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THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL PRESENT AS AN ANTECEDENT-LESS (i.e. SUBSTANTIVAL) RELATIVE IN COPTIC

By ARIEL SHISHA-HALEVY

1. COPTIC disposes of two procedures to express the substantival relative clause ('he who . . .', 'that which . . .' etc.), namely, either by substituting a substantivator morpheme (of the n-/τ-/υ- paradigm) for the antecedent, yet in close juncture with the relative-converted form: πεταζ-, πεταζη, πεταζη, etc.; or by having an indefinite pronoun or pronominal (σύνσω, ροεσσε, πεσσε: 'one', 'any', 'some') as antecedent to a circumstantially converted form, as the relative: circumstantial opposition is neutralized, in favour of the latter, when adnominal to a non-n-determined substantival kernel.

A third, rarer and obviously idiomatic procedure is that using the bare circumstantial present form as an antecedent-less relative, mostly equivalent to an ου̂-determined, n-substantivated relative form (συντοκαλα, συντοκαλογε, etc.); or, alternatively, a ου̂-antecedent before the adnominal circumstantial. The Sahidic and Bohairic examples offered below (all of them either definitely or very probably translated from the Greek) represent most of the possible syntactical functions of a substantival relative.

(a) as direct object, though without governing the prenominal morphoponemic alternant (status constructus) of the infinitive:

1 Not the definite article (although homonymic and certainly related to it), but belonging to a different category (paradigm): the substantivated relative may be, in many cases, further determined by n-, ου̂-/εν̂e- or ο (zero), and the relative form (ετ̃) itself is not otherwise commutable with a noun. πετ̃ on its own is in some respects treated as a zero-determined substantive: consider the following (among many other examples): Job 11: 8 (πετ̃ as antecedent of the adnominal circumstantial, see n. 3); Shenoute, ed. Chassinat, 117. 32, ed. Leipoldt, III, 126. 13 etc. (συντοκαλα-καλα-πετ̃); Shenoute, ed. Leipoldt, IV, 71. 20 (πετ̃-καλα-); Shenoute, ed. Amélineau, 1, 133. 10 (πετ̃-καλα); Shenoute, ed. Chassinat, 63. 9, ed. Leipoldt, IV, 128. 27 (πετ̃- as direct and immediate object of a Bipartite Pattern predicate, in defiance of the Stern-Jernstedt rule); Mich. 3. 11 (Αχμ.: 'πετ̃-καλα-καλα-καλα'), see Polotsky, ‘The Coptic Conjugation System’ (in Orientalia 29 [1960], §§ 19, 35).

2 Polotsky's conversion terminology, op. cit. §§ 10–18.

3 The so-called 'pseudo' ('unechtt' or 'uneigentlich') relative clause (Till, Kopt. Gr. § 475: an unfortunate appellation, signifying, from the structural-descriptive point of view, precisely nothing), already commented upon by Prätorius (his review of Stern's Gr., ZDMG 35 [181], 758). The present writer has tried, in an unpublished doctoral thesis (1972) to formulate structurally the distributional details, as well as the functioning, of the circumstantial and relative conversion-forms in the Sahidic corpus of Shenoute's works, arriving at the conclusion that there actually exists a circumstantial: relative opposition (predicative vs. attributive junction), which is neutralizable in certain environments.

4 Unlike the Second Future when object of συνσω in a negative predication (see Spiegelberg, ΖΑΣ 58. 157). See in Shenoute, ed. Leipoldt, III, 13. 9, ed. Chassinat, 33. 14, 36.9, 73. 20. In Subakhmimic, see Manichaean Psalmbook 151. 27, 156. 9 (συνσω-ενε-πετοε), 203, 25, 207. 23. This idiom is attested also in Late Coptic: Budge, Miscellaneous Texts 168. 19, Drescher, Coptic Legends, 55. 19.
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(1) Gen. 31:8 (Sah., ed. Ciasca) ... ἵππες κοινοὶ τῷρος ἵππο ἅπτωτα ... and all the sheep bear flecked (ones). Boh.: ἵππες κοινοὶ τῷρος μεταγενεῖαν: τέτειστα πάντα τὰ πρόβατα ποικιλα.

(2) Ex. 12:9 (Sah., ed. Kasser) ὑπετηνωμαι ἐβολὴ ἢπιτωτο εἰμιοτο ὀργεὶ εἰπονεῖ ὑπογραμμα ἀλλὰ εἰςης ὑπογραφατ 'You shall not eat of them what is raw, nor cooked in water, but roasted in fire' (Ciasca ... ἀλλὰ εἰςης sic (?) ὑπογραφα); Boh.: ὑπετηνωμαι ἐβολὴ ἢπιτωτο εἰμιοτο ὀργεὶ εἰπονεὶ ὑπογραμμα ἀλλὰ ἔχεις ὑπογραφα: οὐκ ἔθεθη ἀπ' αὐτῶν ὡμοί ὡδεί ἥμετρον ἐν ὕδατι ἀλλὰ ἡ ὑπαρχεῖ πυρὶ.

(3) Deut. 13:10,11 (Boh., ed. Lagarde) οὐκαὶ οὐκαὶ εἰσερχεῖτε εἰς ὑπογραμμα, εἰς εἰμιοτο ὑπετηνωμαι ... ὀργεὶ εἰπονεῖ ἐβολὴ ἢπιτωτο ὀργεὶ εἰπονεῖ ὑπετηνωμαι 'Let not be found among you (one) who makes his son or his daughter pass through fire, or (one) who inquires of the diviners ... nor (one) who vventiloquizes, nor (one) who looks for omens, nor (one) who is a necromancer'. Greek: all participles (in the nominative).

(4) Judith 12:3 εἰσενεχεί τῶν εἰςενεχεί ἔχων εἰςενεχεί 'Whence shall we bring (one) resembling them to give thee?' πάθει εὐσίδωμέν σου δώσα αἷμα αὐτοῖς;

(5) Epiphanius (ed. Crum, Monastery of Epiph. II. 33.4 f.) οὐκαὶ οὐκαὶ ἐπανογή εἰρηνάκα 'I have not found (one) which is good which (will) please you'. Crum completes 'cornc'). A post-classic, non-literary, untranslated (i.e. native Coptic) instance.

(b) as postposed actor (or grammatical subject), un introduces by ἕτε:

(6) Josh. 9:29 (ed. Kasser) ὑπετηνωμαι ἐβολὴ ἢπιτωτυγί ἐμοὶ μεραίραν ἄγω ἐγν ἢπειραγε-τε: οὐ μὴ ἐκλήσῃ εξ ὕμων δόδοσ οὐδὲ δολοκόπος 'There shall not cease amongst you (one) who is a slave and (one) who is a wood-cutter'.

(7) 2 Kings 3:29 (ed. Drescher) ὑπετηνωμαι ἐβολὴ ἐκεῖνη ἐμοὶ πωλάν ἐκεῖνα (v.l. ἕτεν οὐραλμε ὑπονορεῖ); ἀγφ εἰκεδοθε ἐκεῖνα ἔποιε οἴκων ἤκτο που ἰσορροπή καὶ λεπός καὶ κρατών εὐφάελος καὶ πίπτων ἐν ῥομφαι καὶ ἔλασσούμενος ἄρτος · and there shall not cease in the house of Joab (one) who is impure and (one) who is leprous, (one) who grasps a crutch and (one) who falls by the sword and (one) who is in want of bread'. There seems no justification for Drescher's sic-ing of εἰςενεχεί, see Corpus Script. Chryst. Orient. 314/Copt. 36, p. 86 n. 1; the circumstantial after ὑπαρχεῖ does, however, seem suspiciously like a predicative complementation of this verb.

(8) (?) John 1:27 (Thompson's collation, Chester Beatty MSS. A, B) ὡς ἐκ εἰρατῆ ... παὶ ἐπετηνομαν αὐτός ἐκεῖνος εἰς ἐπανογή (Horsn: παναι τῷρος with εἰς variae lectiones): δ ... ἐφόμενος; 'Stands ... He, whom you know not, (one) who is to come after me'.

(c) Co-ordinated (by ἄγω) to, or disjoined (by ἀλλα) from a noun signifying a quality, this being either the predicate of a Nominal Sentence (εἰς- this expressing an additional predication) or in any other syntactical status:

(9) Num. 14:12 (Boh., ed. Lagarde) οὐκαὶ οὐκ ὁμοι οὐχ ἐπανογή ἐκαβερ 'A great and multi-tudinous people'; ἔθνος μέγα καὶ πολύ.

5 Nominal additional predication is effected by the nota relationis ἐθ, e.g. 1 Cor. 5:11; Joel 2:13 (ed. Malinine); Clemens 45. 1 (ed. Schmidt); Shenoute, ed. Leipoldt, 111, 135. 10 f., ed. Chassinat, 108. 15 ff. In Bohairic this use is extended to non-predicative status, e.g. Acta Martyrum (edd. Balestri-Hyvernat), 1, 158. 18; 164. 11; 175. 10 f.; 179. 15; 207. 3 etc.
(10) Psalms (Sah., ed. Budge) 24: 8 οὐχὶ θεὸς ἡ εὐσεβής καὶ ἐθικὴς ‘Good and (one) who is upright is the Lord’ (cf. Pistis Sophia 80. 1 οὐκ ἂν θεὸς ἡ εὐσεβής). Boh.: οὐχὶ θεὸς ἡ εὐσεβής καὶ ἐθικὴς.


(12) Heb. 12 : 16 (Sah.) Μὴν ὁ πεπίσχων ψυχὴν ἡ πρόκαιν τὸν βέβηλος (Boh. ὁ πεπίσχως) ‘He is not a thing of the flesh, but (one) who is pure’; a Second Present (conditioned by ἀλλα)6 interpretation is not excluded.

(13) Evangelium Philippi (ed. Menard) 108. 6 ὁ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι καὶ ἐν τῷ ζῷῳ ἐν τῷ φυσίν ἐν τῷ ψυχί ‘Thou art a Spirit alone and (one) who is living’.

(14) Nag Hammadi Codex VII (Facsimile Edition, 1972) 125. 6 οὐκ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι καὶ ἐν τῷ φυσίν ἐν τῷ ψυχί ‘He is righteous in all things and (one) who is holy’.

(15) Worrell, Freer MSS. 280. 3 ὁρκίζεται γιὰ τὸν θεὸν καὶ τὸν εὐσεβής ‘He is righteous in all things and (one) who is holy’.

(16) Patres Apostolici (ed. Lefort) 37. 6 ὅπωτε ... θεὸν ἐπεφθαξεν ἡ εὐσεβής. ‘It is an abomination . . . and (a thing) which is vain and base’. Note the contextual association with the ἀλλα (nota relationis) introduced attribute.7

(17) Ibid. 71. 20 ὡς ἄριστος θεὸν καὶ πληρωμή ‘as ingrate and (one) who dissents’.

(18) Acta Pilati (ed. Revillout) 75. 1 ἄνθρωπος ἡ πρόκαιν ἡ εὐσεβής ἡ πληρωμή: θεοβάζης ἐστι καὶ μᾶλλον ιουδαίζει ‘She is God-loving and (one) who tends towards the Jews’. A Second Present interpretation is possible.

(19) Drescher, Coptic Legends 14. 5 οὐκ ἐν τῷ φυσίν ἐν τῷ ψυχί ‘They are great and exalted’.

(d) After the gloss-introducing ἐτε παί πρὸς,8 glossing Greek terms; as gloss in Greek-Coptic (-Arabic), as lemma in Coptic-Arabic scalae:

(20) Baynes, Gnostic Treatise (Cod. Brucianus) L. 13 ... ἐπαντελής, ἐτε παί πρὸς τὸν εὐσεβὴν εὐαλ.: παντελῆς, i.e. ‘(one) who is perfect’.

(21) Ibid. xiv. 1 ὁ παντοκράτωρ καὶ παντοτις, ἐτε παί πρὸς τὸν εὐσεβῆ τὸν εὐαλών ‘He is παντοκράτωρ καὶ παντοτις, i.e. (one) in whom every Fatherhood is’; a Second Present interpretation ‘It is in him that every Fatherhood is’) is possible.

(22) Rylands MS. 113 (Catalogue, p. 62) ζωοκοινωνίας καὶ ἐπίμνησι τοῦ ζωοκοινωνίας τοῦ ζωοκοινωνίας ‘(one) who gives life’.


(25-41) Paris Copte 43, 44 (The Paris Scalae, Vat. copit. 71; ed. Kircher in Lingua Aegyptiaca Restituta, 1643):9 seventeen Bohairic examples in Chapter 25 (pp. 231-4), with occasional variants and parallels quoted by Crum in the Dictionary under the relevant headings. Note especially ἐπιμνήσι τοῦ ‘light’ (adj.), μακρινός (Crum 439 b or 447 b), ‘congregated’ or

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6 Polotsky, Études de syntaxe copte (Cairo, 1944), 52 f., (‘C’).
7 Cf. also Pistis Sophia (ed. Schmidt) 275. 19; Patres Apostolici (ed. Lefort) 91. 7; Athanasius (ed. Lefort) 66. 15 f.
8 See Prätorius, op. cit. 757, and Jelanskaja in Palestinskij Shornik 5. 68 (1960), 40 f.
9 See Mallon, Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale de l’Université St. Joseph (Beyrouth), II (1907), 213-64.
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'‘restrained'; ἐκποτανημογγέ μετάφρασις 'closed' (Μέταφρασι (Μετάφρασι), ἐκπερνων 'putrid, scorched' (Μετάφρασι, ἐκποτανημογγέ 'peeled' (Μετάφρασι, ἐκποτανημογγέ 'glowing' (Μετάφρασι etc.

(c) A co-ordinated substantival unit.

(42) Josh. 11: 17 ἐν θείον ἐγραμείν έσχεριπ ‘... and that which goes up to ...

2. This phenomenon recalls the use, in classic and post-classic sources, of ἐν θείον- as the glose (logical subject) component in a 'Cleft Sentence' ('It is ... who/that...'). This is probably the case of the epistolary opening-formula X ἐν θείον- i, a collateral variant of (the also more literary) X ἐν θείον and X -ἐνθείον, as well as other epistolary and legal formulas. The circumstantial glose-form has a highly interesting distribution also in the literary idiom, and can be traced back to pre-Coptic Egyptian.

3. Not to be overlooked in this context is the adverbial use of the self-same circumstantial present, which may be related to its substantival function, although the exact connection is to me as yet obscure (the Greek participle may be a clue). Cases like our ex. (2) make a translation-transference from the so-called adverbial accusative very plausible, as do also (a) the fact that this function-form is limited to the 3rd person masc. sing. and (b) the lack of any formal means of syntactical inclusion in the two first groups exemplified above.

4. The adnominal circumstantial (see n. 3) which is the only verb-form adnominal to a non-determined substantival kernel, is in my opinion not directly connected with the function here discussed; it is rather a case of localized neutralization of the relative: circumstantial opposition, and cannot account for the substantival function, unless we assume an ellipsis of an indefinite antecedent (ογς, (ογγ) ρομες or sim.): for this there is neither any ground nor any parallel, and it would be but a restatement, not a solution, of the problem. Nevertheless, the very existence of the above category (c), together with its statistical preponderance, seem to imply some connection with the adnominal circumstantial.

5. Functionally, this construction seems to stand on a still lower level of definition than that of πετ-, which is, after all, in many syntactical regards treated not as a zero-determined noun. In our ἐν θείον we really have a case of zero determination: in the syntagmatics of Coptic relative constructions, this means a zero antecedent.

10 For the terminology of the Cleft Sentence ('phrase coupée') analysis see Polotsky, op. cit. 57 ff., idem, Orientalia 31 (1962), 413 n. 1, 414 ff., and the references there.

11 A listing of the variant formulas, with extensive documentation, in Kahle, Bala’izah 183 ff.

12 The circumstantial glose-form (after nominal and adverbial 'vedettes', or logical predicates) has been extensively discussed by the present writer in the aforementioned doctoral thesis, The Circumstantial Sentence in Shenoute’s Coptic (Jerusalem, 1972). An interesting parallel to the non-predicative function of a participial verb-form may be found in Greek; see Rosén, ‘Die “zweiten” Tempora des Griechischen. Zum Prädikatsausdruck beim griechischen Verbum’, Mus. Helvet. 14 (1957), 133-54.

13 Cf. my remarks in JEA 61 (1975), 256-7.

14 This seems to be Stem’s explanation, at least of (c): Grammatik § 406 (our example (11)).