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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,  $\text{𓆎}$  (Arabic  $\text{إِذ}$  *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  $\text{𓆎}$  (vars.  $\text{𓆎}$ ,  $\text{𓆎}$ ,  $\text{𓆎}$ )<sup>(1)</sup> as being equivalent to the Arabic particle  $\text{إِذ}$  var.  $\text{إِذِي}$  and  $\text{إِذْكَ}$  var.  $\text{إِذَاكَ}$  and the enclitic  $\text{𓆎}$  which resembles — in my opinion — the Arabic particle  $\text{إِذْن}$  (var.  $\text{إِذًّا}$ ).

## I

§ 2)  $\text{𓆎}$  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

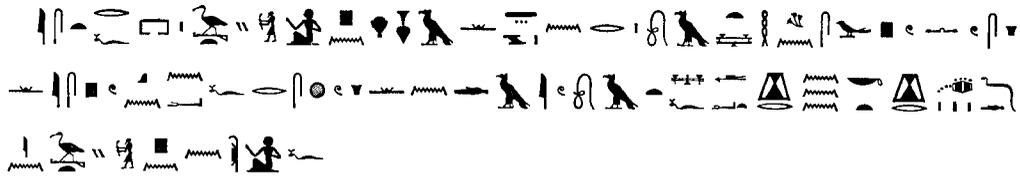
<sup>(1)</sup> An Arabic dialect still existing in Yemen and Kuwait pronounces the  $\text{ك} = k$  as the English *ch*  $\text{كش} = \text{Egyptian } \text{𓆎} t$  especially to distinguish the second person fem. sing. suffix pronoun from that of the masculine.

i.e. «*k*» for the masculine; and  $\text{č} = \text{ch}$  for the feminine (cf. Gardiner, *Grammar*<sup>3</sup>, § 230); also compare in some arabic words the initial alef which is omitted in certain cases e.g.  $\text{مرأة}$  and  $\text{امرأة}$ .









« Since then the house of this *Dhwtj* 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 *Dhwtj* Nakht said to his attendant » (1) « واذ كان بيت جحوتي نحت هذا على الشاطئ من طريق كان ضيقا لا يتسع اذن ليستوعب عرض ثوب والطريق أحسد طرفيه تحت المساء والآخر تحت الشعير فقد قال جحوتي نحت هذا لتابعه .

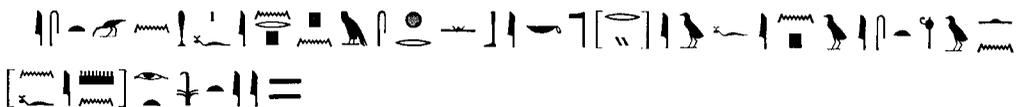
§ 4) The Arabic *اذ* — as Arab grammarians put it — is used to denote one's expressing the accuracy of a thing when he is in a particular state, or to denote a thing's happening suddenly or unexpectedly (2) and in this case is only followed by a verb expressing an event as a positive fact and occurs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



واذ اعتزلتموهم وما يعبدون الا الله فأوا الى الكهف (1)  
 ينشر لكم ربكم من رحمته ويهيء 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.









لقد جعلت دفنى مع جعو هذا فى مكان واحد لىس لعدم كونى بـحيث أصنع قبرا  
ثانيا .

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

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

« Of these properties of his father and not from the properties of the nomarch »  
(*Siut 1, 284*). من أملاك أبيه ولىس من أملاك الحساكم

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