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BIFAO 80 (1980), p. 129-138

Ahmad Abdel-Hamid Youssef

The Particles jst and js - An Arabic Approach to Egyptian Grammar.

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THE PARTICLES *'IST* AND *'IS* — AN ARABIC APPROACH TO EGYPTIAN GRAMMAR

Ahmad ABDEL-HAMID YOUSSEF

§ 1) Egyptian grammar has been, hitherto, studied — almost exclusively — in terms of modern European languages with scanty, very little and sporadic instances of correlation between Egyptian and Semitic. The meaning and use of at least some particles — important particles as they are — are in some cases no easy task to define; their derivation and etymologies are almost unknown; their meanings are approximately grasped and still subject to discussion. In translations and text study, we often find ourselves apt to give various renderings in different texts to a certain particle or leave it untranslated.

Though it was the only particle compared with a Semitic counterpart, (Arabic إن *Wb.* I, 89) is not the only Egyptian particle to which corresponds an Arabic equivalent. In the present article I wish to bring forward for discussion the so-called non enclitic particle or conjunction (vars. , , ,) [1] as being equivalent to the Arabic particle اذ var. اذى and اذذاك var. اذاك and the enclitic which resembles — in my opinion — the Arabic particle اذن (var. اذاً).

I

§ 2) describes a situation or concomitant fact; and sentences introduced by it may often be rendered as clauses of time or circumstance. This is well illustrated by the fact that it occurs often after dates introducing events that had taken

[1] An Arabic dialect still existing in Yemen and Kuweit pronounces the ك = *k* as the English *ch* تش = Egyptian *ṯ* especially to distinguish the second person fem. sing. suffix pronoun from that of the masculine. i.e. « *k* » for the masculine; and *č* = *ch* for the feminine (cf. Gardiner, *Grammar*[3], § 230); also compare in some arabic words the initial alef which is omitted in certain cases e.g. امراة and مرأة.

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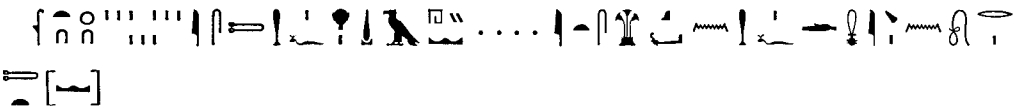
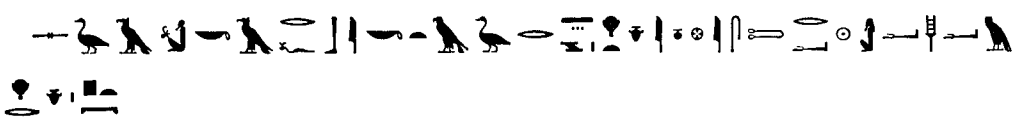
place then. Arab grammarians describe إذ as an adverbial noun denoting generally past time [1] and properly is prefixed to a proposition which is either nominal or verbal [2].

« Year 30 when His Majesty was in the land of Retenw » عام ٣٠ اذ جلالته فى أرض رطنو (*Urk.* IV, 689).



« Year 29 when his Majesty was in Zahi .... when his Majesty captured the city of Wareth » عام ٢٩ اذ جلالته فى زاهى . . . اذ نهب مدينة وارثت (*Urk.* IV, 685).

« In this day when His Majesty was in the city of Pira'messe » ذلك اليوم اذ جلالته فى مدينة برعمسى (*RT* 13, p. 153).



« I will guard the great female falcon on earth who dwells in On while Rê' is standing in the middle of the sky » سأحمى البازة الكبرى على الأرض فى قلب أون اذ رع قائم فى قلب السماء (*C.T.* 362, V 17).

(1) واذكرو اذ أنتم قليل « and remember ye when ye were few » (*Koran* VIII, 26).

(2) Having the verb in the past as to the letter and meaning or the verb as to the meaning but not as to the letter all three of which are comprised in one verse of the Koran (IX, 40) :

الاتنصروه فقد نصره الله إذ أخرجه الذين كفروا ثانى اثنين إذهما فى الغار اذ يقول لصاحبه لا تحزن إن الله معنا « If you do not aid him. Verily God has aided him when those who disbelieved him expelled him, being the second of two when they were in the cave when he was saying to his companion grieve not thou (for) God is with us ».

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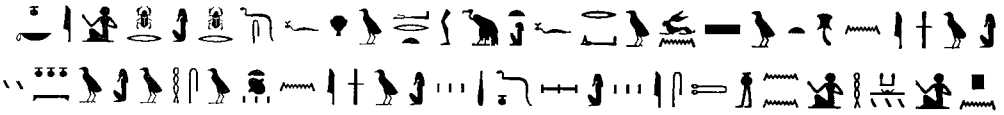

« I am Khopri who came into being of himself upon his mother's lap who gave the she-jackals to those who are in Nun and the killers to those who are in the tribunal since this magic of mine was brought to me » انني خپرى الناشىء بذاته على فخذ أمه ، معطى الذئبات الى من هم فى نون والجلادين لمن هم فى المحكمة اذ يؤتى الىّ سحرى هذا (*C.T.* 402, V 175).

« I have taken their spirits when I came to eat their magic » لقد قبضت أرواحهم اذ أتيت آكل سحرهم (*C.T.* 469, V 391).

« O Osiris and Isis, hasten; announce to the gods of Lower Egypt and their spirits when this Wenis comes an imperishable spirit; a morning star (he is) then over the Nile » أيا أوسير وإيسة ، اسرعا فأعلنا لأرباب الشمال وأرواحهم اذ يأتى ونيس هذا روحا لاتفنى . نجما اذن على النيل (*Pyr.* 155 a, b).

« There will happen when you separate yourself from this place you will never see this island (again) » ويحدث اذ تنفصل عن هذا المكان أن لن ترى هذه الجزيرة (*Shipwrecked Sailor,* 153-154).

N.B. or rather (ꜥ) is used here for ; see Gardiner, *Grammar*[3], § 232).

« He hath created, glorified, made noble their faces; at their existence with him when he was alone in Nun » لقد خلق ومجد وشرف وجوههم عند وجودهم معه اذ هو وحيد فى نون (*Pap. Ani,* Pl. XXVI, chap. LXXVIII).

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§ 3) as well as Arabic إذ also indicates a cause and should be therefore rendered « since », or because Ex. الحمد الله اذ جئت « Praise to God because you have come ».

« I caused to live the name of my father ... since a good son it is he who causes to flourish the names of the ancestors » لقد أحييت اسم أبي ... اذ الولد الصالح هو مؤيد اسماء الآباء (*Beni Hassan* I, pl. XXVI, cols. 161-168).

« Words said, O Osiris Pepi, you have enclosed every god within your arms, their lands and all their possessions because O Osiris Pepi thou art great and round as the circle which surrounds the Ḥow-Nebu » كلام يقال : أيا أوسير بيبي هذا ، لقد أحطت كل اله فى ذراعيك وأراضيهم وكل امتعتهم اذ (أنت) يا أوسير بيبي كبير محيط كالحدق المحدق بالحاونبو (*Pyr.* 847 a-c).

« Save me when I am heard for I am then the Bull of Kenzet » انقذنى مسموعا اذ أنى اذن فحل كنزت (*C.T.* III, 75).

« He is satisfied with living on hearts and their magic because Wenis revolts against licking the *sbšw* which are in the red (?) » لقد رضى بالعيش على القلوب وسحرها اذ يعاف ونيس « السبش » الذى فى الأحمر (*Pyr.* 410 c, 411 a).

« I, since I rule Punt (or : since I am ruler of Punt) myrrh belongs to me » وأنا اذ أحكم بونت (أو : واذ أنى حاكم بونت) فالبخور لى (see *N.B.* on p. 131 above).

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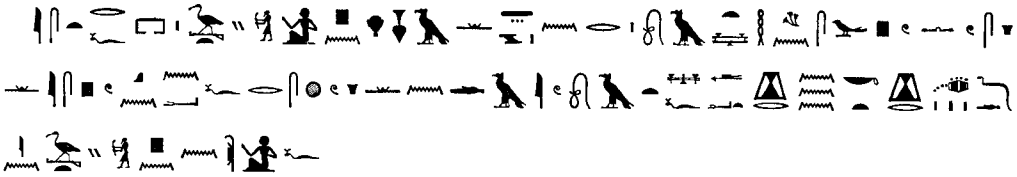


« Since then the house of this *Ḏḥwty* Nakht being to the entrance of a road that was narrow and not wide therefore to receive the width of a piece of cloth, the road being one end under the water, the other under barley, this *Ḏḥwty* Nakht said to his attendant » [1] واذ كان بيت جحوتى نخت هذا على الشاطىء من طريق كان ضيقا لايتسع اذن ليستوعب عرض ثوب والطريق أحد طرفيه تحت الماء والآخر تحت الشعير فقد قال جحوتى نخت هذا لتابعه .

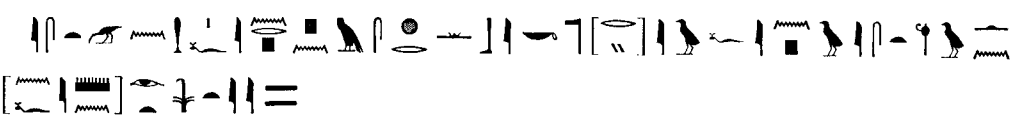
§ 4) The Arabic اذ — as Arab grammarians put it — is used to denote one's expressing the accurance of a thing when he is in a particular state, or to denote a thing's happening suddenly or unexpectedly [2] and in this case is only followed by a verb expressing an event as a positive fact and occurs after بينا or بينما (while, whilst)

بينما أنا كذا اذ جاء زيد

While I was thus, lo Zeyd came

استقدر الله خيرا وأرضين به فبينما العسر اذ دارت مياسير

« Beg thou God to appoint for thee good and do thou content therewith for while there has been difficulty, lo easy circumstances have come about ».



[1] واذ اعتزلتموهم وما يعبدون الا الله فأوا الى الكهف ينشر لكم ربكم من رحمته ويهىء لكم من أمركم مرفقا (سورة الكهف ١٦)

« Since you have separated yourselves from them and that which they worship except God, so take refuge into the cave, your Lord will extend his mercy to you and will dispose your business for you to advantage » (*Koran* XVIII, 16).

[2] Cf. the Arabic enunciative (*itha*) اذا الفجائية, see *BIFAO* 79 (1979), p. 443.

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« When His Majesty found this stone in the shape of a divine falcon he being a royal child, lo Amun decreed for him that he should be made for him the kingship of the two lands » واذ وجد جلالته ذلك الحجر فى هيئة الصقر الربانى وهو صبى اذ أمر آمون له بتولى ملك الأرضين (*Urk.* IV, 1565).

« After the end of this festival in the south of Ope Amun king of the gods having returned in peace to Thebes, faring downstream by His Majesty with the statue of Harakhty, lo, he set in order this land » وبعد ختام ذلك الحفل جنوبى أوپة ، وآمون قد عاد فى سلام الى طيبة ، وعود من الملك هبوطا مع تمثال حراختى ، اذا هو ينظم هذه الأرض (*JEA* 39 (1953), p. 13 ff.).

« When the day on which the royal child came to Egypt to walk around; lo the crocodile of his destiny (followed him) » واذ كان بعد ذلك لما كان يوم مجىء الصبى الملكى الى أرض مصر متجولا ، اذ بتمساح قدره (يتعقبه) (*Doomed Prince* 7, 10).

§ 5) A further resemblance between the use of Arabic اذ and Egyptian is that both serve to switch to a new subject in the sequence of a narrative. This is best illustrated in Egyptian in the Annales of Thutmes III, the Battle of Kadesh of Ramses II and in Arabic in the *Koran* XVIII (Chapter of the Cave).

§ 6) In Arabic, sometimes one half of the proposition is suppressed as in اذذاك (var. اذاك) understood to be « When that was » i.e. then, at that time; and sometimes the whole proposition is suppressed as being known and ‘ tenween ’ is substituted. Exx.

نهيتك عن طلابك أم عمرو بعافية وأنت اذٍ صحيح

« I forbade thy suing umm-ʿAmr in health, thou being then sound ».

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كان كذا وكذا وهو اذٍ صبي

« Such and such things were, he being then a boy ».

A similar construction is noticed in the *Pyramid Texts* as an archaic style of expression

« O Osiris Pepi thou hast appeared as king of Upper and Lower Egypt because thou hast power over the gods and their spirits then يقال : أيا أوسير لقد أشرقت ملكا للصعيد والدلتا أن [1] قويت فى الآلهة وأرواحهم اذٍ (*Pyr.* 776 a-b) [2].

II

§ 7) resembles the Arabic اذن which denotes a response or reply, carroborating a condition or compensation or complement of a condition. Its Virtual meaning is ' then ', i.e. ' in that case ' or ' if the case or affair be as you have mentioned ' or as has happened [3]. Exx.

« I acted towards him in loyalty. A king then to any God » لقد عملت له فى إخلاص قلب ، ملكا اذن لكل اله (*Urk.* IV, 363).

« My Majesty knowing his divinity; I did that (*is st*) therefore (or then) according to his orders » وإنى وجلالتى عليمة بربانيته فقد صنعت اذن ذلك عن أمره (*Urk.* IV 363, 67).

[1] The Arabic particle أن introduces a cause similar to Egyptian. . Cf. Gardiner, *Grammar* [3], § 164,3 and the *Koran* L, 2 : بل عجبوا أن جاءهم منذر منهم « Verily they wonder that a preecher among themselves came unto them ».

[2] Cf. *Pyr.* 824 a-b.

[3] Scholars hesitate between rendering it as meaning ' like ' and indeed or leaving it untranslated. See *Pyr.* passim.

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« A God he is then » اله اذن هو (*C.T.* 215 d).

« Whether I am at the residence or whether I am in this place, thou art then the one who hides this horizon » سواء أنا فى هذا القصر أو فى هذا المكان فانك اذن حاجب ذلك الأفق (*Sinuhe* B, 232-233).

« Art thou not then a man » أما أنت اذن رجلا (*Lebensmude* 31).

« I have given to him the horizon that he may be powerful over them. Ḥarakhty (he is) then » لقد أعطيته الافق يقوى عليهم . حراختى اذن (*Pyr.* 4 b; sim. 5 b);

i.e. having been given the horizon — there is only one horizon understood — the king impersonated Harakhty; a fact which is nearer to the Egyptian thought and belief rather than that he is like Horus [1]. It is not improbable that the *Pyramid texts* were recited by two or more groups of priests, of which one chanted the first part of the utterance and the other responded with the verdict.

« He stands before the souls. Anubis (he is) then foremost of the westerners يقف أمام الأرواح . أنوبيس اذن إمام الغربيين (*Pyr.* 57 d).

« Summon thy Ka; Osiris then protects thee from all anger of the dead » ادع روحك ، يحمك أوسير اذن من كل غضب لميت (*Pyr.* 63 b).

[1] See n. 3 p. 135.

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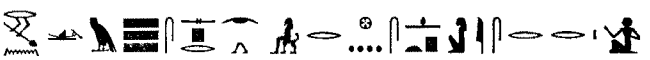
«If the Eye of Horus be not boatless, then I will not be boatless» الا تكن عين حور بغير زورق ، فلن أكون أنا اذن ذلك الذى بغير زورق (*C.T.* 182).

«I plough in them, I reap in them I rise early in them and go to rest in them. I am a spirit in them. I am happy then» أحرث فيهن واحصد فيهن وانتبه فيهن وأعزب فيهن وأكون روحا فيهن فاسعد اذن (*C.T.* 467, V 365).

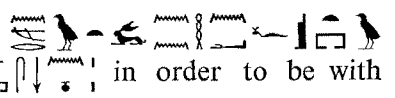


«I row on the waterways and arrive at its towns. Hetep (I am) them according to my utterance» أجدف فى القنوات فاصل الى مدنها ، فاستريح اذن وفق منطقى (*C.T.* 467, V 366).

III

§ 8) The inseparable compound from and bears a great resemblance in form and use to the Arabic ليس. Arab grammarians, however, state that ليس itself is a compound word from لا and أيس ; the latter had dropped into disuse and oblivion long ago from the Arabic language. According to Arabic dictionaries أيس means 'to be' or 'to exist'; a meaning which, if applied to the Egyptian , would not be too far from probability and logic.

 serves to dissociate a word (substantive, verb or a substantive preceded by a preposition) from a preceding proposition expressed or understood (Lefebvre, *Grammaire,* § 551; Edel, *Altägyptische Grammatik,* § 827). Exx.

«I caused myself to be buried with this *Dʿw*  in order to be with him in one place not because not being in a position to erect a second tomb»

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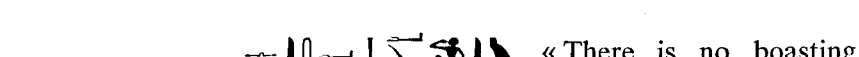
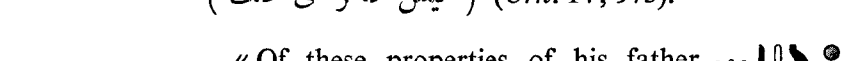
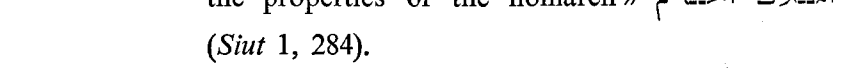
لقد جعلت دفنى مع جعو هـذا فى مـكان واحد ليس لعدم كونى بحيث أصنع قبرا ثانيا .

« If thou findest a disputent in his rage, who is a poor one not thy equal » اذا وجدت عبوسا فى سورته ، فقيرا ليس مثلك . . . (*Ptah hotep* 74-75).


« There is no boasting therein » ليس فى ذلك فخر (ليس فخر فى ذلك) (*Urk.* IV, 973).

« Of these properties of his father  and not from the properties of the nomarch » من أمـلاك أبيه وليس مـن أمـلاك الحـاكم (*Siut* 1, 284).

« My heart is contented of myself  but not of eating the shatet-bread of Osiris » قلبى راض بنفسى وليس بأكلى (خبز) شعت أوسير (*Nu* 26, 2; Lefebvre, *Grammaire*, § 550).

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