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# THE STATIVE PARTICIPLE — AN ARABIC APPROACH TO EGYPTIAN GRAMMAR

Ahmad ABDEL-HAMID YOUSSEF

The Egyptian tongue, being of the Hamito-Semitic family, has shown and still affords — whenever there is chance of study — many affinities with its sister languages. Its affinities with Hebrew — to quote Prof. Bakir — are often acknowledged; but it is equally manifest that an affiliation with Arabic exists<sup>(1)</sup>.

The so-called pseudoparticiple or old perfective described as a survival of the Semitic finite verb has retained a close resemblance noticed in particular to the Akkadian permansive. An important feature, to quote Gardiner<sup>(2)</sup>, is that it can be used with passive as well as in active and that the time position it indicates depends upon the context<sup>(3)</sup>. That is to say that the same form can give — regardless of time — the active meaning in some verbs and the passive in others.

This is strikingly the same with the Arabic Verbal form or rather Verbal measure *fa'īl* and *fa'ūl* فَيْلٌ a form which sometimes gives the meaning of, and is substituted by, the active participle or passive participle.

<sup>(1)</sup> Erman's comparison between his 'Pseudo-partizip' of which the Coptic qualitative is the latest form — and the Arabic perfective was based on a striking resemblance — he said — between the endings in both. But endings alone cannot be a decisive criterion for comparison. In meaning the « Stative participle » being essentially of a circumstantial nature qualifying a noun or a pronoun differs greatly from the Arabic perfect. As a matter of fact  cannot be translated *sami'tu* 'I heard'; nor can the perfective

passive be the correct or accepted translation for  « I was sent » أرسلت *ursiltu*. (See Erman, « Eine Neue Art der ägyptischer Konjugation », *ZÄS* 27' (1889), p. 65 ff.; cf. Lefebvre, *Grammaire de l'Egyptien Classique*, § 334).

<sup>(2)</sup> Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*<sup>3</sup>, § 309, OBS. 1.

<sup>(3)</sup> Cf. T.W. Thacker, *The Relationship of Semitic and Egyptian Verbal Systems* Oxford (1954), p. 109.



« I know » عَلِمْ (أَنَا) *alīm* = عَالِمْ *ālīm*



« he hears » سَمِيعْ *sāmi'* = سَامِعْ *sāmi'*



« I am sent » رَسُولْ *rasūl* = مَرْسُلْ *mursal*

With verbs of motion, the stative participle, as well as the Arabic *fa'il-fa'ūl* measure, describes not as much the movement itself as the position reached of the movement.



« I am descended » نَزِيلْ (أَنَا) *nazīl*



« sitting » قَعِيدَ *qa'īd*

Furthermore, the stative participle and the Arabic *fa'il-fa'ūl* measures, share the common feature of being frequent with adjective Verbs<sup>(1)</sup>. A good deal of Arabic adjectives as a matter of fact is in the *fa'il-fa'ūl* measure e.g.



« great » كَبِيرَاتْ *kabīrāt*



« wide » وَسِيعْ *wasi'*



« beautiful » جَمِيلْ *jamīl*

In the following pages, we will find that the Arabic measure we bring forward for discussion applies well in all the uses of what we call the « stative participle » اَسْمَ فَعْلِ الْحَالِ known as the pseudoparticiple or old perfective.

The stative participle is used as a predicate to a nominal sentence :



« The mouth is silent » صَمُوتْ (الْفَمُ *Prisse* 4, 4).



« Old age is descended » تَرِيلْ (أَوْ هُوَيْ) *Prisse* 4, 2).



« The divine body is mixed with he who created him » جَسَدُ الْإِلَهِ أَبْيَشْ بَخَالِقَهْ (*Sinuhe*, R 7-8).



« Thy son is shining upon thy throne » بَدِيَّ (أَوْ جَلِيَّ) عَلَى عَرْشِكْ (*Book of the dead* LXXVIII, 52).

<sup>(1)</sup> Cf. Gardiner, *Grammar*<sup>3</sup>, § 135; cf. being (or is) great in the sight of the populace'

see « Coronation of King Haremheb », I. 11, *JEA* 39 (1953), p. 13 ff.

«The field is come forth» (Pap. d'Orb. 16, 1).

«I am living» (Orb. 16, 1).

«The Bowman is ready» (Admonitions 2, 2).

The nominal sentence with the stative participle as predicate can be introduced by or ; *iw* which serves to introduce some statement of outstanding interest (Gardiner<sup>3</sup> § 117) can be translated in Arabic with the corroborative particle *إن* governing the subject in the accusative and the predicate in the nominative case Exx.

«Teti is satiated» (Pyr. § 551 c).

«I know» (Coffin texts 247).

«I am appearing as Sokar» (op. cit. 245).

«I am appearing as a divine falcon» (B.D. LXXVIII, L9).

«I am high, new and young» (B.D. XLIII, 3, 4).

«The scale is void of my sins» (B.D. CXXXII, 3).

can be translated by the enunciative *(إذا الفجائية)* *إذا* which denotes a thing's happening suddenly or unexpectedly, or one's experiencing the occurrence of a thing when he is in a particular state; it pertains only to nominal phrases :

«Then a ship is come as he fortold before».

«Then I was gone and put myself on a high tree» (Shipwrecked sailor 154-156).

In these sentences, the *Shipwrecked sailor* in the rhetoric style of the story meant to say that he had found himself beholding a ship that was coming and found

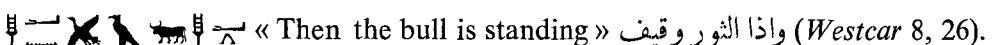
himself reacting by going and climbing a high tree. The serpent has expressed himself similarly in his own narrative :



« Then a star fell and those went into the fire by it ....

« Then I was (almost) dead for them »

واذا نجم هوى وانطلق هؤلاء في النار . . . . واذا انا ميت عليهم (op. cit. 129-131).



The independently used stative participle (Gardiner § 312) can be interpreted in Arabic Grammar terms as a predicate to an omitted subject understood to be « I ». Such an interpretation may have been the actual Egyptian conception of the stative participle; the fact that it developed so that it is only found in the first person singular, may suggest that the Egyptian of the Middle Kingdom disliked the omission of the subject qualified by the stative participle which henceforth required the support of a preceding pronoun suffixed or dependent.



« After we had gone to the great portal I was put to a magnificent prince palace » فلما ان مشينا من بعد الى السدة الكبرى (اذا انا) ثوى في دار امير فخمة (Sinuhe, B 285-6).

« At dawn I had reached Peten stopping at an island in Kem-wer » فلما ان اضاءت الارض (Kem-wer) كنت قد بلغت بن هبيطا في جزيرة كور of Peten i.e. he reached Peten where the island was).

« I was wealthy and I was great » (Brit. Mus. 614). (كنت) غنيا عظيما او (اذا انا) غني عظيم

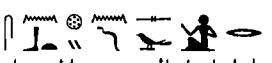
« I was watchful concerning it day and night » (Urk. IV, 185). حفيظ عليها ليل كالنهار

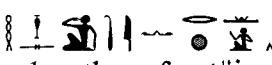
A similar rule applies to the exclamatory use (*Gardiner*<sup>3</sup> § 313) of the stative participle :

 «(be you) away from me» (C.T. 236).

The Arabic analysis of such a case is that it is a predicate to the omitted imperative of the incomplete 'verb to be' which governs the subject in the nominative and the predicate in the accusative :

 «beware of any occasion of neglectfulness» (Prisse 154).

 «in heath in heath good fellow to thy house» (Sh. S. 158).

 «praised thou art : I do not know the number thereof» (Westcar 9, 2-3); and the well known formula  «life, prosperity and health».

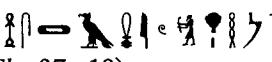
Appended to a noun, the stative participle gives the meaning of an epithet or an Arabic adjective (*Gardiner's* virtual relative clause § 317).

 «an old book boiled with oil» (Ebers 49, 1).

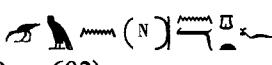
 «a frog boiled with oil» (ib. 52, 4).

 «a chariot wrought in gold» (Urk. IV 663).

 «the complete eye» (Eb. 99, 20).

 «cake mixed with salt» (Eb. 97, 19).

The circumstantial use of the stative participle is frequent :

 «Teti found his throne empty» (Pyr. 602).

« O Wenis, thou dost not go dead, thou goest alive » (Pyr. 1349). ايا ونيس ما تذهب اذ ذاك ميتا بل تذهب حيا

« behold I am coming » (Pyr. III, 20).

« this order reached me standing in the middle of my tribe » (Sinuhe 199-200). وبلغني ذلك الأمر وقيما في قلب قبيلتي

« so truly as thou wishest to see me healthy » (Peasant B, 78). ما احبيت رؤيني سليمان

« I came endowed with magic » (C.T. 229). اتيت عيدها بالسحر

« at last he sat down » (Lebensmüde 75). استوى قعيدها

« I spent three days alone, my heart being my companion sleeping in the middle of a thicket » (Sh. S 41-44). وانفقت ثلاثة أيام وحيدا وقلبي رفيق رقيدا وسط غابة

« I found him knowing it » (Sh. S 175). وجدته علية بـ

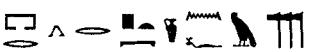
« their wine was found lying in their presses » (Urk. IV, 687). وجدت انبدتهم وديعة في معاصرهم

« the heart becomes confused through it » (Eb. 102). خرج القلب ضليلا منها

The circumstantial stative participle can stand in anticipation before the main clause :

« Going upstream I reached Elephantine, going downstream I reached the Delta » (Lefebvre, Grammaire § 344). صعيدها بلغت الفاتين هبيطا بلغت الدلتا

« faring upstream he reached Wawat, faring downstream he reached Tawer » (op. cit. 345). صعيدها بلغ واوات هبيطا بلغ تاور

 « ascending to heaven he mingled with the Gods » طليقاً إلى السماء اختلط بالآلهة (Sinuhe, 7).

The stative participle stands as a predicate to a nominal sentence introduced by  « to be » and other certain verbs denoting some duration of time e.g.  « spend the night »,  « spend the day ». Such verbs are equivalent to the group of verbs known in Arabic as the incomplete verbs which govern the subject in the nominative and the predicate in the accusative case (see above); the predicate in this case qualifies the subject.

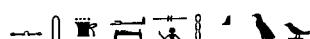
 « I shall be judged with him » (Cairo 20458).

 « Nay, he who is yonder shall be standing in the bark » ويكون الذي ثم وقيفاً في السفين (Leb. 144).

 « behold, he was fled » (Gardiner<sup>3</sup> § 326; Pap. Kah. 34, 20).

 « to me belonged the universe and I was alone » (ibid.; ÄZ, 54, 47).

 « she spends the day lying hungry » (Pap. Kah. 5, 33).

 « never does a man spend the night hungry in my town » لا يبيت رجل خميساً في مدينتي (Menthew, II, cf. Lefebvre, Grammaire § 349).

As it is the case with the Arabic measures in question, the stative participle implies an emphatic meaning in certain cases. This can be noticed in the following versions of the same utterance in the coffin texts (B1 L and B3 L, Spell 220).


« I known you; I am knowing your names » أنا أعلمكم عليم باسمائكم  
« I am knowing you; I am knowing your names » أني عليم بكم عليم باسمائكم

It can be thus understood, however, why in boastful and self laudatory texts, the stative participle is frequently used in the first person singular; the deceased asserts his knowledge and equipment of the requirements that allow him to the hereafter. It is not improbable that such a tradition was an important factor in the survival of the independent use of the stative participle in the first person singular.

Being of itself timeless, the future meaning was indicated in Middle Egyptian by placing the imperfective *sdm:f* of the verb *wnn* (to be) which has future reference, before it.

« Nay, he who is yonder shall be standing in the bark (Leb. 143-4). **وَيَكُونُ الَّذِي ثُمَّ وَقِفَّا فِي السَّفَرِينَ**

﴿ وَتَكُونُ رُوحَهُ حَمَّهُ إِلَى جَنَّتِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾ (Urk. IV 62). « His soul shall live beside the Lord of the Universe »

Yet, the future meaning can be implied like our Arabic measure <sup>(1)</sup> in the following example in Middle Egyptian :

Two more late Egyptian examples of the stative participle give the future meaning:

اصدر قسمها بالرب قائلاً لئن لم يصدق ما قلت جمِيعاً فاني موضوع (وديعة) (B.M. 10053, verso 3, 5; sim. *ib.* 4, 6).

(1) Arabic examples are frequent. Cf. « انك ميت و انهم ميتون Verily thou shalt die and they shall die » (Koran XXXIX 30) و قال تقسم ليلة النائي هذه فانك من جوم غدا أو مسيف

« and they said enjoy this eve of departure;  
for you will be stoned tomorrow or slain by  
sword » (*Giřānu l-Awd*). جران العود .

Being the equivalent of the active or passive participle; the stative participle can be used substantively in some cases :

اـنـا ذـلـكـ التـزـيلـ إـلـىـ الـمـنـاجـمـ « I am the one-who-descended to the mines in the expedition of the sovereign » (Sh. S. 89).

According to Arabic grammar « *ink* » is the subject and *h̥k·wi* comes in apposition to *pw* standing as predicate.

A final remark noticed, is that the stative participle — similar to Arabic still — could be used — though infrequent — without feminine endings. This was attested in the ‘*Admonitions*’ where the third masculine singular form applied to the feminine plural :

الـمـقـاطـعـاتـ حـطـيمـ « The nomes are laid waste » (Adm. 3, 1).  
اـلـاـ وـاـنـ النـسـاءـ قـلـيلـ « Foresooth, women are lacking » (Adm. 2, 4).

اـلـاـ وـاـنـ الـامـاءـ سـلـيـطـ بـالـسـتـهـنـ « Foresooth, all female slaves are free with their tongues » (Adm. 4, 13).

انـظـرـ « Behold noble ladies are going hungry » (Adm. 9, 1); this refers us back to adjectives (Gardiner<sup>3</sup> § 135).