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RES BIBLIOGRAPHICAE

The Narrative Verbal System of Old and Middle Egyptian *

Ariel SHISHA-HALEVY

I. The importance of the narrative *parole* to descriptive grammar is (esp. in a written or dead language) greater than that of dialogue, because of the heavier contribution of pragmatic factors and circumstances in the latter case; that is, in narrative these are "segmented" and cotextually given and the "environmental" factor is therefore much more considerably textual. This makes the book under review so important as a comprehensive component study of Egyptian grammar in general and an account of the Old and Middle Egyptian verb in particular.

The work consists of two major subdivisions: Part I: The Old Kingdom. A chapter of formal and functional discussion and illustration is devoted to each of the following forms: *sḏm.f*, affirmative/negative, active/passive: "indicative" (= "autonomous rhematic", see below), circumstantial, "subjunctive" (= "prospective"), "nominal" (= "that-form"); the stative (for verbs of motion, other intransitives and transitives); *sḏm.n.f* ("nominal" and circumstantial – affirmative/negative, active/passive); compound verb-forms, Tables. — Part II: The First Intermediate Period. Initial forms (active/passive, affirmative/negative: *iw-*, *ʿḥʿ.n-*); narrative *sḏm.n.f*; the stative; the circumstantial and nominal *sḏm.n.f*; the narrative infinitive, Tables.

One notices the radical difference in taxonomy between the two parts, a difference perhaps called for by the evolving system, but in the exposition somewhat marring the contrastive-diachronic effect. While the system as depicted in the second part is also considerably blown-up, with much better resolution, the OK part is naturally more interesting, since less closely researched elsewhere in the past.

The corpus (autobiographical inscriptions) is limited in scope: the author would perhaps have been better advised to include (in a separate yet conjoint account) narrative stretches in the Pyramid Texts for the OK and literary (fictional) narratives from ME; I doubt whether the First Intermediate Period (or any single period, for that matter) "exhibits best the characteristics of the M. Eg. language" (15). Other narrative types would also have enriched the system under consideration with other forms and constructions and put its constituents in better perspective. Yet even Doret's chosen corpus is heterogenous: the individual autobiographical inscriptions differ considerably in syntax, and even within each single "micro-corpus" the true narrative or historical textemes are interlaced with dialogic or expository ones, not directly relevant to the system under discussion.

* A review article of Éric DORET, *The Narrative Verbal System of Old and Middle Egyptian.* Cahiers d'Orientalisme, 12. Genève, Patrick Cramer Éditeur, 1986. 239 p. 21,4 × 30,2.

II. Beyond the very pleasing impression of this elegant and neatly produced monograph, one has nothing but praise for its solid scholarship, excellent documentation, grammatical scanning and charting and solid discussion; the morphological tables are admirably clear and lucid. The author's policy of presenting the metalinguistic (statement) material as subordinate to the extensive and always primary illustration, with statements built around examples, not *vice versa*, cannot be too highly recommended, especially in view of some current speculative discussions of Egyptian grammar that give the impression that the texts and indeed the language (*la parole*) itself are no more than incidental, if not downright bothersome... (However, some would wonder at the author's choice to present many of his more important observations in footnotes, e.g. the grammar of *sk*-, p. 25.) Very satisfying, too, is the context illustration, treatment and translation. Fine indexing, an invaluable *index locorum* and a first-rate bibliography close the book.

III. Beyond these considerable merits of format and presentation, the more important methodological virtues of the *Spezialgrammatik* and textemic approach to grammatical description call for mention. In the dearth of morphological data characteristic of Egyptian, the student's "superstition de la forme" is moderated and the cotext-linguistic analytic procedure emerges as the only possible descriptive method; for whereas "Latin" *audivit* is relatively independent of context for its basic message signalling, *sḏm.f* is not.

The work offers several important insights, esp. into the Old Kingdom verbal system, and above all the definition of the narrative "past tense": the restriction of transitive-predicate *sḏm.f* to the nominal actor; the complementary distribution of 1st-person "statives" with transitive verbs (if the *-k* form is a stative) and 3rd-person *sḏm.f* (61ff.). On the stative as an "independent" narrative form with intransitives, see 57ff., e.g. Ex. 93 (Urk. I 137.7ff.): one wonders, however, whether this is not, even in the OK, the background eventual tense (*hꜣ.k* not "I went down" but "I had gone down"), as in literary ME narrative (e.g. in the "Shipwrecked Sailor"), i.e. the text-grammatical function corresponding (in the almost trivial cotext-insensitive "absolute" conception) to the "circumstantial". Even in the case of transitives, certain exx. seem to supply background information rather than advance the main-line plot (Doret's exx. 98 *šʿ.k*, 102 *ḳrs.k* which is certainly different, in narrative hierarchy, from *iw ḳrs.n.i* in Ex. 175). Another important statement (33) concerns the *sḏm.f* with verbs of motion in the OK, which is circumstantial only.

In this work we find the first comprehensive authoritative account of the so-called "continuative" *sḏm.n.f* in ME, to which the author justly devotes a whole chapter (VI). Doret discusses the narrative *sḏm.n.f* — which he identifies (rightly, I believe) as circumstantial in form — and the circumstantial *sḏm.n.f* separately; for the latter, see 167ff. Here an extension of the corpus would certainly have been welcome, in a discussion of the one most manifestly narrative form in early Egyptian. One reservation: one can hardly describe this *sḏm.n.f* as "main clause" and at the same time claim that *iw*- brackets ("gaps") a series of these forms (135); "main clause" is in this case text-semantically, not formal-syntactically conceived.

Another of this work's contributions to Egyptian grammar is the excellent paradigmatic presentation (pp. 68, 151) of the "Rhematic Adverbial" category, the second slot in the pivotal "Bipartite" clause pattern. (One misses here the so-called "Complementary Infinitive", which is no less a "verbal adverbial" than others, albeit a "ghost" one, for focusing the verb lexeme following the emphatic forms.)

In general, the treatment of syntagmatics and combinatorics (prepositions, con-

junctions etc.) is satisfactory. So on the whole is the account of the emphatic forms (e.g. 67ff. for the *sḏm.f*) with the best and most comprehensive discussion of another *mise en relief* construction, namely the topicalizing "*N sḏm.f*" (26, 34 etc.).

IV. The following critical remarks are meant as reflections on relevant issues and problems, suggestions for the next steps to be taken following this pioneering study, not detracting from its achievement.

a) NARRATIVE THEORY. Doret's work is unsophisticated and simplistic in its conception of narrative theory (although Harald Weinrich's justly acclaimed *Tempus* is referred to; an intelligent, sensitive and inspiring book, but very ethnocentric for all that: his eleventh chapter, "Andere Sprachen, andere Tempora?" is largely devoted to Greek and Latin, and therefore hardly the most appropriate theoretical reference discussion to be automatically applied to Egyptian. On the other hand, works of the kind reported on in Grimes, *The Thread of Discourse* [1975] are generally so esoteric as to give the wrong impression that languages closer to home are devoid of interesting text-grammatical phenomena). Indicative of this shortcoming are certain of Doret's definitions: (14) "while narrative texts relate a *succession* of *events* set in the *past*, texts in non-narrative discourse... *describe* past events from the point of view of the present. They can also describe events set in present or future time...", here following Benveniste's too basic dichotomy of *histoire* vs. *discours*. Narrative theory shows all central concepts in this definition (here italicized by the reviewer) to be invalid or not necessarily of universal validity: the "non-event" plane forms an integral and essential component of narrative texture; the narrative tense is not necessarily "past" — indeed, the a priori association between narrative and past time is unjustified. The all-important "literary linguistics" question of differentiating between (literary) genre and (textemic, grammatical) "Textsorte" is all but ignored, i.e. the relationship between the superimposed or mapped-on formulaic structure of a genre (something like "rhetorical self-promoting historiography") and literary convention, and the play possible within this multidimensional matrix. For example: how warranted are presuppositions regarding the logics of historical sequence (consider Ex. 147), or the personal (speaker's) perspective (present [perfect] *vs.* preterite)? Another question, very much in the focus of current "literary science", and of immediate relevance to the appreciation of Doret's corpus, concerns the formal features distinguishing fictional from historiographical narrative. Further, the "seams" between textemes in the autobiographical inscriptions on which Doret bases his findings must be part of the discussion; while the non-narrative introductions, interpositions and conclusions clearly do not belong to the narrative corpus proper, a historical record or catalogue (e.g. Urk. I 198f., a chain of circumstantial *sḏm.n.f* forms dependent upon two coordinated emphatic *sḏm.n.f* ones) must be considered of relevance, even if kept carefully apart from true narrative.

Assumption of flatness or incomplexity of Egyptian narrative structure is here often in evidence (a textological echo of the pre-Polotsky prejudice concerning the "primitive" nature of Egyptian inter-sentence structure?), not taking into account, for example, the existence of special subnarrative textemes (Ex. 26, p. 33 is, for instance, not foreground main-line narrative but non-eventual, descriptive); or the use of topicalization, the emphatic verb forms, and the Cleft Sentence in general in narrative, as a symptom of (Weinrich's) *Reliefgebung* or interference of the speaker's

perspective shift to the background textemic plane. The recognition of narrative and subnarrative types (*e.g.* rhetorical, locutive vs. delocutive narrative, report, condensed, dramatic narrative and so on) is of course immediately relevant to the grammatical resolution of a verbal *système de valeur.*

Without entering upon a detailed critical discussion of a recent article by A. Loprieno, which is pertinent to this review, viz. "Egyptian Grammar and Textual Features", in *Crossroad: Chaos or the Beginning of a New Paradigm* (edd. Englund & Frandsen, Copenhagen 1986) 255-287, I would like to point out that its methodological basis is spurious: in Loprieno's non-empirical approach (here an eclectic blend of generative, "pragmatics" and "theoretical linguistics" notions of procedure), neither "text" nor "function" have any role to play. One is grieved to see "text" join here "grammar" and "structure" in the showroom of degraded phantom concepts taken over by current so-called "general linguistics". The real, concrete text (= "manifestation of *la parole*") is the prime object of linguistic inquiry, to be scanned in one consistent, continuous descending analysis for signals of semantically constitutive and delimitative value; it has as little to do with Loprieno's "textual dimension" (replacing the superannuated "level"?) as has the truly structuralist "system", defined by paradigmatic/syntagmatic resolution of value, with Loprieno's. As for "foreground" and "background" in Loprieno's conception: how can the narrative-carrying chain of *sḏm.n.f* forms be said to convey "the diachronically organized sequential background following the initial background form" (269f.)?

b) MACROSYNTAX. Doret's work is still pronouncedly (though not overwhelmingly) morphologistic, i.e. focusing on the word-formal rather than environment-formal features — "word-centered". (This is striking e.g. in his discussion of diathesis.) However, one truly misses here consciousness of textual grammar or "narrative syntax". The very reason mentioned above for the higher heuristic value of narrative, namely its relative independence of extralinguistic pragmatic data, puts a greater responsibility on the linguistic analyst, called upon to account for and interpret (decode) the totality of signals present in this system of mutual dependences; in this respect the work falls short of the desirable. One would have expected a discussion of tense combinatorics, of phorics (reference contours — correlating actant specificity, crucial in the article-less language phases here described, with tense role) and so on. After all, narrative is not just a linear catalogue of events, but a structured grammemic multidimensional network, "filled with" lexical "content units". Of the greatest importance are the issues of juncture — links and delimitations, the gradation of "dependence" and "independence". These all-important notions cannot be so simply conceived (see for example p. 24). A text being by definition a "Determinationsgefüge" (*Tempus* 144f.), the mutual dependence of its components is an important matter for subtle and sensitive handling; intuitive "translation judgement" is unreliable, since almost inevitably prejudiced (by ethnocentric and "universal logic" programming) and open to circularity — these are after all the very issues that make Egyptian so methodologically "educational" and instructive to the general linguist. "In Old Egyptian, narrative inscriptions consisted of a series of independent sentences... There were no compound sentences containing more than one narrative verbal construction, as was the case in the Middle Egyptian narrative style" (184) ignores what we know of the sophistication of Egyptian syntax (in all of its phases) and of the highly elaborate narrative systems of so-called "primitive" (really meaning "esoteric") cultures. Similarly requiring considered, theory-conscious use is the certainly indispensable distinction of INITIAL *vs.*

NON-INITIAL. Formulations like "(*sḏmw.f* in the OK) has two basic functions... in initial position, i.e. at the beginning of a sentence it serves as a past tense nominal form. In non-initial position, it is a past circumstantial..." (85) or (on the circumstantial form of the *sḏm.n.f*) "The *sḏm.n.f* form, when it appears in non-initial position..." (89) remind us that this intrinsically binary (privative) syntactic property must be more precisely defined, determined in terms of exponence (signalling) and ultimately graded. In fact, the formal basis of the "non-initiality" is largely the presence or absence of macrosyntactic-status markers (*iw-, sk-, igr*; *ʿḥʿ.n-*; negators; various verb forms or verb-phrase constituents characterizing configurations), and not inherent morphological properties. Many of the special macrosyntactically operative morphs are here undertreated: for example, *sk-*, which seems to be a member of the *iw-* pardigm and is not part of the rheme (i.e. it belongs to the same category as the superordinator *iw-*, contrast *iw-gr-*, Urk. I 77, 87, with *sk-gr-* in Urk. I 66, 283); *sk-* signals the background, *relief*, narrator-interference or time displacement components in the narrative texture rather than circumstance (*pace* Doret n. 105 "always introducing circumstantial clauses linked in meaning with what precedes them") — it is *sk-* which signals the different rank of the following clause (comparably to Coptic *ne-* (*pe*), *nea- pe*). (On the text-grammatical role of *sk*, see Vernus, *DE* 9 [1987] 104ff., in a review of Doret's work.) *sk-* may be followed by the emphatic in cases like Urk. I 39.15 *sk rdi.n n.f nṯr siꜣ-ḫt m ḫt n-ʿꜣt špss.f r nṯr nb.* (Incidentally, the perfectly well integrated, "smooth" functioning of the emphatic forms, "*mrr.f*" as well as *sḏm.n.f* and its passive allomorphs in the oldest phase of Egyptian weighs against current speculations about the "original", i.e. prehistoric functional nature of these forms.) Note that *iw-*, even in early ME, represents in reality a pair of homonyms, one a superordinator/formal theme, the other circumstantial converter (*Coffin Texts* II 345b, 347b, III 19b, 88); this calls for attention. Negation, too, is often delimitative in a narrative chain; and so on. It is thus simply inadequate, as a descriptive statement, to say that "*ʿḥʿ* is a more distinctive marker of initiality — hence the translation '(and) then' — often used to introduce new episodes in narrative texts" (126); it ought to be related paradigmatically to other exponents of juncture. What must in fact be aimed at is a narrative stratification/contour analysis-leading-to-theory, taking a given corpus as data-base (not "general Egyptian" but precisely resolved in a special system). A synthetic role definition of a tense-form, with a dictionary-like translation equivalence for guide, regardless of distribution, syntagmatic and textemic context, actantial characteristics — say, "past" for the *sḏm.n.f* — is as distorting a *système de valeur* statement as would be the definition or even description "past" for the Greek aorist, without taking into account its true aoristic roles, such as the gnomic and performative references, under given circumstances. In the "Shipwrecked Sailor", for example, one may roughly resolve the following tenses as operators of stratification:

The STATIVE for (1) prenarrative background, (2) in-narrative anterior time displacement;

The PRESENT (durative) for "slow-motion", "relief", "dramatic staging" (descriptive event plane);

FOCALIZATION constructions (emphatic forms and Cleft Sentence in general) for parenthetic "*Sprechperspektive*" relief;

iw- / *ʿḥʿ.n-* } *sḏm.n.f* (/stative)/*sḏm.f*;

sḏm-in-f, for narrative foreground information, variously delimited "event" plane (foreground information blocks, paragraphs, episodes);

sḏmt.f for subnarrative (lower-rank) information: still "event" plane.

The stative seems to have a posterior (consequent) time displacement role as early as the OK (consider Urk. I 109.4f.; in 23.12ff. we note the absence of *iw-* marking modality). On *sk-* preceding the stative, see Doret's note 690.

c) TENSE SYSTEM vs. inventory. Since systemic tense description implies commitment to the precise statement of paradigmatic opposition (or, as the case may be, neutralization) of tenses, the study before us must still largely be considered a "Tempuslehre" rather than a systemic account.

(1) The most striking illustration of this difference is the value of the opposition of perfect *vs.* preterite. In the OK the perfect (*iw sḏm.n.f*) ought to be opposed in the analysis to the unmarked foregrounding narration carrier (*sḏm.f*). In ME, the narrative (affirmative) *sḏm.f*, though rare, is of course in use, yet in a different role altogether: it is no longer a narrative link (it is unconcatenated, and indeed a delimitation; in Sinuhe B 265, for instance, the shift from the narr. mainline signals something like "then suddenly..."; cf. also the narrative/dialogue seam signalled by *ḏd.f*). The perfect, in many languages a typical "egocentric" locutive verb form, is certainly the most intriguing and most important member of this opposition, and its functional resolution has much to do with our conception of the "*Sprechperspektive*", which in our corpus is problematic: what is the zero axis, the reference point of tense forms? Is the speaker-narrator, the dead person, here to be seen as standing outside time, in an eternal present, with the reader's present the true temporal one, or do the two perspectives merge? Is our text at all a concatenated narrative — or is it a chronicling monumental record, or yet a monologue? Sartre's "je suis mon passé" and Weinrich's metalinguistically applied modification of this (a Sartre–Heidegger synthesis) into "Ich bin, wie ich die Vergangenheit sage" (*Tempus* 86f.) is here very pertinent. The locutive (speaker)-sphere perfect ("perfectum praesens") tense, with its presental component (the superordinating-"nynegocentric" *iw-* and the present-nexus Bipartite Pattern) and the inscrutable *sḏm.n.f* one, ought to have been treated more carefully. In Ex. 199, Doret suggests, we have "the form *iw sḏm.n.f* used as a Simple Past", when in fact we have the interesting feature of a perfect opening and introducing a series of narrative preterites, another narrative-texture phenomenon that might have been explored, cf. Weinrich 67 — this would, if isolated, supply a valuable texture-delimiting principle. It is of interest that the ubiquitous "His Majesty dispatched me..." can be interpreted as a mere historical record (with "His Majesty" a central delocutive orientation), or, locutively ("me"), as relevant to the narrator's "present", in which case the action is expressed by the perfect *iw sḏm.n.f*. This is by no means a question of "use" (see also 98), but of *valeur* resolved by distribution. The functional bifurcation of this form, which was of course to have crucial diachronic consequences, is well evident in the negation opposition (*n sḏm.f* vs. *n sp sḏm.f*). Starting with the stages before the neutralization of "simple" and "composed" past was far advanced in favour of the latter (although we do not ever have a true "disappearance of the simple preterite" in Egyptian, certainly not in the negative, and not even in the affirmative), we miss here not only the diachronic account of one of the most fascinating of categorial evolution, but also the specific structural definition of the perfect in the narrative texteme, drastically different from its value in dialogue, and especially poignant in our locutive narrative. And after all, the fact that a verb form "does not refer to a precise point in past time" (98) does not automatically and universally define it as a perfect — it could well be an "imperfect", an aorist or a present or even a relative-tense "future". It is also imprecise to say that *n sḏm.f* is the negation of *iw-/ʿḥ.n-sḏm.n.f* (128), since the negative system modifies

and neutralizes the junctural-functional opposition of *iw-* vs. *ʿḥʿ.n-* (just as it largely neutralizes the opposition between main-clause and circumstantial conversion, in Egyptian as well as Bohairic Coptic). Even as a case of suppletion, this assignment is no more than approximate; the conventional, typically Egyptological "counterpart" statement of NEGATION – AFFIRMATION suppletive pairing is a matter of practical convenience rather than a scientific descriptive statement, since the affirmative and negative structures are largely asymmetric. (Incidentally, *n sḏm.n.f* is tense-indifferent; in past cotext, it has past reference or is circumstantial: *iw gr rdi.n ḥm.f*... *n gr rdi.n ḥm.f*, Urk. I 283.6ff.)

(2) The circumstantial, on the other hand, ought to have been presented with other "included tenses" such as the prospective and even the "emphatic" forms as a transecting class.

(3) The signalling of time displacement (anterior and posterior) and the basic distincion of "event" vs. "non-event" and the "plane" vs. "relief" disparate narrative subsystems are inadequately treated. The compound *wn.f sḏm.f/ḥr sḏm* and *wnn.f sḏm.f* forms merit closer attention in this respect, as exponents of relative tense and relief, respectively. In *wnn ḫpr* (Urk. I 109.11) *wnn-* is an emphatic converter (46.12, 49.3, 109.18; *wn.i irr.i* is possibly a case of preterite "conversion" of the emphatic, 59.16).

(4) Finally, I find it unfortunate that the Nominal Sentence is not treated here with the same thoroughness as the verb; it is after all combined with verb clauses and is relatable to them paradigmatically, and thus ought to be appreciated as part of their *système de valeur*. In a study so conscientiously discussing the emphatic forms, cases of *ink* + *participle* (e.g. *ink ḳrs s nb*... Urk. I 255.2) surely merit discussion, whether Participial Statement or Nominal Sentence. The Cleft Sentence reveals the quintessential personal-narrative perspective, yet calls in question the inclusion of emphatic ("nominal") *sḏm.f* and *sḏm.n.f* constructions as foreground objective narration carriers, and must be paradigmatically correlated to the perfect and preterite narrative tenses (note the special affinity of *ink-* Nominal Sentences with *n sp sḏm.i*, e.g. Urk. I 78.10, 217.17f.: a tense-form in its own right, not simply "negation of the past"), it supports the inherent-predication role and atemporal reference of the former (as against the durative incidental *wn.i m-*..., e.g. Urk. I 250.13f., which is not necessarily "initial", *pace* Doret 75f., but certainly durative past). The Nominal Sentence is often final in its paragraph as a information center or macrosyntactic rheme (e.g. *ibid.* 162.10ff., 205.8, 255.8), thereby signalling text-delimitation. The Nominal Sentence with a *sḏm.f* rheme (*ink mr.f/msḏ.f*, Urk. I 71.9 and elsewhere in 11th dynasty autobiographical inscriptions) is of special interest: the verb form is probably the circumstantial in its role of "antecedentless" or exocentric substantival relative ("one who...", attested to my knowledge in Coptic: *JEA* 62 [1976] 134-7); cf. also Sin. B60 *rš.f pw* "he is one who rejoices...".

d) TERMINOLOGICAL. I have serious reservations about the following:

(1) "*indicative*" (e.g. "past indicative" *sḏm.f*, 22, 24ff.) esp. when opposed — in the presentation, not necessarily in the system — to "subjunctive (nominal)" (= prospective) on the one hand and "circumstantial" on the other, as is the case with the *sḏm.f* forms. This is after all not the "mode" category in the Indo-European sense, but is a hybrid syntactic-logico-semantic appellation, a mere convenient code for the peculiarly Egyptian "declarative-rhematic-autonomous verbal nexus" syndrome: the theme *iw-*, for example, renders the circumstantial *sḏm.n.f* "indica-

tive". Perhaps using a complex term — e.g. "autorhematic" — is unavoidable; but since this is in fact applicable only to the "simple past" *sḏm.f*, I believe we can dispense with this appellation altogether. In this connection, may I suggest that the epistemology and informational contribution of the equally 'Egyptological' "non-initial main-clause" (e.g. 135ff.) ought to be reevaluated as well? — Initiality, an important text-analytical characterization, like any delimitative characterization, is hierarchical and scalar, whereas "main-clause" is non-analytical, non-textual, referring at best to an external or "universal" semasiological test of a vague communicative "independence". (Incidentally, it is very important in Egyptian to distinguish between a truly "grammatical-analytic" category [however defined: morphologically, functional-syntactically or in a compound definition] and the approximative attributive description, like "narrative", or "continuative".)

(2) I must confess to feeling uneasy with "subjunctive", too; "the subjunctive (nominal) form of the verb occurs only in dependent clauses" (22); "a nominal form of the verb used in dependent clause" (39), which is tautological and imprecise, would properly speaking apply to the emphatic forms too as well as to the relative forms. "*Nominal forms*" (49ff. *sḏm.f*, 67ff., 152ff.) should be more precisely called "substantival", since the "adjectival", *alias* relative forms are not treated in the work under review (although they certainly belong in the verbal system formal and functional). Moreover, the association, implied by this overhead term, of the emphatic forms with the prospective is spurious. (Incidentally, "*Nominal clause*" for "noun phrase" is unfortunate: see Doret's index, p. 207b; also 76.)

(3) "*Transitive*" - "*intransitive*": a distinction so significant in the syntax of verb forms in Egyptian, as in grammar generally; it is nonetheless quite unsatisfactory as it stands. This could have been an opportunity to refine it; the synthetic lexical "verb of motion" category cuts across the syntactic-combinatory distinction of transitivity: TRANSITIVE verbs of motion behave like intransitive ones (61ff.; the material includes intransitive verbs of motion but also *inj, shꜣj, mꜣʿ* "to lead", *wꜣḥ, rdj-fꜣ.tw* and the special *ir-* and causative *rdj* (cf. also *mnj* "to moor" in Ex. 255, p. 154). Indeed, the "verbs of motion" group (so important in Egyptian grammar) and the "motion" seme with the "intransitivity" lexical factor must be better defined, in a way that will account for the grammatical peculiarities of the "intransitive" or copular *irj* as against the transitive one (see p. 158ff.), bearing in mind that it is the combinatory syntagmatic behaviour, the syntagmatic patterning that usually marks them as intransitive, and not the other way round.

(4) "*Compound*" (of tenses) is no doubt a useful term of general linguistic interest, yet it too is in need of defintion and specification (when used outside the simple case of "auxiliary + auxilated verbs in syntagm", and primarily regarding perspective: synchronically - diachronically - glottogonically compound?). Are (for example) *iw-* tenses to be treated as compound? And what about the glottogonically periphrastic *sḏm.n.f, sḏm.in.f* etc.?

In concluding, let me again warmly recommend Doret's book, an indispensable reference tool and the first solid comprehensive-descriptive monograph devoted to the Old and Middle Egyptian tense system to appear since Gunn's *Studies* of 1924, and hope it is but a first step in the author's progress towards a clearer definition of system, that will put the early phases of Egyptian, with regard to the transparency of its grammatical system, on a par with "later" phases of the language.

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