

## **Akkadian Sentences about the Present Time. Part One\***

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0. In this paper I discuss semantic aspects of Old Babylonian (OB) and Old Assyrian (OA) verb morphosyntax, hence the term ‘Akkadian’ as used here covers only these two dialects. My major source is epistolary material, yet literary texts are occasionally drawn upon, because in these texts there appear certain linguistic features important for this study but underrepresented in letters. I had to exclude OB Mari letters on the assumption that OB might have been a second language for their authors.

Akkadian verb has four ‘tenses,’ i. e. four inflectional patterns of the indicative mood—the Pret., the Pres., the Perf., and the Stat. The three former ones (conventionally referred to as prefixing tenses) are opposed morphologically only by their stems, their inflectional affixes being identical; the Stat. has a suffixing finite paradigm of its own. Since I will often use the words ‘state’ and ‘stative’ as semantic terms, the Stat. *paris* will be nicknamed ‘the SC’ (= suffixing conjugation).

The Perf. *iptaras* in its basic sense (i. e. as used in simple present declarative clauses) is a marked form of past tense vis-à-vis the Pret. *iprus*, for this reason the contribution of the Perf. to the general picture of the Akkadian verb grammar might be somewhat limited.<sup>1</sup> The SC has always been felt as somehow occupying a marginal place within the Akkadian verb. This attitude is probably due to the deviant morphological shape of the SC. Therefore many scholars believe that

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\* Prof. K. Hecker’s online database (<http://www.hethport.uni-wuerzburg.de/TXTaltass>) has greatly facilitated my research of Old Assyrian sources. Now that this database is accessible, the Old Assyrian philology is less of *disciplina arcana* than it used to be. The texts available in this database are cited below in K. Hecker’s transliteration. I am grateful to the Russian Foundation for the Humanities for its financial support during the period the present paper was written (the project *Historical Grammar of Akkadian*, 2003–2005).

<sup>1</sup> In OB letters, the Perf. is obligatory only for coding the ‘epistolary past’ of motion verbs (Loesov 2004).

there exists *the* Opposition between the Pret. *iprus* and the Pres. *iparras*<sup>2</sup> that constitutes the core of Akkadian verb grammatical semantics. Students of Akkadian define the nature of this opposition mostly in terms of aspect (perfective vs. imperfective, see e. g. Knudsen 1986) or relative tense (anteriority vs. non-anteriority relative to a reference point, see e. g. Streck 1999).

Now both hypotheses do not find sufficient support in text. In epistolary independent declarative clauses, the Pres. and the Pret. are not used to oppose aspectual viewpoint values (the imperfective vs. the perfective) within the same time-level relative to the moment of speaking. This means that in Akkadian the Pres. and the Pret. are not primarily aspectual forms.

The relative tense hypothesis looks a little better than the aspectual one. Thus, it would explain why temporal clauses introduced by the conjunction *lāma before* employ the Pres. when the main clause has past time reference. Still this hypothesis would fail to make sense of the complicated rules according to which indicative verb forms are used in temporal clauses. Besides, this theory will not account for the Perf.: in independent clauses, *iptaras* is almost exclusively used as a deictic tense, not unlike the English Present Perfect.

Finally, a straightforward deictic tense approach to the semantic value of the assumed Pres. vs. Pret. opposition in independent clauses (the Pres. = non-past, the Pret. = past) runs into trouble when it comes to situations simultaneous with the speech time (= the SpT).

The evidence collected below suggests that—in spite of what is usually assumed—the Pres. is not well-suited to talk about all kinds of situations taking place at the SpT but rather only about certain situation types.

In this paper I take the semantic domain '(talking about) the present time' as my point of departure and study the means by which the Akkadian verb codes this semantic domain, without first trying to embrace all of inflectional morphology of Akkadian verb in structuralist terms, i. e. as a system of meaningful oppositions of any kind, be it tense, aspect, or both. In other words, the question to be answered here is 'How does Akkadian verb express situations that take place at the time of speaking?'

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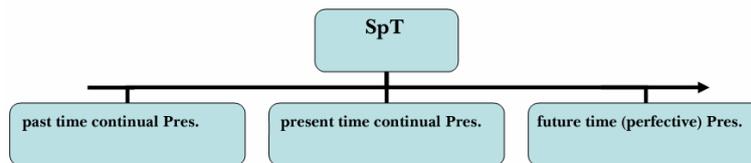
<sup>2</sup> These two tenses are indeed the most frequent ones in text.

1. In OB and OA the Pres. has two principal readings in independent declarative clauses:

(1) **Absolute future**, i. e. a situation following the SpT. By default, i. e. in the absence of information to the contrary, this temporal meaning is coupled with the **perfective** viewpoint.<sup>3</sup>

(2) **Continuance of a non-future situation**. In the terminology adopted here, ‘continual’ is distinct from ‘progressive’: a continual situation is homogenous, i. e. it has no natural endpoint, whereas a progressive situation moves towards an inbuilt endpoint (see below § 2). Lack of an endpoint is the feature shared by durative atelic situations (‘he is/was running’) and habitual/iterative situations (‘he goes to the movies’/‘he used to go to the movies’). As we will see, Akkadian inflectional morphology does not oppose the durative sense to the iterative/habitual one. The continual Pres. has either present or past temporal reference.

This suggestion is mapped onto the conventional time axis as follows:



These two readings of the Pres. neither share semantic traits (i. e. are not reducible to a common denominator) nor can be easily related through an associative link in the spirit of Wittgenstein’s ‘family resemblances.’

In letters, contemporaneity with the SpT is the default situation time for the continual Pres., while past time reference of the continual Pres. needs strong contextual indications, e. g. past time adverbials.

On the other hand, both continual present-time reading and (perfective) future-time reading are equally neutral senses of the Pres., because both of them can do without strong syntactic support within the clause. This precludes one from simply assuming that synchronically in Akkadian the morphological shape *-parras-* itself codes the continual meaning, though this might well have been the case at an earlier (perhaps pre-Semitic) stage of its history.

<sup>3</sup> Synthetic Futures in Spanish, French, and Italian supply a partial parallel. In these languages, the perfective reading of simple Futures is the dominant and often the only possible one.

One will also observe that the Pres. is marked for habituality in the context of the past,<sup>4</sup> while in the context of non-past it is not (i. e. the non-past Pres. may or may not be habitual).

The following examples illustrate both major senses of the Pres.

*Perfective future:*

- (1) *mimma lā tanazziq ana panīka epēška nippuš*  
 ‘Not to worry! We will take care of your work before you(r coming)’  
 (AbB 2, 110:24ff.).
- (2) *kaspam išti PN alaqqe-ma ubbal-ak-kum*  
 ‘I will exact silver from PN and bring it to you’ (Prag I 431:24f.).
- (3) *ana kārīm atūar* ‘I will appeal to the Karum’ (Prag I 432:8).

*Continual non-future (both habitual and durative):*

- (4) *aššum mīnim ana še'im išapparu-nik-kum-ma še'am lā tanaddin*  
 ‘Why do they write you concerning barley but you give no barley?’  
 (Goetze 1958, No. 12:4ff.).
- (5) a. *anaṭṭal<sub>pres</sub>-k[a<sup>dE</sup>]N.KI.DU<sub>10</sub> kīma ilim tabašši*  
 ‘I look at you, Enkidu, you are like a god’ (GilgP 53).  
 b. *ki-ma a-na wa-ar-ki-ti-a sa-al-tum mi-ma lá i-ba-ši-ú e-pá-áš PN ú-qá-a*  
 ‘I do (my best) to avoid quarrelling behind my back. I am waiting  
 for PN’ (AKT 3, 80:18–21).
- (6) *panānum awilū ša lā idū-ninni ašapparu<sub>pres</sub>-šunūšim-ma šabiātīya ippušū<sub>pres</sub>*  
 ‘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).

Potential and prospective<sup>5</sup> readings of the Pres. cannot be strictly separated from its future-time and continual senses, as the following examples illustrate:

- (7) *pīhat ālim šātu anāku ašabbat<sub>pres</sub> ... anāku qaqqadī ana ekallim  
 ummad<sub>pres</sub> u ana pīqat ālim šātu azzaz<sub>pres</sub>*  
 ‘I am going to take personal responsibility for this town (future/prospec-  
 tive)... I trust the Palace<sub>(continual)</sub> and am going to assume (future/prospec-  
 tive) responsibility for this town’ (Goetze 1958, No. 3:17–18, 23–26).

<sup>4</sup> In letters, the past-time Pres. is always habitual rather than durative.

<sup>5</sup> The prospective as an aspectual meaning is defined in a most general way as follows: “X is/was such that later P will/could come to pass.” An important feature of the prospective meaning, setting it apart from the future, is its compatibility with the past time contexts. See Dahl 1985:111f., Plungian 2000:298.

- (8) *šumma igārum iqām<sub>pres</sub>-ma bābtum ana bēl igāri ušēdi-ma igāršu lā udannin-ma igārum inqut*  
 ‘If the wall was such that it could later fall (= was going to fall) <sub>(past time prospective)</sub> and the ward (authorities) made it known to the owner of the wall, but he did not reinforce his wall and the wall collapsed...’  
 (LE A IV 25ff.).
- (9) *mamman lā ilaqqe<sub>pres</sub>-šu u ana GN uštēbil-aš-šu*  
 ‘Nobody was going to take <sub>(past time prospective)</sub> it, so I have sent it to GN’  
 (KBo 9, 6:9ff.).
- (10) *mannu annūtam ša lā Enki ippuš<sub>pres</sub>*  
 ‘Who but Enki could have done <sub>(past time potentiality)</sub> it?’ (Atr III C<sub>1</sub> VI 13).

The ‘Sein-Sollen’ reading of the future-time Pres. (as assumed in numerous translations) is just its more or less probable contextual connotation. A typical example will be the ubiquitous *išaqqa* ‘he will pay/he has to pay (at a certain point in the future).’ The distinction between tense and mood is not very prominent in the domain of the future, therefore in language future ‘indicative’ verb forms often receive all kinds of modal colouring.

I believe that this description will cover the bulk of *iparras* tokens in independent declarative clauses of OB and OA.

The above description implies that *iparras* in OB and OA does not code telic processes under way at the SpT.<sup>6</sup>

Since reference grammars and textbooks often assume that this is the case in Akkadian, we will have a look at the evidence available in the literature.

But before this I will put forward, in a preliminary way, a hypothesis that seeks to explain the evidence presented in this paper.

I propose that Akkadian *iparras* is an ‘old Present’ that had lost its power to code telic events in progress at the SpT, which means it had forsaken the most salient constituent of the morphological present tense. Yet, this language never developed a ‘new Present.’ For this reason Akkadian coded present-time situations in different ways depending on the inherent temporal properties of the respective situations. Yet *iparras* pre-

<sup>6</sup> The telic process is one that has a natural endpoint (*telos*), as e. g. ‘draw a circle,’ ‘sing a song.’ It is opposed to other types of semantic *actionality* which I will discuss presently. Van Valin–LaPolla 1997:655 observe that in determining the relationships of inflectional morphology to actionality in a language ‘it is important to ensure that one is dealing with a form which is a true progressive, and not one with the meaning “state of affairs continues”.’

served its derived meanings, i. e. those of non-progressive continuance and future. Cross-linguistically, ‘old’ exponents of the present tense are expected to develop this kind of non-trivial polysemy (cf. Haspelmath 1998).<sup>7</sup>

I will now introduce the semantic taxonomy of verbal predications that is used in the present study.

2. As we have seen, temporal and aspectual meanings cross-classify in Akkadian inflectional morphology. The only derivational aspect is the iterative expressed by *tan*-stems. Now it is well known that in language inflectional tense-aspect is sensitive to lexical meanings of verbs, in particular to the internal temporal component of lexical meanings. This is reflected e. g. by selective compatibility of certain lexical classes of verbs with certain inflectional indicative forms, which (as we will see) is also the case with Akkadian.

I will apply the four traditional Vendlerian ‘time schemata’ of verbal predications to the Akkadian verb, hoping that this will help advance our inquiry.<sup>8</sup>

Zeno Vendler (see Vendler 1957/67) classified the totality of English verbal predications into four types according to their inherent temporal properties. These properties are now often called verbal *actionality* (= lexical aspect, situation aspect, Aktionsart, semantic types of predicates, etc.). Different modifications of his approach are widely used in research on individual languages and in typological studies. Vendler himself showed certain grammatical correlations of his taxonomy: in English, different classes of verb predicates display different syntactic and morphological compatibility, in particular with time adverbials and progressive tenses.

Vendler’s classes are as follows:

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<sup>7</sup> I cannot explore the diachronic implications of these statements in the present study. The early history of Semitic verb remains a vexing and controversial problem in current scholarship. Some scholars believe (following Rundgren and Kuryłowicz) that the Central Semitic *yāqtulu* continues the old PS Present while Akkadian *iparras* is a ‘new Present,’ see Kouwenberg 1997:36f. for a recent and typologically oriented restatement of this view. Yet if it can be maintained on independent grounds that Akkadian *iparras* is more likely to be a retention (as in Kogan forthcoming, with a balance of pros and cons leading to the endorsement of Rössler–Greenberg hypothesis), then there is no wonder that in extant texts *iparras* exhibits certain traits of ‘old Present.’

<sup>8</sup> I will speak of both ‘verbal predications’ and ‘verbs’ because the internal temporal properties in question are often determined by both verbal predicate and its terms.

(1) *Accomplishments*, which are also called ‘telic events/processes.’ The distinction between telic and atelic processes turns on whether the situation has a natural endpoint. Telic events imply both temporal duration and an endpoint as parts of their meaning, as e. g. OB *nāram ḫerūm dig a canal*, *bītam epēšum build a house*, *teḫūm approach*.

(2) *Activities* (or *atelic processes*), as exemplified by Akkadian verbs *damāmum moan*, *bakūm weep*, *rapādum wander*, *ilkaḥ/harrānam alākum do military service*, *rāmum love*, *naṭālum look at*, *še’ūm seek*. The lack of a situation’s internal endpoint proper to both activities and states is referred to as *homogeneity*.

(3) *States*. According to the way of thinking current in Russian studies of grammatical semantics, *States* are different from *Properties* in that the former are sensitive to time in the way the latter are not.<sup>9</sup> For the moment, I simply posit informally that in the terminology of this study *marāšum be ill* is a State, whereas *damāqum be of good quality* or *mādum be numerous/abundant* are Properties.<sup>10</sup>

This semantic distinction has overt linguistic correlates in certain languages.<sup>11</sup> As we will see below in Excursus II, Akkadian possesses a morphosyntactic correlate of this semantic distinction, albeit rather marginally attested.

A morphosyntactic counterpart of States vs. Activities distinction for Akkadian lies near at hand: semantic statives do not use the Pres. but rather the SC to code present-time situations, the Pres. of statives typically has only future references and denotes the coming about of a state, while typical activity verbs form no SC.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See Plungian 2000, with literature. (For a somewhat similar approach in English-speaking linguistics see e. g. Kratzer 1989). With this adjustment, I accept the semantic definition of the stative situation type put forward in Smith 1997:32: ‘States consist of an undifferentiated period without internal structure. They have no dynamics, and require external agency for change. The initial and final endpoints of a state are not part of the state: they are distinct situations, constituting changes of state.’

<sup>10</sup> In the rest of this paper I use the Infinitive as the citation form of a verbal lexeme, irrespective of whether a given infinitive is attested in extant sources.

<sup>11</sup> Thus, in Spanish the verb of existence *estar* + adjective codes States, which are thought of as resulting from ‘becoming,’ whereas the verb of existence *ser* + adjective codes Properties, which are not thought of as ‘having become,’ cf. *Juan está enfermo* ‘J. is ill’ as against *Juan es sabio* ‘J. is wise.’

<sup>12</sup> Cf. GAG 126: ‘Verben, die nicht-resultative Vorgänge bezeichnen, bilden meist keinen St.’. Ibid. 127: ‘Bei Zustandsverben ist das Prs. im Gegensatz zum Stativ immer ingressiv.’ It is likely that this last feature has to be explained as innovation.

According to this criterion, among the typical Akkadian statives there are verbs denoting spatial location, e. g. *wašābum* *be around, stay*, *lawūm* *surround* (~ *be situated around the spatial reference point*), *parākum* *lie across*, *rakābum* *mount, ride on* (*chariot, boat, animal*), *saḫārum* OA *delay*. Another semantic group of states comprises verbs whose animate subject involuntarily experiences the situation in question, e. g. *marāšum* *be ill*, *balāṭum* *stay alive*, *berûm* *be hungry*. Verbs of propositional attitude are rare among the statives, one such verb is *takālum* *trust*, cf. also *palāḫum* in its meaning *be afraid, fear*.

In general studies of semantics, Activities, unlike States, are usually supposed to be *dynamic*. This feature is intuitively appealing, but it escapes an heuristically useful definition.<sup>13</sup> One feels that the stative vs. dynamic division is popular in linguistics because some languages support it by morphosyntactic devices, as this is the case with Akkadian. Thus, Standard British English does not normally use its progressive tenses for predications said to be semantically stative, cf. *\*he is knowing*, *\*he is loving*. Therefore English non-punctual verbs incompatible with progressive tenses are considered statives.<sup>14</sup>

Hence Akkadian morphosyntax supports a semantic demarcation *state* vs. *event* different from that observable in English, cf. *šumma taramm-anni* ‘if you love me,’ while the SC of *rāmum* is not used.

(4) *Achievements*, which I will also call punctual situations. They are conceptualized as having no temporal dimension, i. e. they represent instantaneous change into a state. Akkadian examples are *šebērum* *break*, *šabātum* *seize*, *baqārum* *claim*, *maḫārum* *receive*, *nadānum* *give*, *qabûm* *tell*, *order*, *ḫalāqum* *disappear*, *watûm* *find*.

<sup>13</sup> The clearest criterion of dynamicity is the negative value of sub-interval property (cf. Partee 1984). States are ‘dense,’ i. e. their temporal structure ‘is isomorphic with the structure of time,’ as Bertinetto 2001:180 puts it. In other words, stative situations hold for all sub-intervals of a given temporal interval. This is not true of atelic processes: they are homogenous but lack the sub-interval property, i. e. (unlike states) they cannot be divided indefinitely because they possess temporal structure of their own. To take a classical example, *running* is thought of as a certain cyclic sequence of body movements, while situations making up this sequence (having both feet off the ground, touching the ground with one foot, etc.) cannot be described as *running*. Still this criterion is less helpful if we consider e. g. verbs of propositional attitude and cognition, such as *want*, *hope*, *believe*, etc.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. a list of prototypical states in Van Valin–LaPolla 1997:92: *be sick, be tall, be dead, love, know, believe, have*. Much the same in Smith 1997:32: *own the farm, be in Copenhagen, be tall, believe in ghosts*.

It follows that punctual events do not cross the SpT, they always ‘happen’ before it or after it. Achievements can bring about stative situations continuing into the SpT and beyond it.

Vendlerian verb taxonomy may be decomposed in terms of elementary individual features, which are presented in the table below.

features \ situation types	durative	dynamic	homogeneous
states	+	–	+
atelic processes	+	+	+
telic processes	+	+	–
punctual events	–	+	–

In the last decades, studies of interaction between lexical, temporal and aspectual verb meanings have been exploiting the parameter of control or agentivity, which cuts across the four categories as outlined above and creates a more complex taxonomy. Controlled situations possess a volitional agent. Thus, Simon C. Dik (1997:105–117) singles out for English [+ controlled] and [– controlled] situations within all four Vendlerian classes. Controlled punctual events are sometimes called *actions*, while those lacking a volitional agent are *happenings*. Akkadian does not have salient grammatical correlates of [ $\pm$  control], or perhaps they are difficult to grasp in our sources for this dead language. Yet awareness of this semantic feature will sometimes be useful for the purposes of this study.

3. I will now review the evidence for *iparras* used for coding present-time telic events as available in reference grammars, textbooks, and certain studies.

The ideas of Benno Landsberger (1926) regarding the Akkadian verb might be relevant to the problem at hand:

‘Das akkadische Verbum hat ... durchgängig drei Themen. Es ist beherrscht von dem Dualismus zwischen momentan oder punktuell und dauernd. Der momentanen Aktion fällt ein Thema (*i-kšud*), der dauernd zwei zu (*kašid* und *i-kašad*). Diese beide letzteren sind aber nach Form und Wesen identisch. Sie unterscheiden sich nur dadurch, daß das eine Mal ein ruhender Zustand, das andere Mal ein dauerndes Geschehen ausgedrückt wird (p. 359). [...] Wir haben also zunächst ... bei jedem Verbum zu unterscheiden zwischen dem Punktual und dem Durativ mit seinen Unterarten des Stativs und des fientischen Durativs (p. 300). [...] Der fientische Durativ ist seiner Natur nach immer prädizierend, aber durch einfache Weglassung des pronominalen Präfixes wird er attribuie-

rend, z.B. *isarrīq* = “er schießt” im Sinne von “er schießt häufig hinüber”, dagegen *sarrīq* = “er schießt” im Sinne “er ist schieläugig (p. 360f.). [...] Beim Durativ gibt es keinen Unterschied der subjektiven Zeitstufen: *irappud* bedeutet “er lief”, “er läuft”, “er wird laufen” (p. 361).’

In Bergsträsser 1928:23 (this text is supposed to reflect “Landsbergerische Tempuslehre”) we read that the difference between the three conjugational classes is ‘zunächst rein objektiv, ein Unterschied der Aktionsart: das Permansiv ist stativ, das Präsens fientisch-durativ, das Präteritum punktuell. Darüber hinaus werden Präsens und Präteritum auch zum Zeitausdruck verwendet, aber vorwiegend wieder im objektiven Sinn: die Folge der Tempora in der Rede, die *consecutio temporum*, gibt das gegenseitige Zeitverhältniss, das Früher und Später der ausgesagten Handlungen wieder. Dabei wird die Zweistufigkeit *īprus* : *īpárras* zur Dreistufigkeit erweitert durch Einbeziehung des *t*-Stammes *īptaras*. Die punktuelle Erzählung verwendet nur *īprus* als frühere, *īptaras* als spätere Stufe ... [...] Jede Stufe kann ihrerseits aus mehreren Verben gleicher Form bestehen. Erst sekundär und beschränkt kommt die subjective Zeit zum Ausdruck: *īprus* Vergangenheit, *īptaras* Gegenwart (punktuell), *īpárras* Zukunft (und durative Gegenwart).’

Landsberger’s insight into the deep-level synchronous semantic proximity between the Pres. and the SC is important for my study.<sup>15</sup> Yet I disagree with him on the interpretation of their opposition as ‘stative’ vs. ‘dynamic’ (see presently). Landsberger’s observation that the Perf. can function as a ‘perfective Present’ (≈ ‘punktuelle Gegenwart’) also has certain point, as the following example shows:

- (11) *inanna PN eqlī ibtaqr-anni u šē inaššar*  
 ‘Now PN has claimed<sub>perf</sub> my field and keeps<sub>pres</sub> the barley’ (AbB 4, 40:18ff.).

In a way, both situations are considered to take place ‘now,’ the first one is viewed as perfective, the second one—as continual.

<sup>15</sup> Landsberger’s observations are interesting in spite of the fact that he starts his line of thought by incorrectly positing an etymological identity between the stems of the Pres. and the SC. Cf. also Landsberger 1926a:970: ‘[D]as akk. Präsens und Permansiv ihrem Thema nach gleichartig sind (*-kaša/i/ud* bzw. *kaši/ud*). Beide sind Durative, das erste fientisch, das zweite stativisch, das erste präfigierend, das zweite postfigierend, z. B. *i-rapud* “er läuft”, aber *rakib* “er befindet sich auf einem Vehikel”, “fährt”.’ My suggestion goes in the opposite sense: originally the semantics of the Pres. and the SC had little in common; these two ‘tenses’ developed certain similarity within prehistoric Akkadian.

Landsberger's description of the non-future Pres. as 'fientisch-durativ' aims at the habitual value, as suggested by 'er schielt häufig hinüber.' The habitual reading of the Pres. is quite productive, but the dynamicity Landsberger attributes to the Pres. is cancelled by the habitual context.<sup>16</sup> Consider the following example:

- (12) *ištu* MU 40.KAM *eqlam ikkal u inanna* I KASKAL *ina* KA.KEŠDA LUGAL *illak*  
 'He lives from this field for forty years, and now he is enlisted in a  
*certain kind of military service*' (AbB 4, 73:7ff., F. R. Kraus: 'ferner  
 leistet er jetzt einen Einmannsdienst im königlichen Heere').<sup>17</sup>

In this example, present-time situations are clearly 'derived statives.' The Pres. is chosen because the SC is unavailable for both *akālum eat* and *alākum go*, which in their primary senses are activity verbs.

Pace Landsberger, I believe the Pret. is not so much punctual/momentary as it is primarily the basic past-tense form whose viewpoint aspectual reading is predominantly perfective.<sup>18</sup> Unlike the past-time Pres., the past-time Pret. is unmarked for 'Aktionsart,' as the following example shows:

- (13) *eqlam māri PN aššur*<sub>pret</sub> *-ma* MU 15.KAM *ākul*<sub>pret</sub>  
 'I cut off<sub>pret</sub> part of the field belonging to the sons of PN and  
 lived<sub>pret</sub> from it for fifteen years' (AbB 4, 69:7 ff.).

In <sup>3</sup>GAG 127 all three examples of the Present meant to show its force as 'eigentliche Gegenwart' do not qualify as telic processes. By OB standards, Oakk *ù-má* 'ich schwöre (jetzt)' will be a preterite,<sup>19</sup> although this cannot be proven beyond doubt. The second example, mB *inanna ul igenmih* 'er hustet jetzt nich mehr', is irrelevant if only because of negation: there is no process at the SpT but rather a state, and the verb *cough*

<sup>16</sup> Smith 1997 shows that habitual sentences are semantically stative because they possess positive value of sub-interval property. She reckons habituales among 'derived statives': 'Habitual predicates present a pattern of events, rather than a specific situation, and denote a state that holds consistently over an interval' (p. 33). Consider *šê inaššar* in ex. (11) and cf. ex. (4) and (6).

<sup>17</sup> English translations of quoted Akkadian texts belong to the present writer, unless indicated otherwise; by default, non-English translations follow the Editions used as sources of the respective texts.

<sup>18</sup> Streck 2003:425 correctly rejects Landsberger's view of the Pret. as a punctual verb form. Streck *ibid.* puts forward an example *išebbir* "er zerbricht/wird zerbrechen" to refute the understanding of the Pres. as necessarily 'dauernd.' Yet in so far as the present-time reference is concerned, this punctual (or 'rapid action') reading of the Pres. *išebbir* remains to be documented.

<sup>19</sup> See below Excursus I.

is ill suited to illustrate the function in question.<sup>20</sup> OB *ikkalū* ‘(die Rinder) fressen (jetzt)’ does not describe a situation actually taking place at the moment of writing, but rather a habitual activity of the grammatical subject, as is clear from the context (now AbB 10, 15:24). In sum, GAG offers no true example of the ‘eigentliche Gegenwart,’ still less of a *telic* present-time situation.

GKT 122f. stresses, quite correctly, future time and modal readings of the Present and offers two examples of ‘Wiedergabe von Vorgängen, die sich im Moment des Sprechens abspielen (eigentliches Prs.)’ The first of them is continual:

- (14) *ilum lammīš bīt abi-ni eppaš*  
 ‘Ein Gott behandelt zur Zeit das Haus unseres Vaters schlecht’  
 (KTS 24, 12f., Hecker’s translation).

The second one is controversial:

- (15) *šulrum ina bubūtim i-mu-a-at* ‘Das Gesinde ist dabei, vor Hunger zu sterben’ (BIN 6, 197:14f., Hecker’s translation).

It may be a prediction ‘the “children” will die of hunger,’<sup>21</sup> a prospective ‘the condition of the children is such that they will die of hunger (= *they are going to die*, as Hecker actually has it!),’ and it may have been construed by OA as a genuine *telic* process ‘the children are dying of hunger.’ Still the last option, even if difficult to disprove, is far from revealing a good example of *telic* process. The verb *die* is punctual in terms of semantic actionality, as well as e. g. *stumble*. Therefore *he is dying* (and possibly *imūat*) is better interpreted similarly to *he is going to stumble*, i. e. as a prospective *state* rather than a *telic* process.<sup>22</sup> Simply put: if I say *I am dying*, I do not think of myself as more dead *now* (at the SpT) than a minute ago and less dead than a minute later. But if I say *I*

<sup>20</sup> Incidentally, Comrie 1976:42f. treats just the English verb *cough* as a textbook example of a punctual and essentially a semelfactive situation: it takes place once only (semelfactive) and is categorized as having no temporal dimension (punctual). The Present Progressive ‘he is coughing’ does not express an ongoing process: it is iterative or habitual (*ibid.*). Verbs that are punctual by virtue of their lexical semantics (such as *nadûm* throw [*something into fire*], *cast* [*lot*]) are not sensitive to the ‘telic vs. atelic’ distinction.

<sup>21</sup> This is the understanding of CAD § 236: ‘The children will die of starvation.’ I am not sure whether this understanding is superior to Hecker’s.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. a discussion of *die* as a punctual verb in Comrie 1976:47f. Cf. also Botne 2003, a study of DIE-verbs as ‘achievements’ in 18 languages.

*am approaching my end*, I do represent the same real world situation as a telic process.

Ungnad 1964:66: ‘Das Präsens ... entspricht im allg. unserem Präs. und Futur, z.B. *išappar* “er schickt” oder “er wird schicken”.’ This claim is to my mind correct only if “er schickt” is understood as habitual/iterative,<sup>23</sup> because *šapārum* is thought of as punctual and not telic situation. Thus, *išpur* “he sent,” *ištapar* “he has sent,” *išappar* “he will send,” but in our Akkadian sources there seems to be no counterpart to “he is sending (now),” and see presently a fn. in the discussion of Buccellati 1996.

Buccellati 1996:101: ‘The present-future refers to an action which is either contemporary or posterior to the speaker’s point in time, e. g., *ikaššad* “he reaches” or “he will reach”.’—Same comment. Taken literally, Buccellati’s statement is hardly correct, because habitual present is no good example of the semantic category ‘action contemporary to the speaker’s point in time.’ In linguistic literature *reach* is a stock example of punctual verb, as in *John reached the summit of the mountain* (Vendler 1957/67, Comrie 1976:43).<sup>24</sup>

Leong 1994 is to my knowledge the best documented study of tense-aspect in OB, though limited to AbB 1–13. Remarkably, in his documentation of the Pres. as present progressive (p. 340ff.) there happen to be no waterproof telic predications.<sup>25</sup> In what follows I will examine those of his examples in which a telic reading would seem a viable option:

<sup>23</sup> Cf. this kind of usage in an embedded clause: *inūma ašappar-u-šum šibūtī mādiš ippuš* ‘Whenever I write to him, he acts very much according to my wish’ (AbB 9, 6:7f.).

<sup>24</sup> Comrie 1976:43 observes in his explanation of punctuality that ‘it would always be inappropriate to say *at this point, John is reaching the summit*. Imperfective forms of *reach the summit* would then only have iterative meaning...’ The Present forms of *kašādum* and *kuššudum* of OB and OA possess, in so far as I was able to check, just the range of meanings provided for in my description; in the present-time domain they have habitual or prospective readings (see e. g. AbB 9, 147:17 and TC 3, 60:9).

<sup>25</sup> Leong does not introduce the distinction between telic and atelic processes, but the lack of the former in his sample is hardly due to chance. Besides, most of his ‘present progressive’ tokens are in fact clear-cut habituals, as is borne out by a high rate of Gtn verbs among his examples. As it seems, Leong’s rigorous rendering of *iptanarras* forms by the Present Progressive partly conforms to the current American English trend of substituting Present Progressive for Simple Present in most environments, including semantically stative predications.

- (16) <sup>f</sup>PN *ana dīnim aššumī-ka idabbub ana maḫrī-ya alk-am-ma awātū-šina linnamrā*

‘<sup>f</sup>PN is about to bring a suit against you (Leong: ‘is pleading’) to the court. Come here so that their case is examined (upon your arrival)’ (AbB 7, 105:6–10).

The verb *dabābum* does have telic meanings, but this context suggests prospective rather than progressive reading.

- (17) *u ina qāti habbāti išātum naphat mātam ikkal*

‘Dabei ist von der Hand des Räubers ein Feuer entzündet, es verzehrt das Land’ (AbB 8, 28:8ff.; Leong: ‘it is consuming the land’).

In this letter *išātum ... mātam ikkal* means ‘criminals produce disorder in the land’, so it is an activity.

- (18) *ina kīmnanna (ki-im-na-an-na) ana mīli kiššatim CN ippetē (ip-pi-it-te-e) ana epēšim annīm bēlī išemmē-ma*

‘Right now the Nukaribbum-canal is being opened for the height of the flooding. My lord will hear about this act and...’ (AbB 13, 180:18–22, translation as in the Edition).

The translation assumes that the opening of the canal (a telic situation!) takes place at the SpT, and this interpretation looks unproblematic. Yet a future-time reference is also compatible with the context of the letter, i. e. ‘the canal will get opened.’ The examples in (19) show that (*ina*) *kīma inanna*, like *inanna*, may point to the SpT or to the future; all other verbal predications of AbB 1–13 containing this deictic adverbial (as cited below) have either present-time habitual/stative or future-time reading.

- (19) a. *kīma inanna ana abīya kâta luktarrab*

‘Let me “always” (= Gtn) pray for you, my father, (starting) right now!’ (1, 15:28f.).

Future/prospective.

- b. *ina kīma inanna MĀ.NI.DUB.ĪLA ul in-ne-pu-uš ina mati-ma in-ne-pu-uš*  
 ‘Jetzt werden die Frachtschiffe nicht gebaut, wann werden sie gebaut werden?’ (2, 59:9ff.).

Semantically stative present-time situation, note the negation.

- c. *kīma tīdû ebûrum ina kīma inanna mannum mannam i-ḫa-al*

‘Wie du weißt, ist Erntezeit; wer fertigt gerade jetzt jemanden ab?’ (7, 110:9).

I do not quite understand the Edition’s translation. The meaning is perhaps: “Right now, who is going to satisfy/reimburse whom?”

- d. *ina kīminamma (ki-mi-na-an-na) mammanni ana mammannim ul iḫabbatti*

‘Right now, nobody loans anything to anybody’ (10, 4:29ff.).

Semantically stative present-time situation.

e. *ina kīma inanna alap-šu tēr-šu*

‘Give him back his ox right now!’ (11, 156:19).

f. *u mīnum ša kīam tašpur-am umma atta-ma eqlam ana panī-ka uštanas-saq adi kīma inanna šutassuqum-ma tuštanas-saq<sub>pres</sub> lū tīdē (ti-de-e) aštapr-ak-kum*

‘And what (is it) that you wrote to me as follows: “I will make the field ready before you(r arrival).” You absolutely must make it ready right now! Do know! I warn you!’ (AbB 12, 30:6–11, translation follows the Edition; ‘you should have done it by now’ is perhaps also a possible interpretation).

g. *u ina kīma inanna 1 SAR epšētim ul išu (i-šu-ú)*

‘And right now I do not even have 0.1 acre of cultivated field’ (AbB 13, 4:23’ f.).

A stative present-time predication.

Huehnergard 1997:98 brings an example *tuppašu ikannak* ‘he is sealing his tablet’. It is telic, but, according to Prof. Huehnergard’s p.c., it is made up.

Streck 1999:102 claims that OB *iparras* can denote ‘die Gegenwart “er entscheidet (jetzt)”’,’ but produces no examples. I suspect that from the point of view of Akkadian *parāsum decide* is to all intents and purposes an achievement.

Thus in the literature reviewed above we have found no unambiguous instance of the Pres. coding a telic event at the SpT.<sup>26</sup>

#### *Excursus I. The Pres. and performatives*

The Pret. *iprus* is used as the neutral performative verb form in OB and OA, and I believe this is a piece of circumstantial evidence supporting the perspective on the Akkadian verb advanced in this study.

Performative use of verbs has been best described for Germanic, Romance and Slavic languages, as well as for Latin and Classical Greek. All these languages have the grammatical category of verbal tense that indicates—either morphologically or periphrastically—past, present, and future, and all these languages use (one of) their present-tense verb forms as the neutral exponent of performative function. Note that Standard British English usually employs its Simple Present rather than the Present Progressive to code the performative illocutionary force: *I accept your*

<sup>26</sup> This is not to say that I am sure the available sources may have no better examples of what we are looking for; yet this negative evidence is in itself provocative.

*offer* constitutes performative use, while *We are accepting your offer* is a prospective, it is roughly equivalent to *We are going to accept it* (Leech 1975:3, as discussed in Paducheva 1996:165).<sup>27</sup> In performative utterances the speech time embraces the event time, i. e. the event time is spanned by the speech time or coincides with it, cf. *I promise to come and see you, I invite you to join us*. This fact probably explains the choice of the Simple Present in English for performative use, since in the Present Progressive (the normal tense for telic events!) the speech time is enclosed within the event time: in *I am now getting ready to lecture tomorrow morning* the ongoing telic event expressed by this utterance starts before the time of speaking and extends beyond it.

As far as I know, for the moment there exist no typological studies of performatives carried out on representative samples of genetically and culturally unrelated languages. Still the available research does not lend sufficient support to the theoretical claim according to which the choice of the performative form is not motivated by the verb grammatical semantics of the respective language.<sup>28</sup> Verschueren 1995:317 predicts that in languages with outspoken aspectual oppositions ‘the perfective would be used less—if at all—in a performative utterance since it draws attention more strongly to an interpretative difference between A[ction] and D[escription],’ which are supposed to ‘coincide’ in the performative use of verb forms (cf. the very term ‘Koinzidenzfall’ used to refer to the performative function in German-speaking linguistics).

A semantic comparison of languages that oppose aspects via inflectional morphology (such as French or Spanish) with languages having derivational aspect (e. g. Russian and Lithuanian) and with languages where aspectual meanings are marginal to the verbal grammatical semantics (e. g. German and Akkadian) is a delicate matter. What all these languages have in common from the point of view important for our inquiry is that all of them possess some kind of grammatical tense, while ancient Semitic languages (including Akkadian) are the only ones that use their basic past-tense forms to express the Koinzidenzfall.<sup>29</sup> This fact must have a good reason.

<sup>27</sup> J. Verschueren believes that in English the Present Progressive can have performative meaning under special conditions (Verschueren 1995:302).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. e. g. Hinrichs 1986:183: ‘Sprachkontrastiv gesehen ist die grammatische Form für die Koinzidenz beliebig, arbiträr, konventionell. Es gibt keine “kausale” Verbindung zwischen Grammatik und Koinzidenz.’

<sup>29</sup> See Mayer 1976 for a general survey of the Semitic evidence. For Classical Ethiopic see Weninger 2000, for Hebrew and Aramaic see below.

I propose that Akkadian employed its Preterite in performative function just because the Pres. *iparras* had constraints in expressing the present actual, and consequently *iparras* was ill-suited as a vehicle for ‘closed’ contemporaneity of the speech time and event time, while this contemporaneity constitutes the trademark of performative utterances.<sup>30</sup> Given the poverty of Akkadian inflectional verbal morphology, the Pret. happened to be the best available exponent of the performative force. It is routinely used in the context of *šapārum send, write* within the conventional greeting formula of OB letters *ana šulmīka ašpur-am* ‘I wish you well-being’ (Sallaberger 1999:87–92). Same verb form *ašpur* has other performative uses in OB letters, cf. *u tuḫpī annīam libbī gamra ašpur-ak-ki* ‘I (hereby) address you whole-heartedly through this letter’ (AbB 5, 210:16f.); *alik inanna ašpur-ak-ku širim-ma TA-pu-ul-šu* ‘Go, now I prescribe you: be careful in satisfying his claim!’ (AbB 4, 57:14ff.).<sup>31</sup> The performative use of the Preterite *atma* ‘I swear (by DN—constructed as direct or ‘dative’ object)’ is well attested in letters (AbB 1, 122:4; 12, 169:22; 12, 178:11).<sup>32</sup> Cf. also a non-formulaic use *ú-na-ḫi-i-id-ka* ‘I call your attention (= I order you)’ (AbB 1, 60:16). This use of the Preterite seems to be productive in OB, since verbs which in their basic meanings are no utterance verbs (i. e. no explicit performatives) may occasionally be used performatively, as e. g. *šakānum put, place: [aš]-ku-un-ka* ‘I demand (this) of you’ (Goetze 1958, No. 47:27–29).

<sup>30</sup> For alternative explanations of the Akkadian evidence, see e. g. Müller 1986, Streck 1995 (based on Denz 1982) and Metzler 2002. These explanations derive the performative force of the Pret. directly from its assumed basic sense (perfective aspect or relative anteriority, depending on the views of the respective scholars). Cancik-Kirschbaum 1996:62f. explains the use of *altaprakku* for (what she believes to be) Koinzidenzfall in Middle Assyrian letters from Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad through the notion of ‘virtuelle Vergangenheit,’ i. e. shift of the temporal reference point from the writer’s ‘now’ to that of the addressee: ‘Der Verfasser dieses Briefes hat sich auf die Zeitebene des Empfängers versetzt, denn sonst hätte er ein Präsens gebraucht’ (p. 63). This view is not applicable to the OB evidence: OB letters carefully distinguish between the ‘epistolary past’ (the Perf.) and Koinzidenzfall (the Pret.).

<sup>31</sup> The verb *šapārum send, write* is no utterance verb; still the above examples can be considered explicit performatives, because in the epistolary milieu *šapārum* functions as a genuine *verbum dicendi*. (Cf. *I send you my love*.) This observation is consonant with the analysis of prostration formula (*amqut* etc.) of the Amarna correspondence offered in Pardee–Whiting 1987:29: ‘The prostration formula is ... a performative that, because of social realities, could only exist in a letter.’ This is true simply because *amqut* and *uš-ḫé-ḫi-in* are conventional ways of *greeting* the addressee.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. also Mayer 1976:193.

The Pret. seems to be the principal vehicle of performative force in OA. Heimpel–Guidi 1969:150 fn. 8 cite *timāli-ma maḥar šališti taš'elī-ma u āpul-ka* (OIP 27, 57:1–4) and translate ‘Gestern fragtest du vor dem Dreierkollegium und daraufhin antworte ich dir hiermit,’ the contents of the answer follows. Still the translation ‘and I answered you’ (CAD Š<sub>1</sub> 288a) is perhaps more plausible. On the contrary, the OA evidence for formulaic performative use of *(n)uška* ‘in ana tuḫḫim ša ālim u rābišim ša bēlīya/bēlīni ‘I/we bow before the document of the City and the attorney<sup>33</sup> of my/our lord’ is quite reliable (see ATHE 23:10 and more OA examples of this formula discussed in Heimpel–Guidi 1969:149). This formula expresses the author’s consent to take part in a lawsuit. Cf. also the following example:

- (20) *umma šūt-ma ula aše*<sup>e<sub>pres</sub></sup> *-ka akbus*<sub>pret</sub> *-ak-kum*  
 ‘This is what he said: “I will not sue<sub>pres</sub> you, I drop<sub>pret</sub> (my claim) against you”’ (Prag I 534:18ff.).

One linguistically interesting thing about performative use of verbs is that this function has no exclusive exponent. Perhaps for this reason performative utterances within a single language tend to exploit different verb forms: a default one (e. g., present tense first person singular in Standard Average European) coexists with less frequent exponents. So there is no wonder that Akkadian could occasionally use verb forms other than the Preterite to render this function. The following examples illustrate:

- (21) *inanna ina ša aḫātī-ma išpur-am lūmur ta-me-ku<sub>sc</sub> ma-ši-a-ku<sub>sc</sub>*  
 ‘Now I do agree with what my sister (=you) has written to me.<sup>34</sup> I swear<sub>sc</sub>: I have forgotten<sub>sc</sub> <to reimburse you> (i. e. ‘I acknowledge my debt’)’ (AbB 6, 1:24ff.).

The SC *ta-me-ku* is performative, and this is the only clear example of the performative SC I have been able to find in OB letters.<sup>35</sup>

- (22) *ana epēšim annīm kī lā taplah lū tīde lū tīde aštapr*<sub>perf</sub> *-ak-kum*  
 ‘How did not you fear to do such a thing? Do know, do know: I warn<sub>perf</sub> you!’ (AbB 3, 45:9f., and see more similar examples and discussion in Sallaberger 1999:147).

This is performative use with a flavour of epistolary Perfect.

<sup>33</sup> Dercksen 2004:240f.

<sup>34</sup> Literally ‘I am eager to learn from what my sister has written to me.’

<sup>35</sup> Mayer 1976:200 brings a few putative examples of the performative SC and Pres. in OB literary texts. Their performative nature is doubtful to both W. R. Mayer and the present writer.

I am aware of no explicit performatives employing *iparras* in OB and OA letters, but one of course cannot exclude that they will turn up.

A few parallels from cognate languages might reveal the suggestive nature of the fact that the Pret. is the basic performative verb form in Akkadian.

Prose dialogues of Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH) and early Hebrew epigraphics employ the Perfect *qatal* as the only performative form (Wagner 1997, Schüle 2000, Rogland 2001).<sup>36</sup> Again, I think this evidence is due to the limited ability of the Hebrew Imperfect *yiqtol* to code the ongoing Present actual. In independent clauses of prose dialogues, BH Imperfect codes the present actual only in the conservative context of *wh*-questions, while corresponding declarative clauses use predicative participles with free personal subject pronouns, i. e. the innovative present tense in train of grammaticalization, as illustrated by the following minimal pair of verb forms:<sup>37</sup>

- (23) *ma-ttəbaqqēš<sub>imperf</sub> ... ʔūt ʔahḥay ʔānōkī məbaqqēš<sub>part</sub>*  
 ‘What are you looking for<sub>imperf?</sub> ... I am looking for<sub>part</sub> my brothers’  
 (Gen 37:15f.).

Now in Late Biblical Hebrew and in the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls there appear performative participles (Rogland 2001:115f.), and they ‘have completely ousted the perfect in performative utterances by the Mishnaic period’ (*idem* 117, with examples and literature). I believe that this shift is due to the fact that in the domain of indicative mood Mishnaic Hebrew used the Imperfect *yiqtol* only for future references (Segal 1927:153), while the predicative participle in its capacity of the ‘new Present’ ended up coding present-time situations of all semantic types and in all syntactic environments. Thus in Mishnaic Hebrew the grammar of Koinzidenzfall abides by the rule of European languages. The examples in (24) illustrate:

- (24) a. *mʔymty qwryn<sub>part</sub> ʔt šmʕ bʔrbyn* ‘From when do they recite<sub>part</sub> the  
 Shema in the evening?’ (Berakhot 1:1).  
*Wh*-question, a habitual situation.

<sup>36</sup> Outside of SBH, Ps 28:1 *ʔelākā YHWH ʔāqrā šūrī* ‘I call you, YHWH, my rock’ is, *pace* Mayer 1976:205 fn. 122, no performative. It is a habitual Imperfect: King David used to address his god ‘my rock.’

<sup>37</sup> In SBH dialogues, the Imperfect is freely used to express present-time habitual situations, cf. e. g. 1 S 9:6a. Thus the present-time sentences of BH receive different coding depending on situation type.

b. *kšm šyšrʾl nknsw lbryt bšlš mšwt kk grym nknsyn<sub>part</sub> bmylh wbtbylh wbyqrbn šnym mškbyn<sub>part</sub> wʾhd ʾynw mškb<sub>part</sub>*

'Just as Israelites entered into the covenant by three precepts, so proselytes enter<sub>part</sub> by circumcision, immersion, and a sacrifice. Two [of these, if omitted,] bar<sub>part</sub> [persons from becoming proselytes], and one does not bar<sub>part</sub>' (Gerim 2:4).

c. *nšb<sub>part</sub> ʾny bšmk hgdwl* 'I swear<sub>part</sub> by your great name...' (Taanith 3:8).

A similar development took place in Aramaic.

A few extant Old Aramaic monumental inscriptions of 9th–8th centuries BC do not have predicative participles.<sup>38</sup> The Imperfect for ongoing present does not turn up in these inscriptions either. The absence of references to ongoing present-time situations is most probably due to the genre.

In Egyptian Aramaic (EA) letters and legal documents the present actual is coded by the predicative Participle (Hug 1993:123; Muraoka–Porten 1998:196, 203f.), while the Imperfect in the present-time domain is largely constrained to non-referential readings in embedded clauses.<sup>39</sup> In independent clauses, future-time situations are coded by the Imperfect.<sup>40</sup> The Perfect is the only synthetic verb form used for past-time situations.<sup>41</sup> Thus in EA the Imperfect had been already expelled from the domain of present actual, but still survived in a semantically peripheral part of present-time domain, mostly in embedded predications.

The examples in (25) illustrate:<sup>42</sup>

(25) a. *lh šbq<sub>part</sub> ʾnh lh kdy mʾh<sub>part</sub> ydy wkt ʾbd<sub>part</sub> ʾnh lh* 'I do not leave<sub>part</sub> him alone, in so far as I am able<sub>part</sub>. And now, I take care<sub>part</sub> of him' (TAD 1, 2.4:4).

b. *wkt kl zy tšbh<sub>impf</sub> šlh ly* 'And now, whatever you desire<sub>impf</sub> send (word) to me (about it)!' (TAD 1, 2.4:7).

c. *bʾy ʾš zy yzbn<sub>impf</sub> bylʾ [r]bʾ* 'Seek out a man who would buy<sub>impf</sub> the big house' (TAD 1, 3.8:6).

<sup>38</sup> Degen 1969:116. The participles in Tell-Fakh 2–5, being part of the god Adad's titlature, are most probably substantivized, as in the Akkadian version of this bilingual inscription.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Muraoka–Porten 1998:196: 'The imperfect may be used in *generic* statements on what might or could happen, but not referring to a specific or particularised event.' See examples *ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> I have found no present-time *wh*-questions with dynamic verbs in the corpus.

<sup>41</sup> Muraoka–Porten 1998:195: 'No *impf.* has been identified which indicates an action in the past, whether punctiliar or durative/iterative/habitual.'

<sup>42</sup> Real telic present-time situations are rare in the corpus, yet I tried to choose the most 'dynamic' situations available.

d. *ʔzl ʔl PN wyntn<sub>impf</sub> lk ktwn* ‘Go to PN, and he will give<sub>impf</sub> you a tunic’ (TAD 1, 3.8:8).

The Perfect seems to be the only performative verb form in EA (Hug 1993, Muraoka–Porten 1998), the respective performative utterances being for the most part formulaic epistolary greetings and legally binding statements. The examples in (26) illustrate:

(26) a. *brkt<sub>perf</sub> -ky l-ptḥ* ‘I bless<sub>perf</sub> you to Ptah’ (TAD 1, 2.1:2)

b. *ʔmr PN<sub>1</sub> ʔrmy zy yb byrt<sup>ʔ</sup> qdm PN<sub>2</sub> rb hyl<sup>ʔ</sup> zy swn l-PN<sub>3</sub> w-PN<sub>4</sub> ... lʔmr rḥqt<sub>perf</sub> mkm mn byt PN<sub>5</sub>*  
 ‘(date and locality) said PN<sub>1</sub>, Aramaean of Yeb the fortress, in the presence of PN<sub>2</sub>, commander of the garrison of Syene, to PN<sub>3</sub> and PN<sub>4</sub> ... as follows: I withdraw<sub>perf</sub> from you (my claim) on (lit. ‘from’) the house of PN<sub>5</sub> ...’ (Cowley 1923, No. 25:2ff.).

The Biblical Aramaic (BA) corpus, although relatively small, is favourable for the study of verbal grammatical semantics, because it contains narratives, letters and representation of spoken utterances.<sup>43</sup>

BA Imperfect in the domain of indicative present has only non-referential readings in embedded clauses, similarly to EA. Besides, the Imperfect has future-time and modal readings. In narratives, it appears in descriptive and backgrounded predications, i. e. behaves similarly to the Classical Arabic Imperfect in *ḥāl*-constructions and to OB past-time *iparras* in epic narratives (see e. g. Dan 4:2; 7:16).

BA Participle is used as the ongoing present of telic verbs, for future references (unlike EA!), as imperfective past (e. g. Dan 5:5), and even as a narrative form competing with the Perfect, probably as a kind of *praesens historicum* (e. g. Dan 3:26).

The Participle is the only verb form used for performative utterances in BA.<sup>44</sup> The examples in (27) illustrate the points that are most relevant for the present study:

(27) a. *šibʔā ʔiddānīn yaḥlāḥūn<sub>imperf</sub> ʔlāk ʔd dī tinda<sub>imperf</sub> dī šallūt ʔllāʔā bəmalḳūt ʔnāšā ʔlman dī yišbē<sub>imperf</sub> yittaninnah<sub>imperf</sub>*

‘Seven times will pass<sub>imperf</sub> over you until you have learnt<sub>imperf</sub> that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives<sub>imperf</sub> it to whom he pleases<sub>imperf</sub>’ (Dan 4:29).

b. *qiryatā mārādātā ʔbīštā bānayim<sub>part</sub>*

<sup>43</sup> The following remarks partly depend on Bauer–Leander 1927.

<sup>44</sup> Esra 4:14 *ʔl dānā šəlahnā wəḥōdaʔnā ləmalḳā* ‘therefore we have sent this information to the king’ is most probably an epistolary perfect (with Pardee–Whiting 1987:28 fn. 84 and *pace* Mayer 1976:190).

'They are building<sub>part</sub> this rebellious and wicked city' (Esra 4:12).<sup>45</sup>

c. *wəlāk tārādīn<sub>part</sub> min 'ānāšā ... wə'isbā kəṭōrīn lāk yaṭa'amūn<sub>imperf</sub>* 'You will be driven<sub>part</sub> from the mankind ... and you will be made to eat<sub>imperf</sub> grass like oxen' (Dan 4:22).

d. *lākōn 'āmərīn<sub>part</sub> 'ammayā 'ummayyā wəliššānayyā*  
'(It) is required<sub>part</sub> of you [lit. 'told to you'], (men of all) peoples, nations and languages!', the contents of the order follows ( Dan 3:4).<sup>46</sup>

e. *qāl min šəmayyā nəḫal lāk 'āmərīn<sub>part</sub> nəbūkadnešsar malkā malkūtā 'ādāt minnāk*

'A voice came down from heaven: It is told<sub>part</sub> to you, King Nebuchadnezzar! Sovereignty has gone from you' (Dan 4:28).

f. *məhōdē'īn<sub>part</sub> 'ānahnā ləmallā*

'We (hereby) inform<sub>part</sub> the king' (Esra 4:16).

Examples (d) and (e) are performative utterances with no explicit 1<sup>st</sup> person speaker (suppressed due to pragmatic reasons), quite similar to an airport announcement 'Passengers *are requested* to board the plane.'

In Classical Syriac, the Imperfect has almost entirely lost its indicative readings; the predicative Participle with cliticised pronominal subjects has acquired the status of the new Present-Future. The proper performative verb form of Classical Syriac is, as expected, the Participle (see Rogland 2001a).<sup>47</sup>

M. Rogland suggests that the performative use of the Participle in Qumran Aramaic and Classical Syriac 'should probably be viewed as an application of its use for the actual present' (Rogland 2001:247 fn. 14; same in Rogland 1999:279 fn. 11). Our study corroborates this insight and shows that the use of the Perfect as the exponent of performative function in BH and EA is a grammatical retention: it was brought about by the pre-historic layout of verb grammatical semantics in the respective languages. In our SBH and EA corpora, sentences about Present time are in transition: the 'old Present' \**yaqtulu* not quite gone, the 'new Present' being under way to full grammaticalization. The semantically motivated distribution of both tenses in present-time sentences depending on the situation type (as outlined above) proved to be fragile; the \**yaqtulu* form will soon be

<sup>45</sup> Much like in Classical Syriac and unlike BH, 'the new Present' in BA may have a zero 3<sup>rd</sup> person subject.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. a Perfect in a similar BH performative context: *wəyyōmār lō hammälāk lamma təḏabbēr 'ōd dəḫārākā 'āmartī 'attā wəšibā taḥlōqū 'ūl haššādā* 'The king said, "Why say any more? **I rule** that you and Ziba are to share the property"' (2 Sam 19:30, JB).

<sup>47</sup> Rogland 1999 showed that this is also the case in Qumran Aramaic.

more or less completely replaced by the predicative Participle in the whole sphere of indicative Present and Future. One consequence of this innovation is the new way of coding the performative force.

The Pres. *iparras* lost the most important segment of its present-time uses; however Akkadian never built a ‘new Present.’ This entailed a peculiar method (to be discussed below) of coding present-time situations in OB and OA by the Pres. *and* the SC, as well as retention of past-time tenses for performative utterances in later periods of Akkadian.<sup>48</sup>

A comparable situation is observable in the Oman variety of Mehri.<sup>49</sup> The past tense of this modern South Arabian idiom is the Perfect *katūb*. A non-finite form *kaḫbōna* (= Fut.) with (pro)nominal subject is used for future references:

- (28)  ${}_1nāḫā$   ${}_2māšmārūtān_{Fut}$   ${}_3wə-4lā$   ${}_5gəzmūtān_{Fut}$   
 ‘ ${}_1$ we will  ${}_2$ undergo trial by ordeal  ${}_3$ and  ${}_4$ not  ${}_5$ swear’ (MT 2:6).<sup>50</sup>

The Imperfect *yakūtāb* (widely believed to be cognate with the Akkadian Pres.) is used to express habitual present-time and past-time situations:

- (29) a.  $u$   ${}_1māt$   ${}_2ḫābū$   ${}_3šīnāml_{Perf}$   ${}_4tīs$   ${}_5yāšáwš_{Imperf}$   ${}_6u$   ${}_7yətḫáwḫ$   ${}_8šəwáyr$   ${}_9tayt$   
 ${}_{10}ḡār$   ${}_{11}tayt$   ${}_{12}w-{}_{13}yāḫābākyəm_{Imperf}$   ${}_{14}aylōm$   
 ‘ ${}_1$ When  ${}_2$ people  ${}_3$ see it, they are  ${}_5$ afraid  ${}_6$ and  ${}_7$ throw  ${}_8$ stones  ${}_{10}$ on  
 ${}_9$ one  ${}_{11}$ another,  ${}_{12}$ and  ${}_{13}$ make  ${}_{14}$ orphans  ${}_{13}$ cry’ (MT 16:2, about the lunar eclipse).
- b.  $wə-{}_1ḫābū$   ${}_2yātāḫáydān_{Imperf}$   ${}_3bī-{}_4həm$   ${}_5wəlāken$   ${}_6mən$   ${}_7sənáy$   ${}_8əlyōmāh$   ${}_9l-$   
 ${}_{10}ād$   ${}_{11}əḫād$   ${}_{12}yātāḫáydān_{Imperf}$   ${}_{13}bī-{}_{14}həm$   ${}_9lā$   
 ‘ ${}_1$ People  ${}_2$ used-to-believe  ${}_3$ in  ${}_4$ them,  ${}_5$ but  ${}_6$ since  ${}_8$ those  ${}_7$ years  ${}_{9,11}$ no-  
 body  ${}_{12}$ believes  ${}_{13}$ in  ${}_{14}$ them  ${}_{10}$ any longer’ (MT 25:19).

The choice of verb form in non-habitual present-time sentences depends on situation type: the Perfect serves for stative situations, otherwise

<sup>48</sup> On the performative Perf. in later Akkadian dialects see Mayer 1976:194, 197, 206 and Cancik-Kirschbaum 1996:64. It looks like the choice of the Perf. for this function has to do with its innovative use as the main past-tense verb form in post-OB/OA vernacular Akkadian dialects.

<sup>49</sup> My data on Mehri are drawn from Frolova 2005 who uses Stroemer 1999 (= MT) as her corpus. Wagner 1953 arrives at results somewhat different from Frolova 2005. Rössler 2001:390f. compares the functions of the Akkadian Pres. and Mehri Imperfect on the basis of GAG and Wagner 1953 and concludes that they are very similar.

<sup>50</sup> Numbers refer to the No. of text and line in MT. Translations largely follow the Edition.

a compound form including the prefix *d* + the Imperfect *yākūtāb* is used.<sup>51</sup> Etymologically, the prefix *d* goes back to the relative pronoun, i. e. *d-yākūtāb* is in its origin a nominalized predication.<sup>52</sup> The examples in (30) illustrate:

- (30) a.  ${}_1h\bar{o} \text{ } {}_2s\bar{a}t\bar{o}k\bar{a}k_{\text{Perf}} \text{ } {}_3\bar{a}l\text{-}{}_3h\bar{a}b\text{-}{}_4y\bar{e}$   
 ‘I miss my parents’ (MT 20:41).  
 b.  ${}_1\bar{a}l\bar{h}ayki_{\text{Imv}} \text{ } {}_2n\bar{u}ka_{\text{Perf}} \text{ } {}_3t\bar{o}g\bar{a}r \text{ } {}_4w\bar{a}\text{-}{}_3\delta\text{-}y\bar{a}h\bar{a}d\bar{y}an_{\text{Impf}} \text{ } {}_6h\bar{a}y\bar{n}\bar{i}\bar{\theta} \text{ } {}_7\bar{a}š\bar{a}y\bar{y}\bar{a}t$   
 ‘Hurry! A rich man has come and is-distributing jewellery to women’ (MT 3:5).

The performative function is expressed by the Perfect *kātūb*:

- (31)  ${}_1\bar{a}š\bar{k}\bar{a}r\bar{a}rk_{\text{Perf}} \text{ } {}_2b\bar{a}\text{-}{}_3h\bar{m}\bar{o}f\bar{i} \text{ } {}_4\delta\bar{a}\text{-}{}_5h\bar{o} \text{ } {}_6\delta\bar{a}l\bar{a}mk_{\text{Perf}}$   
 ‘I confess of myself that I have acted unjustly’ (MT 19:24).

The retention<sup>53</sup> of the past tense form for Koinzidenzfall is probably due to the absence of a ‘new Present’ (i. e. a morphologically uniform exponent of present-time situations) in Mehri.

4. We will now look at correlations between situation types and morphological shapes of predicates in OB and OA sentences about the Present time.

4.1. Depictions of telic processes going on at the SpT are not encountered on every page of published OB and OA epistolary corpora. This might be due to the written milieu of communication and its contents: ‘quick’ actions are often irrelevant,<sup>54</sup> the authors tend to speak about their past and future more often than about their present moment. I suggest that real-life telic processes contemporaneous with the SpT can be represented by the SC.

In what follows I discuss a few OB sentences in which SC forms are probably used to refer to telic processes under way at the SpT.

- (32) PN *annikām sanīq-niāti-m[a] alākam ana šēri-ka ula nīle”e*  
 ‘PN is checking on us here so that we cannot go to you’ (AbB 9, 88: 6–11, translation follows the Edition).

<sup>51</sup> JM:XIX: ‘The indep. imperf. describes durative action and, (modified by the particle *d*) punctual action.’

<sup>52</sup> Note that ‘forms beginning with *t-* or *n-* do not occur with the verbal *d*-prefix, but they do occur with the relative *d*-prefix’ (JM:XIX fn. 2). It follows that in verb forms with the personal prefixes *t-* and *n-* the difference between simple and compound Imperfect does not surface.

<sup>53</sup> The evidence presented in this Excursus speaks in favour of retention.

<sup>54</sup> Note that sentences ‘He is building a house’ and ‘He is chopping down a tree’ are both telic.

AHw. 1021a puts AbB 9, 88:8 under the gloss (*über*)*prüfen, kontrollieren*, while CAD S 140b has it under *put pressure on* and translates ‘PN is pressing us here so that we cannot go to you.’ Now *is pressing* is an unambiguous atelic event.<sup>55</sup> Verbs indicating activities usually form no SC. Moreover, as we will see below (§ 4.2), controlled atelic events taking place at the SpT are coded by the Pres. Since a resultative reading of *saniq-niāti* ( $\approx$  *has done sanāqu*) is hardly compatible with the contents of the letter,<sup>56</sup> I believe that in this particular case the decision of AHw. (i. e. a telic meaning for this verb form) finds support in the grammar of Akkadian (an atelic agentive reading would require the Pres.).

(33) *anāku sanqāku-ma alākam ul ele”i*

‘I am being checked’, so I am not able to go’ (Goetze 1958, No. 42:8f.).<sup>57</sup>

The close similarity of (32) and (33) makes it possible that here too the SC form might reflect a telic non-subject-controlled process *undergo checking*. But as we will see in § 4.2 below, if atelic or habitual situations at the SpT happen to be described by agentless (semantically) passive verbal clauses with personal subjects, these clauses choose as their predicates the SC of simple stems rather than the Pres. of passive stems. Thus the suggested morphological difference in coding telic and atelic situations at the SpT (the SC vs. the Pres.) does not apply to this kind of clauses.

(34) *kīma tīdū ana antim hi-ša-a-am ēzib<sub>pret</sub>-ma adān kasim šaqālim*

*iktašd<sub>perf</sub>-anni-ma tamkārūm is-ra-an-ni<sub>SC</sub>*

‘As you know, I drew up<sub>pret</sub> a debt-note (obliging me to pay) for the slave-girl, and (now) my term to pay the silver has come<sub>perf</sub> and the merchant is exacting<sub>SC</sub> (payment from) me’ (AbB 2, 94:9).

R. Frankena translates in the Edition ‘und der Kaufmann hat bei mir die Zahlung eingefordert’. CAD E 332b translates ‘the term for the pay-

<sup>55</sup> At this juncture, I would like to quote at some length Vendler’s original observations on the internal temporal properties of *activities* and *accomplishments*: ‘If someone stops running a mile, he did not run a mile; if one stops drawing a circle, he did not draw a circle. But the man who stops running did run, and he who stops pushing the cart did push it. [...] Thus we see that while running or pushing a cart has no set terminal point, running a mile or drawing a circle do have a “climax,” which has to be reached if the action is to be what it is claimed to be’ (Vendler 1967:100).

<sup>56</sup> I do not consider the possibility of *sa<sub>3</sub>-ni-iq* being a predicative participle *pāris* because in the corpus *pāris* is largely constrained to the function of *nomen agentis*.

<sup>57</sup> A. Goetze translates in the Edition ‘I myself am busy and cannot come’, but in view of AbB 9, 88 hardly convincing. CAD S 140b translates ‘I am hard pressed and cannot go.’

ment of the money has caught up with me and the merchant has demanded payment from me.<sup>58</sup>

At first glance, an understanding of *esr-anni* in the spirit of the Present Perfect (as in the cited translations, and see below on the past-time usage of the SC) cannot be ruled out completely, but the sequence of tenses in this text makes a past-time reading unlikely. The resultative meaning of SC<sup>59</sup> does not apply here either: pragmatically, the author's message is hardly about the creditor's resultative state 'having demanded/Eingefordert-Haben.' Thus a present-time (and most probably telic) sense for this SC token looks almost inescapable. The following example shows that the verb *esēru* A (CAD E 332) does have telic meanings:

(35) 6 <sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> GÍN KÙ.BABBAR PN *i-si-ir*<sub>pret</sub>-*ma ilqe*<sub>pret</sub>  
 'PN **asked**<sub>pret</sub> **for the payment** of six and two-thirds shekels of silver and received<sub>pret</sub> (it)' (BE 6/1 82:10, text and translation follow CAD E:332b).

(36) É.GAL *is-ra-an-ni-ma ana maḥrī-ka alākam ul ele*<sup>60</sup>  
 'The Palace is exacting (payment from) me, so I am not able to come to you' (AbB 10, 73:10f.).

The above analysis of (34) fully applies to this text; in what follows the author asks the addressee to send him the GÚ.UN of the author's field as soon as possible, doubtless to be able to cope with the demand of the Palace.

(37) *kīma is-ri-ku*<sub>SC</sub> *ul tīde*  
 'Don't you know that I am being pressed<sub>SC</sub> (for payment?)' (AbB 2, 96:36).

As in (33), grammatically there is no telling if this is a telic or an atelic situation.

(38) *aššum dibbātum lā ša-ak-n[a] x [...] u[m]ma atta-ma x B1 nam da-ab-ba-ku*  
 'Since the agreement is not reached ... you will have to say the following: "I am negotiating (= resolving the dispute?) X/with Y"' (AbB 10, 148:27ff.).

<sup>58</sup> The general gloss for the CAD entry *esēru* A is *to press for payment due, to collect, to put a person under pressure*.

<sup>59</sup> It has long been recognized in grammatical studies of Akkadian (starting perhaps with Ungnad 1918) that with certain semantic types of verbs both the verbal adjective *parsum* and the SC have the basic meaning of the Resultative. Therefore the verbal adjective *parsum* of telic and punctual verbs may be termed *the resultative participle*. Recently, this view has been most cogently expounded in Kouwenberg 2000, with illuminating references to cross-linguistic studies of Resultatives.

The text is slightly damaged,<sup>60</sup> still the suggested interpretation (it largely follows the Edition) looks quite plausible. If behind x BI *nam* there was indeed a noun in the acc., we most probably have another example of the two-place SC with telic reading at the SpT.

- (39) PN 2 *līm a-mu-ra-am ihuz-am-ma ana qaqqadī-ka-ma šu-úr-du*  
 ‘PN has taken two thousands Amorites and is advancing against you (... night and day the guard should not come down from the wall)’ (AS 22, 7:3–8).

I believe that *šurdû* *advance* with a locative argument *ana qaqqadī-ka* is a transparent example of a telic intransitive verb of motion. The telic event is clearly in progress at the SpT. As a motion verb in the SC, *ana qaqqadī-ka šurdu* compares well with OA ‘X PN *naš’-ak-kum*’ ‘PN is carrying you X’ to be discussed below.

Finally, more-than-one-place SC of *punctual* transitive verbs can render nuances of prospective present:

- (40) *anumma PN attard-ak-kum eqelšu e-ri-[i]š-ma 2 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR nadnāk-šum 2 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR itti iprika amur-ma idiš-šum*  
 ‘Look, I have sent PN to you. He cultivated his field, and I *have to give* him two shekels of silver. Look out two shekels of silver from your barley rations and give (them) to him’ (AbB 4, 149:10–13).<sup>61</sup>

All the other examples of this kind known to me come from outside of the corpus, namely from OB Mari. Still for the sake of comparison I adduce one such example, found within a prophecy:

- (41) *[a]nāku-ma ka-ab-sà-ak-šu-nu-ti*  
 ‘It is I who *will tread/is going to tread* upon them’ (ARMT 10, 53:16 = ARMT 26/1, 195:16).

In both instances, a straightforward stative/resultative interpretation looks far-fetched (and cf. also the SC form *tamēku* meaning ‘I swear’ discussed above, ex. 21). Furthermore, this is a deictic usage clearly distinct from the well-known future-time readings of the SC in the contexts

<sup>60</sup> The preceding text of the letter is quite well preserved, but it unfortunately does not yield much for the reconstruction of the damaged part. It seems that l. 27 introduces a new theme already familiar to both correspondents. From examples in CAD D 8 (*dabābu* = *to discuss a topic, to come to an agreement, to negotiate*) it follows that x BI *nam* in l. 29 could be a noun in the acc. standing either for the subject-matter of the negotiations or for their participant.

<sup>61</sup> See discussions of this text in the Edition (p. 99) and in Illingworth 1990:374.

where it has a reference point posterior to the SpT. These latter readings are readily explained by the basic atemporal and stative semantics of the SC. The following example illustrates:

- (42) *šeam amaḥḥar-ma kašdāk-ki*  
 ‘I will receive the barley and (then) come to you’ (AbB 13, 87:8’f.).<sup>62</sup>

Note that the Pres. of both telic and punctual verbs with present-time reference has habitual sense:

- (43) a. *u kaspam ša ibaššū ana ḥušāḥi-ya agammar<sub>Pres</sub> mimma lā i-ri-ḥa-am*  
 ‘Und das Silber, das vorhanden ist, *gebe* ich für meine Bedürfnisse *aus<sub>Pres</sub>*, so daß mir nichts übrig bleibt’ (Prag I, 517:3’ff.)  
 The author *used to spend* on his immediate needs whatever he earned, not being able to save anything.
- b. *tamkāram ša tuppi šarrim našū ... nušetleq*  
 ‘We let through (only such) a merchant that has the king’s tablet’ (AbB 2, 84:8f.).

Two verbs commonly used in the Kültepe correspondence to denote transportation of goods are interesting for our study: *našā’um* and *radā’um*. They occur in identical contexts and in all probability are synonymous. Yet, surprisingly, they disagree in their morphosyntactic behaviour.

OA letter-writers consistently use sentences of the type X PN *naš’-ak-kum*/X PN *aššēri-ka naš’-am*<sup>63</sup> ‘PN is bringing you X (from me)’ for present-time references.

Consider the examples in (44):

- (44) a. 2 GÍN KÙ.GI *a-na ni-qi-kà* PN *na-áš-a-kum*  
 ‘2 S. Gold für dein Opfer bringt dir Puzur-Ilī’ (Prag I 447:36f., end of letter).<sup>64</sup>
- b. 4 <sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> *ma-na* 5 <GÍN> KÙ.BAB[BAR] *ku-nu-ku-ni* PN *na-áš-a-kum*  
 ‘4 <sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> M. 5 <S.> Sil[ber] unter unseren Siegeln bringt dir Ušupī[š-kum]’ (Prag I, 484:15ff., a new subject-matter follows).
- c. *na-áš-ú-ni-kum* ‘(Den Rest des Silbers) bringt man dir’ (Prag I 564:11, an instruction regarding the use of this silver follows).
- d. PN *na-áš-a-ku-ši-na* ‘PN is bringing them<sub>f</sub> to you’ (BIN 6, 35:4’)
- e. [*a-w*]*i-lúm* / KÙ.BABBAR 10 *ma-[na]* [*bu*]-*lá-ti-šu* / *a-še-ri-kà na-áš-a-am*

<sup>62</sup> The SC of *kašādu* is used this way ‘passim in OB letters,’ cf. CAD K 273a.

<sup>63</sup> This latter sub-pattern is attested e. g. in CCT 4, 33b:15f. cited below, but in most cases the 3 pers. SC token of *našā’um* in this use has both the ventive and bound dative 2 pers. pronoun.

<sup>64</sup> The common word order in this verb phrase is OSV.

‘L’homme apporte chez toi de l’argent—(pour une valeur) de 10 mines—de son capital d’exploitation’ (CCT 4, 33b:15f., translation follows Michel 1991, No. 13).

In OA, the lative ventive on the 3 pers. SC of *našā’um* meaning ‘to transport goods’ (CAD N<sub>2</sub> 87a, cf. 89b) is obligatory when the goal is the location of the addressee (i. e. ‘the second person’).<sup>65</sup> It follows that in this verb phrase *našā’um* is a motion verb<sup>66</sup> and probably denotes a dynamic situation (note that, unlike *našā’um*, basic motion verbs in Akkadian do not build the SC with trivial meanings).

Thus, in terms of elementary features of actionality discussed above, ‘X PN *naš’-ak-kum*’ is [+ durative], [+ dynamic], [– homogeneous].

The speaker can be the subject of this SC predication, while the goal of motion is still the location of his interlocutor:

- (45) a. *ana* 15 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR *raqqatam na-aš-a-kum*  
 ‘I am bringing you a thin cloth worth 15 shekels of silver’ (RA 59, 172:20f.)  
 b. *ú a-na-ku* 10 TÚG *dam-qú-tim i-a-ú-tim ša na-aš-a-ku-ni ú-zi-ni pí-té*  
 ‘Let me know concerning 10 fine cloths of mine that I am bringing you’ (BIN 4, 7:19–22).

The contents of both letters makes it clear that the bringing was not in progress at the SpT but rather was supposed to be done at a later date, so perhaps a prospective present ‘I am going to bring’ will make a better translation for (45).

Note that to say ‘I/PN *will bring* X to you’ the OA letter-writers were able to use the same verb phrase in the Pres.:

- (46) a. 20 *ma-na* KÙ.BABBAR *ú ½ ma-na* KÙ.GI ... *a-na-ší-am*  
 ‘I will bring you (lit. ‘to where you are’) 20 minas of silver and half mina of gold’ (CCT 3, 33a:13–16, cf. AKT 3, 71:8).  
 b. *i-na na-áp-tù ha-ra-nim* PN<sub>1</sub> *ù* PN<sub>2</sub> *i-na-ší-ú-ni-ku-um*

<sup>65</sup> Lewy 1922:11 paid special attention to this predication in his discussion of ‘Energicus’ in Kültepe texts: ‘Das Bestreben, die dativischen Suffixe nach Möglichkeit an den *a*-Modus anzuhängen, führt hier auch verhältnismässig häufig zu Bildungen wie *na-aš-a-ku-um* Liv 2, 13ff.; Liv 17, 5; *na-aš-a-ku-um* Scheil, RT 1909, 55, Z. 8; *na-aš-a-ki-im* Cont<sup>30</sup> 19, 8; 19 u.ä.’

<sup>66</sup> Cf. the criteria for setting apart verbs of motion (with obligatory locative argument) and ‘dative’ non-motion verbs (with obligatory indirect object) elaborated in Kouwenberg 2002. K. shows how *šapārum send* is morphosyntactically different from *nadānum give* or *qabūm ‘tell’* in the contexts where the goal or beneficiary/addressee is ‘the second person.’

‘At the (re)opening of the road, PN<sub>1</sub> and PN<sub>2</sub> will bring you (afore-mentioned goods)’ (BIN 6, 115:5’ff.).

The time adverbial in 46b unambiguously locates the situation in the writer’s future.

Kültepe correspondence has no epistolary Perf., while it is common in OB letters of similar contents.<sup>67</sup> This fact and the first-person SC examples in (45) make me wonder whether the OA ‘PN *naš’-ak-kum*’ pattern might be a pragmatic near-equivalent of the OB ‘*uštābil-am/uštābil-ak-kum*’ pattern (‘I have sent to you’ meaning ‘I am going to send to you’).

The OB ‘*uštābil-am/uštābil-ak-kum*’ views the forthcoming sending from the temporal vantage point of the addressee, i. e. as already having taken place by the time of decoding the message; the writer’s future is represented as the reader ‘present perfect.’

It is conceivable that the OA ‘PN *naš’-am/naš’-ak-kum*’ represents the same real-life situation (i. e. the forthcoming sending) as contemporaneous with the letter-writing (provided the letter traveled with the very messenger who delivered goods to the addressee).

The SC of *našā’um* may be used in the same sense as in (44–45) but, as expected, without the ventive if the goal is the third party:

- (47) I TÚG *na-ma-šu-ḥa-am ša A-ḥa-ḥa a-na šú-ḥa-ri-im Ì-lí-ba-ni na-ší-šum*  
*i-na wa-ar-ki-ú-tim* I TÚG *ní-ib-ra-ra-am ú-šé-ba-lá-šum*  
 ‘Ilī-bāni lui apporte une étoffe-*namašuhhum* provenant d’Ahaha pour le serviteur, et plus tard, je lui enverrai une étoffe-*nibrarum*’ (BIN 4, 10:31–36, translation follows LAPO 19, 303).

The SC describes a situation contemporaneous with the SpT, while the Pres. *ušebbal-aš-šum* (with the optional ventive) points to the future. This shows once more that the ventive in ‘PN *naš’-ak-kum*’ retains its full force of a spatial deictic morpheme.

<sup>67</sup> An OA example in Pardee–Whiting 1987:23 (TCL 4, 2:17–23) seems to be unique. This epistolary Perf. is also exceptional syntactically: unlike in OB, it appears in a relative clause *ša uš-té-bi<sub>4</sub>-lá-ku-ni*. I wonder whether this clause can be assigned a past-time reference vis-à-vis the author’s present moment. Interestingly, the epistolary Perf. of *šapāru* and *šūbulu* shows up in Middle Assyrian letters, though of course we have to keep in mind that in MA letters *iptaras* is the main narrative form (Cancik-Kirschbaum 1996:63) and therefore its semantic range is different from that of OA *iptaras*. For examples of MA epistolary perfect see e. g. KAV 99:11; 100:8; 109:8; Cancik-Kirschbaum 1996, No. 9:6, 9. This divergence in verbal usage between the Kültepe correspondence and MA letters might be due to different conventions of epistolary structure.

GAG 133k and GKT 130 cite one instance of this SC verb phrase appearing in the context of the vetitive negation.<sup>68</sup> The negative wish is directed to the document's addressee:

- (48) TÚG.ĪLA *ku-ta-mi ú AN.NA e-na-áš-a-ti-ma a-na qá-qí-dí-a e-áp-lá-ah*  
 'Do not transport *kutānu* fabrics and tin lest I have to be afraid for myself' (CCT 1, 50/EL 296:12–15, translation follows CAD N<sub>2</sub> 87b).<sup>69</sup>

For want of additional examples, there is little point in speculations on the remarkable tenacity of the SC of *našū'm* in this environment, as opposed to the normal Pret. base of *e-áp-lá-ah*.

I believe that the basic meaning of *naši* is *he has (it) with him/under his control*, and its meaning *he brings (something to you)* within the predication discussed above is a derived one; this predication is not attested in OB. In OB letters, the SC of *našū'm* is a clear-cut semantic stative:

- (49) *kašpam ul našiāku-ma ukultam ul ašām*  
 'I have no silver, so I can buy no food' (AbB 1, 132:7f.).

In OB contexts where a 3 pers. SC token of *našū'm* might look like expressing movement towards the interlocutor it has no ventive, so most probably this form keeps its stative reading:

- (50) a. [*mār*]*i šipri maḥrūm bussurat ḥadēm na-ši-kum*  
 'The first messenger *has* a good news for you' (YOS 10, 25:28').<sup>70</sup>  
 b. *šumma PN ittalk<sub>pt</sub>-am-ma SIG.ĪLA na-ši umma atta-ma 5 GÚ.UN*  
*síG.ĪLA ana PN<sub>2</sub> ušur šumma šimam na-ši I šimam liššur-am*  
 'If PN comes<sub>pt</sub> to you<sub>vent</sub> with wool (lit. 'and he has/brings<sub>SC</sub> wool'), this (is what) you (will say): "Reserve 5 talents of wool for PN<sub>2</sub>." If he has<sub>SC</sub> merchandise, let him keep 1 (piece of) merchandise for me' (AbB 12, 50:23–28).

The verb *radā'um* frequently appears in Kültepe with apparently the same lexical meaning and in the environment of the same syntac-

<sup>68</sup> Unfortunately, this is also the only occurrence of the vetitive morpheme + SC in OA known to the present writer.

<sup>69</sup> EL translates: 'Hättest du doch die Stoffe, die *kutānu*(-Stoffe) und das Blei nicht gebracht, und möchte ich doch für mein Haupt nicht fürchten müssen!', but hardly correct.

<sup>70</sup> Hardly *našēk-kum!* Same in relative clauses AbB 9, 200:5 (*tuppam ša PN na-šu-kum*) and 270:7 (*PN ša tuppī na-šu-kim*). Cf. also AbB 11, 160:23ff.: *PN ... kašpam na-šu-ú-ma* probably means '[while] PN ... has the silver (with him)' rather than '[while] PN is (already) carrying (with him) the silver' (Edition's translation). This suggestion is meant to explain the contrast between the OA usage (+ ventive) and OB usage (– ventive) when the goal/beneficiary is the interlocutor.

tic terms as *našā'um*, but its SC is not in use (the SC of *redūm* does not seem to be attested in the whole of OA and OB epistolary literature and is very rare elsewhere). The Pres. is the only tense form of *radā'um* used for non-past references. Let us briefly review the evidence.

- (51) a. *mì-ma a-nim PN i-ra-de<sub>8</sub>-a-kum*  
 'PN is carrying you<sub>sg</sub> all this' (AKT 1, 23:28f., end of letter). Cf. also e. g. BIN 4, 92:21; 226:20; BIN 6, 12:26.
- b. 6 GÚ ù *it-ra-sú* AN.NA 12 TÚG *ša li-wi-tim* 3 ANŠE *ša-lá-me En-um-A-šur i-ra-de<sub>8</sub>-a-ku-nu-tí*  
 'Ennum-Aššur vous conduit 3 ânes noirs (chargés de) 6 talents d'étain et son surplus, ainsi que 12 étoffes d'emballage' (AKT 2, 22:5–8, beginning of letter, translation follows LAPO 19, 8). Cf. also e. g. AKT 3, 70:9; BIN 4, 3:22; 13:10; 221:11; CCT 2, 1:15.
- c. *a-ma me-er-at-ki i-ra-de<sub>8</sub>-ú-nim ra-mì-i-ší*  
 'Look, they are bringing (to where you are)<sub>vent</sub> your daughter, treat her with love!' (AKT 1, 14:25f.).
- d. *a-ḥa-ma* 22 TÚG.ḤI.A *qá-áb-li-ú-tim PN i-ra-de<sub>8</sub>*  
 'Besides, PN is bringing 22 medium-quality cloths' (CCT 2, 25:24f.).

The Pres. tokens of *radā'um* without the ventive and bound pronouns are relatively rarer ones but not at all exceptional, cf. e. g. BIN 6, 201:12 ([*i-ra-de<sub>8</sub>*]); AKT 3, 103:13 (*i-ra-de<sub>8</sub>-ú*).

The context of CCT 2, 25 suggests that in (51d) the goal of movement are the letter's addressees. Thus, unlike in the case of *našā'um*, here 'short' forms are not necessarily opposed to 'long' ones (*iraddi-ak-kum*) in terms of participants, i. e. the 'bare' *iraddi* does not predict that the goal is the third party.

It seems that the Pres. of *radā'um* may be used interchangeably with the *naš'-ak-kum* predication discussed above:

- (52) a. *mì-ma a-nim ku-nu-ki-a Ku-lu-ma-a i-ra-de<sub>8</sub>-a-kum* ... I TÚG *ku-ta-num ša PN Ku-lu-ma-a na-áš-a-kum* ... *Ku-lu-ma-a i-ra-de<sub>8</sub>-a-kum*  
 'Kulumāya is bringing you all this under my seals ... Kulumāya is carrying you along I *kutānum*-cloth (originating) from PN ... Kulumāya is bringing you (the aforementioned quantity of tin)' (CCT 2, 2:38ff., 44f., 49).
- b. *mì-ma a-ni-[im ku]-nu-ki ša A-zi-[a ku-a]-tí a-ra-de<sub>8</sub>-a-kum* ... *ša-ku-kam ù pá-pá-ar-dí-lam a-na šú-ḥa-ar-tí I-ku-pì-Ištar na-áš-a-kum*

‘I am going to bring you all this under the seals of *A-zi-a*... Ikūppī-Ištar is carrying you a *pappardilum*-belt<sup>71</sup> for the young girl<sup>72</sup>’ (BIN 6, 78:11f., 24ff.).

Summing up, there is every reason to believe that in Kültepe texts ‘X PN *naš-ak-kum*’ represents the respective situation as contemporaneous with the SpT, while ‘X PN *inašši-ak-kum*’ has a future reference. For *radā’um* (as well as for most verbs of motion in letters) the SC is unavailable. This kind of defective paradigm is of course typical for atelic verbs (and see below § 4.2). Hence I am tempted to propose that an assumed atelic (i. e. non-directional) meaning of *redûm* (*take along, carry*) is so tenacious that this verb can be used for present-time references (in the way of atelic verbs) even in the telic context of directive ventive. This suggestion would also explain the rationale of [– ventive] tokens of *radā’um* with much the same meaning. On this hypothesis, the latter ones would be explicitly atelic-durative (‘he is carrying/bearing’).

In OB letters the verb *redûm* in the sphere of non-past has, as expected, either habitual present-time (cf. AbB 10, 171:15, 21) or future references. I have found only one instance of the Pres. of *redûm* + ventive in AbB 1–13:<sup>73</sup>

(53) *awîlê ša ... PN i-re-ed-di-a-a[k-kum]*  
 ‘People that ... PN is going to lead to you’ (AbB 2, 76:6–10; the Edition: ‘führen wird’).

Let me now introduce into the discussion another ‘deviant’ use of the SC. It sometimes appears in macrosyntactic slots in which one would expect to find the Pret. or the Perf.<sup>74</sup> Consider the examples in (54):

(54) a. GU<sub>4</sub>.H1.A ... *ḥalqū<sub>SC</sub>-ma ina qāti PN iṣbatū-šunū <ti>*  
 ‘Oxen ... were lost<sub>SC</sub>, but (afterwards) they found them in the hand of PN’ (Goetze 1958, No. 28:4–8).  
 b. *maš’āku<sub>SC</sub>-ma allik-am*  
 ‘I was robbed<sub>SC</sub>, and then I came here’ (Prag I 431:7).<sup>75</sup>

<sup>71</sup> LAPO 19, 124 (p. 201): ‘un ceinturon (orné) d’agates rubannées’, with a justification of this translation *ad loc.*

<sup>72</sup> LAPO 19, 124 ‘pour ma jeune femme’, but hardly correct.

<sup>73</sup> Thus the above observations suggest that the lexicographic profiles of both verbs under discussion differ depending on the dialect.

<sup>74</sup> Grammatical studies pay little attention to this fact, yet see Rowton 1962, Illingworth 1990, Metzler 2002.

<sup>75</sup> The Edition translates, trying to make sense of the SC: ‘Ich wurde bestohlen, bevor ich herkam.’ One could press it even further in the direction of a *ḥāl*-like con-

c. *qá-bi<sub>4</sub>-ú<sub>SC</sub>-ma ... I TÚG ana PN ezib*

‘They said<sub>SC</sub>: “... leave one piece of cloth for PN”’ (TTC 15:16ff.).

d. *kīma ... ina sūnī-ki nīlu<sub>SC</sub>-ma aqlīp*

‘I have been led to believe that he slept<sub>SC</sub> with you’ (TCL 1, 10:23, text and translation as in CAD Q 93a).

e. *PN bí-it ana šarrim iḫa-ma*

‘PN spent the night and then had an audience with the king’ (AS 22, No. 19:3ff., translation follows the Edition).

A preliminary account of the evidence adduced so far in 4.1. is as follows. The basic meaning of both the verbal adjective and the SC of telic and punctual verbs is the Resultative, appropriately defined in GAG 126f: ‘(bezeichnet der St. den) sich aus der Verbalhandlung ergebenden Zustand.’ Still in my view the Akkadian evidence supports (*mutatis mutandis*) the suggestion of Martin Haspelmath:

‘In many languages the participle that is used in periphrastic passives can also be formed from telic intransitive (=unaccusative) verbs, and then with active orientation, e. g. *the fallen capital, an escaped prisoner*. What is common to the passive adjectival use and the unaccusative adjectival use is that the adjective refers to the state of the verb’s patient that results from its undergoing the complete verbal action. Therefore such participles should be called **resultative participles**, rather than “passive participles.” As adjectives, participles are used to characterize nouns by means of verbal actions [...]. *Only the patient can be characterized by means of the result of an action, because in general only the patient is affected by an action. This explains why resultative participles show passive orientation with transitive verbs...*’ (Haspelmath 1990:40, italics added).

This would corroborate one’s immediate impression that outspoken *one-place* SC tokens of punctual verbs<sup>76</sup> are ‘the most resultative’ ones. By way of illustration, I adduce in (55) what are in my view the clearest examples of genuine Resultatives:

(55) a. *inanna GIŠ.MA.NU nakis*

‘Now the MA.NU wood is (already) cut’ (AbB 12, 194:8f.).

b. *ermum ša tuppi hepi-ma tuppaša išrumū*

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struction: ‘Robbed I came here.’ In the same vein, (54a) can be construed as ‘Oxen being lost, they found them...’ Yet the *-ma* as marker of narrative sequence makes backgrounding interpretations vulnerable.

<sup>76</sup> It seems that M. Haspelmath, with some other scholars, believes that punctual verbs are a variety of telic verbs.

‘The case of the tablet was (already) broken/had broken down, so they broke open her tablet’ (*RA* 9 22:22f.).

c. 1 LÚ *haliq* ‘One man has disappeared ( $\approx$  ist verschwunden)’ (AbB 11, 157:18’).

Now, in tune with M. Haspelmath’s thesis and the above reflections on the SC forms with assumed present-time telic reading, I would suggest that the more agentive is the grammatical subject of SC, the less resultative is the respective clause. Hence two- or more-place tokens of SC tend to be no genuine Resultatives, because the situations coded by what is traditionally called the ‘active’ or ‘transitive’ SC are in most cases controlled by the referent of the nominative-case argument.<sup>77</sup> Consider the following sentence:

(56) [*m*]inû *awātum-ma* PN<sub>nom</sub> [*a*]rdī<sub>acc</sub> *bītīya ... rakis*  
 ‘How is it that PN has the slaves of my household bound (by contract)/has bound the slaves of my household?’ (AbB 12, 72:13–16).

It is not easy to say which participant (if any) is here ‘characterized by means of the result of an action.’<sup>78</sup> As shown above, the resultative interpretation is hardly applicable to *tamkārūm esr-anni*, and this is true of some other texts discussed in this section.

<sup>77</sup> ‘Transitive’ and ‘active’ tokens of the SC are not the same thing. Grammatical subject of a ‘transitive’ SC form need not be the agent or an agent-like semantic entity. It seems that the nominative case marks the contrastive topic of ‘transitive’ SC predications. Cf. *šumma awīlum<sub>nom</sub> kalbam<sub>acc</sub> našik* ‘if a man<sub>nom</sub> has got a dog’s<sub>acc</sub> bite’ (Köcher BAM 393 r. 5) and *iš-ra-tim<sub>acc</sub> ša ELLAT PN É<sub>acc</sub> kà-ri-im lá-áp-ta-a-ku<sub>nom</sub>* ‘I<sub>nom</sub> am booked in the *bīt<sub>acc</sub> kārīm* for the tithe<sub>acc</sub> of the enterprise ... of PN’ (BIN 6, 15:4–8, translation as in AOATT:286 fn. 417). Compare *šumma masraḥ martim šīrum<sub>nom</sub> katim* (YOS 10, 59 r.:10) with *šumma martum i-ši-id-sā<sub>nom</sub> šīram<sub>acc</sub> katim* (YOS 10, 31 4:27). Yet, other things being equal, the general tendency of ‘transitive’ SC predications is to assign the pragmatic role of contrastive topic, coded by the nom., to the agent (if there is one).

<sup>78</sup> The attitude of Nedjalkov–Jaxontov 1988:9 is different from that of Haspelmath 1990: ‘The objective resultative may be formed from transitive verbs exclusively. The subjective resultative is typically derived from intransitive verbs. A resultative form may be derived from a transitive verb and have a subjective diathesis if the underlying object of the previous action refers to a body part or a possession of the underlying subject or to something in immediate contact with the latter. In these cases the result of the action affects the underlying subject rather than the immediate patient of the action. This variety of the resultative is termed here the possessive resultative.’ On the face of it, the theoretical notion of subjective resultatives looks like admirably explaining the *šimam maḥrāku/eqlam šabtāku* kind of two-place SC forms. Still it is not helpful with regard to ‘transitive’ SC forms with non-possessive lexical semantics.

This phenomenon of ‘demoted resultativity’ has most important consequences for the SC of telic verbs whose temporal reference point happens to be the SpT. I suppose that here syntax and lexical semantics override morphology: contextual agent-relatedness of SC tokens with certain lexical meanings (e. g. X<sub>acc</sub> *nadnāk-šum*, PN ana X<sub>goal</sub> *šurdu* cited above) cancels the resultative sense intrinsic to the SC of relatively high transitivity verbs. Thus the SC tokens in 1 LÚ *haliq* (ex. 55c above) and *ina lā ālišu qebir* ‘he is/will be buried not in his own city’<sup>79</sup> are both resultative and patient-oriented, while X PN *naš-ak-kum* is neither.

4.2. As we have already mentioned above, atelic processes taking place at the SpT are expressed by the Pres., while typical atelic verbs form no SC with trivial meanings. By way of illustration, I cite a few present-time atelic sentences:

- (57 = 5a) *anaṭṭal*<sub>pres</sub>-k[a <sup>d</sup>E]N.KI.DU<sub>10</sub> *kīma ilim tabašši*  
 ‘I look at you, Enkidu, you are like a god’ (GilgP 53).<sup>80</sup>
- (58) *awīlū kâta-ma uqawwû-ka ...*  
 ‘It is you whom the gentlemen are waiting’ (AbB 1, 36:8f.).
- (59) *mû ... ša illakû* ‘Water ... that flows’ (AbB 10, 17:13).
- (60) PN *pá-ni-ni i-šé-e*  
 ‘PN is looking forward to our instructions’ (BIN 4, 52:10ff.).
- (61) *a-na 5 u<sub>4</sub>-me a-na KÛ.BABBAR a-da-ga-al*  
 ‘I have been waiting for the silver for 5 days’ (CCT 2, 1:7f.).
- (62) *mì-šu-um* PN *i-a-ti ú-kà-lá-ni* ‘Why does PN hold me?’ (ATHE 21A:8f.).

Verbs of perception and mental attitudes are very prominent in this group, which may be partly due to the nature of our sources.

It follows from § 1 that atelic verbs do not oppose morphologically the Present actual to habitual situations whose temporal reference point is the SpT:

- (63) *anāku mūšam u kašâtam šunāti-ka-ma anaṭṭal* ‘I dream about you night and morning’ (TCL 18, 100:9, text and translation follow CAD N<sub>2</sub> 124b).

<sup>79</sup> TIM 9, 79:4; cf. interpretations in PIHANS 64:186 and Metzler 2002:189.

<sup>80</sup> The SC of *naṭālum* does not seem to be attested in the corpus. In OB Mari the SC of *naṭālum* has a special meaning (≈ ‘has taken place’), related to revelatory dreams, cf. CAD N<sub>2</sub> 25 and the interpretation of *naṭlat* as terminus technicus in ARM 26/1 456.

With certain verbs denoting emotions and attitudes, coding of present-time sentences is sensitive to the parameter of control: [+ subject-controlled] situations are represented as continual (*iparras*), [- subject-controlled] situations are represented as stative (*paris*). The examples in (64) illustrate:

- (64) a. *ki-ma ša a-na a-wa-at a-bi<sub>4</sub>-a [a-p]á-ri-du ú a-na ku-wa-ti[m] a-pá-ri-id ta-ki-l[i] ša ma-ma-an lá ta-ša-me*  
 ‘In the same way as I care for the affairs of my father, I also care for yours. Do not pay attention to dishonest words of whomsoever’ (CCT 2, 20:12–17).
- b. *a-na lu-qú-tim ša ha-[ra-an] sú-ki-nim li-bi<sub>4</sub> pá-ri-id*  
 ‘I am worried about the merchandise shipped along the “narrow track” ’ (CCT IV, 38a:17f., translation as in AOATT 325).<sup>81</sup>
- c. *nizi[qt]a-ki-ma anazzi[q]*  
 ‘It is with your concern that I am concerned’ (AbB 7, 45:6f.).
- d. *kīma tešmē* (2 fs) *nazqāku* ‘wie du gehört hast, bin ich verärgert/bekümmert’ (AbB 7, 22:9).

W. von Soden believes that in OB the SC of *hašāḥum* means *brauchen*, *benötigen*, while the prefixing forms of this verb have the meaning *wünschen*, *begehren* (AHw. 332b).<sup>82</sup> Von Soden’s suggestion is important for the present study: informally speaking, it turns out that the SC of a given verb can be opposed to its suffixing forms through a shift in lexical meaning. In this particular case von Soden’s insight can be easily reformulated in grammatical terms: *ihaššeḥ* is [+ control], while *hašeḥ* is [- control]. In the following examples the SC and the Pres. of *hašāḥum* appear (in the way of a minimal pair) in near-identical syntactic surroundings, thus here [ $\pm$  control] seems to be the only semantic value of this morphological opposition:

- (65) a. *šumma NUMUN i-ha-aš-še-eh NUMUN ina bītī-ka idim-ma...*  
 ‘Wenn er Saatgut will, gib ihm Saatgut aus deinem Hause und (man soll saatpflügen)’ (AbB 1, 17:27f.).
- b. *aššum [še]-e-e[m] ša tašpur-a[m] šumma PN ha-ši-ih ana PN mudud*

<sup>81</sup> This is the only SC token of *parādum* of this kind I have found so far in OA. Yet sandhi is most probably excluded because *pá-ri-id* starts a new line. Outside of the corpus this usage is well attested in OB Mari, cf. e. g. *pa-ar-da-nu* ‘we are afraid’ (A.449:9–10, cited in CAD P 142b).

<sup>82</sup> ‘Wer aber wie H.<aldar> etwa *ihaššeḥ* “er begehrt” und *hašeḥ* “er braucht” nicht zu unterscheiden vermag’ (von Soden 1959:438) is according to von Soden no expert in Akkadian philology.

‘As for the barley about which you wrote me: if PN needs (it), measure (it) out to PN’ (AbB 9, 84:15–20).<sup>83</sup>

Akkadian tends to interpret subjects of atelic present-time sentences as their agents:

(66) *eršum ú-kà-al-šu*

‘The bed (i. e., sickness) holds him fast’ (ICK 11:42, text and translation follow CAD K 511), and cf. (62) above, with a personal subject.

If a real-life durative/habitual situation that takes place at the SpT is to be represented as semantically passive (typically, if an animate referent of the subject is undergoer of the situation), then—wherever applies—the SC of a morphologically simpler stem rather than the Pres. of the respective ‘passive’ stem is used. In all probability, Akkadian interprets this kind of situations as stative rather than continual. The following examples with the verb *epēšum* illustrate:

(67) a. *miššum PN lamniš té-pá-ša-ni*

‘Why is it that PN treats me harshly?’ (Jankowska KTK 66:3).<sup>84</sup>

b. *aššum amtīm annūtim ... anāku lemniš epšēku*

‘Wegen dieser Sklavin ... ich bin schlecht behandelt’ (AbB 1, 67:3ff.).<sup>85</sup>

c. *kīma aḥam u qirbam lā išū ep-ši-e-ku*

‘I am treated like one who has neither kith nor kin’ (TCL 17, 21:32, text and translation as in CAD E 196b).

Since Akkadian usually does not form the SC for semantically passive Nifal verbs, we cannot describe this evidence by saying that the SC of Qal is used here ‘instead of’ the SC of Nifal.

This rule is valid only for present-time sentences. E. g., the Pres. of *nēpušum* with a passive present-time meaning and a personal subject (‘S<sub>pers</sub> undergoes doing’) is not attested, yet within the past-time sphere this situation type may be expressed by a N-stem Perf.:

(68) *anāku e-te-en-pu-uš*

‘I have been treated’ (VAT 8435:6; unpub., OB lit., CAD E 235a).

<sup>83</sup> The absence of an explicit direct object in (65b) is not relevant for the choice of tense, since *ḥašēh* + direct object is well attested, see e. g. AbB 9, 15:22; LE A III r 24 = LE B III r 8.

<sup>84</sup> In OA, *lamniš* + the Pres. of *epāšum* with the same grammatical value is attested also in RA 59, 165:23f.; KTS 1, 24:12.

<sup>85</sup> Another OB example of present-time *lemniš epšēku* is TCL 18, 95:27. In OA, a present-time *lamniš epšāku* is attested in Prag I 547:9’ ff.

4.3. States observed at the SpT are expressed by the SC,<sup>86</sup> i. e. (if the hypothesis of § 4.1 is plausible) they receive the same coding as telic present-time predications. According to this morphosyntactic criterion, prototypical Akkadian semantic Statives (as distinct from Activities) are verbal predicates denoting spatial location (see a list in § 2 above). Among spatial verbs, the well-known exceptions are the ‘prefixing statives’ *izzaz er steht, išqallal er hängt* (GAG 127): in the taxonomy of this study, they are atelic verbs.

If we stay with everyday facts of both dialects, the contrast between a present-time state and a present-time atelic process may be exemplified by the following made-up examples:

- (69) a. (*inanna/inna*) PN *ina* GN *wašib/wašab*  
 ‘(now) PN lives in GN’  
 b. (*inanna/inna*) X<sub>nom</sub> Y<sub>acc</sub> (*ina qātim/iqqātim* etc.) *ukāl* ‘(now) X is holding Y (e. g. as pledge).’<sup>87</sup>

The Pres. of semantic statives, unlike that of event verbs, usually has no habitual but rather only inchoative future-time meaning, i. e. it denotes the forthcoming change into a state.

As often happens with semantic classifications, the borderline between states and activities is neither iron curtain nor always predictable in a given case. Working from a dictionary gloss, we cannot always foresee the way Akkadian conceptualizes situations that involve low semantic transitivity/dynamicity. Thus, *uqawwû* + acc. ‘they are waiting’, *taramm-anni* ‘you love me’, but ‘I trust’ is usually *taklāku* + *ana*/dat. pron., and see below a more detailed treatment of this verb. Yet the thumb-rule for Akkadian is to interpret verbs of perception and propositional attitude as activities. As we have seen, in OB ‘(s)he wants’ is *iḥašših*; *le’ûm* *be able* and OA *mu’ā’um* *want* (always negated) ‘occur mostly in the present tense’ (Veenhof 1986:236).

I have found no examples of *amārum* with the clear-cut meaning ‘(s)he sees (now),’ yet cf. the following OB text: *šāriqī niše”e-ma lā nimmār* ‘we are

<sup>86</sup> See above § 2 on the theoretical distinction between States and Properties.

<sup>87</sup> On different linguistic grounds, Kouwenberg 1997:316 observes that ‘the very frequent D tantum verb *kullu* “to hold, to offer” ... is transitive but basically stative ...’. *To hold a debt slave* matches the informal understanding of Activity current in typological literature: Activity, unlike State, is ‘dynamic’ in so far as it requires ‘input of energy.’ To the best of my knowledge, the SC of *kullum* is not attested in the corpus; yet see presently on its synonym *kalûm* *hold, detain*.

looking for the thieves but cannot find them,<sup>88</sup> i. e. actually ‘we do not see them’: the semantic purity of this Pres. token is marred only by negation. It is likely that the frequent OA *ašamme-ma* + sentential complement filling the direct object slot (CAD Š<sub>2</sub> 278a) is not expressly habitual (cf. *ibid.* Gtn *aštanamme I keep hearing*), but rather a way of saying *I know, I am posted*.

A serious discussion of the Pres. *ibašši er ist* (GAG 127) is possible only within a special study of ‘grammar-related’ verbs. In both OB and OA the SC and the Pret. of *bašûm* are extremely rare,<sup>89</sup> yet the normal Precative *li-ib-ši* is well attested in OA (CAD B 146), in contrast to the SC-like form of *lû ide* ‘let him/her know.’

Two common OB verbs, *redûm* II and *našûm* III,<sup>90</sup> are glossed in AHw. as *taugen, sich eignen* and *ist geeignet* respectively, and indeed they are synonymous as far as the lexical meaning goes. Yet *redûm* II is attested only in the Pres. (the stem vowel is *u* and occasionally *i*), while *našûm* III has only the SC (the stem vowel is *u*). According to the CAD translations, the meanings of these forms in text are for the most part ‘is suitable’ resp. ‘is appropriate.’ The syntax of these two verbs also partially overlaps:<sup>91</sup>

- (70) a. *awatum annitum ana šemē ilim u awilim i-re-ed-du-[ú]*  
 ‘Is this matter fitting for god or man to hear?’ (TLB 4, 35:31, text and translation as in CAD R 245b).
- b. *awatum annitum ša tēpušu ul na-šá-at*  
 ‘This thing you have done is not right’ (LIH 43:20, text and translation as in CAD N<sub>2</sub> 131b).

The Pres. *ireddu* is especially conspicuous as an inflectional exponent of the lexical meaning in question, since ‘is fitting’ looks more like a Property than a State; and indeed, as we will see below in Excursus II, the nom. *našûm* can be used predicatively alongside the SC.

Our prototypically semantic stative *wašābum live, be around* does occasionally use its Pres. for present-time references, as the following OA examples illustrate:

- (71) a. *annakam PN ú-ša-áb* ‘hier sitzt PN’ (Prag I, 483:3f).
- b. *erium anāku ú-ša-áb ula erium anāku ammīšam ú-šá-a-am*

<sup>88</sup> Bab 6 191, No. 7:19, as cited and translated in CAD Š<sub>1</sub> 335b.

<sup>89</sup> AHw. 113: ‘St. fehlt aAK, ass. (?); aB selten; Prt. selten; kein Pf.’

<sup>90</sup> The latter one is also well attested in OA.

<sup>91</sup> *našu* is often constructed with a sentential complement as subject: *na-šá-ú ša tēpušu* ‘was it right, what you have done?’ (TLB 4, 26:6, text and translation as in CAD N<sub>2</sub> 131a).

‘Nackt sitze ich da, aber nackt will ich nicht dorthin abreisen!’ (Prag I 518:6’ ff.).

What difference the SC forms *wašab* resp. *wašbāku* would have made in these texts, can be only guessed.<sup>92</sup>

The verb *kalûm* *hold, detain* uses (unlike its synonym *kullum*) both the Pres. and the SC in present-time sentences:

(72) a. *kaspam ʿša ta-kà-lu-[ú] iššērika ú-ta-a* ‘Das Silber, das du zurück hältst, werde ich zu deinen Lasten irgendwie finden’ (Prag I 638:10’).

b. *1/3 mana kaspam ša ayyimma kaliāku*

‘Ich habe ein Drittel Mine Silber von jemandem bei mir’ (AbB 2, 160:7f.).

It is possible (though difficult to ascertain) that here the Pres. is more ‘controlling/volitional’ than the SC, as reflected in the respective translations; so with this verb the difference between the two tenses would be of a quasi-lexical nature, similarly to the case of *ihašših/haših*.

The verb *takālu* *trust* has changed its actionality class from Process to State in historical times.

In Oakk (from pre-Sargonic up to Ur III period) this verb is attested in personal names in the Imperative (the source of trust is coded by the *-iš* form of a DN), the Pres. (with dat. and acc. bound pronouns), and the SC (with *ana* prepositional phrase). The evidence available to me is gathered in MAD 3:295, AHW. 1304, and Hilgert 2002. In what follows I cite a few examples in Gelb’s transliteration: <sup>d</sup>*A-ba<sub>4</sub>-iš-da-gal*; <sup>d</sup>*EN.ZU-iš-ti-gal*; *A-da-gal*; *A-da-gal-šum*; *A-da-ka-al-šu[-um?]* (Ur III, ITT 5, 6815:4’); *A-na!* (wr.ba)-<sup>d</sup>*EN.ZU-dak-la-ku*. For the sake of comparison, Gelb adduces an OB PN *A-ta-ka-al-šu* (A 21920).<sup>93</sup>

On the contrary, the writers of OB and OA letters regularly use *taklāku* for ‘I trust.’ I have found only two exceptions:

(73) a. *ana ša [k]īma yāti lā a-ta-kāl akkuāti a-ta-kāl*

‘I do not trust in my representative(s), I trust in you’ (TTC 24:30f.).

<sup>92</sup> For the SC of *wašābum* in OA letters in the meaning *to stay somewhere temporarily*, see the references in CAD A<sub>2</sub> 393.

<sup>93</sup> Hilgert 2002:186ff. shows that the evidence of Ur III orthography does not favour relating the relevant personal names in his corpus to the verb *dagālu* *schauen, blicken, ansehen*. The PN *A-da-gal-šum* (MAD 3:295; Hilgert 2002:544, 637), attested 13 times in Ur III texts, has to be connected with *takālum* because of the dative pronoun (Hilgert 2002:188). In Sargonic Akkadian, the signs sequence *a-da-gal* can stand for both *adaggal* and *atakkal* (MAD 2:92f.).

b. *ištēn ša ta-ta-ak-ka-lu-šu ... turud*

‘Send one (= somebody) in whom you trust’ (AbB 13, 149:19f.).

In (73b) the choice of the Pres. is probably due to the non-referring nature of *ištēn* that lends a “subjunctive” (in the Romance sense) modal colouring to the predicate of the relative clause. In this special case, the use of the SC might have gone against the author’s intended meaning.

Otherwise, this verb uses the SC for present-time references, see e. g. *kuāšim-ma ta-ak-la-ku* in AS 22 12:5; *kīma ana* <sup>d</sup>AMAR.UTU *ta-ak-la-ku ana ka-šu[m t]a-ak-la-ku* ‘I trust in you like in Marduk’ (AbB 8, 99:7f.); AbB 1,72:7’; 11, 23:6 (PN); 12, 90:13 (PN); 13, 74:15; [*ta*]-*ak-la-ti* ‘you<sub>f</sub> trust’ (AbB 5, 255:26).

#### *Excursus II: Grammaticalization path of the SC*

In this discussion of Akkadian sentences about the Present time, I do not consider the SC tokens denoting Properties (e. g. *takil* ‘reliable<sub>predic 3ms</sub>’), quite independently of their origin. This is because Properties, unlike States, are not time-sensitive. The SC forms denoting Properties are predicates that do not participate in the shaping of temporal relationships in text.

It follows from N. J. C. Kouwenberg’s groundbreaking study of the SC (Kouwenberg 2000) that Akkadian has a way for distinguishing Properties from States: only property predicates may be used in the nominative (whether with the nominal clause predicate marker *-ma* or without it), while stative predicates have to have the morphological form of the SC.

Kouwenberg 2000:34–38 offers a list of predicative adjectives attested in the nominative; all the words found in this list match up with our semantic definition of Property. In what follows I reproduce this list in K.’s order and with his glosses (K. quotes texts in which these adjectives appear). I have left out a few *parVs*- adjectives that are clearly denominative and those that do not have the *parVs*- stem.

Here is the list: *taklum* reliable, *damqum* excellent, *mādum* much, *naṭūm* fitting/appropriate, *ḫalqum* lost (? or: ruined?), *kēnum* OA honest, *raggum* villain, *tābum* friend (MB Amarna; K. suggests substantivization, as well as in the case of the preceding word, attested in OA),<sup>94</sup> *šeḫrum* small, *lemnum* evil, *šīrum* august, *dannum* strong, *šaḳūm* exalted, *namrum* bright, *rašbum* awe-

<sup>94</sup> ‘[T]he use of the nominative is often caused by the addition of *-ma* and/or by substantivization’ (Kouwenberg 2000:38).

*inspiring*, *da-ri<sub>2</sub>-um eternal* (RIME 4, 388:134), *waqrum expensive*, *šarḫum noble*, *banītum beautiful* (woman).

The only word that looks out of place in this list is the resultative verbal adjective *ḫalqum*, attested once in predicative function in OB. Again, this usage might be explained by an *ad hoc* substantivization: *ḫalqum anāku* (TLC 17, 10:17) would mean ‘I am a ruined man.’

Thus Akkadian builds a privative opposition: the nominative is the marked form, it marks a predicative adjective as denoting property; the SC is the unmarked form, it is not sensitive to the distinction of properties and states. This systemic possibility of marking properties is rarely used in our sources, yet the semantic homogeneity of K.’s list<sup>95</sup> shows that the distinction in question is linguistically relevant for Akkadian. On the force of this evidence, it looks plausible that nominal clauses *\*tuppum ḫepūm-ma* ‘the tablet—(it is) broken’ or *\*PN ina GN wašbum-ma* ‘PN—living in GN’ were unacceptable in the vernacular Akkadian.

K. regards *damqum* (p. 57) and similar words as ‘primary (i. e. non-derived) adjectives’ (p. 58, cf. p. 62). This view accords with his suggestion that ‘the historical nucleus of the stative is to be found in the adjective,<sup>96</sup> where it arose as a means of making a morphological distinction between attributive and predicative use’ (p. 56f.).

Yet the existence of primary adjectives in Akkadian (or, better, in PS) remains to be proven,<sup>97</sup> and therefore it is doubtful that we have to look in this direction in our quest for the historical nucleus of the SC. The above list contains several clearly deverbal *parVs*-adjectives, e. g. *taklum*, *kēnum*, *waqrum*, *namrum*. This fact shows that property adjectives need not be non-deverbal.

The view according to which the SC originated with ‘basic’ adjectives is undermined by the possibility to use these adjectives in Akkadian as nominative predicates. Thus the SC did not quite get through in its al-

<sup>95</sup> It comprises several basic adjectival lexemes and only one adjective derived from a dynamic verb.

<sup>96</sup> K. means first of all his ‘primary adjectives’.

<sup>97</sup> To the best of my knowledge, there are no primary adjectives reconstructable to PS. Most non-suffixed Semitic adjectives are derived from verbs; in rarer cases they are (ultimately) denominative (as e. g. Akk. *zaqnu* ‘bearded’). The cumulative evidence favours positing ‘property verbs’ (*be good*, *be small*, etc.) as the derivational source of semantically basic adjectival words in Semitic. Naturally, these verbs may sometimes have defective paradigm, as e. g. *naṭu* (the SC *tantum*) or *ireddu* (the Pres. *tantum*) discussed above.

leged 'historical nucleus,' while the *verbal* adjective *paris-* is not attested as a nominative predicate.

If it is true (with Kouwenberg 2000:60 fn. 35) that frequency is relevant for establishing the direction of derivation, then the 'historical nucleus' of the SC is most probably the verbal adjectives of dynamic verbs.

I suggest that the SC emerged (possibly in pre-Semitic times) via verbalization of nominal clause whose predicate was the resultative participle, i. e. the Verbal Adjective (VA), a productive deverbal derivate.<sup>98</sup> Within this predication, the VA gave up its adjectival inflection for gender and number and was thus reduced to the bare stem. Postpositive subject pronouns (Huehnergard 1986) within this construction underwent phonetic reduction and were ultimately grammaticalized to personal suffixes. If the referent of the subject is the 'third person,' it is typically expressed by a preposed noun rather than by a postposed pronoun. For this reason the 3<sup>rd</sup> person suffixes were created from diachronic sources other than personal pronouns. 3 ms = -Ø (as expected, here surfaces the bare stem); 3 fs = -(a)t. Since this morpheme is lacking in the rest of the feminine forms of SC, it is not retention of the nominal flexion but rather a case of its secondary employment for the new finite paradigm. 3 mp = *ū*, 3 fp = *ā*. These suffixes were taken from the prefix conjugations (Kouwenberg 2000:57). The [*ā*]-element in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> persons remains to be explained. For what it is worth, this 'binding vowel' could be a rest of a prehistoric copula within the original predication.<sup>99</sup>

This proposal has the advantage of establishing continuity between the resultative meaning of the VA (one of the diachronic sources of the SC) and the prototypical resultative meaning of the SC as a finite verb form.

In the course of metonymic extension, the SC came to be formed from semantically stative verbs, and finally from property verbs, although in this last instance predicative verbal adjectives are also marginally attested.

As for the SC forms derived from nouns, K. has shown convincingly that 'historically the stative of nouns is a secondary development, an offshoot of the stative of adjectives' (Kouwenberg 2000: 55), while I believe that K.'s 'stative of adjectives' is itself 'a secondary development.'

<sup>98</sup> As is well-known (see GAG 126 and most recently Kouwenberg 2000), the VA is derived in Akkadian predominantly from high transitivity verbs.

<sup>99</sup> \*VA cop Pronoun (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> persons) vs. \*N<sub>Sub</sub> cop VA.

Whether *awīlāti* in *lū a-wi-lá-ti* ‘be a gentleman’ (AKT 3, 88:56) is a noun or a verb (so Kouwenberg 2000) is an important theoretical question, yet it is impossible to approach it within this Excursus.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> On the difference between nouns and verbs from the perspective of functional and cognitive linguistics, see e. g. Hopper–Thompson 1984.

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