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BIFAO 45 (1947), p. 61-64

Girgis Mattha

The origin of the explanatory particles [en] and [entji] : [endje].

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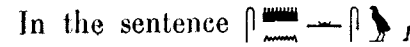
THE ORIGIN

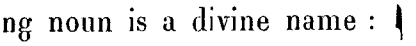
OF THE

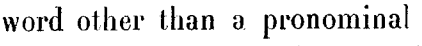
EXPLANATORY PARTICLES ⲛ̄ AND ⲛ̄ⲑⲓ : ⲛ̄ⲭⲉ

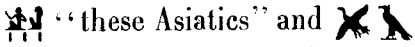
BY

GIRGIS MATTHA.

In the sentence  "she, namely Isis, establishes me on Earth" [1] the particle serves to introduce a noun, , defining a preceding pronoun in .

In Late Egyptian texts this use of is confined to cases where the defining noun is a divine name :  "so said he, namely Amon-Rē" [2]. Otherwise it occurs in Late Egyptian under the form when it is best rendered "namely" or "that is" as in the following examples [3] :

"so said he, namely the prince, to them" and "the two shares which she, namely my mother, gave me" and  "so said he, namely his son".

Sometimes this *m* introduces a word or set of words defining a preceding word other than a pronominal suffix as in  and , where each of "these Asiatics" and "what thou hast said" defines the interrogative word [4]. These same two sentences occur elsewhere without the particle and without a change of meaning [5].

[1] Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, § 227, 5.
[2] Erman, *Neuägyptische Grammatik*, § 714.
[3] *Ibid.*, § 702.
[4] *Ibid.*, *Anmerkung*.
[5] *Ibid.*, § 740.

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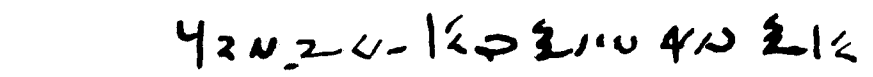
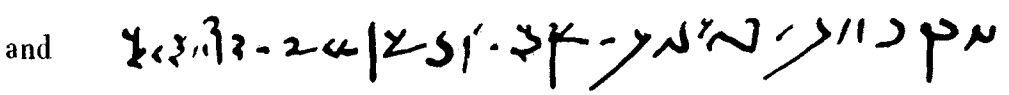
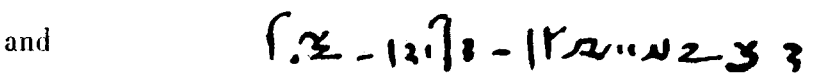
In demotic this particle takes the form ⸗; e. g.



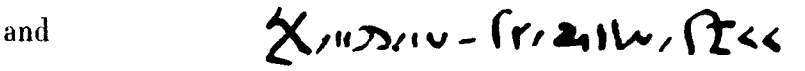
te-tn m-s p-e-tn mr n·'m-n n p s 2 [1] "you have a claim upon anyone you please of us, both", where *p s 2* (ⲡⲉⲥⲛⲁⲩ) "both, lit. the 2 persons" defines *n* "us" in *n·'m-n*.

and 

p rm nt e-f a st-f n-t pe-f 'r n·'m-n n t ḥe·t 2·t [2] "the one who withdraws from the other of us, the 2 (contracting) parties", where *t ḥe·t 2·t* "the 2 parties" defines the suffix pron. 1st. pers. plur. *n* in *n·'m-n*.

and 

n wpty·w n n w'b·w n Wpwy [3] "the judges, the priests of Ophois", where *n w'b·w n Wpwy* "the priests of Ophois" defines *n wpty·w* "the judges".

and 

Twt s P-te-'Tm n pe hy [4] "T. son of P. my husband", where *pe hy* "my husband" defines or determines "T. son of P."

In Coptic the particle takes the form ⲛ̀, ⲙ before initial ⲙ, ⲡ (ⲫ, ⲯ); e. g.

ⲁⲩⲧⲱⲟⲩⲛ ⲇⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲥⲛⲁⲩ [5] "then both arose", lit. "they arose, namely the two persons", where ⲡⲉⲥⲛⲁⲩ defines the pronominal suffix ⲩ (= ⲟⲩ) in ⲁⲩⲧⲱⲟⲩⲛ; and ⲛ̀ⲧⲉⲣⲟⲩⲥⲱⲟⲩ̀ⲥ̀ ⲙ̄ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲛⲟⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲉⲡⲓⲥⲕⲟⲡⲟⲥ [6] "when they assembled, namely 12 bishops" i. e. "when 12 bishops gathered",

[1] Sethe, *Demotische Bürgschaftsurkunden*, 1, 17-18.

[2] *Ibid.*, 9, 22.

[3] Thompson, *Family Archive from Siut*, B. I, 1-2, 7; II, 13-14; X, 16.

[4] *Ibid.*, IV, 4-5. For other instances see glossary No. 157.

[5] Zoega, 346.

[6] Zoega, 348.

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where ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲛⲟⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲉⲡⲓⲥⲕⲟⲡⲟⲥ "12 bishops" determines the 3rd pers. plur. in ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲣⲟⲩ-; and ⲙⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲛⲁⲩ ⲉⲣⲟⲟⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲥⲛⲁⲩ[1] "hast thou not seen both?" lit. "hast thou not seen them, namely the two persons?", where ⲡⲉⲥⲛⲁⲩ defines the 3rd pers. plur. in ⲉⲣⲟⲟⲩ; and ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲁⲉ ⲁⲓϫⲱ ⲉⲣⲟⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲛⲧⲁⲩⲥⲱⲗⲙ̄ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ[2] "I then described what was revealed to-me" lit. "I then spoke concerning them, namely the things which were revealed to me", where ⲛⲉⲛⲧⲁⲩⲥⲱⲗⲙ̄ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ "that which was revealed to me" defines the 3rd pers. pl. in ⲉⲣⲟⲟⲩ.

Other examples are like ϧⲁⲣⲁⲧⲥ ⲛ̀ⲟⲩⲃⲱ "under a tree", lit. "at the foot of it, namely a tree"; ⲣⲱⲟⲩ ⲛⲛⲓⲁⲥⲉⲃⲏⲥ "the mouths of the impious" lit. "the mouth of them, namely the unrighteous", etc. etc.

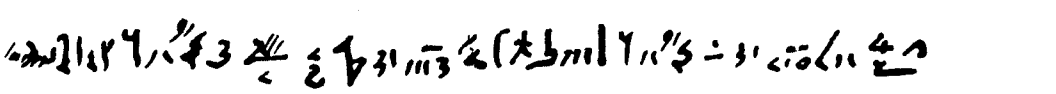
The word introduced by ⲛ̀ could also define a preceding independent pronoun as in the following examples :

ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲛⲓⲁⲡⲁ ⲉⲓⲥⲓⲧⲣⲟⲩ, ⲁⲛⲁⲕ ⲛⲕⲁⲥⲉⲙ etc. (joint authors) and ⲛⲧⲟϥ ⲛⲓⲁϩⲱⲙ[3].

If the defining word is a pronoun, this latter is the independent pronoun : ⲁⲛⲙⲟⲱⲓ ⲛⲉⲙⲁϥ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲛⲉⲙ ⲕⲉⲥⲛⲁⲩ[4] "we walked with him, I and two others". Independent pronouns are etymologically related to the particle and they were not infrequently used in the language parallel to + noun.

Sometimes this explanatory particle ⲛ̀ is omitted; e.g. ⲉϥⲧⲱⲛ ⲡⲟⲩϩⲁⲓ[5] "where is thy husband?" lit. "where is he, thy husband?" Compare the absence of in Late Egyptian, referred to above.

Sometimes this particle *n* (variant *m*) is followed in demotic by the enclitic particle *ge* (old) as is the case in



hbqe n·'m-s n-ge 'yḥ ṯ n ty-s qt·t m-ge rm 'mnt[6] "waste her away, thou demon; take her sleep, thou man of Amenti", where the first *n-ge* introduces

[1] Zoega, 397.
[2] Zoega, 397.
[3] Crum, *Coptic Dict.*, p. 215 *b*, sub ⲛ-, I, d.
[4] Mallon, *Grammaire*, § 350, last example.
[5] Zoega, 346.
[6] Griffith-Thompson, *Mag. Pap.*, verso 13/2.

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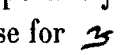
yḫ "demon" and the second *m-ge* introduces *rm 'mnt* "man of Amenti" as nouns defining the pronoun "thou" implicit in the imperatives *ḥbqe* "waste away" and *ỉ* "take" respectively. Compare  subject, *Wb* V, p. 178, 10.

The group is false for ( ). Palaeographically speaking, it is properly the group for *sp-2* "twice", which is not infrequently confused by the scribes with that of .

While this example is almost the only one in the extant demotic texts for the use of the explanatory particle *n* followed by *ge*, examples for the use of its Coptic form ⲛ̄ⲥⲓ : ⲛ̀ϫⲉ are very common.

Its chief use is to introduce a noun to define a preceding suffix pronoun used as subject e. g. ⲁϥϫⲟⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲥⲓ ⲟⲩϩⲗⲗⲟ "an elder said" lit. "said he, namely an elder".

ⲡⲉϫⲁϥ ⲗⲉ ⲛⲁϥ ⲛ̄ⲥⲓ ⲡⲣ̄ⲣⲟ "the king said to him" lit. "then said he, namely the king, to him", etc. etc.

We have already seen that simple ⲛ̄ had this same use in such examples as ⲁⲩⲧⲱⲟⲩⲛ ⲗⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲥⲛⲁⲩ and ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲣⲟⲩⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ ⲙ̄ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲥⲛⲟⲟⲩⲥ ⲛ̄ⲉⲡⲓⲥⲕⲟⲡⲟⲥ quoted above.

ⲛ̄ⲥⲓ : ⲛ̀ϫⲉ could also be used in places where simple ⲛ̄ is normally used e. g. [1].

†ⲥⲱⲧⲙ ⲉⲣⲟϥ ⲛⲥⲓ ⲓⲱϩⲁⲛⲛⲏⲥ, where ⲓⲱϩⲁⲛⲛⲏⲥ defines ϥ in ⲉⲣⲟϥ; and ⲁⲓⲧⲏⲓⲧⲟⲩ ⲛϫⲉ ⲛⲉⲫⲏⲣⲓ ⲉϕⲟⲩⲉⲓ, where ⲛⲉⲫⲏⲣⲓ defines ⲟⲩ in ⲁⲓⲧⲏⲓⲧⲟⲩ; and ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲧⲁⲩⲫⲡϩⲓⲥⲉ ⲛϩⲏⲧⲟⲩ... ⲛⲥⲓ ⲛⲥⲁϩ, where ⲛⲥⲁϩ defines ⲟⲩ in ⲛϩⲏⲧⲟⲩ.

As to the example ⲑⲏⲉⲧⲁⲩⲟⲩⲱⲣⲡ ⲱⲁⲣⲟⲥ ⲛϫⲉ ⲅⲁⲃⲣⲓⲏⲗ, quoted by Crum, *ibid.*, I cannot give an explanation except, perhaps, that ⲉⲧⲁⲩⲟⲩⲱⲣⲡ is written in error for ⲉⲧⲁⲩⲟⲩⲟⲣⲡϥ.

[1] Crum, *Coptic Dict.*, p. 252, sub ⲛⲥⲓ *ad fin.*

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