



BULLETIN DE L'INSTITUT FRANÇAIS D'ARCHÉOLOGIE ORIENTALE

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BIFAO 45 (1947), p. 43-55

Girgis Mattha

The Egyptian conjunctive.

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


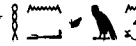
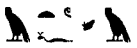
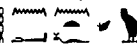


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

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THE EGYPTIAN CONJUNCTIVE



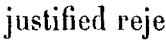
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



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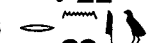
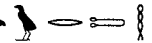



I.—The origin and true interpretation of the Late Egyptian conjunctive  has always been a serious problem to students of Egyptian philology. In his most instructive article entitled *An Egyptian Split Infinitive and the Origin of the Coptic Conjunctive Tense* published in *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, vol. XIV, pp. 86-96, Gardiner gives very important examples, dating from the end of the XVIIIth Dynasty and the beginning of the XIXth, illustrative of the use of a construction of the type  as the actual origin of the later conjunctive  and the Coptic $\bar{\eta}\tau\epsilon\epsilon\text{-}\omega\tau\epsilon\mu$, Sa'idic $\bar{\eta}\tau\epsilon\omega\tau\bar{\eta}$. He explains this construction as being composed of  followed by the independent pronoun  and the infinitive , and that it is simply the outcome of the older possibility  with the transposition of the pronoun from *after* to *before* the infinitive with a meaning "together with on his part the hearing" containing no time-implication; and, lastly, that  is nothing more than  with the suppression of  and the disguising of  in Late Egyptian orthography. Erman holds the same views ⁽¹⁾.


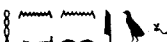
II.—To the part of this theory concerning the explanation of the construction  there are serious objections: (1) Had  been really an independent pronoun or at least felt as such by the Egyptians it should have at least been occasionally rendered in Late Egyptian by one of the forms peculiar to the Late Egyptian pronoun ,  or , and not *persistently*

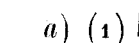
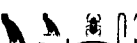
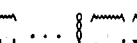

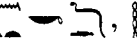
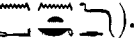
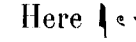
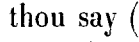

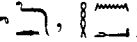
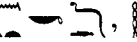



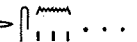

⁽¹⁾ ERMAN, *Neuägyptische Grammatik* (1933), § 575; *Aegyptische Gram.* (1928), § 416, *Ann.*

to *te* of *'nte* (= ) and, therefore, omitted in writing, then and there our co-ordinate construction would certainly be only confined to the sense and usage peculiar to the Praesens I; and future or prospective sense is not at all suitable to the Praesens I. This is apart from other difficulties such as, for instance, the problem of reconciling a construction like  with an assumed origin as . Hence is Gardiner's justified rejection of this view.

VII.—But if we, on the other hand, consider that the co-ordinate construction, ushered in by  after , is the pseudo-verbal construction , conveniently called Praesens II, with  (pronounced *e*) assimilated to terminal *e* in *'nte* (= ), then our co-ordinate construction, henceforth called Praesens II, would certainly suit all tenses and moods, including, of course, the future or prospective tense. This is as a matter of fact the outstanding characteristic of the so-called Praesens II.

VIII.—That the pseudo-verbal construction with  could actually be ushered in by  after a preposition is clear from the example “sharpen your weapons  seeing that it is intended to engage issue with that vile enemy to-morrow”. (GARDINER, *Gram.*, § 223). Moreover, it would not seem very strange if we explain such writings as  in an example like  (*ibid.*) as standing for  instead of .

IX.—Let us now see how far our explanation of the construction , as being = , is true by applying it to Gardiner's quoted examples, discussing each under the same number assigned to it in his article.

a) (1)   ... ... “may they be... and mayest thou say...”; an optative, literally meaning “cause that they be... and that thou say (, , ). Here  is co-ordinate with  and is dependent, like it, on . That it is not in the *sdm-f* form , like its co-ordinate , is true; but it holds the same rank and order as this latter. It acts, like it, as object of ; and expresses, like it, the same tense. The whole is parallel to  ... ... “may they be... and mayest thou say...”, two parallel optatives.

a stone $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ and that he broke his door to pieces $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ and that men were appointed (to look after the chief workman) $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ and that he (the criminal) thrashed (9 men) $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ and that the chief workman reported (him to the vizier) $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ and that he (the vizier) punished him $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ and that he (the criminal) reported the vizier to *Msi* $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ and that he (*Msi*) dismissed him (the vizier)” *P. Salt*, 2, 14-17.

As the infinitive cannot be confined to any one time-position, in the sense that “his hearing” could mean “that he heard”, “that he hears” and “that he will hear” etc., the infinitive $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ “his running” expresses here a past narrative tense “that he ran”. Thereupon, its co-ordinates in the form of the Praesens II express the same tense.

c) *Ibid.*, § 581. $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ continues *future* tense,
 $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ “I shall become a big ox... and thou shalt sit on my back”
d’Orb., 14, 6.

Here the co-ordinate Praesens II expressing future tense is in the construction $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$, i.e. with the pseudo-participle. This clearly shows that the co-ordinate Praesens II of an intransitive verb could be expressed in either of its two forms, namely, $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ followed by (ⲓ) infinitive or in $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ followed by a pseudo-participle.

d) *Ibid.*, § 582. $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (ⲓ) continues *past narrative* tense.
 $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ “they said to him (the grass is good in such and such a place)
 $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) and he heard (what they said) $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$
(for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ and he took them (to that place) *d’Orb.*, 1, 10.
The co-ordinate Praesens II in both cases expresses the past narrative tense.

e) *Ibid.*, § 584. $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (ⲓ) continues *conditional*.
 $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$
 $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ “if the cedar is felled and it (sc. Bata’s heart) falls down and thou comest” *d’Orb.*, 8, 4-5.

$\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \\ \text{ⲓ} \end{array} \right] \text{ⲓ}^{\text{e}}$ (for ⲓ^{e}) $\text{ⲓ} \text{ⲓ}^{\text{x}}$ “if thou findest it (sc. the heart) and put it (in a bowl of cold water)” *d’Orb.*, 8, 5.

word $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$, with $\overline{\text{ⲛ}} = \bar{n}$ and $\overline{\text{ⲧⲉ}} = \tau\epsilon$. Hence is the Coptic form of the conjunctive $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉⲥⲱⲧⲉⲙ}}$ and $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ before the nominal subject.

Such parallelisms as were made in XI *a* and *b*, above, give us forms like

a) Ist Sing. ($\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$) $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ | ϵ $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ for $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$

IIIrd Pl. ($\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$) $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ | ϵ | " $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ |

b) With $\overline{\text{ⲛ}}$ ($\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$) $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ | ϵ $\overline{\text{ⲛ}}$ " $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ $\overline{\text{ⲛ}}$ $\overline{\text{ⲛ}}$

Nom. Subj. ($\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$) $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ | ϵ N.S. " $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ N.S. See also IX *f*, above.

XI *c* shows that the co-ordinate Praesens II of an intransitive verb could be invariably used in the pseudo-participial or the infinitive forms.

XIII.—THE ABSENCE AND THE PRESENCE OF $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ BEFORE THE INFINITIVE

OR

THE CORRELATIVE AND THE ABSOLUTE CONJUNCTIVE.

In the examples employing $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ or $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$, i. e. the form without $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ before the infinitive, it will be noticed that the verb in the conjunctive form, or, in other words, in the co-ordinate form of the Praesens II, is directly related to the preceding verb with which it is co-ordinate, in the sense that it is either directly dependent on it as resultant from it, or that both verbs are closely connected by their common relation to a third member of the sentence. On the other hand, in the examples employing $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ before the infinitive the verb in the co-ordinate form of the Praesens II is not directly dependent on the preceding verb with which it is co-ordinate, nor does it share with it in common the quality of being dependent on a third member of the sentence. Thus Late Egyptian distinguishes between two forms of conjunctive: (1) a Correlative conjunctive, *without* $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ before the infinitive, and (2) an absolute conjunctive, *with* $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ before it. To illustrate this theory, the following examples may be quoted :

a) $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ "they said to him (the grass is good in such and such a place) $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ and he heard (what they said) $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ $\overline{\text{ⲛⲧⲉ}}$ and he then took them (to that place)" d'Orb., 1, 10.

In this example the scribe regarded "he heard" as directly resultant from "they said to him", so he omitted before . On the other hand he regarded as indirectly dependent on . Hence is the presence of .

b) "thou shalt put them over the fire and thou shalt add to them"; Gardiner's example 4. Here the coordinate Praesens II with before is not in the least directly dependent upon or resultant from etc., but rather represents an action which could be taken quite independently of the one preceding it.

c) "hasten and call upon them; then write to me" *P. Bologna*, 5, 5-6. Contrast between the direct relation of *sni* and the indirect relation of *h;b* to *hn*.

d) "if the cedar be cut down and it (sc. Bata's heart) fall to the ground" *d'Orb.*, 8, 4-5. Notice the close relation of *h;y* to *s'd*. Hence is the use of the correlative conjunctive *without* .

e) "if thou find it (sc. Bata's heart) and then thou place it (in a pot of cold water)" *d'Orb.*, 8, 5. is regarded as an indirect consequence of *gm*; hence is the use of the absolute conjunctive *with* .

f) "may I see thee in good health and embrace thee" *P. Bologna*, 9, 9. Both *mh* and *pti* are closely related by their dependence in common upon ; hence is the use of the correlative conjunctive *without* . For similar cases cf. XI *g* and *h*, above.

g) The correlative conjunctive is also used when its verb forms part of a whole narrative, such as an item of a speech or in a report. For this, see XI *a* (first example) and *b*, above.

XIV.—NON-CONJUNCTIVE FORMS.

We have seen that the conjunctive is essentially a *clause of co-ordination* composed of the Praesens II introduced by after whether this latter is actually present, as in , or implied, as in , or , and the Coptic $\bar{\eta}\tau\epsilon\chi\sigma\omega\tau\epsilon\mu$. On this assumption the co-ordinate verb

in the form of the Praesens II must needs hold the same rank and order as the preceding verb with which it is co-ordinate. Otherwise any form like or the Coptic $\bar{\eta}\tau\epsilon\chi\omega\tau\epsilon\mu$, which does not express co-ordination, cannot in any way be assigned to the conjunctive.

As a matter of fact there are instances of the type or the Coptic $\bar{\eta}\tau\epsilon\chi\omega\tau\epsilon\mu$ which either takes the form of the Late Egyptian conjunctive *only* in appearance and is not at all etymologically connected with it, or is a noun-clause composed of a Praesens II introduced by , and so has exactly the same form as the Late Egyptian conjunctive but *not* the same uses. Of these instances we may single out the following :


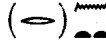
a. $\omega\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi$ - and $\bar{m}\pi\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi\omega\tau\epsilon\mu$.


The construction $\omega\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi\omega\tau\epsilon\mu$ represents $\omega\lambda$ “until” followed by “he does”, the *sdm-t-f* form of *iri*, followed by the infinitive . $\omega\lambda$ thus means “until he hears”, lit. “until he does a hearing”. The *sdm-t-f* form , *artef*, is here pronounced dialectually *antef* with the *a* assimilated to that of *ša* and the *r* rendered *n*, exactly as in $\bar{m}\pi\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi = \bar{m}\pi\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi =]\epsilon$ (compare Aehmimic $m\bar{n} =$). Thus we have two forms for the *sdm-t-f* form of *iri*: (1) *antef* as in $\omega\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi$ and $\bar{m}\pi\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi$, and (2) $\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi$, with the *r* dropped, as in $\omega\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi$ and $\bar{m}\pi\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi$, and possibly in $\lambda\tau\epsilon\tau\bar{n}\epsilon\chi\omega\tau\bar{m}$ of the Perfect I and $\bar{n}\tau\lambda\tau\bar{n}\epsilon\chi\omega\tau\bar{m}$ of the Perfect II.


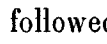
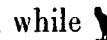

The pronunciation *antef* for in $\omega\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi$ led to the purely phonetic and unetymological writing in demotic. This has nothing to do with the conjunctive. On the other hand the form pronounced *atef* in $\omega\lambda\tau\epsilon\chi$ led to such purely phonetic and unetymological writings as “until they find” *Unamun*, I, 19, for *ibid.*, 2, 66, for . This is clearly due to the assimilation of *a* in *atef* to *a* in *ša*, thus leaving *te* standing by itself. See ERMAN, *ibid.*, § 586.

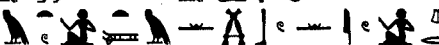
b. = (\ominus) .

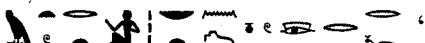
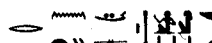
(1) “(I swear) by Amūn and by the Prince to the effect that if I tell a falsehood I should be

placed at the back of the house” *Mes*, N 35. Here  etc. stands for (⊃)  “to the effect that” followed by a conditional Praesens II. This is Gardiner’s example 29, p. 91.


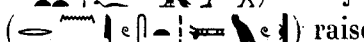
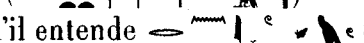
He swore  “saying : if the ass dies I am responsible for it and if it lives I am also responsible for it” *Ostr. Berlin*, III, 35 (= *ERMAN*, *ibid.*, § 584).

 stands for (⊃)  followed by the conditional Praesens II  while  is the conjunctive form.

“(I swear) by Amūn  ... to the effect that if I do not pay, I shall receive (100 strokes)” *Ostr. Petrie*, 60. (= *ERMAN*, *ibid.*, § 584).

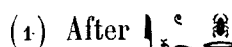
(2) The demotic  “so that everyone may see it” in line 60 of the *Canopus Decree* of Tanis has as hieroglyphic parallel  “so that everyone may see it”.

XI *g* and *h* (1st example), above, could also belong here; and so translate :

“he does not realise my desire to embrace him so as to write (de façon qu’il écrive  to my mother” and “let her not reproach thee lest she ( raise her arms to God that He may hear (de façon qu’il entende  her cry”—clauses of consequence with حَتَّى and لَسَلَا.


ΖΕΝΚ ΕΡΟΙ ΠΑΩΗΡΙ ΝΤΑΧΟΜΧΕΜ ΕΡΟΚ “come near, son, that I may feel thee” *Mallon*, § 250, 2. ΦΑΤΟΥ ΟΥΟΣ ΦΑΣΟΥ ΝΤΑΟΥΝΟΦ ΜΜΟΙ “cut them and cook them that I may rejoice” *ibid.*

c. 

(1) After  εωωπ “if” lit. “if it happens”.

 “if he opens his eyes” demotic *Mag. Pap.*, II 3. εωωπ ΝΤΕ ΠΙΑΡΧΩΝ ΕΡΝΟΒΙ “if the prince sins” *Mallon*, § 391.

(2) After an implied *iw-f hpr* εωωπ “if”.

 “if the light is good” *Mag. Pap.*, II 15. ΝΤΝΝΑΟΥΕΜ-ΛΛΛΥ ΛΝ...ΝΓ ΤΜΧΩ ΝΛΝ “we shall eat nothing... if thou do not tell us (what thy profession is)” *Zoega*, 346.

