

Marginalia on the Akkadian Ventive*

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0. Introduction

In this paper I set forth my observations on the functions of the ventive in OB and OA letters and some other prosaic texts. The present study builds on the results achieved in Kouwenberg 2002, now the most comprehensive description of the ventive in OB. I will discuss K.'s contribution, yet otherwise I will do without a literature review, since to the best of my knowledge nothing of essence (except for Kouwenberg 2002) can be added to the history of research available in the monograph of H. Hirsch (Hirsch 2002).

As A. R. George observes in his review of Hirsch 2002, '[t]he book opens with a detailed and commendably forthright critical history of philological and linguistic scholarship on the Akkadian ventive, and finds that little progress has been made since Landsberger's pioneering study of 1923' (*BSOAS* 67/2, 2004:227). I agree with George's general evaluation of Hirsch 2002: 'It ... does emphatically remind linguists and philologists that there is a question' (*ibid.*).

In addition to the literature listed in the introductory chapter of Hirsch 2002, I can mention only three items. Hirsch 2001 is a collection of ventive tokens from the OA texts published in Michel 1991, without much analysis. Macelaru 2003 is a general survey of the methods by which OB Akkadian codes spatial relations. The Akkadian evidence for this study is drawn primarily from Huehnergard's textbook (Huehnergard 1997); this paper does not offer anything that might be new for the students of Akkadian (except perhaps for its terminology). Edzard 2003: 175 restates in apodictic form the theory according to which the Ak-

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kadian ventive is the continuation of the ‘Common Semitic affirmative [an],’ its new function being due to the Sumerian influence.

In text editions, CAD and elsewhere one often comes across more or less explicitly stated questions regarding the meaning of the ventive morpheme in a given text or on a certain verb. The present study attempts to couch some of these questions in terms of grammar and seeks to answer them. Due to the notorious difficulties in understanding letters, exegetical discussions of certain passages turned out to be indispensable.

1. An Overview of Kouwenberg 2002

N. J. C. Kouwenberg reduces “meaningful” uses of the ventive (i. e. the *-am* / *-m* / *-nim* morpheme in all its senses) in letters and other OB prosaic texts to three functions: *allative*, *dative*, and *benefactive*. Dropping whatever is not essential for my study, I will restate K.’s conclusions as follows.

The **allative** ventive is *obligatory* on motion verbs when they code movement towards the speaker¹ or the addressee(s), if the speaker chooses to express the goal of motion at all: *illik-am* may mean either ‘he arrived *here* (= *at where I am/we are*)’ or ‘he arrived *at where you are*,’ but this sentence cannot express motion towards a third party. By the same token, in the sentences PN *ana mahri-ya turd-am_{vent}* lit. ‘send PN to me *hither_{vent}*’ or PN *ana mahri-ka attard-am_{vent}* lit. ‘I have sent PN to you *to where you are_{vent}*’ the goal is encoded by the prepositional phrases *and* the ventive,² while the sentence **ana mahri-ya illik* (– vent), *PN *ana mahri-ka attarad* (– vent) etc. are unacceptable.

The **dative** ventive *apud* K. is another word for the 1st p. sg. pronoun bound to “dative” verbs with obligatory indirect object, such as *nadānum* ‘to give something *to somebody*’ or *qabûm* ‘to tell something *to somebody*’: *id-din-am* can only mean ‘he gave *me*’, *iqbi-am* is ‘he told *me*’; the respective sentences cannot mean ‘he gave / told *us*.’

The **benefactive** ventive encodes a non-core personal participant ‘for whom something is done or to whom something happens,’ it is ‘compatible with almost any verb’ (p. 202), and, as in the case of the “dative ven-

¹ Or to what K. for the sake of brevity terms ‘speakers’, i. e. the “we” used by the author of the respective message; this “we” in most cases will be exclusive, i. e. it does not include the addressee(s).

² K. posits a fine-tuned semantic distinction between *ana mahri-ya* / *mahri-ka* (or *ana ŧēri-ya* / *ŧēri-ka*) and the ventive: these prepositional phrases with bound personal pronouns express the *personal* goal, while the ventive on motion verbs codes the *location* of the speaker or the addressee.

tive,” its referent is always the speaker: *tepte-am sikkūrī dalāt šamê* ‘you have opened the locks of the gates of heaven for me’ (K.’s example on p. 218). Thus for K. all the “meaningful” ventive tokens that are not allatives or datives (i. e. core arguments) belong, *ipso facto*, to this third species, i. e. to 1st person singular benefactives.³

K. observes that ‘[f]or nominal constituents the preposition *ana* is the basic means of expression for allative, dative and benefactive alike’ (p. 202). In other words, the three kinds of arguments can be encoded by the prepositional phrase *ana* + noun_{gen.} K. finds that the prepositions *ana šēr-* / *ana maḥar-* do not introduce the indirect object, but only the personal goal of motion as a locative argument of motion verbs.⁴ These findings lead K. to the conclusion that in OB there are two distinctions between the allative ventive and the dative ventive: (1) only the former is compatible with prepositional phrases headed by *ana šēr* / *ana maḥar*; (2) only the former may refer to the addressee.

To my mind, a consistent contradistinction between motion verbs and “dative” verbs as hosts of the ventive morpheme is the major achievement of Kouwenberg’s study. Important differences in the use of the ventive morpheme with these two semantic classes of verbs were not properly recognized in Landsberger 1924 and went unmentioned in GAG.

Following Landsberger 1924 and much of the subsequent scholarship, Kouwenberg considers the ventive to be an inflectional morpheme: ‘the ventive is a verbal ending on a par with other endings such as those of number, gender, person and subordination’ (p. 222, cf. also p. 237ff.).⁵

³ The ventives that are not “meaningful” (this is my word) include anticipated ventives before the sequencing conjunction *-ma* (GAG § 82c) and ventives as mere linking elements between the verb and the bound pronoun. Both kinds are exhaustively described in Kouwenberg 2002 and not treated in this paper.

⁴ This means that **ana šēr* / *ana maḥar* PN *addin* / *aqbi* are no correct OB sentences.

⁵ K. extends this view to the ventive morpheme as the exponent of the 1st p. sg. *dative* bound pronoun (p. 237). Though the shape and morphophonological behaviour of this bound pronoun are not different from those of the lative ventive, semantically *-am* ‘(for) me’ and e. g. *-šum* ‘(for) him’ belong together within the paradigm of bound personal pronouns (as acknowledged by K. on p. 238), so it is strange to assign the morphological status of a ‘verbal ending’ (i. e. an inflectional morpheme) only to one member of the paradigm because of phenomena such as *iqīas-sum* ‘he will bestow on him’ vs. *iqīšš-am* ‘he will bestow on me’ ~ *iqīšš-ū* ‘they will bestow,’ and *ša iddin-u-šum* ‘the one who gave him’ vs. *ša iddin-am* ‘the one who gave me.’

Yet, semantically the lative ventive is not directly comparable to any of the inflectional affixes mentioned by K., because the latter express syntactic inflectional values,⁶ while the primary function of the ventive on motion verbs is to code the goal of motion. This means that under certain conditions (described by K.) the ventive fills the obligatory goal valence within the argument structure of motion verbs, such as *šapārum* ‘to send to’, *alākum* ‘to move (to a reference point),’ or *sanāqum* ‘to arrive (at a locality), reach (a mark).’ Therefore in structural terms the OB ventive in *isniq-am* ‘she arrived *here*’ is quite similar to the bound pronoun in *iddin-šum* ‘she gave *him*’: both elements are external to the (rest of the) word form and both fill the slots of compulsory core arguments.

K. sums up his thoughts on the history of the ventive morpheme by saying that it ‘shows a *grammaticalization* from verbal ending to pronoun (or at least pronoun-like)’⁷ (p. 239, italics added), yet both the starting point and the path of this evolution (as defined by K.) look extremely questionable. An *inflectional affix* becoming a *pronoun* is no case of grammaticalization; this could be more aptly called “lexicalization,” but its path is anyway typologically almost unbelievable.

I feel that the morphological status of the lative ventive needs to be thought through afresh.

2. “Problematical ventives”

The reading experience shows that the number of ventive tokens that are not taken care of in Kouwenberg 2002⁸ is not negligible, so his description might not be the whole story about the ventive morpheme in OB and OA letters.⁹ A study of certain “problematical ventives” might enhance our understanding of texts: a glance at the available translations shows that in non-trivial cases the ventive in letters is often rendered

⁶ Thus, the finite verb is the target of agreement for person, gender and number, while the subjunctive morpheme signals that the respective verb stands in a subordinate clause.

⁷ I. e. to the 1st p. sg. dative bound pronoun.

⁸ K. calls them “problematical ventives.”

⁹ K. does not explore systematically the ventive in OA, yet he believes (I think, correctly) that there exist no drastic differences between the functions of this morpheme in OB and OA. This granted, it may be appropriate to draw on the Kültepe material, especially because of certain OA lexical items that are poorly represented in OB sources or absent from them (cf. Kogan 2006). Yet my study has no claim on exhaustiveness as far as the ventive in OA goes. This would be a work for the future.

more or less *ad hoc* or simply disregarded, depending on the intuition and predilections of the respective editors.¹⁰ Therefore in the rest of this paper I will try to identify more functions of the ventive in both “classical” dialects. These functions can be classified as follows.

2.1. The lative ventive for the third party goal

K. forbids the ventive on motion verbs to express movement towards a non-deictic spatial reference point, i. e. towards a landmark which is not somehow associated with either the speaker or the addressee. Yet there are many good OB texts for which an association of the ventive on motion verbs with either the speaker or the addressee does not look plausible, as e. g. the following ones:¹¹

- (1) PN UGULA MAR.TU [ša] GN *wa-aš-bu* [q]á-du-um ERIM-šu ʿaʿ-na ši-bu-tim **ip-ta-at-ru-nim**_{vent}

‘PN the general, who is stationed in Rapiqum, has left_{vent} with his troops on an assignment’ (AbB 13, 25:3–7, a letter of Hammurapi, van Soldt’s translation).

The verb *paṭārum* in the sense ‘to depart, withdraw, desert, leave’ (CAD P 296ff.) is clearly a motion verb, and in this case its ventive most probably points to a non-deictic goal, i. e. it is coreferential with *ana šibūtīm*.¹²

- (2) *a-na se-e-er ša-pí-ri-ia* [a]t-tu-ra-am_{vent}

‘I had returned_{vent} to my superior’ (AbB 14, 29:8f., Veenhof’s translation).

The ‘superior’ is not the addressee of the letter.

¹⁰ Cf. a sober remark of F. R. Kraus (AbB 5, 231:19 p. 123 fn. b) ‘Der Vorschlag, den Ventiv bei *ezēbum* in der Bedeutung “zurückbehalten” ... als *dativus ethicus* oder *incommodi* aufzufassen, bleibt ein unsicherer Versuch, solange eine diesbezügliche systematische Untersuchung noch aussteht.’ The text commented upon is *i-na pa-ni-ka la te-zi-ba-a[m]*; Kraus translates ‘halte mir nicht bei dir zurück’ (italics in the Edition). Yet the same scholar reads in AbB 7, 23:8f. the following text 5 MA.NA SÍG *ú-ki-il-[l]a-l[am]* and translates ‘fünf Minen Wolle habe ich ihm angeboten.’ The restoration rests on an unproven assumption that the ventive can fill the slot of a non-1st p. sg. recipient.

¹¹ This type of usage is quite frequent in OB, although the conditions that favour it are still to be established. K. mentions some other “problematical instances” of this kind (p. 216, fn. 30). Yet partly because of the origin of the ventive he advances, partly perhaps in order to keep from multiplying entities beyond necessity K. tends to play down the grammatical value of this evidence (see below).

¹² Another possible case of this usage of the ventive with *paṭārum* is ARM I, 4:19.

- (3) *še-a-am ša GN a-na a-ah na-ri-im ra-bi-tim ú-še-eš-ši-a-am_{vent}*
 ‘The barley of the town of Širimum *I intend to move out_{vent}* to the bank of the main canal’ (AbB 14, 56:32–35, Veenhof’s translation).
 The ventive once more points to a non-deictic landmark.
- (4) GU₄.HIA *a-na me-e ša-te-em lu uš-ši ul-li-iš a-bu-ul-lam ú-ul uš-ši-am_{vent}-mi*
 ‘The cattle now truly leaves (the town only) to drink water and does not *get out_{vent}* of the city-gate any further’ (AbB 14, 132:12f., Veenhof’s translation).
- (5) *ul-[l]a-nu-uk-ka a-na ma-an-nim a-ša-ap-pa-ra-am_{vent}*
 ‘Except for you, to whom else *shall I write_{vent}*?’ (AbB 14, 145:26f., Veenhof’s translation).
- (6) *a-pu-tum iḫ-da-ma KÙ.BABBAR lu <ša> ru-ba-tim lu ša GAL še-ri-im ša-áš-qí-lá lá a-kà-ša-dam_{vent}*
 ‘S’il vous plait, veuillez à faire payer l’argent, que ce soit celui de la princesse, ou celui du *rabi šērim* afin que je n’aie pas à les *contacter_{vent}*’ (BIN 4, 93:5ff., translation as in LAPO 19 No. 104).

The verb *kašādum* ‘to reach, to arrive’ behaves here as a motion verb (cf. Kouwenberg 2002:225f. on *kašādum*). The content of the letter hardly permits the ventive of *akašād-am* to refer to the addressees: the author asks the addressees to recover his debts from a princess and a palace official; otherwise he himself will have to “reach” the debtors, not the addressees. Therefore the ventive of *akašād-am* is in a sense anaphoric: it points to the location of *rubātum* and *rabi šērim*.

I think that the simplest way to deal with this kind of usage is to keep the original insight of Landsberger, according to which the ventive may be analogically (and optionally) used to point to a third party as the goal of motion (see Landsberger 1924:114f.).

K. rejects this solution in favour of his own ‘location of the speech event’ as the etymologically original deictic meaning of the ventive morpheme. This ingenious idea elegantly explains the obligatory use of the ventive for the 2nd p. goals (see § 1 above),¹³ yet it has three drawbacks:

¹³ In the canonical situation-of-utterance the speaker and the addressee in their face-to-face communication share locality (to which the ventive points according to K.), while in the course of written epistolary communication they are at different localities. Since in the latter situation the ventive still points to *both* the speaker and the addressee, one may surmise that it fictitiously restores the broken ‘unity of space’ (i. e., if we accept K.’s etymology). I suggest a different explanation for the obligatory use of the ventive for the 2nd p. goals in § 3 below.

(1) it does not allow for an equally elegant or at least plausible explanation of the rather common third party lative ventive on the motion verbs treated in this section;¹⁴ (2) deixis to the location of the speech event is hardly attested as a meaning of the ventive in extant Akkadian texts; while we have no records of actual oral exchanges, this function will remain purely hypothetical; (3) this kind of deictic category (*location* of the speech event to the detriment of its *participants*, i. e. *I* and *Thou*) seems to lack parallels in the languages of the world.¹⁵

2.2. The “dative” ventive with a 3rd p. referent

In OB and OA texts we come across ventives that incorporate the obligatory 3rd p. indirect object of “dative” verbs¹⁶ into the verb form. Consider the following examples:

(7) A.ŠÀ-um šu-ú a-na ERIM GI.ÍL.MEŠ *es-ḥa-am*_{vent}

‘That field is *allocated*_{vent} to the reed-carriers’ (AbB 7, 110:16f.).

The verb *esḥum* ‘to assign, allocate’ requires a recipient as its core argument, and the ventive of *esḥ-am* copies the recipient prepositional phrase *ana ERIM GI.ÍL.MEŠ*.

(8) 2×600 Ḫ 10 GÍN šī-ḫim x 1 GÚ ZA.BA.L[UM] 10 MA.NA šī-im.‘L1’
‘it’-ti LÚ.MEŠ li-qí-<a>-ni-im-ma [*i*]**d-na-ni-im**_{vent}-ma [*li*]-ih-mu-
tú-nim

‘[T]ake for me 1200 ... plants, 10 shekels of purified juniper oil, 10 pounds of juniper (grains) together with the men, *hand it*

¹⁴ K. rules that in this case a non-deictic goal has to be somehow associated with the speaker or the addressee: a speaker who uses a third-party ventive ‘implies that he himself and / or his interlocutor is / are or will be at the location of the goal, if not physically, than at least in his imagination’ (p. 206), yet K. admits that ‘it does not seem possible to bring all instances we find into line with the general rule’ (p. 216). K.’s approach can of course be retained for transparent cases. Thus, if an author writes ‘bring it (+ vent) to GN!’ clearly meaning ‘bring it *here!*’ the ventive he uses is most probably deictic, as e. g. in Hammurapi letters, where the author’s locality is supposed to be Babylon: *ana Bābilim šūbil-am*_{vent} ‘have (barley) brought to Babylon!’ (AbB 2, 37:13f.); *arḫiš ana Bābilim lisniqā-nim*_{vent} ‘let them, quickly arrive at Babylon!’ (AbB 2, 34:27).

¹⁵ See Loesov 2004 for more detailed critique of ‘location of the speech event’ as the primary meaning of the ventive.

¹⁶ I will call the corresponding semantic role “recipient”: it is an animate participant who gets something, and for the sake of simplicity I will subsume under the label *recipient* indirect objects of verbs of telling.

*over*_{vent} (to them) and let them come here quickly' (AbB 14, 211:7–17, Veenhof's translation).¹⁷

The ventive of *idnā-nim* 'give to them!' provides a filling for the obligatory "dative" valence slot of the verb *nadānum*¹⁸ and refers back to LÚ.MEŠ in the previous clause.

- (9) *ù a-ta a-ma-nim* [KÙ.BABBAR *ta-]ša-qá-lam*_{vent}
 'und du, *wem zahlst*_{vent} [du das Silber]? (Prag I 431:32f.).

The context of the letter makes the Edition's restoration quite certain, the ventive copies the recipient *am-mannim* 'to whom?'

- (10) KÙ.BABBAR *lá ta-ša-ká-na-am*_{vent} *ta-ša-ká-nam*_{vent} *-ma i-ša-bu-tù-ma*
 'Stelle kein Silber *bereit*_{vent}! *Stellst du bereit*_{vent}, werden sie (es) packen!' (Prag I 428:19ff.).

Although the text is somewhat obscure, it is clear that the *-am* of *tašakkan-am* can hardly mean "on my behalf," because the letter is authored by two persons and the general sense seems to require "for them." Thus *tašakkan-am* may mean literally 'do not offer *thither*', the ventive referring to the recipients, i. e. to the subject of *išabbutū*.

- (11) *ši-ta-at ŠE ša ha-an-du-ti i-na qa-ti-šu-ma ip-qí-du-nim*_{vent} *i-na mu-ši-im ip-te-e-ma iš-ri-iq-šu*

'They entrusted him_{vent} the rest of ... barley,¹⁹ (yet) he opened (sacks?) and stole it at night' (*JCS* 8, 10 No. 119:8–14; OB Alalaj).

'They entrusted on my behalf' hardly makes sense for *ipqidū-nim*, because the text looks like a legal document with no 1st p. speaker (cf. Wiseman 1953:61).

- (12) PN₁ *a-na* PN₂ *pí-iq-da-am*_{vent} *-ma it-ti-šu li-il-li-[i]k-ma me-ḥi-ir tu-pí-ia šu-bi-la[m]*

'*Übergib*_{vent} die Ilša-ḥegal dem Ilšu-bāni und mit ihm soll sie gehen! Und schicke mir Antwort auf meinen Brief!' (AbB 1, 6:31–34).

¹⁷ The letter is addressed to two persons, hence the plural imperative forms *li-qí-<a>* and *[i]d-na*.

¹⁸ Therefore this ventive can hardly be accounted for by the ventive anticipation (cf. the next clause *[li]-iḥ-mu-tū-nim*). Kouwenberg 2002:220 brings the following as a typical example of the anticipated ventive on the verb *nadānum*: *kaspam ana* PNF *id-nam-ma li-ib-lam* 'give the silver to PNF so that she can bring it to me' (AbB 9, 240:16ff.). In this text, unlike in the above one, the slot of indirect object is filled by the prepositional phrase *ana* PNF within the same clause.

¹⁹ Lit. 'they entrusted him_{vent} in his hand.' See CAD H 79b for *ha-an-du-ti*.

The ventive of *piqd-am-ma*, if it is not due to the presence of *-ma*,²⁰ may point to the recipient. Yet a 1st p. sg. benefactive reading ‘hand PN₁ over to PN₂ on my behalf’ cannot be excluded.

- (13) GiŠ.IG.ĪL.A *a-na qa-ti-šu pi-iq-da-am*_{vent}
 ‘Confie-lui_{vent} les portes’ (ARM 1, 127:16f.).
- (14) *ša-b[a-am x] x x x [...] uš-ta-aš-bi-tam-ma a-na A-bi-x-[x x] ap-qi-dam*_{vent}
 ‘Des hommes [...] j’ai fait équiper et à Abi[...] je (les) ai confiés_{vent}’ (ARM 6, 46:1’ff.).
- (15) A.ŠÀ GN₁ *ša i-nu-ma be-el-ka iš-tu* GN₂ *i-tu-ra-am-ma id-di-na-kum i-ki-mu-nim*_{vent} *-ma a-na PN id-di-nu-ni*_{vent} *-šu ù A.ŠÀ ša i-na at-lu-ki-ka be-el-ka iq-bi-kum ú-ul id-di-nu-nim*_{vent}
 ‘The field of Dūr-Yahdunlīm that your lord gave you when he returned from Andarig, they took away from you_{vent} and gave it to_{vent} PN. And the field that your lord promised you at your departure—they did not give (it) to you_{vent}’ (ARM 2, 32:6–11).²¹

This example is especially curious: what is formally the ventive morpheme is attached to all six finite verb forms of the quoted text. “They took away from you” is the most natural rendering of *ikimū-nim*: in my opinion this ventive is coreferential with the 2nd p. sg. pronoun of *iddin-akkum*²² and fills the slot of the *source* participant (which is semantically opposite to the *recipient*). The ventive of *iddinū-nim* is also anaphoric and codes the recipient (“to you”). The ventive of *iddinū-niš-šu* is most probably coreferential with the *ana* PN prepositional phrase, literally ‘they gave it to him_{vent}’;²³ the only alternative is to interpret it as K.’s “linking morpheme,” i. e. part of the bound pronoun: *iddinū-niššu* ‘they gave it’ or perhaps ‘they gave him’ (with the loss of mimation), but the evidence for the use of the ventive

²⁰ Kouwenberg 2002:221f. hypothesizes that ‘[t]he particle *-ma* by itself—without the support of a following ventive—may also cause the insertion of a ventive, but completely unambiguous instances are hard to find, because it is often impossible to exclude the chance that the ventive in question is a 1st p. benefactive.’ He adduces only three instances which he deems plausible, so one’s impression is that this provision may have been made in order to reduce the number of “problematical ventives,” i. e. those left unexplained within the framework of Kouwenberg’s study.

²¹ The translations in ARM 2, Finet 1956:260, and LAPO 17 No. 768 differ from each other and from my translation as far as the interpretation of the ventives is concerned.

²² See Kouwenberg 2002:228f. on this kind of form and on *iqbēkkum*.

²³ *eqlum* is used as a masculine noun in OB Mari.

as a “linking morpheme” in OB presented in Kouwenberg 2002 does not support this option. Note that this is the only text in which we seem to come across a “dative” ventive with a 2nd p. referent.

More instances of the “dative” ventive with a 3rd p. referent are doubtless present among the ventives on *nadānum* and *qabûm* that are referred to in Kouwenberg 2002:217 fn. 32 and, according to K., ‘must remain unexplained for the time being’ (ibid.). This usage is marginal, yet in my view it shows the versatile nature of the ventive morpheme, i. e. its potential for polysemy.

2.3. The ventive as a non-core argument

2.3.1. *Reflexive-benefactive* (RB) *ventive* is used with agentive non-motion verbs *ahāzum* ‘to seize,’ *leqûm* ‘to take,’ *nepûm* ‘to distraint, to take as pledge,’ *šabātum* ‘to take hold,’ *šarāqum* ‘to steal,’ and perhaps *kalûm* ‘to hold, to detain.’²⁴ All of them are transitive dynamic “taking-hold-of” verbs. The RB ventive can refer to the speaker, addressee, and “third person(s),” i. e. non-participant(s) in the speech event.

I will start with the verb *leqûm* as perhaps the most frequent one in text and the one whose collocation with the ventive often presents difficulties for interpretation.

K. observes correctly that in the context of the deictic directional ventive the verb *leqûm* may be used as an allative motion verb ‘to bring along’:

‘The original meaning of *leqûm* is “to take, receive, acquire”; the meaning (+ vent) “to bring along” doubtless arose secondarily from its frequent use in hendiadys with a motion verb, such as *liqeamma alkam* “take and come here,” i. e. “bring here” (*passim* in OB letters). But also without support of a motion verb it may mean to “bring along,” e. g., AbB 1, 60:18 (two good sacks) *ša-ma-am-ma li-qi-a-am* “buy and bring here/to me” (not “nimm sie an dich”, as Kraus translates), and similarly in 6, 78:18’ (Kouwenberg 2002:203 fn. 3).

This allative use of *leqûm* is indeed quite well attested in OB letters; I will adduce an example wherein the allative ventive is accompanied by the *ana šēr-* prepositional phrase:

²⁴ For the purposes of the present study, I will define “reflexive-benefactive” as a non-core participant of a transitive agentive (and therefore purposive) situation; this participant is coreferential with the agent, as e. g. ‘he built this house *for himself*’ or ‘he built *himself* a house.’

- (16) *a-wi-lu-ú bi-tam ip-lu-šu-ma i-na še-im za-ba-li-im a-lum ú-ki-in-šu-nu-ti ù a-na še-ri-ia il-qú-nim_{vent}*
 ‘Die Männer sind in ein Haus eingebrochen, denn die Stadt hat ihnen nachgewiesen, daß sie Gerste trugen. Auch *hat man sie zu mir gebracht_{vent}*’ (AbB 3, 70:8–11).

Besides, *leqûm* without the ventive can be freely used as an *ablative* motion verb, i. e. it can express the motion towards a non-deictic goal.²⁵ The following examples illustrate:

- (17) a. *a-na GN li-qí-a-an-ni*
 ‘Take me to GN!’ (AbB 14, 49:15f.).
- b. *iš-tu da-ba-bu šu-ú i-na pu-úh-ri ub-ti-ir-ru a-na É^{dia}-ab-li-ia a-na bu-úr-ri il-qú-šu-nu-ti*
 ‘After this statement had been corroborated in the assembly *they took them* to the temple of Jablija for (further) corroboration’ (AbB 13, 60:21f., van Soldt’s translation).
- c. *iš-tu šú-uh-ri-ia a-na GN il-qú-ni-in-ni-ma i-na GN ÌR É.GAL a-na-ku*
 ‘Schon in meiner Jugend *hat man mich* nach Babylon *genommen*; in Babylon bin ich Palastbeamter’ (AbB 4, 118:7f.).

What concerns us at this point is the rather frequent RB use of the ventive in the context of *leqûm* as *non-motion verb*. Grammatical descriptions permit it only for the 1st p. sg. forms, e. g. *alqe-am* ‘I took (it) for myself’. Yet the RB ventive is well attested with other finite forms of *leqûm*, as the following examples illustrate:

- (18) *aš-šum te₄-em 3[0 ERIM.MEŠ]š ša iš-t[u x] x-ri-bi^{K1} ta-al-qí-a-am_{vent}*
PN₁ ù PN₂ ^s [.....] x ⁹ il-li-ku-ma um-ma šu-nu-ma 30 ERIM.MEŠ
il-qí-a-am_{vent}
 ‘Was die Angelegenheit der dreißig Mann betrifft, welche du *dir_{vent}* aus-*ri-bi* genommen hast, (so) sind Narām-Adad und Marduk-nāšir ^s ⁹ weggegangen und (haben) folgendermaßen (erklärt): “Er hat *sich_{vent}* dreißig Mann genommen’ (AbB 5, 242: 3’–11’, italics as in the Edition’s translation).

In this text, 30 ERIM.MEŠ *il-qí-a-am* cannot have an allative sense ‘he brought to me / to us’ or a 1st p. benefactive sense ‘he took for me,’ thus we get (with Kraus) *talqe-am* = ‘you_{m.s.} took

²⁵ “Take”-verbs tend to develop this kind of polysemy. Cf. e. g. the English “take to,” as in ‘he takes (≈ drives) the child to school’ or the Biblical Hebrew *lāqah lə-: qah-nā lə-ʔahēkā* ‘take_{inv ms} your brothers (this ephah of roasted grain)’ (1 S 17:17, JB). In both instances the basic directive preposition suffices to convert “take”-verbs into motion verbs.

for yourself' vs. *ilqe-am* = 'he took for himself' as the only viable solution.

- (19) *il[-l]i[-k]a-[a]m ú-ša-na-ma il-qí-a-am_{vent} !e₄-ma-am šu-up-ra-nim*
 '... he came and received (lit. 'took for himself') [barley] for the second time. Send_{pl} me a report'²⁶ (AbB 6, 173:14ff.).

The *-am* of *il-qí-a-am* is hardly attracted from *šu-up-ra-nim*, as the sequencing *-ma* lacks here, which is due to a caesura after *il-qí-a-am*: the author switches from reporting events to an imperative.

- (20) *a-wi-le-e šu-nu-ti il-qí-a-aš_{vent}-š_u-nu-ti-ma a-na GN it-ta-al-ku*
 'Er hat besagte Männer zu sich genommen_{vent} und sie sind nach Babylon abgereist' (AbB 10, 24:7'f.)

The ventive within *ilqe-aš-šunūti* is a clear-cut RB one, as correctly reflected in the translation of Kraus. Note that Kouwenberg 2002:222–231 offers no evidence showing that the ventive was ever used in OB letters as a linking element before 3rd p. accusative pronouns.

- (21) *tu-pá-am ša hu-bu-li-kà ni-il₅-qí-am_{vent}*
 'Die Tafel über deine Schuld haben wir erhalten_{vent}' (TCL 2, 14:34f., text and translation as in GKT § 78f).²⁷

Again, *nilqe-am* can hardly mean anything but 'we took for ourselves.'

- (22) 5 SILA₃ Ì.GIŠ ša it-ti-ia il-qú-nim_{vent} SAG.GEME₂ it-ta-ba-ak
 'The slave girl has just spilled the 5 liters of oil which they have received_{vent} from me' (AbB 12, 44:5ff., van Soldt's translation).

The source of receiving is coded by *ittiya* 'from me,' while *ilqú-nim* most probably means 'they received for themselves,' if we are to take this ventive seriously.²⁸

²⁶ R. Frankena translates in the Edition (most probably, correctly): 'ist gekommen und hat abermals empfangen,' i. e. the person in question received barley twice for the same service. The context excludes a reading 'he took for me' or 'he took along to me.'

²⁷ Hecker (GKT 133) believes that the ventive in this and similar instances quoted *ibid.* is not "meaningful" and belongs 'zu einer unkontrollierten, kaum noch einen Sinn erkennen lassenden Verwendungsweise,' yet the evidence presented here makes me think that Hecker's judgement is premature and somewhat dogmatic.

²⁸ K. (p. 261 fn. 31) suggests that the ventive might sometimes have been used 'vicariously for a subjunctive.' I believe that this interesting (if unprovable) idea should not be applied to cases for which other explanations may be found.

- (23) *tup-pí a-na Nu-un-na-tum aš-šum síG uq-ni-a-ti ta-ak-la-tim ša I*
 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR *ša-mi-im-ma šu-bu-li[m] uš-ta-bi-la-aš-šu síG uq-ni-*
a-ti ta-ak-la-tim ša I GÍN KÙ.BABBAR *li-ša-ma-ak-kum-ma li-qi-a-*
am_{vent} *ù aš-šum 2 a-za-mi-il-la-tim i-na KÁ KIL.LAM ša-mi-im-ma le-*
qé-e-em ú-na-ḥi-i-id-ka 2 a-za-mi-il-la-tim dam-qá-tim ša-ma-am-ma
li-qi-a-am_{vent}

‘I have sent Nunnatum a letter regarding buying and sending one shekel worth of sturdy blue wool. Let him buy you one shekel silver worth of sturdy blue wool, and *take* (it) *for yourself*_{vent}. And I (hereby) suggest you to buy at the market gate and take 2 sacks: buy and *take for yourself*_{vent} 2 sacks!’ (AbB 1, 60:7–18, the letter is quoted in its entirety, save for the head).

The text does not say explicitly that the addressee has to ‘take the wool along’ to the author; on the contrary, the author writes that the third party has to buy it for the addressee (*li-ša-ma-ak-kum*).

- (24) *te₄-mu-um šu-ú a-[n]a [...] ú-ul i-sa-ni-qá-am-ma na-áz-qá-ku a-na*
 PN *tú-ru-ud-ma te₄-ma-am šu-a-ti ga-am-ra-am li-il-qi-a-am*_{vent} *ma*
la a-na-zi-iq

‘If this (= the aforementioned) information does not reach [...], I will be worried. Send to Marduk-nāšir *so that he gets*_{vent} all this information and I shall not worry’ (AbB 3, 53:25–30).

The Edition has ‘zu Marduk-nāšir schicke, damit er den definitiven Bescheid darüber *für mich*_{vent} erlange und ich mich nicht Sorge.’ Yet, the speaker most likely has only one piece of information in view, i. e. *tēnum šū = tēnum šuāti*: if the *tēnum* (known to the author) reaches [...] and Marduk-nāšir gets it, the author will not worry / will be out of trouble. Thus the ventive of *lilqe-am* refers to Marduk-nāšir as a RB (lit. ‘let him take it for himself’) rather than to the author.

In AbB there are several attestations of the verb phrase *kīma pa-ni-ka leqe-am* ‘take according to your wish’ (as translated in CAD P 92a), whose ventive is clearly a RB marker, provided the general interpretation of this phrase is correct. Consider the following example:

- (25) *šum-ma ta-la-ka-am ki-ma pa-ni-ka-ma li-qi-a-am*_{vent}
 ‘Wenn du kommst, *nimm dir*_{vent}, wie (es) deine Absicht war!’
 (AbB 5, 237:15’f.).²⁹

Yet, as we know, only the context of the respective letters can lift the inherent ambiguity of *liqe-am*: in itself this phrase may equally well mean

²⁹ Other instances in AbB include 2, 100:24f.; 2, 104:12; 13, 171:10; 14, 143:13f. and 26, most of them referred to in CAD P 92a.

‘take for me’ (1st p. sg. benefactive), ‘take to where I am’ (allative), or ‘take for yourself’ (RB). If the context does not provide a good clue, the ambiguity remains unresolved. The Edition’s translation of AbB 5, 237:15’f. does not seem quite certain to the present writer;³⁰ and as regards AbB 14, 143:13f. and 26, Veenhof translates both instances of *ki-ma pa-ni-ka-ma li-qi-a-am* as ‘get me/take me as soon as you can’ (sic!), probably correctly (*contra* CAD P 92a).

All the assumed RB tokens of the ventive on *leqûm* are bound to the forms of the Preterite, Imperative or Precative. The absence of the Present with the future-time reference looks peculiar. Anyway, in AbB 1–14 the Present of *leqûm* + ventive is only scarcely attested also for the deictic meanings of the ventive. This is hardly incidental, but an explanation of this fact remains to be found. The Perfect of *leqûm* appears in AbB 1–14 some 20 times, no (+ vent) forms are available.

From the above it follows that *leqûm* in the Preterite and in the volitive mood (Precative / Imperative) builds a complete RB paradigm with the ventive:

	Preterite	Precative/Imperative
1 cs	<i>alqe-am</i>	<i>lulqe-am</i>
2 ms	<i>talqe-am</i>	<i>liqe-am</i>
2 fs	* <i>talqî-m</i>	* <i>liqî-m</i>
3 cs	<i>ilqe-am</i>	<i>lilqe-am</i>
1 cp	<i>nilqe-am</i>	<i>nilqe-am</i>
2 cp	<i>telqeā-nim</i>	<i>liqeā-nim</i>
3 mp	<i>ilqû-nim</i>	<i>lilqû-nim</i>
3 fp	* <i>ilqeā-nim</i>	* <i>ilqeā-nim</i>

The RB forms not present in the exx. (18)–(24) are attested in the following texts: *alqe-am* AbB 14, 205:10; *telqeā-nim* AbB 4, 22:17; *lulqe-am* AbB 2, 152:10; *liqeā-nim* AbB 4, 32:14. Some of the RB ventives in these prooftexts can be interpreted as attracted, but this does not change the general picture.³¹ The feminine forms (marked by *) have not been found in the OB sources for obvious reasons. One can safely assume they could

³⁰ A reading ‘if you come, get me (an understood something) according to your wish’ is also a possibility.

³¹ One has to keep in mind that the “trivial” ventive anticipation is not obligatory in letters: cf. *anumma ... aknuk-am-ma uštābil-am* ‘I herewith send you (a document) under seal’ (AbB 13, 23:4–10) vs. *aknuk-ma ana mahri-ka uštābil-am* ‘I herewith send you (some silver) under seal’ (AbB 13, 68:6ff.). This is to remind that we posit ventive anticipation only if there is no other way to explain a given ventive token.

be freely built upon necessity. The verb forms in the paradigm mean ‘I took for / to myself,’ ‘you took for yourself,’ ‘take for yourself,’ etc.

In what follows I quote the few tokens of the reflexive-benefactive ventive bound to the non-1st p. sg. forms of *nepûm* ‘to distraint, take as pledge,’ *šarāqum* ‘to steal,’ *aḥāzum* ‘to seize’ I have found in the OB documents.

An example for *nepûm* comes from an OB legal text:

- (26) *aš-šum* KUŠ *gu-sa-nu-um ša* PN₁ *ma-ḥa-ar* PN₂ *i-zi-ba-am* ù SAG.
GEME₂ ***ip-pi-a-am***_{vent} PN₂ KUŠ *gu-sa-na-am ub-la-am-ma*
SAG.GEME₂ *it-ba-al a-wi-lum a-na a-wi-lim ú-ul i-ra-ga-am*

‘Concerning the leather sack which PN₁ lent to PN₂ and took a slave-girl as *pledge*_{vent}, PN₂ brought the leather sack and carried off the slave girl. One will not bring a claim against the other’ (CT 33, 49b:1–12).

If the ventive of *ip-pi-a-am* has a meaning, it is doubtless the RB: ‘he distrainted a slave-girl for himself.’³²

The view of space and motion, as expressed in this text via lative ventives, is also worth notice. As the 1st person speaker is not available, the role of the spatial deictic center is assigned to the respective *receiver*, and this is the mirror image of the canonical situation-of-utterance: PN₁ *maḥar* PN₂ *zib-am*_{vent} lit. ‘PN₁ left_{vent} [a slave-girl] with PN₂’ (if we are not to take this ventive as a “dative” one with a 3rd p. referent, cf. 2.2 above); PN₂ *gusānam ubl-am*_{vent} ‘PN₂ brought_{vent} the leather sack (to PN₁)’.

There are two examples for *šarāqum*:

- (27) *um-ma a-na-ku-ma i-na ma-a-at I-da-m[a-r]a-[a]z sa-li-ma-tim ša be-
li-ia* SAG.İR.MEŠ ù ANŠE.ĤI.A *a-na mi-nim ta-aš-ri-qa-am*_{vent} *um-ma
šu-ú-ma ú-ul a-na-ku aš-ri-iq*

‘I asked him, “Why did you steal_{vent} slaves and donkeys from the land of Idamaraz, which is allied to my lord?”—He replied, “It was not me who stole them”’ (ARM 14, 51:11–14).

In the question *ana mīnim tašriq-am* a reflexive-benefactive semantic element, allegedly encoded here by the ventive, looks

³² In AbB 1–14 there seems to be attested only one example of the 1st p. sg. RB ventive on *nepûm*: *i-na mu-uh-ḥi* A.ŠA GÚ.UN-šu-ma 2 GEME₂-šu ***at-ta-pi-a-am*** ‘Darauf habe ich wegen eben seines abgabe(pflichtigen) Feldes zwei Sklavinnen von ihm als Schuldhäftlinge weggeführt’ (AbB 10, 5:10f.).

appropriate, while it would perhaps be less so in the answer (*ul anāku ašriq*).³³

(28) *ù a-na-ku ìr-ka ú-ul x [...] [i]š-ri-qá-am_{vent} ku-nu-uk PN a-na-aš-ša-ar*

‘And I, your servant, not ... *he has stolen_{vent}* I will keep the tablet sealed by PN in my custody’ (AbB 12, 172:4’–7’, van Soldt’s translation).

The text is slightly damaged, yet an interpretation ‘he stole on my behalf’ is hardly a viable alternative to the RB reading of *išriq-am*.

The only example for *aḥāzum* comes from ‘archaic OB’:

(29) PN 2 *li-im A-mu-ra-am i-hu-za-am_{vent}-ma a-na qá-qá-dì-kà-ma šu-úr-du*

‘PN *has taken_{vent}* two thousands Amorites and they are marching against you’ (AS 22, 7:3–8, Whiting’s translation).

In OB the verb *šabātum* ‘to take hold’ with the object *panī* X lit. ‘face of X’ means (in an idiomatic phrase) ‘to lead, conduct, to take command of, to march in front of (persons, troops, animals, boats, etc.)’.³⁴ All the OB tokens of this phrase display the ventive on the finite forms of *šabātum*, while post-OB tokens have for the most part “empty” forms of this verb.³⁵

Consider the following examples:

(30) a. PN₁ *ù* PN₂ *pa-ni* DUMU.MEŠ PN₃ ... *ù* ERIM *aḥ-la-mi-i iš-ba-tu-nim_{vent}-ma ma-tam uš-ta-ad-du-ú*

‘PN₁ and PN₂ *took command_{vent}* over the sons of PN₃ ... and the Ahlamite troops, and they devastated the land’ (AbB 13, 60:30ff.).

b. *pa-ni* ERIM.DUŠU *šu-a-ti* 1 DUMU.É.DUB.BA-ka *li-iš-ba-tam_{vent}*

‘*Einer deiner Militärschreiber soll die Führung dieser Fronarbeiter übernehmen_{vent}*’ (AbB 2, 27:8f.).

An attempt to render these ventives with a 1st p. sg. benefactive pronoun (“on my behalf”) would be artificial, so they will have to be construed as RB ones. Since the collocation of finite forms of *šabātum* with the RB ventive and direct object *panī* X created a new non-motion lexical meaning, the ventive functions here as a derivational morpheme.

³³ Incidentally, no *ašriq-am* seems to be attested in OB letters.

³⁴ Cf. CAD Š 28f.

³⁵ “Empty” (“leer”) is Hirsch’s term for a (– vent) finite form, while his term for a (+ vent) form is “full” (“voll”). I will sometimes use these convenient labels.

The verb *kalûm* ‘hold, detain’ is quite often used with the ventive in OB letters. Unlike the (+ vent) *leqûm* in its non-motion meaning, only the Present-based Prohibitive of *kalûm* is compatible with the ventive.³⁶ The attested forms are 2 m. sg. *lā takallâm*,³⁷ 3 c. sg. *lā ikallâm*,³⁸ 3 m. pl. *lā ikallû-nim*.³⁹

The interpretation problem here is of course whether the ventive on the Prohibitive of *kalûm* is reflexive benefactive, 1st p. sg. benefactive (= *dativus incommodi*), or either of them as the case may be. Editors of AbB either understand the ventive of *lā takallâm* literally (e. g. Frankena in 2, 94:19 ‘sollst du *von mir* nicht fernhalten’) or leave it untranslated (e. g. Veenhof in 14, 143:24 has *la ta-ka-al-la-a-am* as ‘you must not detain’). The comparison of “full” and “empty” forms of this Prohibitive, undertaken by the present writer, has led to no dramatic results. The Prohibitive of *kalûm* can be freely used with the 3rd person dative pronouns, as e. g. *la ta-ka-al-la-šum* ‘do not prevent_{2cp} him (from bringing it to me)’ (AbB 2, 182:10); *la ta-ka-la-ši-im* ‘do not withhold_{2ms} (it) from her’ (AbB 9, 130:27). Thus nothing stands in the way of interpreting *lā takallâm* as ‘do not withhold (it) from me.’ Yet see presently a speculative argument in favour of the RB understanding of this ventive.

The RB ventive may be used with certain verbs that are “taking-hold-of” verbs in certain contexts or in particular meanings only. In OB letters the most salient example of this kind is perhaps *ezēbum*, whose basic meaning is ‘to leave.’ Consider the following examples:

(31) a. *ka-ni-kam te-zi-ba-am*_{vent}

‘You *made out*_{vent} a sealed document’ (AbB 11, 129:3, Stol’s translation).

The content of the letter suggests that the addressee had the document in his possession at the speech time.

b. *ku-nu-uk I MA.NA ù ku-nu-uk II GÍN KÙ.BABBAR i-na pa-ni-ka la te-zi-ba-am*_{vent}

‘The receipt for 1 mina of silver and the receipt for eleven shekels of silver do not *keep for yourself*_{vent}’ (ABIM 23:44ff.; the Edition’s translation is different but hardly acceptable).

³⁶ I have found no other “full” finite forms of this verb in OB letters.

³⁷ Written *la ta-ka-al-la-a-am* (AbB 11, 185:23); *la ta-ka-la-a-am* (AbB 13, 155:28); *la ta-ka-la-am* (e. g. AbB 2, 94:19; Goetze 1958, 11:18; ARM 10, 109:19); *la ta-ka-al-la-am* (e. g. AbB 5, 1:14; 6, 53:15; Goetze 1958, 47:21).

³⁸ Written *la i-ka-la-am* (AbB 6, 84:6’); *la i-ka-al-la-a-am* (ABIM 16:14; ARM 10, 92:25).

³⁹ Written *la-a i-ka-al-lu-nim* (ARM 10, 105:15); *la i-ka-lu-nim* (AbB 8, 96:16).

- c. *i-[n]a MÁ.LAH₅.MEŠ ep-pé-ši an-nu-tim 1 [L]Ú la te-**ez-zi-ba-am**_{vent}*
 ‘Don’t *let* even one single of these expert boatmen *stay behind*_{vent}!’ (AbB 14, 225:32f., Veenhof’s translation).
- d. *i-na pa-ni-ka la te-**zi-ba-a**[m]*
 ‘Do not *keep* (aforementioned goods) *for yourself*_{vent}!’ (AbB 5, 231:19, in a partly damaged context, and cf. fn. 11 above).

To exclude arbitrary “intuitive” judgements one would have to maintain the 1st p. benefactive as the only reading for the (+ vent) Prohibitive of *kalûm* and perhaps for the four non-1st p. sg. (+ vent) forms of *ezêbum* just quoted.⁴⁰ On the other hand, we have seen that “taking-hold-of” verbs are compatible with the RB ventive, and one of them (*leqûm*) was shown to build a complete RB paradigm with the ventive for its Preterite and volitive forms.

Thus, if we consistently understand *lā takallâm* as ‘sollst du *von mir* nicht fernhalten’ (Frankena in AbB 2, 94:19), and *lā tezzib-am* in a similar way as ‘do not keep *from me*,’ we will espouse a rigid context-independent interpretation (a 1st p. *dativus incommodi*), which is syntactically very demanding: it invariably makes the speaker a participant in the situations of “holding” (*kalûm*) or “keeping / setting aside” (*ezêbum* in one of its meanings). The only compelling grammatical reason in favour of this interpretation is the fixed semantics of the ventive morpheme in the traditional grammar of Akkadian.⁴¹ Yet, as the evidence collected in this section shows, there are independent grounds to believe that the ventive may have an all-persons reflexive-benefactive reading on verbs with certain lexical meanings. This granted, in certain contexts a RB reading will make more modest semantic and syntactic claims than the 1st p. benefactive, because the RB ventive allows not to increase the number of participants. Therefore I would opt for the inherent semantic ambiguity of the ventive tokens discussed in the last paragraphs.⁴² An additional reason of this option will be proposed at the end of this section.

⁴⁰ Thus one can construe *lā tezzib-am* as ‘do not keep *from me*!’ This kind of option is almost always available in texts with a 1st p. speaker.

⁴¹ As we have seen above, Kouwenberg narrows down the functional scope of this morpheme by forbidding it to point to a third party goal, thus canceling a function suggested by Landsberger.

⁴² The position taken here has nothing to do with I. J. Gelb’s obscure remarks on the ventive in his review of GAG (Gelb 1955:109). See § 3 below on the suggested inner-Akkadian semantic development of the ventive morpheme.

In OA the verb *lapātum* in the ‘taking-hold-of’ meaning ‘to write down, record’ (CAD L 86f.)⁴³ is compatible with the RB ventive, as the following examples show:

- (32) [... *rī*]-*ik-sá-am* *ša* 15 [*ma-na*] AN.NA *ša i-pá-ni šu-ug-lím ša-ak-nu* [*i-na*]
na-áš-pè-er-tim I-na-a ša ki-ma DĀM.GAR *rī-ik-sá-am lá il₅-pu-ta-am*_{vent}
 ‘Concernant le *riksam* de 15 [mines] d’étain qui a été placé au
 sommet d’une caisse; Innāya, représentant du *tamkārūm*, n’a
 pas enrégistré_{vent} le *riksam* sur la notice’ (BIN 6, 252:1’–6’, trans-
 lation as in Michel 1991 No. 124).

This is a court testimony in which the speaker is much in the background. The ventive of *ilput-am* must refer to the culprit Innāya: he did not record this tin *for himself*, i. e. on his own behalf.⁴⁴

- (33) DUMU PN₁ *a-a-um šu-um-šu i-na tuṭ-pi-im lu-up-tám*_{vent} *ù šī-be-e*
ša i-na ma-aḥ-ri-šu-nu [K]Û.BABBAR *a-na* PN₂ *ta-áš-qū-lu x x šu-*
*nu-ti lu-up-tám*_{vent}
 ‘Enter_{vent} into the tablet the son of PN₁ (what is his name?), and
 as for the witnesses in whose presence you paid the silver to
 PN₂—record_{vent} their [names?]’ (ATHE 60:31–38).

- (34) *té-er-ta-kà li-li-kam* *ù šī-bi-kà šu-mi-šu-nu i-na tuṭ-pi-im lu-up-*
*tám*_{vent}
 ‘Let your instruction come here, and enter_{vent} the names of
 your witnesses into the tablet’ (AKT 1, 12:11–15).

- (35) *ki-ma ša-bu-a-ku-ni mi-šu-um i-tuṭ-pi-kà lá ta-al-pu-tám*_{vent}
 ‘Why did not you enter_{vent} into your tablet that I had been fully
 paid?’ (CCT 2, 3:12f.).

From the above it becomes increasingly clear that the appearance of the RB ventive is determined lexically: it looks more like an idiosyncratic

⁴³ The (+ vent) forms of this verb usually have the meaning ‘to enter certain data into a document,’ i. e. a “grasping” semantic element is doubtless perceptible in this usage.

⁴⁴ The only alternative would be to regard [*ina*] *našpertim* PN ... *riksam lā ilput-am* as a motion situation wherein [*ina*] *našpertim* is a non-deictic endpoint of movement (see 2.1 above), but this is hardly tenable. The OA *lapātum* ‘to write down, record’ is synonymous with the OB *šaṭārūm* (a non-motion verb) rather than with *šapārūm*.

property of individual “taking-hold-of” verbs than a common feature of this semantic class of verbs as a whole.⁴⁵

This trend is taken to an extreme in the case of the OA verb *šī'atum* ‘eine(n) Rest(forderung) behalten’ (as glossed in GKT 132). *šī'atum* is a “ventive *tantum*” finite verb in OA (with GKT *ibid.*), and this fact again reveals the propensity of the ventive to behave in the way of a derivational morpheme. Consider the following example, which is quite representative:

- (36) [ni]-kà-sí i-šī-ú-ma 1½ ma-na 3 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR i-na li-bi₄ PN₁ PN₂
*i-šī-tám*_{vent}
 ‘They settled accounts, and PN₂ retained a claim of x silver
 against PN₁’ (BIN 4, 226:1–6, translation as in CAD Š₂ 342b).⁴⁶

The all-persons RB usage of the ventive is probably due to the fact that Akkadian dative pronouns bound to the finite verb do not have the indirect reflexive / reflexive-benefactive reading (unlike pronouns bound to the “dative” preposition *l-* in Biblical Hebrew or in different pre-modern Aramaic idioms). E. g., Akkadian cannot use *ilqe-šum* and **telqekum* / **telqekum* for ‘he took for himself’ and ‘you took for yourself’ respectively, *ippe-šum* is not used for ‘he distrained for himself,’ *lā takallakum* / **takallâkkum* is not ‘do not keep back for yourself,’ etc. Akkadian has no specialized reflexive markers which could be easily used in most situations wherein the reflexive sense is called for. The “long” lexical reflexive words *ramanum* “self,” *napištum* and *pagrum* “body, self” are used mostly as direct reflexives (cf. *pagar-ka ušur* ‘take care,’ *napištī ana kâšī apqid* ‘I gave myself over to you,’ *arahḫi ramanī arahḫi pagrī* ‘I inseminate myself, I inseminate my body’), and we do not come across them on every page of letters editions, whereas an argument coreferential with the subject is expected to be often invoked in any language. The valence-decreasing verbal stems (i. e. the N-stem and especially T-stems) can of course be helpful in expressing direct (and indirect?) reflexive, yet they are—like the re-

⁴⁵ W. von Soden believes that the function(s) of the ventive on non-motion verbs ‘kann nur durch lexikalische Untersuchungen ermittelt werden’ (GAG § 82a), and this turns out to be partially true.

⁴⁶ Note that this is no letter. According to the classification of EL, this document (= EL 173) belongs to “Teilzahlungen und Anerkennung von Restverbindlichkeiten”. For more tokens of this legal technical term, see CAD Š₂ 342b, cf. also Prag I 539:8. *šī'atum* in OA has also an intransitive sense ‘to remain, to be left over’, see CAD Š₂ 342 a. All the intransitive tokens of *šī'atum* known to me also have the ventive. In the contexts, its meaning may be either 1st p. sg. benefactive or “antitransitive” (see 2.3.2 below).

flexive nouns—lexical rather than grammatical devices. It is probably for want of a readily available marker of reflexivity that Akkadian was sometimes able to press the ventive into the service of an oblique reflexive pronoun.

2.3.2. “Antitransitive” (AT) *ventive* is used with intransitive verbs to optionally mark their intransitive value and to emphasize the perfective nature of a situation.⁴⁷ The verbs with the AT ventive, unlike those with the RB ventive, may have both animate and inanimate subjects. The following examples will convey the flavour of the AT construction:

- (37) *aš-šum* GEME₂.HIA *ša um-mi-a-ni šum-ma-mi iḥ-li-qám_{vent} a-na*
É.GAL *i-ru-ub-ma šar-ra-am lu-um-mi-id*

‘Was die Sklavinnen der Handwerker betrifft, wenn eine *entlaufen* *ist_{vent}*, ist sie in den ‘Palast’ eingetreten. Dann benachrichtige den König’ (AbB 10, 57:21–24).⁴⁸

In this context the ventive of *iḥliq-am* cannot refer to the speaker. I believe it renders the notion ‘she definitively fled’ / ‘she fled all by herself.’⁴⁹

- (38) *iš-tu eš-nun-na^{K1} i-ru-ba-am-ma a-wa-at É.GAL-lim e-li-i-šu im-qú-UD⁵⁰-ma a-na^{d1D} il-li-ik-ma iš-ta-al-ma-am_{vent}*

‘He returned from Ešnunna,⁵¹ and a charge of the Palace was brought against him. He went to the divine River Ordeal and survived_{vent}’ (AbB 8, 102:15–18).

The *ištalm-am* of this text has a well-known counterpart in CH § 2:

- (39) *š[u]m-ma a-wi-lam šu-a-ti^{d1D} ú-te-eb-bi-ba-aš-šu-ma iš-ta-al-ma-am*
(CH 5:46–49).

⁴⁷ The label “antitransitive” for this kind of sense is (for lack of a better choice) of my own coinage; it is designed on a purely surface analogy with such well-known terms from the domain of voice and transitivity as *anticausative* and *antipassive*. Regarding the perfectivizing force of the ventive cf. already Finet 1955:259. A. Finet suggests that the ventive is a “mood” that ‘indique l’aboutissement de l’action, une sorte de «terminative»,’ while the allative is its individual meaning.

⁴⁸ I wonder whether ‘if one of them escaped *and* entered the Palace’ would be a better interpretation.

⁴⁹ Note that *ḫalāqum* can govern the accusative of the source, which is a non-core argument of this verb, e. g. *iḫtalq-anni* ‘she has escaped *from me*’ (AbB 11, 55:21). For the sake of the present discussion, verbs whose “accusative” arguments are no semantic objects are considered intransitive.

⁵⁰ L. Cagni has *tam/ut* in his transliteration.

⁵¹ On the ventive of *ištu* X *irub-am* see below in this section.

Kouwenberg proposes that the ventive of *ištalm-am* in CH § 2 ‘indicates unspecified motion towards the implicit observer,’⁵² which latter as a reference point is functionally equivalent to the speaker, hence K.’s translation: ‘If the River (ordeal) has purified that man and he *has come out* safe.’ K.’s ‘implicit observer’ approach looks quite plausible for the laws of CH and for omina,⁵³ less so for a letter with an outspoken 1st p. deictic centre. For this reason I suggest that *ištalm-am* (with an antitransitive ventive) might have been a legal technical term for ‘he survived (the Ordeal).’⁵⁴

Same kind of reinterpretation (AT ventive with the perfective sense rather than motion towards the implicit observer) seems appropriate for K.’s example (06) on p. 206: *iš-tu ar-bi-a-am_{vent}* ‘when I had grown up_{vent}’ (UM 5, 100:I 11).

(40) DUB-*pa-ka a-na a-aḥ-ḥi-ka šu-up-ra-am-ma ni-di a-ḥi-im la i-ra-šu-nim_{vent}*

‘Send a letter of yours to your brothers, that *they must not get careless_{vent}*’ (AbB 14, 141:43ff., Veenhof’s translation).

(41) *la-ma i-na-wi-ra-am_{vent} lu-mu-ur-ka*

‘I want to see you before *it gets light_{vent}*’ (Goetze 1958 No. 14:15f.).

The antitransitive ventive can be used with intransitive motion verbs. The ventive on these verbs is AT if (1) it does not point to the location of the speaker or addressee and (2) it is not accompanied by a directional prepositional phrase that encodes a non-deictic goal, i. e. if this ventive is no core argument of the motion verb in question.

The following texts fulfill both of the above conditions:

(42) *ki-ma iš-tu ma-aḥ-ri-ki ú-ṣi-a-am_{vent} a-ḥi a-wi-lim mi-it-ma a-na GN uš-te-er-di*

⁵² Kouwenberg 2002:204, cf. ex. (07) on p. 206. One has to keep in mind that in motion contexts *šalāmum* can indeed be freely used as a motion verb (with K.): *išlim* = ‘he arrived safely’, *išlim-am* = ‘he arrived here safely’ (see the dictionaries for references). Same is true of the verbs that can render the manner of movement, e. g. *ilymuṭ* ‘he arrived in haste’ vs. *ilymuṭ-am* ‘he arrived here in haste.’

⁵³ This is because in the laws of CH and in most omina there is no 1st p. speaker. Cf. Metzler 2002:41–50 on the “Rezeptionszeit” in CH.

⁵⁴ Other possible examples of AT ventive in CH are ^dīD *išalli-am-ma* ‘he will submit (lit. ‘submerge himself’) to the divine River Ordeal,’ *ša* ^dīD *išli-am* ‘the one who submitted to the divine River Ordeal’ (CH 5:41, 53f.), as against an “empty” form *ana mutiša* ^dīD *išalli* ‘she shall submit to the divine River Ordeal for her husband’ (CH 29:4ff.).

‘When I left you (lit. ‘went out_{vent} from your presence’), the brother of the gentleman was dead, and I proceeded to GN’ (AbB 6, 2:5–8).

- (43) *iš-tu u₄-mi-im ša [š]a-[pí-r]i iš-tu gi-ir-ri-im i-r[u-b]a-am_{vent} um-ma a-na-ku-ma lu-l[i]-ma it-ti ša-pí-ri-ia lu-u[n]-na-mi-ir la-ma ša-pí-ri iš-tu gi-ir-ri-im i-ru-ba-am_{vent} mu-ur-šum iš-ba-ta-an-ni-ma a-na ma-ḥar ša-pí-ri-ia ú-ul al-li-kam*

‘After the day that my superior *came back*_{vent} from the campaign, I thought: “I will go up and meet with my superior.” (However,) (even) before my superior *had come back*_{vent} from the campaign, an illness overcame me and I did not come into the presence of my superior’ (AbB 9, 42:5–11, Stol’s translation).

The “full” verb form *irub-am* denotes the movement (admittedly, the ‘coming back’) of “the superior”, who is the addressee of this letter. Hence the addressee, being the participant in motion, is not the reference point of the ventive on *erēbum*.⁵⁵

Editors of OB and OA letters often interpret certain “full” forms of *at-lukum* ‘depart, set off’⁵⁶ in the way of my antitransitive ventive, as in the following examples:⁵⁷

- (44) a. *ú-ul at-ta-al-kam* ‘I did not go away’ and *at-ta-la-kam* ‘I will depart’ (AbB 12, 53:22, 31);
 b. *la-a-ma PN it-ta-al-kam* ‘before PN has left’ (AbB 9, 144:8’f.);⁵⁸
 c. *[it]-ta-al-ka-a[m]* ‘he has gone off’ (AbB 12, 178:2’);

⁵⁵ Note that the “trivial” ventive of *allik-am* in line 11 points to the location of the “superior.”

⁵⁶ For a new interpretation of the semantics of the Gt-stem in this verb see Kouwenberg 2005.

⁵⁷ The number of such examples can be easily multiplied. I have chosen these particular ones because here the assumed AT meaning looks plausible, so in these cases my judgement does not depend on whether the respective translators just happened to ignore the presence of the ventive morpheme.

⁵⁸ According to GAG³ § 173i–l, future-time temporal clauses introduced by *lāma* “before” have predicates in the Preterite and (more rarely) Present, while the Perfect in these clauses is attested rather exceptionally. Hence *ittalk-am* in this case should be a Gt Preterite. There might be syntactic reasons to believe that some of the relevant forms discussed below are Perfects of *alākum*, yet this ambiguity does not really affect our inquiry into the assumed non-directional meaning of the ventive on motion verbs.

d. [ki-m]a EREN₂ NA.KAD *šum-šu it-ta-al-ku-ni* ù *ša-am-mu i-na*
A.ŠÀ-*lim ú-ul i-ba-aš-šu-ú*

‘... the herdsmen, every single one of them, have left and there is no herbage on the fields’ (AbB 14, 92:7–10, italics in the Edition);

e. *šu-ma um-ma a-ta-ma tí-ib-a-ma a-tal-kam tu-p-pè-e ša ki-ma áš-pu-ra-ku-ni lá-al-qí-a-ma lá-ta-al-kam*

‘si tu (dis) ceci; “Mets-toi en route!” alors, je prendrai toutes les tablettes, comme celles que je t’avais écrites, et je partirai’ (CCT 3, 50b:14–19 as translated in Michel 1991 No. 45 and LAPO 19 No. 279).

Same is true for *alākum*, e. g. *i-lá-kam-ma a-ma-kam* IGI *kā-ri-im i-da-ku-šu-nu* ‘il se mettra en route et là-bas, devant le *kārum*, on les annulera (i. e. the tablets, SL)’ (MAH 16373: 24 = RA 60:98).

These translations are probably due to the fact that the respective letters provide no clues (except for the ventive on *atlukum/alākum*) that the goal of motion is the author or the addressee.

Excursus: iddiam-ma ittalk-am

In this Excursus I discuss controversial pieces of evidence for a possible OB idiomatic phrase with the AT ventive. Consider the following examples as translated by Kraus in AbB:

- (45) a. *a-nu-um-ma i-di-a-am-ma it-ta-al-kam*_{vent}
‘Jetzt hat er mich sitzen lassen und ist auf- und davongegangen_{vent}’ (4, 144:11ff.; in the preceding text no understood direct object of *nadūm* is available).
- b. *š[ú-b]a-ta-am ú-ša-al-bi-šu-ma i-di-a-am-ma it-ta-al-kam*_{vent-mi}
‘Ich habe ihn neu eingekleidet und (dann) hat er mich sitzen lassen und es heißt: «er ist auf- und davongegangen_{vent}»’ (4, 144:21ff.).

The bulk of AbB 4, 144 consists of a complaint about the disappearance of a certain *šuhārum* (translated as “Bursche”); except for the ventive of *ittalk-am*, nothing in this letter suggests that *šuhārum*’s flight was directed towards the addressee (e. g., the author does not ask the addressee to return the runaway servant); thus the translation “auf- und davongegangen” might be correct.

On the contrary, Kraus’s understanding of *iddi-am* as ‘he failed me’ is not convincing. The ventive of *iddi-am* might be attracted, but what is peculiar here is the absence of an explicit or understood direct object of

nadûm: contra Kraus, this slot can hardly be filled by the ventive / 1st p. sg. dative pronoun.

In OB contracts of hire a similar linguistic expression appears at least twice and with no ventives:

- (46) a. *i-na-ad-di it-ta-la-ak-ma i-na i-di-šu i-te-li* ‘if he is lazy or runs away, he shall forfeit his wages’ (JCS 13:107 No. 9:14f., Simmons’s translation).⁵⁹
 b. *i-na-ad-di it-ta-al-la-ak i-na á.BI i-te-el-li* ‘Should he abandon and go away, he will loose his wages’ (PBS 8/2 196:18, Chicra’s translation).

An analogous stipulation with bare *nadûm* (without *atlukum*) is attested in contracts of hire at least twice:

- (47) *i-na-ad-di-ma*⁶⁰ *i-na i-di-šu i-te-el-li* (UCP 10:131 No. 58:13f.) and *i-na-di-ma i-na i-di-šu-ma i-te-el-li* ‘if he is idle, he shall forfeit his wages’ (JCS 14:32 No. 65:7ff., Simmons’s translation).

Thus in contracts of hire we come across a free combination of verbs *nadûm* ‘be(come) idle’⁶¹ and *atlukum* ‘go away.’⁶² On the contrary, in OB letters (e. g. in AbB 4, 144 quoted as No. 45 above) there seems to appear an idiomatic phrase with the (near) obligatory ventives on its both verbal components.⁶³ Its precise import is difficult to grasp, it could be something like ‘go away for good.’ If the verb *nadûm* has an intransitive meaning within this idiom (as the evidence seems to show), both ventives in question are AT ones. Consider the following example, which is perhaps the most transparent of all:

- (48) *um-ma a-na-ku-ma iš-tu an-ni-a-am te-le-qi-a ú-ul a-ša-ba-at ad-da-am_{vent}-ma at-ta-al-ka_{vent}*

⁵⁹ CAD N₁ 78b has ‘if he stops working and leaves, he loses his wages’. Both translations doubtless connect this usage with the idiomatic phrase *aḥam nadûm* ‘be careless, negligent.’

⁶⁰ The text as in CAD N₁ 78b (collation); the Edition has *i-na-ad-di-šu*.

⁶¹ It turns out that in OB (and perhaps in the whole of Akkadian) the prefixed forms of *nadûm* appear without an object only in the texts discussed here (cf. CAD N₁ 78b 5’ ‘to stop working,’ where most of the available examples are collected).

⁶² In AbB 3, 3:21f. there occurs a combination of *nadûm* and *ḥalāqum* that expresses the same idea: *i-na-ad-di-ma i-ḥa-al-li-iq* ‘wird er nachlässig und macht sich davon.’

⁶³ Though the grammatical subject of this verb phrase in AbB 4, 144 is *ṣuḥārum* ‘servant’, the overall content of the letter makes it unlikely that the author’s complaint is about *ṣuḥārum*’s becoming lazy.

‘Folgendermaßen (habe) ich (erwidert): “Da ihr euch dieses nehmt, nehme ich es nicht in Besitz”. *Ich habe (es) aufgegeben*_{vent} und *bin weggegangen*_{vent}’ (4, 150:15–19).

The letter’s content makes it clear that the ventive of *attalk-a* does not point to the location of the addressee; hence this ventive is not an allative one. The actual meaning of this phrase is here probably ‘I made a complete break and went away.’

- (49) *šú-ḥa-ra-am ma-ra-ka ta-aš-pu-ra-am-ma 5 MA.NA SÍG ú-ki-il-[l]a-[am] ú-ul im-ḥu-ra-an-ni šú-ḥa-ru-um id-di-a-am*_{vent}-*ma it-ta-al-kam*_{vent} *šú-ḥa-ra-am tū-ur-dam*

‘Den Burschen, deinen Sohn, hast du hergeschickt und fünf Minen Wolle habe ich ihm angeboten. Er hat sie nicht von mir angenommen. Der Bursch hat (es) aufgegeben und ist dorthin abgereist. Schicke mir einen Burschen!’ (7, 23:5ff., 11–14).

The verb *ṭarādum* (rather than e. g. *turrum*) in the last sentence ascertains that the *ṣuḥārūm* mentioned in it is ‘another *ṣuḥārūm*,’ not just the one who *iddi-am-ma ittalk-am*. So it is probable (but impossible to prove) that the ventive of *ittalk-am* in this text does not point to the location of the addressee, though it seems that ‘dorthin’ in the translation of Kraus purports to convey the sense ‘to where you are.’ The translation ‘Der Bursch hat (es) aufgegeben’ (with 5 MA.NA SÍG as an understood direct object) is hardly correct anyway. The “becoming-lazy” sense of *iddi-am* is again unlikely here (with Kraus).

The sequence [*id*]-*di-a-am-ma* [*i*]-*ta-al-kam* appears once more in AbB 5, 86:17f. in a badly damaged context. In AbB 14, 49:18f. there is an *id-di-ma it-ta-la-ak* without ventives ‘she gave up and left’ in a difficult context (see the commentary in the Edition *ad loc*).⁶⁴

The evidence presented in this Excursus is somewhat ambiguous, yet there is a good chance that in the epistolary passages discussed above we come across an idiomatic expression with the AT ventive on most of its tokens.

* * *

The AT ventive can appear on predicates of *passive* clauses with both animate and inanimate subjects. This is not surprising (at least *après coup*),

⁶⁴ Cf. also *a-wa-ti-ia ù te-er-l[i] id-di-a-a[m] it-ta-al-ka-am* ‘(PN) has neglected my words and my order; he has gone’ (AbB 9, 206:5–8, Stol’s translation). In this text *iddi-am* governs an explicit direct object, therefore this example probably does not belong here.

because in the prototypical case subjects of intransitive and passive clauses share the property of being the single overt arguments of their predicates. Consider the following examples:

- (50) A.ŠÀ **ša-qi-a-am**_{vent} ù la **ša-qi-a-am**_{vent} šu-up-ra-am A.ŠÀ ša ra-bi-im
e-ri-iš ù **na-di-i** šu-up-ra-am

‘Whether the field *has been irrigated*_{vent} or *not irrigated*_{vent} let me know. Whether the field of the chief has been ploughed or left uncultivated let me know’ (Goetze 1958 10:3–7).

These statives are predicates of asyndetic object clauses. A reading of *ša-qi-am* as ‘irrigated on my behalf / for me’ looks artificial: had the field in question belonged to the author (an official in the kingdom of Ešnunna), he would probably had referred to it as *eqī*.

This analysis is corroborated by another example:

- (51) A.ŠÀ.ŠUKU-šū-nu ša i-na la me-e **na-di-a**_{vent} a-mu-ur

‘Check their subsistence field that *has been left uncultivated*_{vent} because of lack of water’ (AbB 3, 74:30f.).

- (52) i-na-an-na aš-šum GÚ.UN uḫ-ḫu-ra-at an-ni-iš **at-ta-an-sa-ka-am**_{vent}

‘Now *I have been blamed*_{vent} here, because the tribute was not paid on time’ (Goetze 1958 1:35f.).⁶⁵

- (53) a-ma me-eḫ-ra-at ma-mi-tim ša [ú-bi]-lu-ni-a-ti-ni a-na kà-ri-im **lá-pu-ta-nim**_{vent}

‘Voici les copies du serment que l’on nous a apportées, (elles) *ont été écrites*_{vent} pour le *kārum*’ (CCT 4, 30a:8ff., translation as in Michel 1991 No. 47).

The amount of examples for the passive variety of the AT ventive is not particularly impressive (note that *attansak-am* is a 1st p. sg. form), yet it seems wiser to keep these examples together rather than to discard them, because they suggest a pattern for interpreting some of the “problematical ventives” across which readers may come in their work.

In OA the verb *zakārum* in its intransitive meaning ‘to become free from specific claims or obligations’ (CAD Z 27) is very often (but not compulsorily) used with the AT ventive in both the Present and the Preterite. Consider the following example:

⁶⁵ *attansak-am* is N perf. of *masāku* (CAD N₁ 322). CAD glosses this N-verb as ‘to become bad, to receive blame.’ A second N perf. of *masāku* adduced in CAD also shows partial assimilation of [m]: *at-ta-an-sa-ak* ‘I have been blamed’ (TCL 18, 151:12).

(57) x KÙ.BABBAR *iz-ku-am*

‘x silver became available *to me*’ (BIN 4, 148:16f.).

3. Discussion

In this paper I suggest that the ventive may

- express the motion towards a “third person” goal on motion verbs (2.1);⁶⁹
- represent the non-1st p. sg. indirect object of “dative” verbs (2.2);
- function as a reflexive benefactive pronoun on transitive “taking-hold-of” verbs (2.3.1);
- be used as a marker of intransitivity and perfectivity on intransitive verbs (2.3.2).

It is easy to see that the “canonical” functions of the ventive (allative marker pointing to the location of the speaker or addressee + the 1st p. sg. dative bound pronoun) are deictic, while all the functions of the ventive proposed in this paper are anaphoric. Under certain conditions (described in Kouwenberg 2002) the deictic ventive is the only (or the strongly preferred)⁷⁰ filling of the respective obligatory valence slots. Thus the grammatical value of the deictic ventive is much higher than that of the anaphoric ventive, whose use (unless lexicalized) is optional in all its individual functions.

The present writer has no fresh ideas on the diachronic source of the ventive morpheme and emergence of its allative—1st p. sg. dative polysemy in Akkadian. The only thing one can claim with confidence is that the *-m* showing up in all the allomorphs of the ventive has the same “nature” as the final *-m* of all the OB dative pronouns (and the OA sg. dative bound pronouns).⁷¹ This means that the *-m* of the dative sg. bound pronouns *-kum* / *-kim* and *-šum* / *-šim* arose independently of the ventive⁷² and has the same morphophonological status and historical origin as the ventive’s *-m*. This is proven by such OA forms as *izakku-ak-kum* vs. *izakku-*

⁶⁹ Following Landsberger and *contra* Kouwenberg.

⁷⁰ This reservation is introduced because a verb phrase (*ana*) *yâšim iddin-Ø* ‘he gave me’ is also acceptable.

⁷¹ Cf. von Soden 1988.

⁷² *Contra* Landsberger 1924:117: ‘Die «Dativsuffixe» der übrigen Personen entstehen durch Anfügung des Ventivexponenten an das pron. suff, also *šu + m = šūm > šum, šī + m = šīm > šim*’.

ak-kun-ni which exhibit the same unusual assimilation pattern of [m] as *išpur-am* vs. *išpur-ak-kum*, etc.

The functions of the ventive discussed in this paper emerged in the following way. At a certain stage of linguistic evolution, the *-am / -m / -nim* morpheme had two meanings only: ‘hither’ (= ‘to where I am’) and ‘(to / for) me’ (= 1st p. sg. bound dative pronoun). Typologically, the evolution ‘hither’ > ‘(to / for) me_{dat}’ is trivial (cf. Plungian 2002:93). Yet both the early Semitic (or Sumero-Akkadian Sprachbund) life of what became the *am / -m / -nim* morpheme and the history of the dative pronouns in Akkadian are completely unknown to us, so we are better off if we do not manipulate with the two unknowns.

At a later stage the allative ventive acquired the force of pointing to the location of *the addressee* of a speech event: thus, *allak-am* means ‘I will arrive at your place / at where you are.’ I believe that this obligatory spatial deictic projection developed in the milieu of written communication and hence is similar to the deictic projection of a tense value known as the epistolary Perfect (Loesov 2004): the variously translated form *aštapr-am*⁷³ combines the two “projected” morphological values.⁷⁴ Interestingly, the epistolary Perfect is used only with motion verbs (Loesov 2004a) and thus to some extent shares compatibility with the 2nd p. lative ventive.⁷⁵ Note that the epistolary Perfect also seems to be obligatory in certain contexts, though this problem requires further study.

At a further step in its semantic evolution, the ventive acquired the force of optionally pointing to a non-deictic landmark. In this function it copies an explicit goal argument: *ana* GN *īrub-am* ‘he entered_{vent} GN’ (§ 2.1). This is where the present study actually starts.

The other three functions of the ventive described in this paper are semantic derivatives of this anaphoric third-party goal ventive. The anaphoric ventive as the 3rd p. indirect object of “dative” verbs (x *ana* PN_i *ipqidū-nim_i* ‘they entrusted x to PN’) developed via the well-known directional → dative shift, which is similar to the universal semantic evolution of directive prepositions (cf. Akkadian *ana* or Aramaic *l-*).

An intermediate diachronic link between the directional/“dative” usages of the ventive and its all-persons reflexive-benefactive function on transitive verbs (*ilqe-am* ‘he_i took [it] for himself’) seems to be missing: a

⁷³ ‘I have sent you,’ ‘I will send you,’ ‘I herewith send you.’

⁷⁴ Here we can see how writing influenced the Akkadian morphosyntax.

⁷⁵ The epistolary Perfect is compatible mostly with the verbs of sending, while the 2nd p. ventive can be used with any motion verb.

shift from the compulsory indirect object to the oblique non-core beneficiary is self-explaining,⁷⁶ while the coreferentiality of the agent and beneficiary in the RB construction is a semantic feature not directly derivable from this construction's precursors.

The emergence of the "antitransitive" ventive on intransitive verbs (*iḥliq-am* 'she fled,' *izku-am* 'it became available') is also difficult to explain directly from the data gathered in this paper.⁷⁷ The most likely diachronic source of *iḥliq-am* 'she fled' is *ilqe-am* 'he took [it] for himself'. Still, the RB construction is both transitive and volitional, while the AT construction is intransitive and may embrace inanimate or semantically passive subjects: *eqlum šaqi-am* 'the field has been irrigated,' *lāma inawwir-am* 'before it gets light,' *izku-am* '(x silver) became available.' To explain this shift from the RB construction to AT construction, I propose the following speculative hypothesis. The ventive within the RB construction had been understood as an indirect reflexive marker on its own. As such it received a new function of an optional exponent of intransitivity on certain semantic classes of intransitive verbs, because reflexivity and intransitivity are semantically related (cf. Kouwenberg 2005 and the typological literature referred to in this study). This diachronic path may show partial parallels with the developments that led to the emergence of Spanish and Syriac intransitive constructions mentioned in the fn. 77. Yet a comparative analysis of the pedigrees of these constructions is beyond the scope of this article.

Summing up, I propose the following route of semantic development for the Akkadian ventive in those of its functions that are not restricted to the 1st sg. personal deixis:

ALLATIVE₁ ('hither') → ALLATIVE₂ ('to where you are') →
NON-DEICTIC GOAL (→ NON-DEICTIC DATIVE) → RB → AT.

Thus the function of the 1st sg. personal deixis ([for] *me_{dat}*) stands quite by itself, it develops no further senses.

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⁷⁶ Cf. the syntactic functions of the ventive as an exponent of the 1st p. sg. bound pronoun (§ 1 above).

⁷⁷ A weakened reflexive sense of this construction calls to mind perfective constructions of Spanish or Syriac intransitive verbs with reflexively used pronouns (*me fui* 'I went away,' *sleq leḥ* 'he ascended').

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