to the Akkadian verb.

By way of illustration, consider a textual example of what I call “competition” between PARIS and IPARRAS, selected from the data gathered in Loesov 2006:142, where the morphosyntax of *akālum* ‘to eat’ was analysed:

PARIS: [*in*]a *mimma annîm* [*a*]k-la-ku
 ‘I am entitled to the use of all this,’ lit. ‘I am consuming all this’ [or, better still though stylistically impossible, ‘I habitually consume ...’]
 (AS 22, 26:5; “archaic” OB).

²¹ The best semantic analysis of the verbal stems in Akkadian is now Kouwenberg 2010, yet the purpose of this work is encyclopedic, the book is meant to be a reference tool for some time to come, i. e. a balances description of the Akkadian verb. It includes formal and semantic, synchronic (wherever possible, separately for OB and OA), diachronic inner-Akkadian (roughly 2500–700 B. C.), and comparative analyses (against the Semitic and Afroasiatic background), with the aim of a Proto-Semitic reconstruction. A comprehensive semantic description of the verb stems for OB and OA with methods of the corpus linguistics has not yet been undertaken. This kind of research would certainly deepen our understanding of the language.

²² For a provisional list of such verbs see Loesov 2010:761, fn. 7. I thank Bert Kouwenberg who suggested me (in his p. c. back in 2006) the elegant word “competition” as a label of this phenomenon.

annakam emārū ak-lu

‘The donkeys get fodder here’ (ATHE 46:17f., and a few more times in OA).

IPARRAS: *eqlam ... i-ik-ka-al*

‘He supports himself with this field’ (AbB 4, 79:19, and often in Hammurapi-letters).²³

We will now discuss the data related to the Gtn and, wherever necessary, to the D-stem of this group of verbs. I will first have to quote one of the conclusions that Kouwenberg reached in his study of the Akkadian derived stems:

“In all second millennium dialects, the Gtn-stem is fully productive. It is especially frequent in two kinds of verbs: intransitive action verbs,²⁴ in particular motion verbs such as *alāku* ‘to go/come,’ *elū* ‘to go/come up,’ *erēbu* ‘to enter,’ *ebēru* ‘to cross,’ *etēqu* ‘to pass,’ *maqātu* ‘to fall,’ and *wašū* ‘to go/come out,’ and transitive verbs with a low degree of transitivity, e. g., *amāru* ‘to see,’ *akālu* ‘to eat,’ *apālu* ‘to answer,’ *leqū* ‘to receive,’ *nadū* ‘to drop, leave behind, lay down,’ *našū* ‘to lift, carry,’ *šakānu* ‘to place,’ *šemū* ‘to hear,’ *wabālu* ‘to bring, carry,’ and *warū* ‘to bring, lead.’ These are exactly the same types of verbs that do not normally have a D-stem (see § 11.5, p. 279). So *there is a complementary distribution between Gtn and D in its function of underlining verbal plurality*: Gtn takes the area of intransitive and low-transitivity verbs, D that of high-transitivity verbs” (Kouwenberg 2010:421, italics added).

Following the lead of Kouwenberg, we will check the D-stem of transitive roots from my list as well (i. e., in addition to the Gtn-stem), though of course we do not expect high-transitivity verbs to reveal the competition of PARIS and IPARRAS. Here are the data.

- *akālum* ‘to eat,’ ‘to receive victuals/fodder.’ No Gtn in OA; in OB it has been found twice within the idiom *karṣi akālum* ‘to slander’ (ARM 2, 115:11; YOS 10, 41:56), once with another metaphorical meaning, ‘to hurt (of ailing body parts)’—in TLB 2, 21:23 (an OB diagnostic manual). Thus, the “pluractional” or habitual eating (consumption, getting sustenance) is expressed by the Present and the SC of the G-stem of *akālum* rather than by its Gtn-stem (see the examples above and in

²³ The differences in the government of *akālum* in the three examples are doubtless significant, but we cannot discuss them here.

²⁴ “Action verbs” is Kouwenberg’s word for agentive verbs (see p. 256f.). To my mind, intransitive verbs from this list are not always impeccably agentive, especially *maqātu* ‘to fall’ is not.

Loesov 2006:142). Note that *ikkal* and *itanakkal* ‘it hurts’ were likely used synonymously in OB medical texts:

šumma maršu qātā-šu u šēpā-šu ikkalā-šu šitassām mimma lā paṭer

‘If the patient’s hands and feet **ache** and he never stops screaming’ (TLB 2, 21:19, tr. CAD Š₂ 164).²⁵

šumma maršu [...] libbīšu itanakkalā-šu (i-ta-na-ka-la-a-šu)

‘if the patient’s [some**things** = fem. pl. substantive] inside him **hurt** him **all the time**’ (TLB 2, 21:23).

There is no D-stem.

- *baqārūm* ‘to claim’²⁶ has no Gtn in the whole of Akkadian. Its D-stem, glossed in CAD P 133b ‘to raise a claim, to lay claim to,’ is used “passim in NB sales contracts and kudurrus” (CAD *ibid.*); besides, CAD P 134a enters two MB tokens with the same meaning. It further lists three OB tokens of the D-stem meaning ‘to contest, challenge’ (a legal text TCL 1, 157:49; AbB 12, 166:13; 1, 58:16); this meaning is also attested in later periods. Thus *baqārūm*, a verb common in OB, has in OB neither Gtn- nor D-stem corresponding to its basic meaning ‘to claim (a property title).’²⁷
- *ḥašāḥum* ‘to need,’ ‘to desire’ (AHw. ‘brauchen’, ‘begehren’)²⁸ has no Gtn in the whole of Akkadian. Its D-stem is represented in AHw. 333a and CAD H 136a by two SC passive (!) tokens (OB and SB), glossed ‘to deprive, take away’ (AHw. ‘in Bedürftigkeit bringen’), which is irrelevant for our discussion.

²⁵ Note also the periphrasis *šitassām*_{Inf. Gtn} *mimma lā paṭer*_{SC} ‘he never stops screaming’ rather than a straightforward *ištanassi*_{Pres. Gtn}. In the context, *lā paṭer* has a “pluractional” reading.

²⁶ For the competition between the Pres. and the SC of this verb in the present-time domain, see Loesov 2006:142.

²⁷ One would suspect that CAD divorced ‘to claim’ (G) from ‘to contest, challenge’ (D) simply because the stems are different, but one of these three examples does deviate from the well-known use of *baqārūm* G in the official OB letters: *aššum kunukkī-ša ú-ba-aq-qí-ru* ‘because she contested her own sealed documents’ (TCL 1, 157:49, tr. CAD P 134b). AbB 1, 58:16 has an Imperative *bu-uq-qú-ur-šu* in a badly broken context. AbB 12, 166:13 *tu-ba-qá-ra-an-ni* ‘you claimed from me (the aforementioned field)’ is not really different from the G-stem examples with two participants.

²⁸ For the examples of both the Pres. and the SC in the present-time domain, see Loesov 2005:137f.; 2006:145.

- *kalûm* ‘to hold, detain.’²⁹ This verb is common in both OB and OA, its Gtn is registered in the dictionaries with two identical SB tokens from the same medical text, and there is also one instance from NA. The CAD (K 102b) gloss for the Gtn is ‘to stop repeatedly, to hold up.’ For the D-stem **kullû* ‘to hold back,’ CAD K 102–103 has only four tokens (from OA, OB, MB and SB), all of them are the Pres. forms. The OB example *tu-ka-la-šû* (*Sumer* 14, 73, No. 48:8) stands in a difficult context,³⁰ therefore the case (dat. or acc.) and antecedent of the *-šû* pronoun are problematic. Goetze translates in the Edition, ‘[But (as to) getting water on my time—] you will prevent **it**,’ CAD K 102b has ‘[but at the moment it is irrigated,] you_{m.sg.} will block up (the water) **for him**.’ On any interpretation, this sign string is plausibly construed as the Pres. of *kullum*, the near-synonymous D-verb, common in both OA and OB: *tukall-aššu*, *-aššu* can be analysed as a OB allomorph of the bound dative pronoun 3ms ‘to/for him,’ or as the ventive + acc. *-šû* (‘you will prevent **it** for your own sake_{vent.}’).³¹ The OA example, PN *lā tù-kà-lá* ‘do_{sg.} not hold PN back’ (CCT 4, 18b:15), can be interpreted as the Pres. of *kullum* as well (‘do not withhold PN **for yourself**_{vent.}’) if we accept, with GKT 54c, the orthographic rendering of the ventive without *-m* as a possibility for OA: *lā tukall-a_{vent.}*³² Thus, depending on one’s judgement, the D-stem of *kalûm* is represented in the corpus marginally or not attested at all. Ockham’s razor favors the latter solution, since for **kullûm* no Preterit has been found, i. e. the tense form where the orthographic opposition between the D-stems of verbs II-weak and III-weak cannot be neutralized in both OB and OA, because the respective Preterit **bases** (unlike the Present ones) have orthographically undeletable phonological differences, whatever be affixed

²⁹ For the competition between the Pres. and the SC of this verb in the present-time domain, see Loesov 2006:141.

³⁰ Ll. 7ff.: *ù a-na ù-ti-i ša-tu-ú tu-ka-la-šû me-e [t]a-ta-ba-la-šum*. The last two words probably mean ‘you_{m.sg.} will take the water away from him.’

³¹ I. e., in the spirit of “the reflexive benefactive ventive on transitive taking hold-of verbs” (Loesov 2006a).

³² Bert Kouwenberg suggests me a different solution, which looks more likely (p. c. of March 3, 2011): “I prefer to interpret the OA form *lā tù-kà-lá* as an imperfective pl. In many OA letters, second person sg. and pl. alternate erratically, according to whom the writer has in mind for a particular statement. This is more probable than a ventive, which in the intended meaning does not further occur with this verb, as far as I know, and *-a* instead of *-am* is unusual (though possible).”

to their right. Consider the comparative table of the 3 sg. Present and Preterit forms for *kullûm* and *kullum* in both dialects.³³

	<i>kullûm</i>		<i>kullum</i>	
	Preterit	Present	Preterit	Present
OB	<i>ukalli</i>	<i>ukalla</i>	<i>ukâl/ukillû</i>	<i>ukâl/ukallû</i>
OA	<i>ukalli</i>	<i>ukalla</i>	<i>ukaʔîl/ukaʔîlû</i>	<i>ukâl/ukallû</i>

- *nazâqum* ‘to worry.’³⁴ No Gtn in the corpus, it is attested a few times (‘to have constant worries, to squeak constantly’) in SB omens (AHw. 772a, CAD N₂ 138a).
- *parâdum* ‘to be afraid, to care.’³⁵ No Gtn in the corpus, it is attested a few times in SB medical texts (AHw. 827b, CAD P 143a: ‘is constantly fussing’).
- *takâlum* ‘to trust.’³⁶ No Gtn in the whole of Akkadian.
- *wašâbum* ‘to sit’, ‘to dwell.’³⁷ No Gtn in the core OB and OA corpora. An exception is ‘the chamber [š]a *qerbuššu ni-it-ta-aš-ša-bu-nim* in which we used to sit’ (MIO 12, 54rev.:17, “OB love lyric” according to CAD R 377b). Note that the compatibility of the subjunctive and the ventive (*-nim* = *qerbuššu?*) in this form is also most unusual. Another exception (a Participle) also comes from an OB literary text: *mu-ta-aš-ši-ba-at askruppât awîlê* ‘(she is) **the one constantly sitting** on the thresholds of men’ (van Dijk 1953:92, 2). According to the dictionaries (AHw. 1483a, CAD A₂ 386a), Gtn appears a few more times in SB.

Thus all eight common verbs (found so far) that use both the Pres. and the SC for coding the present-time sense do not really have pluractional stem forms (whether Gtn or D) in the corpus.

³³ Bert Kouwenberg finds this presentation too tortuous: “I think it would be better to state right after mentioning the D forms of CAD that you think they do not belong to *kalûm* at all.” He thinks it would be enough to simply refer to AHw., where all the relevant examples “are assigned to *kullu*, as they should be.”

³⁴ For the competition between the Pres. and the SC of this verb in the present-time domain, see Loesov 2005:137.

³⁵ For the competition between the Pres. and the SC of this verb in the present-time domain, see *ibid.* 137.

³⁶ For the competition between the Pres. and the SC of this verb in the present-time domain, see *ibid.* 141f.

³⁷ For the competition between the Pres. and SC of this verb in the present-time domain, see *ibid.* 140f.

According to Kouwenberg, **lowly dynamic transitive agentive**³⁸ verbs are supposed, as a rule of thumb, to have the pluractional Gtn-stem. In my eight-verb list there are three very frequent verbs that meet these criteria: *akālum* ‘to eat,’ *baqārum* ‘to claim,’ *kalūm* ‘to hold,’³⁹ and all three have neither Gtn- nor D-stem at their side. On the face of it, these notions are dynamic and easily “pluralized,” **so the absence of either Gtn- or D-stem needs an explanation.** Further, such notions as ‘to worry’ (*nažāqum*), ‘to be fearful about smth./smb.’ (*parādum*), ‘to desire’ (*ḥašāḥum*) are quite susceptible to a pluralic interpretation. Only ‘trusting’ (*takālum*) and ‘sitting, dwelling’ (*wašābum*) are concepts whose pluralic derivatives are perhaps less needed, due to their pronounced stative character.

My preliminary explanation of this evidence runs as follows: IPTANARRAS can code not only “plurality” in the narrow sense, it is also involved in the coding of the “basic” present-time sense (probably in its different nuances) *within* (or *for*) the G-stem paradigm, along with the G-stem Present and the SC. As I have already suggested, the distribution of the three present-tense shapes is lexical. In particular, from the point of view of Akkadian, the above eight verbs have the same *Aktionsart* (= “situation aspect” of Smith 1997), though *takālum* and *wašābum* usually do not have “accusative” arguments. Whatever their government and valences, these eight are all low-transitivity verbs, therefore their present-time reading is taken care of by both PARIS and IPARRAS (in “competition”), and **they do not need IPTANARRAS for this function.** Why they do not use the Gtn-stem for a genuinely “pluralic” sense, I cannot explain for the moment.

In addition, there is a group of frequent lowly dynamic transitive verbs **that do not form the SC**, to be joined to the “prefixing statives” of the traditional grammar. The most common of them are *rāmum* ‘to love’ and *zērum* ‘to hate’; most importantly, both have no Gtn. I would add to this group e. g. the OB *našārum* ‘to guard, to keep,’ in e. g. *šē inaššar* ‘he keeps my barley’ (AbB 4, 40:20). Its SC *našir* is rare and always passive, the verb has no Gtn in the corpus.

To come back to the roots that use PARIS (and no IPARRAS) to render the present-time sense: two very common verbs of this group are *labāšum*

³⁸ Note that in the above Kouwenberg’s list of lowly dynamic transitive roots with admittedly frequent Gtn all the items are meant to be agentive.

³⁹ Whether the verb *ḥašāḥum* is agentive, i. e. whether its subject has free will, is not clear (cf. von Soden 1959:438).

‘to wear’ (*labšāku* ‘I wear’) and *qerēbum* ‘to get nearer’ (*qerub* ‘is near’/‘is approaching’).⁴⁰ Once more, these roots have no Gtn in the corpus.

For these facts, I suggest the same explanation as for the above eight verbs with the PARIS/IPARRAS competition: **the respective roots do not form Gtn because for some reason they do not need it for the coding of the basic-stem PRESENT**. Since the frequency of the roots and the basic character of the concepts neutralize the factor of chance to a certain degree,⁴¹ the only sensible alternative that comes to mind would be the following: Akkadian is supposed to process all these concepts/roots as **radically stative and therefore not readily susceptible to “plurification,”** with the result that they will not need the Gtn-stem. This claim is stronger and more daring than mine, in particular because it clashes with Kouwenberg’s conclusion (Gtn is productive for intransitive agentive verbs and “transitive verbs with a low degree of transitivity”), which has a lot to commend itself.

My paragraph (2) constitutes a sort of *ex silentio* argument (why is there no Gtn for this or that common root?), but, given the absence of native speakers and a well-formed Akkadian National Corpus, this kind of reasoning and the questions it leads to are hopefully legitimate and useful for the better understanding of the language.

3. In the *protases* of OB omens, we come across **synonymy** of PARIS and IPTANARRAS for certain verbs.⁴² In particular, this is true of *rabiš* vs. *irtanabiš* and *maqit* vs. *imtanaqqut*, while the G Pres. forms *irabiš* and *imaqqut* are not attested in these *protases*.

Consider the examples:

šumma qutrinnum ana ereb šamši maḥrātūšu ra-ab-ša arkassu šaqât
 ‘If the front parts of the (smoke of the) incense **are settling down**
 toward the west but its rear part is ascending?’ (*Or NS* 32, 383:11).

šumma qutrinnum ir-ta-n[a]-b[i]-iš
 ‘If the (smoke of the) incense **keeps settling down**’ (*UCP* 9, 369:37).

⁴⁰ The latter has been already discussed above; for a morphosyntactic analysis of the former, see Loesov 2010:765.

⁴¹ Consider the fortuitous character of our corpus of this long-dead language with no written tradition reaching into the present day through an uninterrupted chain of transmission.

⁴² Much of what will be said in this section is the *Gemeingut* of Ilya Khaït and the present writer. We discussed the evidence and the interpretations during several sessions in summer 2010.

The translations are non-committal as to the aspect/dynamicity and taken from CAD.

Both *rabšā* and *irtanabbiš* as descriptions of the behavior of smoke **refer to the same real-life situation**. In other words, it is hardly the case that *rabīš* describes a *condition* of incense smoke, while *irtanabbiš* describes its *iterative* (or otherwise “pluralic”) *movement* (e. g., in the texts there are no hints to the effect that the observation was repeated, etc.).

The usage of verb forms in divination protases has not yet been fully understood,⁴³ yet it is well-known that this usage is “artificial,” i. e. obviously different from the natural linguistic code. It includes certain literary conventions proper to the genre. (E. g., **dynamic** preterit forms like *iṭṭul* ‘he looked/he had a look’ can describe a *condition* of still exta, etc.) In the case of *rabīš/irtanabbiš*, there was probably an uncertainty as to how one should depict the behavior of smoke, in static or dynamic terms, yet for the authors the common denominator of both verb forms was that the two inflectional paradigms (PARIS and IPTANARRAS) could as a matter of principle belong to the G-stem and code the “basic” present-time idea.

E. Cohen (2010:713) says that linguistically “beast omens, unlike those concerning extispicy, may answer to a different set of rules: beasts actually do things while exta basically do not.” Yet, surprisingly enough, it looks like the creators of the linguistic rules of the divination genre did not really take seriously this facts-of-life difference (still objects vs. moving ones), since both varieties of protases **possess essentially the same repertoire of finite paradigms**.⁴⁴ Only the linear order of “tenses” in the chaining constructions of protases may have been sensitive to the criterion of the real-life stativity vs. dynamicity (see presently). The problem is in much need of research. One thing is clear: we cannot take the morphosyntactic data of the OB divination protases as a *prima facie* evidence for the tense-aspect of the spoken Akkadian contemporary to the creation of YOS 10 and other OB divination compendia.

Both *maqit* and *imtanaqqut* can be used to describe a *condition* of still exta rather than dynamic events of movement:

ú-ba-nu ša-al-ma-at MÁŠ [= *šibtum*] ***ma-aq-ta-at*** (*JCS* 21, 231:27, an extispicy report = ARM 26/1, 100bis:50)

‘Le Doigt était en bon état. L’Excroissance tombait (?)’ (Nougayrol’s translation in *JCS*).

⁴³ Metzler 2002 and Cohen 2010 do not address the kind of questions mentioned here.

⁴⁴ And it is not really different from that of the CH protases.

vs.

šumma <ina> rēš [ubānim] qûm pešûm šakim-ma u im-ta-[na]-aq-qu-ut
 ‘if on top of the “finger” there is a white “filament” in horizontal²
 position’ (YOS 10, 33rev. iv 35ff.).

[*erištum*] *nadiat-ma im-ta-na-qu-ut*

‘there is [a feature of liver] in horizontal² position’ (CT 44, 37:21).

In descriptions of still exta, *imtanaqqut* (rather than *maqit*) always appears in the non-initial slot, preceded by a SC form, whether existential (as in YOS 10, 33rev. iv 35ff. and CT 44, 37:21 above) or descriptive, as in the following example:

‘if the “weapon” ... *saliḫ-ma im-ta-na-qu-ut* is covered with drops and lies horizontally²’ (YOS 10, 46 v 16).

This purely syntactic distribution (reminiscent of the OT literature, both prose and poetry) may be due to the just mentioned “conventional linguistic code” of the divinational literature. I. e., the second-slot *imtanaqqut* is a feature of literary *consecutio temporum*, idiosyncratic for this genre (more specifically, for still-life protases).⁴⁵ Once more, *maqit* and *imtanaqqut* do refer here to the same real-life facts, and their alternation (while *imaqqut* is absent from this slot) may be ultimately explained by the suggestion that both finite paradigms (i. e., PARIS and IPTANARRAS) can functionally belong to the G-stem. Plus we have to remember that the originators of Akkadian extispicy decided to describe the still life, at least partly, in terms of becoming, *des Werdens*.

Why then did not they use in the above examples *imaqqut* in the slot of *imtanaqqut*?—According to my hypothesis, this is because in spoken Akkadian *imaqqut* cannot be contemporaneous to the moment of observation (= PRESENT) but rather has to refer to FUTURE.

Most importantly for my thesis, in divination protases both *maqit* and *imtanaqqut* (but not *imaqqut*!) can describe real-life **dynamic** present-time events as well:

šumma qutrēnum ana imitti-šu iḫsur-ma šumēl-šu ma-aq-ta-at

‘If the smoke concentrated to the right and (then) its left *starts going down*?’ (UCP 9, 377rev.:44, see *ibid.* 48, and cf. CAD M₁ 244b, B 122b, and Pettinato 1966, 319:29).

⁴⁵ Incidentally, other *tan*-forms appear in still life extispicy in the same slot (the SC-*ma* the **TAN Pres.**), as in the following example: *šumma martum nashat-ma it-ta-na-aG-ra-ar* ‘If the gull bladder has been torn out and **turned upside down**?’ (YOS 10, 31 iii 41–42, Ntn of the intransitive verb *g/qarāru* ‘to writhe, grovel’).

In this smoke divination protasis, *maqtat* is hardly static as far as facts of life go.

šumma awīlum imūma šallu ālum im-ta-na-qú-ta-šum u i-ḫa-az-zu-ma išemmū-šu

‘If a man, when he is asleep, (dreams that) the city is falling² upon him, and he groans and someone hears him’ (*AfO* 18, 67 iii 31ff.).

The text suggests that what is meant is a telic event of falling rather than a recurring nightmare.

DIŠ UDU *uz-na-šu im-ta-ḫna-qú-ta*⁴⁶

‘if the sheep [while it is being slaughtered] is twitching its ears’ (*YOS* 10, 47:4).

The situation of ear-twitching is probably frequentative by its nature, so this example is indecisive.

This cumulative evidence seems to indicate that the Akkadian Sprachgefühl did not permit *imaqqut* as a vehicle for the expression of PRESENT ACTUAL.

To sum up, my preliminary conclusion boils down to the starting-point of my inquiry into the meaning of the Akkadian Stative (Loesov 2011 and previous essays mentioned in the present note): in order to understand what the Present of *tan*-stems was doing in Akkadian, we have to start with a list of OB and OA verbs that are frequent enough in the corpus to allow a deduction about the functions of Gtn in spoken varieties of Akkadian.

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