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Temporal adverbs in Akkadian

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Semitic languages have two different means to express the tense and/or aspect of a situation: verbal forms and temporal adverbs. Whereas numerous studies have been devoted to verbal tense and aspect in Akkadian, temporal adverbs in Akkadian have hardly ever been studied. The following discussion of temporal adverbs in Akkadian can only be a first step towards a comprehensive analysis. It is structured as follows: under § 1 I give a survey of the most important temporal adverbs in Old Babylonian. § 2 analyses the time-moving metaphors „in front" and „behind". § 3 briefly discusses other spatial metaphors expressing time. § 4 deals with two cases of double marking by temporal adverbs and verbal forms expressing time and aspect.

1. Survey of important temporal adverbs in Old Babylonian

This paper gives a survey of temporal adverbs in Old Babylonian. For the sake of conciseness I have not dealt with other Akkadian dialects and periods in which somewhat different temporal adverbs are attested. However, the overall picture does not change radically, either in Assyrian or in more recent periods of Babylonian. Even for Old Babylonian I do not aim at completeness but rather concentrate on important, more or less well attested forms. In the search for temporal adverbs, a convenient starting point is von Soden's grammar of Akkadian[2], to be supplemented by the two dictionaries AHw. and CAD. The first column lists the adverbs, the second column presents the morphological structure and etymology, the third gives the translation and the fourth column an analysis of the semantics in abstract terms. The order of the adverbs follows the last column.

Adverb	Morphology/Etymology	Translation	Semantics
maḫra	*maḫr-* "front" + acc. *-a*	before, earlier	anteriority
pana	*pan-* "front" + acc. *-a*	before, earlier, formerly	anteriority
panānūm	*pan-* "front" + deriv. *-ān* +loc. *-ūm*	before, earlier, formerly	anteriority

2   See von Soden 1995 § 119 "Adverbien der Zeit", § 113 "Die adverbialen Endungen" and § 72 "Zeitangaben".

Adverb	Morphology/Etymology	Translation	Semantics
ullīš	Demonstr. *ullī-* "that" + term. *-iš*	afterwards, subsequently	posteriority
warka	**wark-* "backside" + acc. *-a*	afterwards, later on	posteriority
warkānūm	**wark-* "backside" + deriv. *-ān* + loc. *-ūm*	afterwards, later on	posteriority
ullânūm	Demonstr. *ullī-* "that" + deriv. *-ān* + loc. *-ūm*	from the beginning, already	beginning of situation
adīni	Prep. *adī* "up to" + pron. suff. *-ni* "us"	yet, still	end of situation
anūmma[3]	Demonstr. *an* "this" + loc. *-ūm* + encl. *-ma*	now, in this moment	present
inanna[4]	Prep. *in(a)* "in" + deictic particle *anna* (**hann* + acc. *a*) "yes, indeed, now"	now, in this moment	present

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3   Both *inanna* and *anūmma* always denote the absolute present and never refer to situations simultaneous to reference points other than the present moment, either in the future or in the past. For their use with the epistolary perfect see ch. 4.1, below. Kouwenberg 2012: 42–46 exclusively ascribes to *anūmma* a presentative meaning, which he translates as "Look" or "Listen". However, this does not well explain the frequent sequence *inanna anūmma*, which can be more easily analysed as a frozen clustering of two temporal adverbs than of a temporal adverb + a presentative particle, the latter having an unexpected second position in the sentence. Also some "atypical" cases (Kouwenberg 2012: 45; but see also many other of the references in CAD A/2, 147f. s. v. *anumma*) can simply be explained by a temporal meaning of *anūmma*. Therefore, I rather prefer an analysis of *anūmma* as a particle, which quite often, including its use with the epistolary perfect, has a temporal meaning and in other cases a presentative meaning. Both meanings can well be derived from a demonstrative element "this", and both are sometimes difficult to distinguish by context. Note that CAD I, 143f. *inanna* discussion section states: "in context there seems to be no difference in meaning between the two [i.e., *inanna* and *anūmma*]".

4   von Soden 1995 § 119c explains the etymology as "in diesem". Obviously, the etymology given in AHw. 381, *ina + anna*, is based on the same considerations, since the latter is, according to von Soden 1995 § 124a, related to the demonstrative **hann-*. According to von Soden 1995 § 113 *inanna* is status absolutus without any case ending; but how does this explain the ending *-a*? Therefore, this *-a* must be the ending of the accusative. For the meaning of *anna* see AHw. 52 "yes, indeed", but also *annama* ibid. "da! da ist". CAD A/2, 125 distinguishes two *anna*: "indeed, yes" and "now, indeed (?)". – A different etymology was proposed by Tropper 2002: he derives *inanna* and other particles (*inū, inūma* etc.) from **hīn* "time": **hīn-annâ* "at this time". Apart from the fact that this leaves the certainly short *-a*-ending of *inanna* unexplained, this etymology is quite doubtful for the following reasons: a) According to Hasselbach 2005: 81, one would expect a writing *e-* for the syllable /ḫi/ in Old Akkadian. Actually attested are, however, the spellings *i-na-na* MAD 3, 53, *i-da-az-ga-ri-ni* MAD 5, 8: 21 *ittaskarinnē* "among the

Adverb	Morphology/Etymology	Translation	Semantics
ūmam	*ūm-* "day" + acc. *-am*	today	present
inūmīšu	Prep. *in* "in" + *ūmī* "days" + pron. suff. *-šu* "his"	at that time	past
amšalī[5]	**amš* "night"(? "evening"?) + ? + adv. ending *-ī*	yesterday	past
šalšūmī	*šalš-* "third" + *ūm* "day" + adv. ending *-ī*	the day before yesterday	past
šaddaqdim/[6] *šaddaqdam*	*šatt-* (?) "year" + acc. *-a* + *QDM* (?) "to precede"	last year	past
urram	*urr-* "bright day" + acc. *-am*	tomorrow	future
ullītiš	Demonstr. *ullī-* "that" + fem. *-t* + term. *-iš*	the day after tomorrow	future
matīma	Interr. *matī* "when" + encl. *-ma*	ever	duration
ūmišam	*ūm-* "day" + term. *-iš* + acc. *-am*	daily	repetition, regular interval
warḫišam	*warḫ-* "month" + term. *-iš* + acc. *-am*	monthly	repetition, regular interval
šattišam	*šatt-* "year" + term. *-iš* + acc. *-am*	yearly	repetition, regular interval

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boxwoods" (Hasselbach 2005: 167), and *i-nu* (ibid. 172). True, spellings with *e-* occur from Middle Babylonian onwards, but only for *enūma* and *enenna*. The reason for these spellings is unclear but they are certainly not related to an original **ḫ* since the preposition *ina* is in later periods never spelled with *e* (for the remarkable Old Babylonian spellings *e-ni-ši-i* and *e-sú-lum-ma* see Streck 2010: 563 ad iv 7). b) Pace Tropper 2002: 788, there is no difficulty in deriving particles with temporal meanings from a preposition with a local meaning. On the contrary, this is a widespread phenomenon among the world's languages. From the earliest attestations on, *ina* itself has temporal meanings side by side with local ones. c) That *inanna* does not end in genitive *-i* can be explained by the fact that its second component is, as proposed above, the already frozen adverbial accusative *anna*.

5   See Hebrew *ʾemeš*, Arabic *ʾamsi*, after HAL p. 66 related to Arabic *masāʾ* "evening" (which corresponds to Akkadian *mūšu* "night"). The *l* also occurs in the rare word *timālī* "yesterday".

6   According to AHw. 1123 and Sokoloff 2009: 109 borrowed into Aramaic as *ʾešteqaḏ(ī)* (Syriac) and *ʾeštāqad* (Jewish Aramaic). After CAD Š/1, 40, the relation with these Aramaic words "is not clear." The Akkad. etymology given above after von Soden 1995 § 72c and AHw. 1123 is doubted ("no proof") by CAD Š/1, 40. CAD reads the word as *šaddagdim* with *g* instead of *q* on the base of the Late Babylonian reference *šad-da-ga-ad* TCL 13, 231: 16; but the change from *q* to *g* could be easily explained as an assimilation *qd > gd*. Nothing speaks for an Amorite origin (Kaufman 1974: 96f.) of the word.

2. The time-moving metaphor "Earlier/in front, later/behind"

A group of time adverbs denoting relative tense is based on the time-moving metaphor "earlier/in front, later/behind".[7] Thus the adverbs *maḫra*, *pana*, *panānūm*, meaning "before, earlier, formerly", are derived from words meaning "front", and their antonyms *warka*, *warkānū*, meaning "afterward(s), later on", are derived from a stem **wark-* meaning "backside"; this stem is actually not attested in a masculine noun in Akkadian but is only found in the feminine noun *warkatu*.

This group of time-adverbs as well as corresponding prepositions and sub-junctions such as *warkī* "after" and nouns such as *panu* or *maḫru* "past time" and *warkītu* "future" have sometimes given rise to far-reaching conclusions about conceptions of time in Ancient Mesopotamia. Thus Maul in a recent article entitled "Walking backwards into the future" writes: "If we regard the Akkadian ... terms that designate 'past' and 'future'... we make an astounding discovery. An examination of temporal terms such as 'earlier'... shows that these are all related to the Akkadian *pānum*, or 'front' ... the underlying word 'front' is used in the sense of 'something that lies before/faces the observer' ... It is a similar case with terms that denote the future. The Akkadian (*w*)*arka*, (*w*)*arkānu*(*m*), (*w*)*arki* in the sense of 'later, afterward' ... are all related to the word (*w*)*arkatu*(*m*), meaning 'reverse side, behind' ... for a Babylonian the past lay before him – it was something he 'faced'; whereas that which was coming, the future ..., was something he regarded as behind him, as at his 'back.' In the mental world of our own modern society the exact opposite is, of course, the case. When we look 'into the future,' we firmly believe that our gaze is fixed straight ahead. Nothing can shake our conviction that the past is at our back, that it lies behind us. While we advance along a time-line that has us 'facing the future,' the Mesopotamians advanced along the same time-line but with their eyes fixed on the past. They moved, as it were, back-to-front – backing into the future. Without, belaboring the image, it would indeed suggest that Mesopotamian culture was focused on the past, and, ultimately, the starting point of all existence."[8] This statement is obviously based on an earlier study by Wilcke,[9] also commented upon by Selz.[10]

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7 Traugott 1975: 12.

8 Maul 2008: 15f. See also Maul 1997: 109f. and, in a popular journal, Maul 2010.

9 Wilcke 1982: 31.

10 Selz 1999: 509f. n. 154.

Unfortunately, the rich linguistic literature on the subject[11], ignored by these authors, makes it clear that this statement is based on a misunderstanding of the linguistic facts in several aspects, and therefore also the conclusions for a specific Mesopotamian or Ancient Near Eastern conception of time are untenable. This was already pointed out by several authors before: already Hirsch[12] notices that the metaphor "earlier/in front, later/behind" is not confined to Ancient Mesopotamia but is also known in German. In the same year also Archi, in a short note[13], draws parallels between Akkadian and Sumerian on the one hand and Indo-European languages such as Hittite, Greek, and Latin on the other. He also points out that similar ideas had already expressed by J. Barr for Biblical Hebrew 80 years ago and later rightly disproved by T. Boman who also referred to Indo-European parallels and called these ideas "very naive".[14] In a study ten years ago[15] which aims to warn Ancient Near Eastern scholars against drawing naive conclusions from linguistic facts onto the minds of speakers of ancient languages, basing myself on two articles of Traugott[16], I again refer to parallels between Akkadian and Indo-European, but also to other languages such as Chinese, I refute the explanation of the phenomenon given by Wilcke, Maul, Selz and Archi, and I give instead the commonly accepted explanation in linguistic studies. Last but not least, it should be noted that already Landsberger 90 years ago apparently saw the parallel between the etymology of the words "earlier" and "later" in Sumerian, Akkadian, other Semitic languages and Indo-European languages.[17]

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11 See, e.g., Traugott 1975; 1978; Haspelmath 1997, esp. 56–63, 149–151; Gentner/Imai/ Boroditsky 2002.

12 Hirsch 1998: 472: „Auch wir blicken ja zurück, hinter uns, auf diejenigen, die vor uns da waren (und meinen damit nicht jemanden, der eben noch vor uns gestanden ist ...) und vorwärts auf diejenigen, die nach uns, hinter uns kommen ...".

13 Archi 1998.

14 See the quotation in Archi 1998.

15 Streck 2003: 429–431.

16 Traugott 1975 and 1978.

17 Landsberger 1926: 164: "Überall, wo es sich um eine Aufeinanderfolge [spaced out in the original] von Erscheinungen und Ereignissen handelt, wird das gegenseitige Zeitverhältnis durch Ableitungen der Wörter "vor" und "nach" ausgedrückt. Für diesen Gebrauch, der dem Sumerischen und Akkadischen gemeinsam, auch den anderen semitischen Sprachen, wie den indogermanischen, geläufig ist, liefern die Wörterbücher reiche Belege, bei פן und מחר einerseits, ורך und אחר andererseits." Although not explicitly stated by Landsberger, it is probable that his comparison did not only concern the use of the words *per se* but also on the correlation between "vor" = "earlier" and "nach" = "later".

Since none of these Ancient Near Eastern studies was mentioned by Maul, it seems worthwhile to summarize the matter here more broadly. Haspelmath[18] in his book "from space to time" lists a sample of 49 languages from entirely different language families which use the spatial metaphors "in front" and "behind" to express the temporal relations "earlier", "before" etc. and "later", "after" etc. Out of this sample, I only quote here 8 examples:

Hebrew/Arabic: roots *PN*, *QDM* "before" etc. (*panīm* "face", *QDM* "to precede") – root *ʾḪR* "afterwards" etc. (*ʾḪR* "to be behind")

Latin: *postea* "afterwards" (*post* "behind") : *prius* "before" (cf. *prior* "the one in front*")

English: *before – after, preceding – following*

German: *vor – hinter* in *Hinterbliebener* "survivor", *vorangehend – folgend*

Turkish: *önce* "before" (*ön* "front")

Chinese: *yiichyan* "before" (*chyan* "in front") – *yiihow* "after" (*how* "behind")

Tamil: *munnaale* "before, in front" – *pinnaale* "after, behind"

Maori: *mua* "before, in front" – *muri* "after, behind"

These and the other examples analysed by Haspelmath, Traugott and others make clear that we are not dealing here with a phenomenon particular to Ancient Mesopotamia or the Ancient Near East. On the contrary: we are dealing with a very widespread phenomenon, virtually a language universal. This alone suffices to exclude any conclusions about a specific conception of time or a characteristic cultural attitude of Ancient Mesopotamia: in this respect, Mesopotamia is not different from Europe, Africa, India, China, or New Zealand, and there is no difference between languages which died out more than 2000 years ago and living languages.

But we must go a step further. The phenomenon is not only widespread but has also been misunderstood. The linguistic analyses of Traugott and others prove that "in front" and "behind" do not refer to the speaker; the situations are not in front of his face or behind his back, and he does not walk "backwards into the future". In the words of Traugott:[19] "sequencing is not speaker-anchored. That is, the relation *earlier/in front, later/behind* remains constant, wherever the speaker places himself with respect to the events. Given two events, A and B, the earlier event is always 'before', 'preceding', or 'in front', while the later event is 'after', 'following', or 'behind', whether the tense is past or future." There is ample evidence that the same is true for Akkadian. In

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18 Haspelmath 1997: 149–151.

19 Traugott 1975: 218.

the following four examples the metaphor "in front" = "earlier" refers to future situations, whereas in the last two examples the metaphor "behind" = "later" refers to past situations:

(1) *aššat šīmātim iraḫḫī šū panānumma mutum warkānū* Gilg. OB II iv 159f. (OB) "He will couple with the destined wife: he first and the bridegroom later."

(2) *mārū ša tullad ša panānū u ša ⌈arkānū⌉ mārūjami ⌈šunu⌉* RA 77, 17f.: 32–35 (Emar) "The children whom she bears, previously or subsequently, are my children."

(3) *paniš* PN *ul atta ul anāku lū nuṣṣī* CCT 4, 36a: 4–7 (OA) "Before the arrival of PN either you or I will leave."

(4) See also *maḫrû* "first (to come or go), next, future" (CAD M/1, 110, OB and SB) and *panišam* "soon" (CAD P 82, OA), both always referring to the future.

(5) *warkānūm* 10 GÚ URUDU *ušēribamma* TCL 19, 53: 16f. (OA) "Afterward he brought ten talents of copper."

(6) *warkama* PN *kīʾam iqbī* BE 6/2, 58: 9f. (OA) "Afterward PN said:"

Rather, the explanation for the metaphors "earlier/in front" and "later/behind" is the conception of moving time. Time is conceived as a river flowing from past to future in the direction of a stationary speaker (fig. 1). In the words of Haspelmath:[20] "If time is thought of as moving, then points in time or time spans can also be thought of as having an inherent front-back orientation ... Since time moves in the direction of the observer (or to the observer's now), earlier times are 'in front' of later times."

Moving time

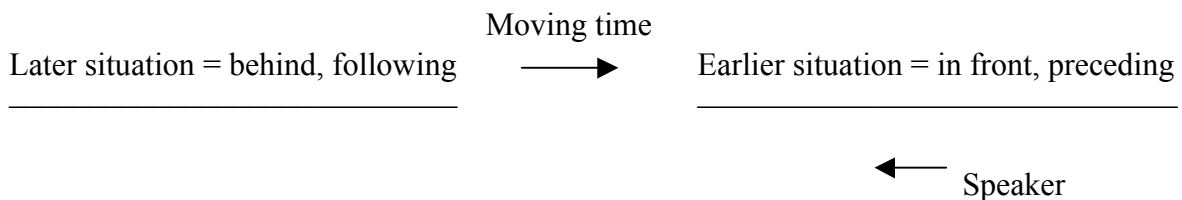Later situation = behind, following   ⟶   Earlier situation = in front, preceding

⟵ Speaker

Fig. 1: Time-moving metaphor

The counterpart of the time-moving metaphor is the ego-moving metaphor. In this metaphor, the speaker moves on the time-line from past to future: the past

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20 Haspelmath 1997: 59. See also Traugott 1975: 220; Gentner/Imai/Boroditsky 2002: 538.

is behind him, has passed or gone by, and the future is in front of him and will come towards him (fig. 2). Again in the words of Haspelmath:[21] "In this model, the observer moves from earlier moments to later moments and thus faces the future. In this situation, times do not have an inherent front-back orientation, so this axis can only be used in subject-based descriptions." English examples, all after Haspelmath,[22] for the time-moving metaphor are: *As we go through the years*, *As we go further into the 1990s*, *We're approaching the end of the year*, *In the weeks ahead of us*, *This coming Tuesday*, *Bygone events*.

<div align="center">Moving ego</div>

_____   ⟶   _____

Past situation = behind, passed   Future situation = in front, coming
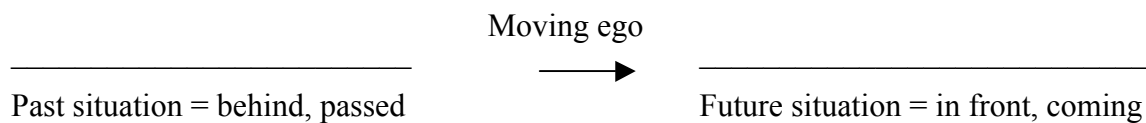
Fig. 2: Ego-moving metaphor

In English, German and other languages, the time-moving metaphor and the ego-moving metaphor are not mutually exclusive, but are rather used side-by-side in different expressions. The same is true for Akkadian. See the following examples for the ego-moving metaphor in which the time comes, comes near, passes or elapses:

(7) *šat*[*tum*] *ittalak* AbB 2, 99: 5 (OB) "The ye[ar] has passed." Cf. CAD A/1, 311*alāku* 3i2' for further examples.

(8) *ina šatti ša illakuni ... inandin* HSS 13, 463: 7–12 (Nuzi) "He will pay in the coming year." Cf. CAD A/1, 311 *alāku* 3i1' for further examples.

(9) *šumma* 1 ITI^kam *ū* 2 ITI^kam *ētatqū* BIN 6, 55: 17f. (OA) "if one or two months have elapsed". See CAD E 387 *etēqu* f for further examples.

(10) *ūmūšu qerbū ul iballuṭ* ARM 10, 6 r. 8' (OB) "His (last) days are near, he will not stay alive." See CAD Q 230 *qerēbu* 1c for further examples.

Indeed, expressions like "the future is ahead of me", "the past is behind me" are practically not attested in Akkadian. However, the reason for this is most probably not that these expressions do not exist in Akkadian but simply that the nature of the textual record does not favor such expressions. Nevertheless, at least one example for the future "in front of" the speaker can be adduced:

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21 Haspelmath 1997: 60. See also Traugott 1975: 216; Gentner/Imai/Boroditsky 2002: 539.
22 Haspelmath 1997: 59.

(11) *nišū maḫrâte tanittaka lišmâ* KAR 104: 19 (SB) "May future (lit. in front (of me/us)) people listen to your praise."

3. Other spatial metaphors

Besides the time-moving metaphors, other spatial metaphors also serve as temporal adverbs in Old Babylonian. Thus the demonstrative pronoun *an(n)-* "this", expressing nearness, is used for the adverbs *inanna* and *anūmma* denoting simultaneity. Parallels can be found in "here" or "this" as lexical sources for progressive tenses in different languages.[23] The counterpart *ullī-* "that", expressing remoteness, is used for posterior *ullîš* "afterwards, subsequently", future *ullîtiš* "day after tomorrow" and *ullânūm* "from the beginning, already", an adverb emphasizing the beginning of a situation.

The spatial prepositions *ina* "in" and *adī* "until" are used in *inanna*, *inūmīšu* and *adīni*. Another spatial metaphor is the use of the locative case for location in time as in *panānūm*, *warkānūm* and *ullânūm*.

4. Temporal adverbials and verbal tense: double marking of temporal relations

In Akkadian, temporal relations in most cases are not expressed by temporal adverbs alone but by a combination of adverb and verbal tense. Only in verbless sentences or sentences with a stative as predicate are temporal adverbs the sole means to express, e.g., past and future:

(12) *šumma eqlum šaddaqdim lā erišma nadī kanīk teptītim ... liqē* AbB 2, 92: 15–19 "If the field was not cultivated last year and is lying fallow take a sealed document about newly broken land!"

(13) *urram maḫrīkunu anāku* AbB 10, 10: 16 "Tomorrow I will be before you."

However, in the following, I want to point out two cases of double marking temporal relations by temporal adverbs and verbal tense or aspect. Again most examples are from Old Babylonian.

4.1 Epistolary perfect

The first case is the so-called epistolary perfect.[24] The sender of a letter writes to the recipient that he or she "has sent" the envoy to him or "has written" the

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23 See Bybee et al. 1994: 128.

24 For the epistolary perfect in Akkadian see Pardee/Whiting 1987; Streck 1995a: 155–159.

letter to him. Although, from the standpoint of the writer, the situation lies in the future, English uses a present perfect in these cases. This can be explained by the fact that the writer doesn't refer to his own present moment but to the present moment of the letter's recipient: from the latter's standpoint the sending of the letter lies in the past. Akkadian mostly uses the tense *iptaras* to express the epistolary perfect. Although this tense is called "perfect" in Akkadian grammatical literature its function has nothing to do with the function of the English present perfect. Rather, in older Akkadian *iptaras* denotes a situation that is anterior to one and posterior to a second reference point.[25] *iptaras*, when used for an epistolary perfect, denotes that the sending of the letter or the envoy lies posterior to the present moment of the writer but anterior to the present moment of the recipient.[26] More rarely, the Akkadian preterite *iprus* denoting anteriority is used to express the epistolary perfect.

The Akkadian perfect *iptaras* or the Akkadian preterite *iprus*, when expressing an epistolary perfect, are almost always accompanied by the temporal adverbs *inanna* or *anūmma*, or even a combination of both. See the following examples:

(14) *inanna aštaprakkum* AbB 13, 91: 6' "Now I have written to you."

(15) *anūmma* 10 ERIM ... *u* PN *aṭṭardakkum* AbB 13, 110: 34f. "Now I have sent to you ten workers ... and PN."

(16) *inanna anūmma* PN [*a*]*ṭṭardakkum* ARM 1, 28: 28f. "Now, in this moment, I have sent PN to you."

Both adverbs denote a shift to the present moment of the letter's recipient: referring to his present moment, the sending of the letter or the workers is past. Thus the adverbs serve to mark one of the two reference points also marked by the perfect *iptaras*.

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25 See Streck 1999.

26 I do not agree with Kouwenberg 2010: 147 who wants to derive the use of *iptaras* for the epistolary perfect from an alleged present perfect function of *iptaras*. Kouwenberg's analysis doesn't yield a coherent function of *iptaras,* whereas the definition of the perfect given above can explain not only the use of *iptaras* for the epistolary perfect but also its use in subordinate or in *šumma* clauses anterior to a future reference point and its function to express the last in a chain of anterior situations. Akkadian and other Semitic languages do not possess an exact counterpart to the English present perfect. Rather, the functions of the latter are covered by both the Akkadian perfect as well as the Akkadian preterite.

4.2 Present tense for iterative past situations

The second case is iterative or habitual past situations, very often expressed in Akkadian by the present tense *iparras*.[27] *iparras* is a tense that denotes simultaneous situations on the one hand and imperfective situations on the other. Iterative or habitual situations are typically imperfective. Quite often, the adverbs expressing repetition such as *šattišam* "yearly, every year" and *ūmišam* "daily, every day" are used together with the present tense for iterative past situations. See the following two examples:

(17) *ana errēšūtim ītenerrišma šeʾam mikis eqlija* [*š*]*attišam inaddinam* [*in*]*anna šeʾam mikis eqlija ul iddinam* AbB 13, 13: 8–13 "S. used to cultivate (the field) under tenancy and to give me the barley, the share of my field's yield, every year. Now he has not handed in the barley, the share of my field's yield."

(18) [*ū*]*mišamma ibtanakkī* [*m*]*uššakkī izabbil* [*in*]*a šērēti* Atr. 76 iii 4f. "Every day he wept, brought incense every morning."

In both examples, the iterativity or habituality already expressed by the adverbials is marked a second time by the present tense. With time adverbials expressing repetition, the use of the present tense *iparras* is very frequent but not obligatory as the following example with preterite *iprus* from Standard Babylonian shows:

(19) *ašgiš immerī ūmišamma* Gilg. XI 72 "Daily I slaughtered sheep."

In the last example only the time adverbial expresses the iterativity of the situation whereas the preterite denotes that the situation lies in the past.

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27 Streck 1995b: 37–50.

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