

Polotsky's Contribution to the Egyptian Verb-System, with a Comparison to Biblical Hebrew

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I wish to thank Profs. Gideon Goldenberg and Ariel Shisha-Halevy for inviting me to the Workshop on Ancient Egyptian, Neo-Semitic, and Methods in Linguistics held in honour of the late Prof. H. J. Polotsky of blessed memory. I am glad and honoured for this welcome opportunity to pay my tribute to the greatest Master I had the chance to know. At the same time, I am rather embarrassed for presuming to write on Polotsky's contribution to the Egyptian verb-system, not least because I am, so to speak, a part-time Egyptologist. I studied Egyptology in my youth with Prof. Adhémar Massart at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome according to Gardiner's grammar, and afterwards graduated Rome University with Prof. Sergio Donadoni. In Jerusalem, I had the chance to study Egyptian with Prof. Polotsky during the years 1973–1975, not on a regular basis but from time to time, as well as studying Coptic for one year in 1979–1980. Prof. Polotsky was so kind as to give me private lessons during the summer of 1973 on the *Coffin Texts*, which opened new horizons to me. In 1978, I began teaching at the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem, where most of my time was taken by research on the Hebrew Bible and on Biblical Hebrew in particular.

I *The Polotskyan Theory of Middle-Egyptian Verb Forms*

One should keep in mind that Polotsky never presumed to write a complete description of the Middle-Egyptian verb-system as such, although of course he tried to show the coherence of his description as against *ad hoc* analyses and solutions. His main writings on Egyptian are well known: *Études*, *Egyptian Tenses*, and *Les transpositions*.

In this section, I shall try to summarize Polotsky's basic theory of Middle Egyptian, putting pieces together from his writings. This may be helpful for those who wish to have a compact overview of his theory.¹

¹ For competent presentations of Polotsky's theory see Gilula *Sentence System* and Satzinger *Clauses*. Gilula, in particular, wrote a short, useful outline of the Middle-Egyptian verb system, something that Polotsky never did, or never had the opportunity to do. Among other things, he forcibly affirms, against the theory of aspect, that "the combinations *iw sdm.f* and *iw sdm.n.f* are

1 Three Basic Categories of Egyptian Grammar

Polotsky insisted that three basic categories need to be identified in order to reach a coherent exposition (*Les transpositions* §1.3):

- | | |
|-----------------|----------|
| (a) Adjective | } = Noun |
| (b) Substantive | |
| (c) Adverb. | |

According to the three basic categories the verb forms are classified as follows (see Polotsky *Les transpositions* 6):

(a) Adjective verb forms: (1) non-personal active = active participle, (2) personal = relative form; (3) non-personal passive = passive participle (or non-personal relative form);

(b) Substantive verb forms: (4) personal = “emphatic” *sḏm.f* and *sḏm.n.f* (Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §§34–40); (5) non-personal = infinitive;

(c) Adverbial verb forms (Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* 2–3): (6) Circumstantial *sḏm.f* (with morphologically distinctive forms — *di.f*, *iw.f*, *in.f*, *m’’.f*, cf. Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §11); (7) Circumstantial *sḏm.n.f* (negated with *sḏmw.f*, not *sḏm.n.tw.f*, cf. Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §12); (8) Circumstantial passive *sḏmw.f*; (9) Stative (or Old Perfective); (10) *ḥr* + Infinitive; (11) *m* + Infinitive; (12) *r* + Infinitive.

2 Five Noun Verb Forms

Polotsky suggests a paradigm of the five adjective and substantive verb forms (§1a–b) according to three temporal axes (Polotsky *Les transpositions* 7):

Present (“Inaccompli”)	Past (“Accompli”)	Future (“Prospectif”)
(1) <i>irr st</i>	<i>ir st</i>	<i>ir.ty.fy st</i>
(2) <i>irrt.f</i>	<i>irt.n.f</i>	<i>irt.f</i>
(3) <i>irrt</i>	<i>iryt</i>	<i>ir(w).ti</i>
(4) <i>irr.f st</i>	<i>ir.n.f st</i>	<i>ir(w).f st</i>
(5) <i>irt st</i> _____	for all the temporal axes _____	

3 Auxiliaries

The most common auxiliary elements are *iw(-)*, various forms of *wnn* (*wnn-*, *wn.in-*), ‘*ḥ*’-*n-*, and *m k* (*mṭ*, *mṭn*).² These auxiliaries combine with various

tenses for all practical purposes” (Gilula *Sentence System* 166). I would like to suggest that progress can be made by applying to Egyptian the text-linguistic distinction of main and secondary levels proposed by H. Weinrich (see §16 below).

² Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* 20. It has recently become customary to call *iw* a particle (§12 below), not an auxiliary as did Polotsky; see, e.g., Loprieno *Ancient Egyptian* 166 ff., who nonetheless recognizes some peculiarities of *iw*. Exceptions are Eyre *Word Order* 126 and, in part, Greig *The sḏm=f* 329. Clearly *iw*, whatever its origin is (see, e.g., H. Satzinger’s contribution

adverbial constructions (§1c) to form compound verb forms in initial position (Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §§41–46; *Les transpositions* §3.8). By “initial position”, Polotsky meant the beginning of a syntactic sequence. Usually, the compound verb forms are followed by a chain of *coordinate* continuation forms, which share the same auxiliary, or by *subordinate* circumstantial or prospective forms.³

The compound verb forms are as follows:

<i>iw sdm.f</i>	<i>iw.f sdm.f</i>	<i>wn.f sdm.f</i>	<i>wn.in.f sdm.f</i>
<i>iw sdm.n.f</i>	— ⁴		<i>wn.in.f</i> + stative
<i>iw sdmw.f</i>	—		<i>wn.in.f</i> + <i>hr</i> + inf.
—	<i>iw.f</i> + stative (motion verbs)		
—	<i>iw.f</i> + <i>hr</i> / <i>m</i> / <i>r</i> + infinitive		
<i>‘h’.n sdm.f</i>			<i>mk sw sdm.f</i>
<i>‘h’.n sdm.n.f</i>			
<i>‘h’.n sdmw.f</i>			<i>mk sdmw.f</i>
	<i>‘h’.n.f</i> + stative (motion verbs)		<i>mk sw</i> + stative
	<i>‘h’.n.f</i> + <i>hr</i> + infinitive		<i>mk sw</i> + <i>hr/m/r</i> + inf.

Grammatically, these compound verb forms are analysed as consisting of a substantival element (*iw*-, *wn*-, or *‘h’.n*- + suffix-pronoun or a substantive; *mk* + dependent pronoun or a substantive) in the subject slot and an adverbial element (*sdm.f*, *sdm.n.f*, stative, or preposition + infinitive) in the predicate. Syntactically, these compound verb-forms are indicative “First Tenses”, consisting of an auxiliary element and a verbal form as the predicate.

in this volume, and fn. 111 below), does not fully behave like a verb, but it does not behave like a particle either. It is therefore incorrect and misleading to put *iw* in the same slot with *mk* (see §12 below). In any case, it is essential to point out that, contrary to Junge *Syntax* 74 ff., *iw* + pronominal suffix / substantive, not *iw* alone, functions as the subject of a following adverbial predicate (see my review of Junge *Syntax* 533, and §12 below).

³ It seems to me that what Loprieno *Ancient Egyptian* 190 writes concerning the “Standard Theory” does not apply to Polotsky: “As suggested in section 6.3.2, the Standard Theory did not fully recognize the opposition between non-initial *main* clauses and embedded *subordinate* clauses, considering all non-initial *sdm=f* and *sdm.n=f* forms circumstantial, i.e., functionally adverbial. But the difference between paratactically linked main clause and subordinate dependent clause lies in their temporal and aspectual setting...”. If I am not mistaken, Loprieno’s “paratactically linked main clause” corresponds to my “coordinate continuation form”, and his “subordinate dependent clause” corresponds to my “subordinate circumstantial and prospective form”. Yet I would not say that considering a *sdm.f* or *sdm.n.f* circumstantial automatically means analysing them as “subordinate dependent” because even the *sdm.f* or *sdm.n.f* of the *iw sdm.f* / *sdm.n.f* or *‘h’.n sdm.n.f* / *sdm.f* constructions are circumstantial, and still constitute initial independent verb forms together with *iw* or *‘h’.n*.

⁴ The construct *iw.f* / substantive *sdm.n.f*, already rare in Old Egyptian, practically disappeared in Middle Egyptian. See fn. 45.

4 “Second Tenses”, or “Emphatic” Verb Forms (Cleft Sentences), vs. “First Tenses” (Plain Sentences)

The “second tenses”, or “emphatic” verb forms show a structure that is similar to that of the “first tenses” as they consist both of a substantival element as the subject and an adverbial element as the predicate. The “emphatic” structures, or cleft sentences, are as follows:⁵

- (a) *mrr.f* (substantival *sdm.f*) = Subject + Adverbial element = Predicate
(Present)
- (b) (substantival) *sdm.n.f* = Subject + Adverbial element = Predicate
(Past)

Polotsky indicates the distinction between the First Tenses and Second Tenses as follows:

Dans un “Temps Premier” de l’égyptien classique le verbe principal (auxilié) est le prédicat circonstanciel d’une forme substantive personnelle qui lui sert d’auxiliaire. Dans un ‘Temps Second’ c’est le verbe principal lui-même qui revêt la forme substantive personnelle pour devenir le sujet d’un prédicat circonstanciel nouveau; autrement dit, le verbe principal substantivé se met à la place de l’auxiliaire ‘substantiveux’, et le nouveau prédicat circonstanciel à celle de la forme verbale circonstancielle:

⁵ Polotsky employed various equivalent designations for this phenomenon: “First Tense vs. Second Tense”, “mise en vedette vs. construction ‘plane’”, “Cleft sentence / phrase coupée”. In his words, the “mise en vedette implique un revirement des valeurs syntaxiques. Le membre non verbal à mettre en vedette est élevé au rang de prédicat, tandis que le verbe est dégradé à celui de sujet” (Polotsky *Les transpositions* 15). Further, the Cleft Sentence is adjectival when the verb subject takes on the adjectival forms (participle and relative form); it is adverbial when the verb takes on the substantival personal form (or Second Tense). The two types of Cleft Sentence complement each other: “Die adjektivische und die substantivische Cleft Sentence ergänzen einander je nach dem Satzglied, das zum Prädikat (‘Rhema’, Z oder ‘Vedette’) gemacht wird” (Polotsky *Grundlagen* I/105). For his part, Vernus *Le rhème marqué* 338–339 reserves the designation “Cleft Sentence” for the adjectival type and “constructions emphatiques” for the adverbial type, while Doret *Cleft-Sentence* treats only the adjectival cleft sentence. Among the latter group Vernus lists, along with “emphatic” *mrr.f*, and *sdm.n.f* / *sdm.n.tw.f*, also prospective *sdm.f*, passive *sdm.f*, and the different constructions with the auxiliary *wnn* that according to Polotsky are not necessarily “emphatic”. For example, *wnn.f* is also used for the simple, non-“emphatic” future (see Gardiner *Grammar* §118,2; Westendorf *Grammatik* §200); therefore Vernus’s Ex. (9): *iw.k m ntr, wnn.k m ntr* need not mean “Tu es (dans la situation d’) un dieu. C’est dans la situation d’un dieu que tu es” (Vernus *Le rhème marqué* 340; italics added); instead, it simply means “you are god, and you shall be god” as argued by Junge *How to Study* 425 (italics added). Therefore, there seems to be no room for the “auto-focal construction” evoked by Vernus *Le rhème marqué* 340, following Shisha-Halevy *Coptic Grammatical Categories* 72–74. Differently, Doret *A Note* 40, fn. 35, opts for interpreting *wnn.f* as both emphatic and future, translating the same passage: “You are a god, and it is a god that you will be”, but I do not see any basis for that (see fn. 110 below).

	SUJET	PRÉDICAT
"TEMPS PREMIER"	<i>jw.f</i>	<i>st.f</i>
"TEMPS SECOND"	<i>st.f</i>	<i>m ntrwt</i>

(Polotsky *Les transpositions* §3.9.1)

The main function of the second tenses is to highlight the adverbial element. This is done by nominalizing the verb form, i.e., by demoting it from its more typified role of predicate to the role of subject, while promoting an adverbial element to the role of predicate. In other words, in the (indicative) first tenses, the verb is the main element (i.e., the predicate), while the non-verbal element is its support (i.e., the subject). On the other hand, in the ("emphatic") second tenses a non-verbal component is the main element (i.e., the predicate), while the verb is its support (i.e., the subject). With the first tenses, the sentence is plain and unmarked, while with the second tenses the sentence is cleft and marked. The function of the second tenses is of course the best-known discovery of Polotsky.

A list of first tenses with *iw* / 'h'.n.- / *mk* + noun-phrase (NP) vs. second tenses is as follows:

Indicative verb forms	versus	"Emphatic" verb forms
<i>iw sdm.n.f</i>	vs.	<i>sdm.n.f</i>
<i>iw sdm.f</i>	vs.	<i>mrr.f</i>
<i>mk</i> + NP + Old Perfective	vs.	<i>sdm.n.f</i> (verbs of motion; <i>rh</i> "to know")
'h'.n.f + Old Perfective	vs.	<i>sdm.n.f</i> (verbs of motion)

Note, however, that *mk* can also introduce an "emphatic" construction (see §12 below).

5 Structures with Substantival Verb Forms

Besides the construction #substantival *sdm.f* / *sdm.n.f* + adverbial predicate# (§4), two more constructions are attested:

(a) #Substantival *sdm.f* / *sdm.n.f* + substantival *sdm.f* / *sdm.n.f*#

(b) #Substantival *sdm.f* / *sdm.n.f* + main sentence#, i.e., a compound verb form with *iw* (§3), a *pw* construction, or a prospective *sdm.f*.

In (a) the two substantival verb-forms balance each other, e.g., *mrr.f irr.f* "The-fact-that-he-likes is the-fact-that-he-does" (Pyr. §412b). This construction is known as *Wechselsatz*, or "Balanced / Correlative Sentence".

In (b) the first substantival *sdm.f* / *sdm.n.f* is used adverbially, i.e., "As for the-fact-that-he-hears / heard..." + main sentence. This construction, though not widely recognized, is well attested. I would analyse the first sentence as a protasis, the second as an apodosis. The two are tightly linked together so as to constitute an indivisible syntactic unit that might be called a "Double Sentence".

I would schematically represent the three constructions as follows (SVF = substantive verb form, §1b):

- (§4ab) SVF + adverbial construction = One sentence
 (§5a) SVF (noun) + SVF (noun) = Two Balanced (Correlative) Sentences
 (§5b) SVF (adverb) + main sentence = Two Related Sentences (protasis–apodosis)

6 Examples of First Tenses vs. Second Tenses

Some examples are particularly telling because they show first tenses and second tenses in contrastive proximity. For Middle Egyptian, e.g.,⁶

(1) *CT I 364/365b–366/367b* — indicative *iw.f. sdm.f* (§3) in (ab) vs. “emphatic” *mrr.f* in (cd): (a) *iw.i st.i*, (b) *iw b'.i st.f*, (c) *stt b'.i m rmtw imyw iw-nsrsr*, (d) *stt.i ds.i m ntrwt* “(a) I make love, (b) my soul makes love. (c) It is with the people who are in the Island of Fire that my soul makes love, (d) it is with the goddesses that I myself make love”;

(2) *Hamm. 114,10–12* (Polotsky *Les transpositions* 41) — indicative narrative ‘*h'.n.f* (§3) + stative (motion verbs: §5) in (a) vs. “emphatic” *sdm.n.f* in (b): (a) ‘*h'.n(i) pr.kw(i)*... (b) *pr.n(i) m mš' n z 3000* “(a) Then I came out... (b) It is together with an army of 3000 men that I came out”;

(3) *BH. I pl. 8,14* — same as Ex. 2 (Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §26): (a) ‘*h'.n.i hnt.kw(i)*..., (b) *hnt.n.i m hsb 600* “(a) Then I travelled southward... (b) It is together with 600 workmen that I travelled southward”;

(4) *CT I 116b–117b* — indicative “presentative” construction with *mk* (§3) in (a) vs. “emphatic” *sdm.n.f* in (c): (a) *mt N pn iw hr.t* (b) *(i)nd.f hr.t r' nb...* (c) *ii.n.f nd.f hr.t m iw-nsrsr* “(a) Behold this N has come unto thee (f.), (b) in order to greet thee daily... (c) It is from the Island of Fire that he has come to greet thee” (Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §25);

(5) *Peas. B 1,84–85* — indicative *wn.in.f + hr + infinitive* (§3) in (a) vs. “emphatic” *mrr.f* in (bc): (a) *wn.in.tw hr rdit n.f tw 10 hnkt ds 2 r' nb*, (b) *dd st imy-r pr Mrw s' Rnsy*, (c) *dd.f st n hnms.f*, (d) *ntf dd n.f st* “(a) So they gave him (i.e., the eloquent peasant) ten loaves and two jugs of beer daily. (b) While the High Steward Rensi, son of Meru, used to give them, (c) It was to a friend of his that he used to give them: (d) it was he who used to give them to him”.⁷

Ex. 5 is peculiar because it comprises two *mrr.f* forms — the first “non-emphatic”, without an adverbial element (b), the second “emphatic”, with a highlighted adverbial element (c). The first *mrr.f* is used adverbially, i.e., it expresses a circumstance (protasis) related to the following main sentence

⁶ The designations of the Egyptian inscriptions are usually abbreviated according to Gardiner *Grammar* xxi–xxix.

⁷ This is a good example showing how a substantival (c) and an adjectival cleft sentence (d) complement each other (see fn. 5).

(apodosis; see §5b); lit. “As for the fact that he used to give them”. The main sentence, in its turn, consists of an “emphatic” *dd.f* form (c). The “emphatic” force of this *dd.f* is confirmed by the “participial statement” *ntf dd* (d).⁸

Ex. 6 is a similar case in Late Egyptian:

(6) *Wenamun* 2,19–20 — with *mk* + “emphatic” *i.ir.f* (a) + circumstantial *iw sdm.f* (b); then *hr* + “non-emphatic” *i.ir.f* (c) as protasis and “emphatic” *i.ir.f* (d) + circumstantial *iw sdm.f* (e) as apodosis: (a) *mk i.ir Imn hrw m t' pt*, (b) *iw di.f Stḥ m rk.f*, (c) *hr i.ir Imn grg n' (!) t'w r-drw.w*, (d) *i.ir.f grg.w* (e) *iw grg.f p' t' n Kmt* “(a–b) Behold, it was only after he had placed Seth in his time that Amon thundered in the sky. (c) Further, while Amon founded all the lands, (d–e) it is only after he had founded the land of Egypt that he founded them”.

For Coptic, let us recall the New Testament text studied by Polotsky at the beginning of his research on the Second Tenses in Coptic (Polotsky *Études* §§5–6):

(7) 2 *Corinthians* 4:3: (a) εἰ δὲ καὶ ἔστιν κεκαλυμμένον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν, (b) ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις ἔστιν κεκαλυμμένον = (a) *ešje penkeeu-aggelion hobs*, (b) *efhobs nnetnatako* “(a) And even if our gospel is veiled, (b) it is to those who are perishing that it is veiled”.

The use of the Second Tenses in the protasis of a conditional sentence is also attested in Coptic and other stages of Egyptian.⁹

7 Rubrics in the Coffin Texts

The initial and final rubrics in certain spells in the *Coffin Texts* provide a convincing syntactic setting for proof of the equivalence between “emphatic” *mrr.f* form (or, better, personal substantive verb form) and infinitive (or non-personal substantive verb form) (§1,4–5). In fact, we find cases with simple *mrr.f*, or with infinitive (Exx. 8–9), and also cases with *r n* “spell for” governing an infinitive or a *mrr.f* form (Exx. 10–11).

(8) *CT* III 204a (cf. I 83k, IV 390a; Polotsky *Les transpositions* §2.4.1), with *mrr.f: irr s mrt.f m-hrt-ntr* “that a man may do what he likes in the necropolis”;

(9) Variants with *mrr.f* vs. infinitive: *irr s hprw* “that a man may make transformations” vs. *irt hprw* “making transformations” (*CT* IV 42e); *tss sw s hr gs.f [i'by]* “that one may raise himself upon one's [left] side” vs. *tst hr gs i'by, rdit hr gs wnmy* “raising upon the left side, placing on the right side” (*CT* III 199a, 200g);

⁸ See Gardiner *Grammar* §373. In this way, one can overcome the “certainne difficulté” represented by the fact that here the first *mrr.f* has no adverbial element to highlight (Polotsky *Études* 81).

⁹ Till *Grammatik* §§447–449; Shisha-Halevy *Protatic* ⲉⲓⲥⲱⲧⲙ (a) & (b).

(10) Similar rubrics with *r n* governing *mrr.f* vs. infinitive:¹⁰ *r n ḥꜣꜣ Imnt Nfrrt m ḥsfw s* “Spell for the Beautiful West to rejoice at meeting a man (i.e., someone)” (CT V 23a) vs. *r n prt r pt* “Spell for ascending to the sky” (CT III 61a).

(11) Concluding rubrics with *mrr.f pw* to specify the result of the recitation of the spell: *ḥꜣꜣ Imnt Nfrrt m ḥsfw s pw* “This means that (or: the effect will be that) the Beautiful West will rejoice at meeting a man (i.e., someone)” (CT V 28c; compare initial rubric in Ex. 10).

8 Wechselsatz, or Balanced / Correlative Sentence

A well-known formula of the CT is very instructive in regard to the different forms attested as variants of the two basic syntactic structures listed above, i.e., the two balanced (correlative) sentences, or *Wechselsatz*, and the two related sentences (protasis – apodosis) (§5ab).¹¹ The various forms attested according to the temporal axes of the correlative sentences (a and b) are:

(12) PRESENT (*mrr.f*)

(1) *prṛ.tn r pt m nrwt*

(2) *prṛ.tn r pt m ḥꜣꜣw*

(3) *prṛ.tn r pt m iꜣrwt*

PRESENT (*mrr.f* = *Wechselsatz*)

prṛ.i ḥr-tpt ḏnhw.tn

prṛ.i ḥr kꜣbw.tn

prṛ.i ḥr wpwt.tn

“(1a) If you go up to the sky as vultures, (1b) I go up on the tip of your wings. (2a) If you go up to the sky as snakes, (2b) I go up on your coils. (3a) If you go up to the sky as uraei, (3b) I go up on the tops of your heads” (CT III 61f–k B1C B2L).

(13) PRESENT (a = protasis)

(4) *prṛ.sn r pt m bikw*

(5) *hꜣꜣ.sn r tꜣ m ḥꜣꜣw*

PRESENT (b = apodosis)

iw.i ḥr ḏnhw.sn

iw[.i] ḥr kꜣbw.sn

“(4a) If they go up to the sky as falcons, (4b) I am on their wings. (5a) If they go down to the earth as snakes, (5b) I am on their coils” (CT III 100h–101b S1C S2C).

(14) PAST (*sḏm.n.f*)

(1) *hꜣꜣ<.n>.sn r tꜣ m ḥꜣꜣw*

(2) *pr.n.sn r pt m bikw*

PAST (*sḏm.n.f* = *Wechselsatz*)

hꜣꜣ.n.i m kꜣb(w).sn

pr.n.i ḥr ḏnhwy.sn

“(1a) When they have gone down to the earth as snakes, (1b) I have gone down on their coils. (2a) When they have gone up to the sky as falcons, (2b) I have gone up on their wings” (CT III 115 e–h P. Gard. II).

¹⁰ See my review of Faulkner *The Ancient Egyptian CT* 455–456.

¹¹ See Niccacci *Su una formula* and Vernus *Formes “emphatiques”*. See also Polotsky *Randbemerkungen* 119–120; Loprieno *Ancient Egypt* §7.5.1, p. 274; and Schenkel *Tübinger Einführung* §8.3.4, p. 271.

- (15) FUTURE (Prospective) FUTURE (Prospective = Wechselsatz)
 (1) *pr(y).f r pt* *pr(y).i ds.i hn'.f r pt*
 “(1a) If he will go up to the sky, (1b) I will go up with him to the sky” (CT VI 338c–d B2L).

- (16) PRESENT (a = protasis) FUTURE (b = apodosis)
 (1) *h''.sn r t' m hf'w* *h'y.i m k'bw.sn*
 (2) *prr.sn r pt m bikw* *pr(y).i hr dnhw.sn* (B2Bo)
 (3) *(i)r prt.sn r pt m bikw* *pry.i hr dnhw.sn*
 (variant of 2!) (B17C B1Be)
 (4) *(i)r prw.sn r pt m bikw* *pry.i 'r fn'w.sn*
 (variant of 2!) (B2L B1C)

“(1a) If they go down to the earth as snakes, (1b) I will go down on their coils. (2a) If they go up to the sky as falcons, (2b) I will go up on their wings. (variant of 3a!) As for their going up as falcons / (variant of 4a!) As for their ascensions to the sky as falcons, (3b/4b) I will go up on their wings” (CT III 24a–25b).

- (17) PAST (a = protasis) PRESENT (b = apodosis)
 (1) *p'.n N pn m bik* *Sbk pw N pn*
 (2) *ngg.n N pn m bik* *Sbk pw N pn*
 (3) *sp'.n N pn m gbg'* *Inpw pw N pn nb krt*
 “(1a) Because this N has flown up as falcon, (1b) this N is Sobk. (2a) Because this N has screeched as a falcon, (2b) this N is Sobk. (3a) Because this N has flown up as a vulture, (3b) this N is Anubis, Lord of burial” (CT VI 295s–296c B1Bo).

A case similar to Ex. 16,1–2 (i.e., *mrr.f* as protasis, prospective *sfm.f* as apodosis) is as follows:

- (18) *mrr.i,* (b) *p'w.i frw.sn*
 “(a) If/when I will like, (b) I will be able to reach their boundary” (BD 185,11–12 (Nu)).

Exx. 12 and 14 are analysed as Wechselsatz, or two balanced/correlative sentences (§5a), and Ex. 15 as a variant of this construction with two prospective *sfm.f* forms, while Exx. 13 and 16–18 are analysed as two related sentences, or as a double sentence with protasis – apodosis (§5b).

The compound verb forms with auxiliary *'h'.n* (§3) should be discussed in this connection. Gardiner thought that in *'h'.n sdm.n.f* the *sdm.n.f* is continuative: “he rose up *and* heard”, while Polotsky suggested that it is possibly circumstantial: “he stood up *having* heard” (Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* 21, fn. 33). Later, Polotsky explicitly analysed both *'h'.n ir.n.i* and *'h'.n.i rdi.kwi* according to the principle of concomitance rather than that of anteriority, i.e., respectively, “mon état à ce moment-là se trouva caractérisé par la circonstance

concomitante d'avoir fait", and therefore "alors je fis", and "mon état à ce moment-là se trouva caractérisé par la circonstance concomitante d'avoir été placé", and therefore "alors je fus placé" (Polotsky *Les transpositions* 36). Usually, however, in a sequence of #substantival *pr.n.f* + circumstantial *sdm.n.f*# the *sdm.n.f* indicates anteriority: "it is *after he heard* that he went out", while in a sequence of #substantival *pr.n.f* + circumstantial *sdm.f*# the *sdm.f* "can be used with the effect of stressing (perhaps with some measure of hyperbole) that the action of the second verb occurred concomitantly with ('as soon as') that of the initial verb" (Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §21).

It seems therefore that the compound forms '*h'.n sdm.n.f*' and '*h'.n.f* + Old Perfective' are somehow of a special status compared with the usual sequence of substantival *sdm.n.f* + circumstantial *sdm.n.f*, or of substantival *sdm.n.f* + Old Perfective. This is probably due to the fact that the verb '*h'.n(f)*' is idiomatically used to indicate the start of a new action/event: "he stood up and heard", i.e., "then he heard".¹² In any case, I would suggest that the special status of these constructions does not imply any incongruity with the theory of the substantival verb forms because '*h'.n sdm.n.f*' can be analysed according to the pattern of the balanced / correlative sentence (*Wechselsatz*, see Ex.14), i.e., "the-fact-that-he-stood-up is the-fact-that-he-heard"; similarly '*h'.n.f prw*' "the-fact-that-he-stood-up is / *happened* while-he-went-out".¹³ This analysis also applies to compound

¹² Loprieno *Ancient Egyptian* 186 maintains that '*h'.n(f)*' is a particle, "'then', originally the grammaticalized preterite of the verb '*h'*' 'to stand'". In fn. 10, p. 273, he writes: "A similar phenomenon of grammaticalization led in Biblical Hebrew to the use of the preterite of the verb *qûm* 'to stand up', i.e., *wayyāqom*, lit. 'and he stood up', to express the beginning of an action in a narrative sequence, with a gradual neutralization of the original meaning of the verbal form indicated by *qûm*: 2 Sam 19,9 *wayyāqom hammelek wayyēšeb bašša'ar* *'and the king stood up and sat at the door' > 'then the king sat at the door'". I would only observe that '*h'.n(f)*' is not a particle but a verb form and behaves as such (see §3 above).

¹³ This analysis would account for the principle of concomitancy advocated by Polotsky (see above). Differently, Depuydt *Conjunction* (cf. Depuydt *On Contiguity*) tried to explain this phenomenon by simply invoking the notion of "contiguity" (which is similar to Polotsky's concomitancy); however, this notion is hardly syntactic (cf. my review of Ritter *Das Verbalsystem* 542). Depuydt identifies two types of sequences of two *sdm.n.f* verb forms, calling them A and B: "In Type 1, which exhibits hyperbole as an expression of contiguity, B instantly follows, or partly overlaps with, A. But in Type 2, without hyperbole, B precedes A" (Depuydt *On Contiguity* 24). He then explains, quoting Polotsky, that "no criterion, except 'meaning' seems available" to distinguish one type from the other (*ibid.*). However, Polotsky did not actually refer to these types but rather to the circumstantial and the continuative forms of *sdm.n.f*, which are in fact otherwise indistinguishable. The examples quoted by Depuydt that clearly show "contiguity" are either with '*h'.n*' or *sdr.n-* and *hḏ.n-* while other examples are not clear. In any case, they are much less common than examples in which the second *sdm.n.f* expresses anteriority as expected. The sequence with two *sdm.n.f* verb forms is also dealt with in Zonhoven *Polotsky* 69–76. The author discusses, among other things, constructions with '*h'.n*', *sdr.n-* and *hḏ.n-* and their relationships with the following sentences. Although he basically accepts Polotsky's theory, Zonhoven admits the possibility of "Circumstantial *sdm.n=f* forms" in initial position with the meaning of pluperfect, which implies the opposite relationship between "emphatic" *sdm.n.f* and a following

verb forms with *sdṛ.n-* “(he) spent the night” and *ḥd.n-* “(it) has become bright” which are also used as auxiliaries, much as *‘h’.n-* with the meaning of “at night” and “at dawn”, respectively.¹⁴

II Discussion: Chaos or Beginning of a New Paradigm?

9 Phases in Grammatical Research

Polotsky presented his description of the Middle-Egyptian verb in conscious continuity with a number of authors who have been important for modern grammatical research.¹⁵ For Polotsky this era began in 1881 with A. Erman, who made some fundamental discoveries: the “nominal forms”, the “pseudo-participle” and the circumstantial forms. Shortly after him, K. Sethe described

circumstantial *sdm.n.f* according to Polotsky's theory. “As the last alternative, when, within reason, no other solution is satisfactory” (*ibid.* 90), Zonhoven also admits the possibility of a few cases of indicative *sdm.n.f*. He even tries to trace its diachronic origin as a fusion of three different hypothetical models (*ibid.* 87), something that I frankly find difficult to follow. For my part, the so-called “Circumstantial *sdm.n=f* forms” in initial position are actually substantive *sdm.n.f* forms in correlative relation with another substantive *sdm.n=f* in the second position (cf. two balanced / correlative sentences, §5a above); alternatively, if a main sentence follows, they are used adverbially (cf. two related sentences protasis-apodosis, §5b above). In my opinion, no circumstantial initial verb form exists in classical Egyptian, just as no indicative *sdm.n.f* or *sdm.f* exists. Although Zonhoven criticizes F. Junge (*ibid.* 69, 73, etc.), he seems to reach similar conclusions (see fn. 14)

¹⁴ Amazingly, Junge *A Study* arrives at similar results as Zonhoven Polotsky (see fn. 13) although he does not acknowledge a circumstantial initial *sdm.n.f* with pluperfect meaning. Junge analyses the initial substantial *sdm.n.f* as “backgrounding theme”, or “subject / theme”, and the following circumstantial *sdm.n.f* as “the information in ‘predicative focus’”, or “predicate / rheme”. He thinks, however, that “by cotextual relationship” the information of subject / theme is in some cases anterior to the predicate / rheme (see esp. §§3.2.2–3.2.3; compare Junge *Emphasis* §4.2). Thus he surmises, as does Zonhoven, a type of relationship that is the opposite of the one obtaining between “emphatic” *sdm.n.f* and the following circumstantial *sdm.n.f* according to Polotsky's theory. For his part, Greig *The sdm=f* follows Junge's proposal, as he analyses *‘h’.n-*, *sdṛ.n-* and *ḥd.n-* as “backgrounding elements” and the following circumstantial *sdm.n.f* as “foreground information” (pp. 297, 320–330). He correctly remarks that in similar cases *sdṛ.n* is “a predicative converter”—however not “a predicative converter transforming the following ^{Circumstantial} *sdm.n=f*s into main co-ordinate clauses” (p. 297). This is correct as these *sdm.n.f* forms remain circumstantial, they do not become predicative but, together with the preceding *sdṛ.n-*, they constitute predicative constructions each consisting of two related sentences. This analysis also applies, as Greig correctly recognizes, to *‘h’.n-* and to *ḥd.n-*, not however, as he surmises, also to *iw* (see his diagram on p. 329). The main reason for positing a difference is that while *‘h’.n-*, *sdṛ.n-* and *ḥd.n-* form complete, though dependent, sentences, together with the following pronominal or nominal subject (if the subject is missing, they share that of the related sentences), *iw* needs an adverbial predicate to form a complete sentence. However, the analysis as “Wechselsatz or Correlative Sentence” that Greig suggests for his Ex. 52 (*Sin.* B 77–81, p. 312) is correct and applies to similar cases with *‘h’.n-*, *sdṛ.n-* and *ḥd.n-* much better than that of Junge, but it does not apply to the constructions with *iw-*.

¹⁵ Polotsky *Les transpositions* §1.2.

the relative forms and the participles. He also discovered the “emphatic” *sdm.f*. Afterwards, B. Gunn identified the forms of the prospective and clarified the syntax of the negation (the so-called “Gunn’s rule”). The real function of the “emphatic” *sdm.f* was recognized in the 1940s by Polotsky himself. Later, he identified the “emphatic” value of *sdm.n.f* (Polotsky *The “Emphatic” Sdm.n.f*) and also its circumstantial and continuative functions (in *Egyptian Tenses*). Our understanding of the prospective verb form was advanced by W. Westendorf and E. Edel.

In *Les transpositions* 3 Polotsky wrote as follows:

“Le moment semble venu pour essayer d’en dégager la cohérence [i.e., of the above outlined research]. Évidemment pareil essai ne saurait être que provisoire. Il y a cependant deux raisons de croire qu’il n’est pour autant pas tout à fait prématuré”.

From what comes after this quotation, it seems that the two “reasons” are, on the one hand, the recognition among linguists of the three categories of substantive, adjective and adverb, and, on the other hand, a need to adopt a different terminology from the one commonly used, i.e., to speak of substantive / adjective / adverbial *forms* rather than of noun / adjective (= relative) / adverb *clause*.

10 Acceptance of the Polotskyan Theory

The theory of Polotsky was rather well accepted by scholars of Coptic (W. C. Till), Demotic (R. J. Williams, J. H. Johnson) and Late Egyptian (J. Černý – S. Israelit-Groll), while it raised a lively discussion among scholars of Middle and Old Egyptian.¹⁶ Polotsky’s theory began to be seen as perhaps too comprehensive, too systematic, too syntactic, not enough linguistically up-to-date — and, especially, not enough based in general-linguistic theory. Its structural approach seemed too narrow in comparison with the new discourse-linguistic approaches. As I wrote in my review of Ritter *Das Verbalsystem* 537, “It seems that 1986 was the turning point of a new era — the so-called ‘post-Polotskyan era...’. The new turn is marked by the ‘Crossroad Conference’ held that year in Denmark. If 1986 was the turning point, in Germany the premises of the new era were laid more than ten years earlier by W. Schenkel’s *Die*

¹⁶ See Schenkel *Einführung* 145-158 (with references), and Johnson “Focussing” 401–410. A more recent evaluation is found in Zeidler *Pfortenbuchstudien* 189–208, where four phases are outlined: the pioneers (XVIII–XIX cent.), the “Berlin School” (A. Erman, etc.), the “Standard Theory” (with H. J. Polotsky), and the “Post-Polotsky Era” (or the “not-so-standard-theory” of M. A. Collier, with W. Schenkel, A. Loprieno and T. Ritter). Also noteworthy is the posthumous paper Hintze *Überlegungen*, in which, among other things, the author rejects as “pervers” Junge’s blurring of the fundamental distinction between “Nominalsatz” and “Verbalsatz” (p. 88). Loprieno also draws a “brief look at Egyptological linguistics”, in which he evaluates “Polotsky’s ‘Standard theory’” (see Loprieno *Ancient Egyptian* 8–10, *passim*).

altägyptische Suffixkonjugation and by Junge's *Syntax*. In the 1994 edition of his *Tübinger Einführung*, Schenkel has completely rejected Polotsky's theory.¹⁷ More recently, in his book review of A. Loprieno's *Ancient Egyptian* (1995) in *OLZ* 92 (1997) 5–25, Schenkel complains that Loprieno did not free himself enough from that theory".¹⁸

J. Winand formulated this trend with resolute words in his review of Ritter *Das Verbalsystem* 293:

“Le premier colloque international sur la grammaire égyptienne, qui se tint à Copenhague en 1986 ('Crossroad I'), et qui avait pour ambition d'évaluer la ST [i.e., the Standard Theory], mit au jour un certain nombre de divergences parmi les spécialistes. L'approche (presque) exclusivement syntactique de Polotsky montra petit à petit ses faiblesses. Aujourd'hui, deux 'Crossroads' plus tard (Los Angeles en 1990, et New Haven en 1994), on peut dire que la ST est morte. Ses efforts pour s'adapter aux nouvelles perspectives linguistiques (pragmatique et sémantique) n'ont fait que mettre à nu ses carences structurelles. Même si elle conserve encore quelques défenseurs, sa lutte est devenue un combat d'arrière-garde”.

For his part, P. Vernus thought that time had come to write about the “autopsie d'une théorie”.¹⁹

Among the topics under discussion, one finds again and again the main discovery of Polotsky — the so-called “emphatic” *sdm.f* or *mrr.f*.²⁰ The question is: “imperfective” (Gardiner) or “emphatic”? Gardiner pointed out examples where *mrr.f* is used without an adverbial adjunct. The best known example is of course the divine epithet *mrr.f irr.f* (*Pyr.* §412b). From such cases, Gardiner concluded that the *mrr.f* verb form was *always* “imperfective” while only *in some cases* “emphatic” as well.

Indeed, the formula of *Pyr.* §412b is problematic also as far as negation is concerned. The full text is as follows:

¹⁷ More precisely, according to Schenkel *Standardtheorie* 140–141, the formulation of the “invertierte Standardtheorie”, which is Schenkel's alternative to the Standard Theory, started in the 1994 edition of his *Tübinger Einführung* and continued in a new version of the same published in 1997.

¹⁸ Actually, Loprieno understands himself as a member of a new generation of Egyptological linguists who are aware of the “idiosyncrasies of the Polotskyan system and of methodological developments in the field of general linguistics”, and who think that “the Standard theory seems to have exhausted its innovative potential, being superseded by more verbalistic approaches, i.e., by interpretation of Egyptian syntax in which verbal phrases, rather than being ‘converted’ into other parts of discourse, maintain their full ‘verbal’ character” (Loprieno *Ancient Egyptian* 9).

¹⁹ Vernus *Les parties du discours*. See poignant comments by Satzinger – Shisha-Halevy *The Snark*.

²⁰ See a presentation of this issue, with bibliography, in Widmer *Emphasizing* 170–171, fns. 23–25.

mrr.f *irr.f*
msdd.f *n ir.n.f*

“If he likes, he does; if he dislikes, he does not”.

The problem is that the construction *n ir.n.f* is used to negate the indicative verb form *iw.f sdm.f*, while *mrr.f* as a substantive verb form is negated by *tm*. This problem was felt by Polotsky himself (in *Ägyptische Verbalformen* 282). He correctly noted that the first two sentences constitute a *Wechselsatz* with two balanced / correlative clauses similar to Ex. 12 above. In my opinion, the other two sentences constitute a *Wechselsatz* consisting of two related clauses (or double sentence with protasis – apodosis) similar to Ex. 13 above (§8): *prr.sn r pt m bikw* [protasis], *iw.i hr dnḥw.sn* [apodosis]. Both cases show a *iw* construction in the second member (main sentence) instead of a second *mrr.f* as in the first case. Balanced / correlative sentences having a negative construction with *tm* do exist, e.g.,

iw.k r.i *dd.i r.k*
tm.k iw r.i *tm.i dd r.k*

“If you come against me, I speak against you; if you do not come against me, I do not speak against you” (BD 90 Nu, 192, 10–12).

Differently, a variant found in CT V 323h–j (B2L) has a negation with *nn*, which negates prospective *sdm.f*:

iw.k r.i *dd.i r.k*
tm.k iw r.i *nn dd.i r.k*

“If you come against me, I will speak against you; if you do not come against me, I will not speak against you”.

As a consequence, the cases of *Wechselsatz* (or two related sentences, or double sentence, §8), with no emphasis on an adverbial element, do not contradict the theory of Polotsky.²¹ This point is to be made most clearly, because it is one of

²¹ It is interesting to mention the solution proposed by Polotsky himself in order to translate into acceptable English sentences with long “*that*-forms”, or cleft sentences: “The translation of such sentences presents a certain difficulty... With a large number of clauses of circumstance the use of the Cleft Sentence becomes awkward or impossible. In such cases the relatively best solution is to make a subordinate clause of the initial verb-form and to turn the clauses of circumstance into main sentences: ‘When saying this spell, one shall be pure, clean, dressed, shod, etc. and one shall have offered up...’” (Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* 8–9; the corresponding sentences in Egyptian, quoted *ibid.*, start with *šdd.tw*, a substantive verb-form, which is the syntactic subject of a series of old perfective, or stative, forms). This observation reveals a basic affinity between substantive verb-forms, or second tenses, playing an “emphatic” function and substantive verb-forms without such “emphatic” function but rather used in *Wechselzätze*, or correlative sentences (§8 above), as well as those used as “*casus adverbialis*”. However, this does not justify playing down, if not annulling, the difference between first tenses, which convey main-level information, and second tenses, which convey secondary-level information (see §16 below), as done by Schenkel *Einführung* 178–179. In fact, he sees a “a paralleling of similarly-composed sentences” (“*Parallelisierung ähnlich gebauter Sätze*”) in the text quoted in Ex. 1 above: *iw.i st.i*, *iw b’.i st.f*, *stt b’.i m rmtw imyw Iw-nsr, stt.i ds.i m ntrwt*, which he translates: “(Wie) ich

the main objections raised against Polotsky. In fact, three options are available with the *mrr.f* substantival verb form (§§5–6). First, in most cases, it combines with an adverbial adjunct and constitutes one sentence with it: *mrr.f* is the subject, or the given information, and the adverbial adjunct is the predicate, or the new information. In this case, we have an “emphatic” second tense, or cleft sentence, i.e., “The-fact-that-he-likes (something) *is* in-this-or-that-manner”, and therefore: “*It is* in this or that way *that* he likes (something)”. Second, *mrr.f* can combine with another *mrr.f* form. In this case, it constitutes a construction with two balanced or correlative sentences (*Wechselsatz*): “The-fact-that-he-likes *is* the-fact-that-he-does”, and therefore: “When/if he likes, he does”.²² Third, this correlative relationship of two sentences can be also expressed with an indicative, independent construction in the second place after *mrr.f*, e.g., an *iw* construction. In this case, the *mrr.f* verb form functions as an adverbial or circumstantial sentence related to the following main sentence, as in the *Pyr.* example discussed above: “As *for* the-fact-that-he-likes, he does”, and therefore: “When/If he likes, he does”.

Thus, while “emphasis” is the main (and more frequent) function of the second tenses, it is not the only one. What is common to all the occurrences is the fact that the verb is not the main element of the sentence. It is nominalized morphologically and has the function of a substantive (see further §17 below). This conclusion was already outlined by Polotsky:

“Damit schien eine Erklärung gefunden zu sein, das allen Gebrauchsweisen des ‘emphatischen’ *s[dm].f* gerecht wird: in der ‘indikativischen’ Verwendung stellt es das Subjekt des adverbialen Prädikats dar, in Abhängigkeit von Verben und Präpositionen steht es einem Nomen gleich, in Sinne eines Konditionalsatzes (und in andern ähnlichen Fällen) fungiert es als das, was Sander-Hansen ‘casus adverbialis’ nennt. Schliesslich habe ich zu zeigen versucht, dass es syntaktisch gleichwertige, ‘emphatische’, Formen auch vom prospektiven *s[dm].f* ... und vom *s[dm].n.f* gibt” (Polotsky *Ägyptische Verbalformen* 276–277).

begatte; (so) begattet mein Ba. (Wie) mein Ba unter den Menschen auf der Flammeninsel (d.i. im Diesseits) begattet, so begattet ich unter den Göttinnen”. He comments: “Es handelt sich um vier Sätze, zwei Sätze mit dem Tempus Generalis und zwei Spaltsätze, die paarweise untereinander korrelieren” (*ibid.*). Indeed, Schenkel writes the adverbial expressions “unter den Menschen auf der Flammeninsel” and “unter den Göttinnen” with spaced characters in order to mark the “gewisser Akzent” that, in his words, falls on them (see fn. 96 below). However, this is hardly an appropriate rendering of the second tenses.

²² According to Loprieno *Ancient Egyptian* 196, “The effect [of the ‘balanced sentences’ or *Wechselsätze*] is the ‘autofocality’ of the predicative nexus in each of the two portions of the [‘balanced’] sentence, with a direct temporal or logical dependence of the second predicate upon the first, i.e., ‘if...then,’ or ‘as soon as...then’”. Frankly, I do not like the notion of “autofocus”, which has been proposed by Shisha-Halevy (see fn. 5), at least not for Middle Egyptian. In my view, it is not a question of focus at all but simply of identification between two substantival verb forms.

If we leave aside the prospective, which Polotsky later called “forme substantive personnelle” but not “emphatic” anymore (*Les transpositions* §2.7), all the functions of the substantive *sḏm.f* and *sḏm.n.f* are listed in the quotation above, both the “emphatic” one, which signals the highlighting of an adverbial adjunct, and the “non-emphatic” ones, among which are the dependence on a preposition, as in certain rubrics of the *Coffin Texts* (§7 above), and the adverbial function as protasis.

Examples showing both the “non-emphatic” uses of the second tenses, i.e., the *Wechselsatz* with correlative clauses as well as the double sentence with protasis – apodosis, are Exx. 5 (Middle Egyptian), 6 (Late Egyptian), and 7 (Coptic); see §6 above.²³

Another area of discussion and disagreement with the theory of Polotsky concerns the circumstantial verb forms (§§1 and 3 above).²⁴ Several grammarians deny the existence of specifically circumstantial verb forms, interpreting the forms identified or translated as such simply as verbal, eventually used circumstantially from the point of view of pragmatics or semantics.²⁵ The reasons for such a conclusion are multiple: objective lack of distinctive morphological marks in many cases of *sḏm.f* and *sḏm.n.f*;²⁶ comparison with Old-Egyptian *sḏm.f* forms with “indicative” function (fn. 28 below); reluctance to accept the validity of the principle of paradigmatic substitution according to which *sḏm.f* and *sḏm.n.f* interchange with clearly adverbial verb forms and non-verbal constructions (§12 below); and, more generally, disbelief in the structural syntactic analysis (§13 below). However, the circumstantial/adverbial category is, along with the noun, a basic category of the Egyptian verb system as described throughout this paper.²⁷

11 The Presentative Construction and the Non-Verbal Sentence

In contrast to the analysis proposed above, some scholars have concluded that in the case of two identical substantival forms balancing one another — e.g., *mrr.f*

²³ Widmer *Emphasizing* illustrates a range of different uses of the Second Tenses in Demotic (although in a way that is more descriptive than evaluative), uses that are ultimately parallel to the corresponding forms in Middle Egyptian, i.e., “stressing” an adverbial adjunct, structuring the text into discrete units, conveying a temporal or conditional force, marking contrastive or restrictive emphasis, and introducing a gloss.

²⁴ See bibliography in Depuydt *On the Empirical Distinctness* 18, fn. 1, which discusses the problem of the so-called “virtual sentences”.

²⁵ Thus also Satzinger *Die Protasis* (a) 127 & (b) 274.

²⁶ In order to compensate for this lack, Depuydt *On the Empirical Distinctness* 19 tries to provide “empirical signal(s) whose absence or presence allows one to make the distinction” between independent and subordinate clauses.

²⁷ Also see a brief reaffirmation of substantival and adverbial verb forms in Satzinger–Shisha-Halevy *The Snark* 173–175.

irr.f— this verb form is used as subject as well as predicate, and therefore the so-called “emphatic” form is actually the same as the normal “predicative” *sdm.f*.²⁸ Put differently, *mrr.f* was actually predicative, like any other verb form.

In order to discuss this very delicate issue, it is necessary to introduce a kind of sentence that is not usually considered in Egyptian grammar—the “presentative sentence”.²⁹ This kind of sentence is differently termed by linguists—“descriptive” (J. Lyons), “descriptive statement” (J. R. Searl), “proposition” (J. L. Austin), “existential-presentative construction” (T. Givón).³⁰ In an earlier treatment, I called it “presentative or dramatic construction”.³¹ In the terminology of Andersen *The Hebrew Verbless Clause* 32, it corresponds to the “clause of identification” as opposed to “clause of classification”.

The presentative sentence may comprise the following speech-situations: the speaker/writer introduces himself to the listener/reader (i.e., the so-called “self-presentation formula”), or identifies a third party or an object; he describes what is seen or happens in reality or in a dream; he announces an event almost as happening before the eyes of the listener/reader; he submits a consideration, a decision, or a promise. In certain languages at least, the presentative sentence is different from the predicative sentence in word order. For instance, in languages with a subject–predicate word order like Italian, the presentative construction shows a predicate–subject sequence, e.g., *È scoppiata una bomba* (“A bomb exploded”); vice versa, in a language with a predicate–subject word order, such as Biblical Hebrew, it shows a subject–predicate sequence, e.g. *’ānî YHWH* “I am the Lord”.

What is common to all the speech-situations outlined above is the fact that the sentence involved is not really predicative, i.e., it does not provide new information (i.e., a predicate) on a given topic (i.e., a subject). Rather, it identifies somebody or something, or else announces an event in a global way, in the sense that the information is the event itself. Sentences such as “A bomb exploded” announce an event; others, such as “I am the Lord” identify the speaker. Such sentences do not really affirm anything about the bomb or about

²⁸ Allen *Form* brings into his discussion of the “Standard Theory”—more precisely of the insistence by Polotsky on the morphology of the verb forms—several anomalous cases, already mentioned by Polotsky himself, of non-circumstantial verb forms following *iw*. He also refers to Old-Egyptian *sdm.f* with “indicative” function without distinguishing Old Egyptian from Middle Egyptian. Therefore, his claim regarding the inadequacy of syntax and the priority of semantics seems to me largely unwarranted. It is true that syntax needs the help of semantics and interpretation; however, grammar and syntax remain the basis of analysis. It is unwise to reverse this order in the analysis of a language, particularly of a dead language.

²⁹ However, Schenkel *Tübinger Einführung* 158–160, 222–223 speaks of the particle *mk* as “präsentativ”, and also of a “Präsentativsatz”; similarly Loprieno (see fn. 52 below).

³⁰ See references and discussion in Niccacci *Simple Nominal Clause* 217–218, and *Marked Syntactical Structures* §7.3.

³¹ Niccacci *La Stèle d’Israël* 47–48, 50.

the speaker. In other words, there is no syntactic predication in the presentative sentence; its subject and predicate are solely grammatical.³²

Going back to the analysis of the correlative sentence *mrr.f irr.f*, I would say that it is a sentence of identification, or a presentative sentence, i.e., “the-fact-that-he-likes is the-fact-that-he-does”. It consists of two substantive verb forms, the first of which is the grammatical subject, and the second of which is the grammatical predicate. It reproduces exactly the basic pattern #substantive–substantive# like *pḥti N pḥti Stš* “the strength of N is the strength of Seth” (Polotsky *Ägyptische Verbalformen* 282), or *mkt.t mkt Rʿ* “thy (f.) protection is the protection of Rē” (Gardiner *Grammar* §125). Sentences of this pattern—with two substantives as subject–predicate—may not be frequent but are clearly attested with this function of identification.³³

I would suggest that this pattern of the presentative sentence, together with the predicative-sentence pattern, helps understand the different types of the non-verbal sentences in Egyptian as well as in Coptic. Usually this kind of research is done on the basis of Coptic because Coptic is the most analytic stage of Egyptian;³⁴ however, definite types of non-verbal sentence are identifiable in Egyptian as well.

Besides the two-member, or binary, pattern, a three-member, or ternary, pattern is attested. This three-member formation is an expansion of the basic two-member sentence with the addition of *pw*, the demonstrative pronoun used as a subject in sentences with substantival predicate. When one member is determined and the other undetermined, the analysis is usually easy: the former is the subject, the latter the predicate; when, however, both members are determined, the analysis may be difficult. In any case, three patterns of the

³² I prefer to speak of “grammatical / syntactical” subject and predicate rather than to use the term “logical”, which was preferred by Polotsky; see Niccacci *Marked Syntactical Structures* §3; *Simple Nominal Clause* 220–222; also see §14 and fn. 120 below.

³³ Note that the presentative sentence shows a pattern #subject–predicate# that is identical to that of the second tense, or “cleft sentence”, and sometimes the two are confused, as is the case, in my opinion, in Depuydt *New Horizons* 395. The same pattern #subject–predicate# underlies the first tenses (§4 above). In one respect, the first tenses and the presentative sentence are both indicative and signal the main line of communication, while the second tenses are “emphatic” and signal a secondary line of communication (see §16 below for this terminology); in another, first tenses and second tenses are both syntactically predicative, while the presentative sentence is only grammatically predicative. The basic difference between the first and the second tenses is that in the former the verb form is the predicate while in the second the predicate is the adverbial element (§§3–4 above).

³⁴ See Polotsky *Nominalsatz*. Reservations about a close relationship between Coptic and Egyptian, and about “les comparaisons diachroniques” in general, are raised by Vernus *Observations* 335. However, his analysis of the different constructions with *pw* differs in many points from the one proposed here. E.g., his statement, “A mon sens, le prédicat est toujours l’élément que suit *pw*” (*ibid.*), is not correct (in my opinion) for the presentative S–c–P pattern illustrated below.

ternary non-verbal sentence are attested, which are usually indicated in the following way (S = subject, P = predicate, c = copula): S–P–c, P–c–S, and S–c–P. Most controversial is the third pattern.³⁵

I would object to the analysis of *pw* as a copula. Because *pw* is commonly recognized as the subject in the binary pattern, one would expect it to retain the same function in the ternary pattern, too. I would suggest that the pair termed 'P–c' actually functions as predicate–subject, and it therefore forms a complete sentence from the grammatical point of view. The third element, termed 'S', is appositive to the subject (i.e., P–*pw*–S = predicate–subject + apposition).³⁶ Although this analysis is actually found, among others, in both Gardiner *Grammar* §130 and Polotsky *Nominalsatz* 431, still both speak of *pw* as "copula".³⁷ The reason is that while *pw* is, in Gardiner's words, "a purely formal logical subject, the real logical subject is added in apposition to *pw*" (*Grammar* §130).

As mentioned above, the main problem lies with the third pattern of the non-verbal sentence, i.e., S–*pw*–P, because it can not be easily reconciled with the basic binary pattern P–*pw*.³⁸ In order to solve this problem, I apply the S–P structure of the presentative sentence and analyse *pw* as the grammatical predicate, and the following 'P' element — as appositive to it, i.e., S–*pw*–P = subject–predicate + apposition to the predicate.³⁹

It seems to me that this analysis is appropriate for all the speech-situations in which the pattern S–*pw*–P is attested, such as the interpretation of dreams, parables, or identification of "forbidden things" (*bwt*) of the different nomes.⁴⁰ A couple of examples from Egyptian and one from Coptic will suffice: *srwḥf*

³⁵ Cf. Polotsky *Nominalsatz* 423–424; Depuydt *The Emphatic* 94–97; Frandsen *On the Relevance* 147–154.

³⁶ I would stress again the fact that from the syntactic point of view the main elements of the sentence are two, i.e., the subject and the predicate, not three; a third element is sometimes added in apposition. What I wrote of Biblical Hebrew also applies to Egyptian; see my *Marked Syntactical Structure* §8 and *Types and Functions* §§1.1–1.2 and 3.3.

³⁷ Similarly Schenkel *Fokussierung* 167.

³⁸ Gardiner *Grammar* §130, p. 104, called this construction a "tragedy of language", while according to Gilula *An Unusual Nominal Pattern* 170, it "always plagued the Egyptian language" and A. Shisha-Halevy called it the "weak link" in the theory of nominal sentence (*ap. Depuydt The Emphatic* 96).

³⁹ In his last work on Coptic, Polotsky adopted a totally different terminology, derived from Ch. Bally and ultimately R. Blümel, i.e., "A (= Aussage)" instead of "logical subject", or "theme", and "Z (= Ziel)" instead of "logical predicate", or "rheme" (Polotsky *Grundlagen* §18). He further designates as "a (= geschwächtes A)", i.e., a weakened "A", the Coptic demonstrative pronoun *pe* / *te* / *ne* used as a subject, while *pe* used as a copula he designates as "c", although the difference between "a" and "c" is small (cf. Polotsky *Grundlagen* §39). My type #S–*pw*–P = subject–predicate + apposition to the predicate# corresponds to "ternare Konstruktion A–c–Z" of Polotsky *Grundlagen* §§46–56.

⁴⁰ In a cult-topographical list of the Late Period; see Frandsen *On the Relevance* 151–153.

[subject] *pw* [predicate] *hmst* [apposition to the predicate] “its treatment is this: (namely) sitting” (*Sm.* II,7); *bwt.i pw hs* “my abomination is this: excrement” (Gardiner *Grammar* §130); *anok pe pšōs etnanouf*, Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός “I am it: the good shepherd” (Gospel of John 10:11).⁴¹

A further issue for discussion is the rather widespread contention that a sentence with *pw* indicates “emphasis”, or “Fokussierung”, or that the function of *pw* is to signal the predicate (see fns. 34 and 41). Polotsky himself referred to what he called “le moule de la phrase à prédicat nominal (prédicat – *pw* – sujet)” in order to illustrate one of the means used in Egyptian to achieve la “mise en vedette”, i.e., the reversal of roles in the cleft sentence by which a non-verbal element of the sentence is promoted to the rank of the predicate (“vedette”), while the verb is demoted to the rank of the subject (Polotsky *Les transpositions* 15–16). The examples that he quoted (*ibid.* §2.5.2) are of type P–c–S; indeed a special “emphasis” falls on the predicate and the construction is a “cleft sentence”. However, not all the constructions with *pw* are of this type; there are also sentences that simply serve to identify—“die identifizierende Konstruktion” as Polotsky himself named it in Coptic.⁴² This kind of sentence

⁴¹ Different analyses have been proposed for sentence type P–c–S. As far as I see, Polotsky *Nominalsatz* 431–432 tried to describe the situation rather than to propose a definite solution. Frandsen *On the Relevance* 150–153 speaks of “prosodic weight in terms of definition”; Shisha-Halevy *Stability* 96 analyses it as “#Theme–Copula–Rheme#”, while Satzinger *May Themes Follow* describes type P–c–S, “faute de mieux”, as “descending nexus” and type S–c–P as “ascending nexus”. (In this paper, Satzinger adopts the terminology of Polotsky *Grundlagen* I/18, i.e., “ZaA” for type P–c–S “AcZ” for type S–c–P; see fn. 39 above.) Further, according to Depuydt *The Emphatic Nominal Sentence* 97 ff., type S–c–P is “essentially emphatic in nature”. However, this contention hardly appears convincing to me. In fact, e.g., *Pyr.* 1233b: (a) *P pw Dḥwtj nḏ tṇ*, (b) *n P is pw Sṯ iṯ s(y)* “(a) P is Thoth who protects you, (b) P is not Seth who carried it away”, the text that Depuydt quotes as a case of “explicit contrast” (*ibid.* 104), does not prove that because sentence (b) is “emphatic”, sentence (a) is also “emphatic”. On the contrary, sentence (a) is most likely “presentative” while sentence (b) specifies it; in other words, sentence (a) conveys the main level of communication while sentence (b) conveys a secondary level (see §16 below). Indeed, the very fact that “the pattern S–c–P is also used ‘exegetically’, e.g., in order to give the solution of a parable” (Depuydt *The Emphatic* 108), suggests that this pattern is one of “identification” (see above). Similarly, according to Westendorf *Der dreigliederige Nominalsatz* (not available to me), the type “subject–*pw*–predicate is stating, not emphatic” according to *The Annual Egyptological Bibliography* 1988–1991/Part 2 (1997) 72.

⁴² Cf. Polotsky *Nominalsatz* 432–434. Schenkel *Fokussierung* 162 distinguishes three types of the substantival sentence: “spezifizierend”, “qualifizierend” and “identifizierend” according to the respective range of the P (predicate) in comparison with the S (subject), i.e., narrower ($P \supset S$), wider ($P \subset S$), or equal ($P = S$), respectively. As a means to bring an element of the sentence into “Fokus”, Schenkel lists two special types of sentence—that with *in* and that with *pw* or with *nfr sw*. Unlike Polotsky *Les transpositions* 15–16, Schenkel does not mention the “second tenses” while he adds the *nfr sw* construction. As for the last construction with an adjective-verb, it is not at all special with regard to “Fokussierung”, or “emphasis”, because *nfr*, or any adjective-verb, belongs to the category of the “universal” terms and therefore is expected to function as the predicate (see §14 below). This means that it carries “emphasis” as any other verb in the same position but it constitutes a plain sentence because the verb is the predicate as expected. Instead,

with no special “emphasis” on the noun that precedes *pw* corresponds to what I called above the “presentative sentence”. This is probably the most common function of the *pw* sentence although the analysis is not always clear.

In certain cases, in fact, specific syntactic sets and/or speech situations help identify the predicate: e.g., in *Peas.* B 1,20–21: *ink pw dd n.k, imy-r pr pw sh'y.k* “It is I who am speaking to you, and it is the High Steward whom you are calling to mind”, the opposition between *ink* and *imy-r pr* shows that these elements are predicates and therefore the sentence is not “presentative” but predicative and cleft. Another clear case is *Westc.* 9,9: *pty sy t' Rd-ddt... hmt w'b pw n R'* “who is this Reddjedet?... She is the wife of a *wab*-priest of Rē”, where question and answer follow the same basic pattern #predicate (“who is...?” – “... the wife of...”) + subject#. In other cases, however, it is difficult to decide whether the noun or pronoun preceding *pw* is the predicate or the subject, as observed by Gardiner *Grammar* §131: “In a sentence like... *Nwn pw it ntrw*, nothing but the context can decide whether the intended meaning was ‘it (or ‘he’) is Nun, the father of the gods’ (*it* in apposition to *Nwn*...) or ‘the father of the gods is Nun’ (*it* in apposition to *pw*...)”, in other words, whether *Nwn* is the predicate as in the first possibility, or the subject as in the second, and therefore whether the sentence is type P–c–S or S–c–P, respectively.

Thus the constructions with *pw* do not signal any special emphasis on the predicate, nor do they correspond to cleft sentences, even when they are of type P–c–S,⁴³ except in specific speech situations. In many cases, they have a presentative function, especially when they are of type S–c–P.

The construction #personal independent pronoun + participle / finite verb-form# is also ambiguous, in the sense that in certain cases, when the pronoun carries special emphasis, it is the predicate and the sentence is cleft, while in other cases, in which the pronoun does not carry any emphasis, it is the subject and the sentence is presentative. Only the speech situation can help decide which is the appropriate analysis in each case. For example, a special “emphasis” falls on the personal pronoun in the following sentences: *ink ini.i sw, ink gmi.i sw* “it is in fact I who will fetch it, it is in fact I who will find it”, because this is an answer to the following question: *in m irf ini.f sw, gmi.f sw* “who in fact is the one who will fetch it, who will find it?” (Borghouts

“emphatic” constructions, or second tenses, are those in which a non-verbal element functions as the predicate, contrary to expectations. Also “emphatic” is the construction with *in* + noun / *ink* (independent personal pronoun) because it promotes a non-verbal element (a subject or a direct object) to the role of the predicate, again contrary to expectations. As for the *pw* construction, it is “emphatic” in certain speech situations only, as shown above.

⁴³ E.g., *Peas.* B 1, 62: *hr-ntt ntk it n nmh, hi n h'rt, sn n wd't, šndyt nt iwty mwt.f* “because you are a father to the orphan, a husband to the widow, a brother to her who is divorced, a garment to the motherless”. Despite Gardiner’s doubt in *Grammar* §127,4, these are simply presentative sentences with no special “emphasis” on “you”.

Prominence 66, Ex. 79); in other words, question and answer follow the same pattern: #predicate (the interrogative pronoun) + subject (the prospective *sdm.f*)#, and #predicate (the personal pronoun) + subject (the prospective *sdm.f*)#, respectively. On the contrary, no emphasis falls on the independent personal pronoun or noun when the speech situation shows that it simply serves to present the speaker or someone else, e.g., *CT* III 1b: *ink nb ht* 7 “I am the possessor of seven portions”; *CT* V 37d: *mwt.i hnt, ink s’.s* “My mother is the Pelican, and I am her son”.

12 Analysis of *iw*, ‘*h*’.*n*, and *mk*

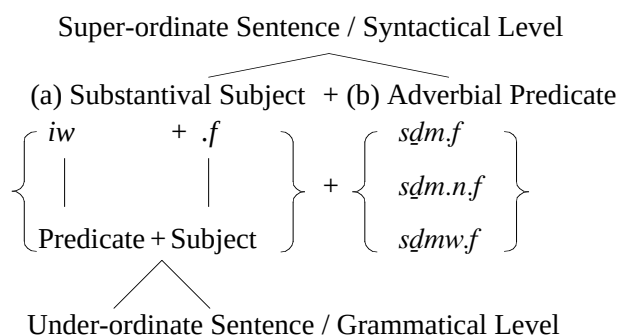
As already indicated, in the 1970s a revision of the Polotskian theory began on a more linguistic basis. For example, F. Junge adopted a generative-grammatical approach.⁴⁴ Almost half of the book is written more or less following the Polotskian theory, while the second half completely rejects it. The key to the change seems to be the analysis of *iw*. According to Junge, the different types of sentences with *iw* are formed, as Polotsky maintained, according to the pattern #noun phrase (subject) + adverbial phrase (predicate)#. Now, Junge argues, *iw* is the subject, and after *iw* we find *nominal* elements (suffix, or substantive) as well as *adverbial* elements (*sdm.f*, *sdm.n.f*, or adverbs); therefore noun and adverb coincide. The adverb is actually a noun used in adverbial relation and the basic pattern of the Egyptian sentence is NP (a noun-phrase functioning as a subject) + NP (a noun-phrase functioning as a predicate).

In my view, Junge’s whole argument is based on a misunderstanding. According to Polotsky, *iw* is indeed substantive, however not *iw* alone but together with its pronominal suffix or the following substantive. And when there is no explicit suffix — e.g., *iw sdm.f / sdm.n.f / sdmw.f* — *iw* shares the suffix of the following verb form (see §3 above).⁴⁵ In other words, *iw* is not a particle, as

⁴⁴ See my review of Junge *Syntax* for details.

⁴⁵ The slots of *iw.f sdm.n.f* and of its passive counterpart *iw.f sdmw.f* are left blank in the diagram of Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* 20 (reproduced in §3 above). Actually, according to grammarians, *iw.f sdm.n.f* is rare in Old Egyptian and unknown in Middle Egyptian (Edel *Grammatik* §890), and passive *iw.f sdmw.f* seems not to occur (Gardiner *Grammar* §465). A case of #*iw* + noun + *sdm.n.f*# with an active verb is attested after two parallel cases of #*iw* + noun + old perfective# with verbs of motion in *CT* III 350 b–d: (b) *iw ff p’(w)*, (c) *iw fnt s’(w)*, (d) *iw Wsir ph.n.f st.i* “(b) A fly has flown, (c) a *fnt*-snake has crept, (d) Osiris has reached my place”. Similar cases are *CT* I 53b: *iw N pn it.n.f t’wy.fy m m’-hrw* “This N has taken possession of his Two Lands as a justified”; *CT* I 74i: *iw Wp-w’wt wp.n.f n.k w’wt nfrwt* “Wepwawet has opened up fair paths for you”; *CT* II 113b: *iw wn.n.i dw’w hrw* “I have opened the dawn of the day” (while the following parallel sentences in *CT* II 113c–f have the more usual *iw sdm.n.f* construction). A case of *iw.f* + passive *sdmw.f* is *BD* 64: *iw Hr rdiw n.f irt.f* “to Horus has been given his eye”, lit. “Horus is in the situation while his eye has been given to him” (see Gardiner *Grammar* xxxv, Add. to p. 412, where another similar example is quoted from *CT* VI 154k). In any case, since instances of *iw* + a noun + *sdm.n.f* are attested, Polotsky’s opinion that *iw* shares the suffix of the

Junge and many new grammarians maintain, but a verb, whatever its etymology, and it needs a subject; together, *iw* and its subject form an incomplete, subordinate sentence.⁴⁶ Further, *iw* + a subject *together* constitute a substantival unit with the function of the subject in a super-ordinate sentence. This can be represented as follows:



In (a), *iw.f* interchanges with a substantive in the role of the subject, and in (b) an indirect complement interchanges with *sdm.f* / *sdm.n.f* / *sdmw.f*. In other words, sentences of the following types are attested: first, #*iw.f* / *iw* + a substantive (= subject) + an indirect complement#; second, #subject + *sdm.f* / *sdm.n.f* / *sdmw.f* (or other adverbial constructions such as old perfective or *hr* / *m* / *r* + infinitive; see §3 above)#. These findings confirm the fact that the first element belongs to the class of the substantive and the second to the class of the adverb.

The basic difference between Junge and Polotsky seems to have escaped scholars who place Junge along with Polotsky as representatives of the so-called

following verb form (either *sdm.f* or *sdm.n.f*) seems to me the best explanation. Yet, Polotsky's opinion is not even mentioned in Satzinger *Anmerkungen*. According to this author, the pattern of *iw.f sdm.f* is #theme (.f) + rheme (*sdm.f*)# while that of *iw sdm.f* is #rheme (*iw* and *sdm*) + theme (.f)#. The pattern of *iw sdm.n.f* is said to be originally "*jw.ø sdm.n.f*", i.e., with a zero subject. Besides its speculative and rather uneconomic character, this analysis implies, in my opinion, an incorrect view of *iw* as a simple particle (see fn. 2 above).

⁴⁶ Thus, basically, also Gardiner. In fact, he observed that *iw* (as *wnn*) is not used in "sentences with nominal or pronominal predicate" while it "is followed by the equivalent of an adverbial predicate". Gardiner thought that in the compound verb-forms *iw sdm.f* / *sdm.n.f* / passive *sdm.f*, *iw* "should be regarded as an impersonal statement 'it is', i.e., 'the situation is', the following *sdm.f*, *sdm.n.f* or passive *sdm.f* form being a virtual adverb clause... serving as predicate of *iw*" (Gardiner *Grammar* 461). This opinion is not far removed from that of Polotsky. From her study on the constructions attested with the particle *mk* in comparison with those attested with *iw* and '*h*'.n, Johnson concludes that *iw* is also a particle but a special one. In her words, "In all these examples [i.e., with *iw* and '*h*'.n from Middle Kingdom Letters], it is the combination *particle plus circumstantial* which forms the main clause and the particle has a specific syntactic function in the sentence. The circumstantial clause without the preceding particle is not a complete sentence and has quite different meaning and usage from the unit *particle plus circumstantial* (i.e., the compound verb form)" (Johnson *The Use of the Particle mk* 74). Indeed, the similarities should not obscure the differences. See further below and fn. 73.

“Standard Theory”. I wish to restate here my strong disagreement with this unfortunately popular view.⁴⁷

The syntactic status of *h'.n-* is parallel to that of *iw* phrase, as Polotsky repeatedly showed.⁴⁸ A difference is that whereas *iw* reflects the position of the speaker (Polotsky calls it “egocentric”), *h'.n-* indicates, in terms of text-linguistics, a sequence of events in the past. I would say that *iw* is characteristic of direct speech (in the different temporal axes, viz. present, past and future) while *h'.n-* is characteristic of historical narrative (in the axis of the past; §16 below).

The status of *mk* is also similar to the extent that many constructions attested after *iw-* and after *h'.n-* are also attested after it.⁴⁹ However, two basic differences should be taken into consideration. First, both *iw-* and *h'.n-* govern a suffix personal pronoun while *mk* governs a dependent personal pronoun; second, neither *iw-* nor *h'.n-* forms a complete sentence with the following pronoun or noun⁵⁰ while *mk* does in certain cases. Under these circumstances, a fresh analysis of the constructions with *mk* is in order.

⁴⁷ See my review of Ritter's *Verbalsystem*. Reservations concerning “the unfortunate designation ‘Standardtheorie’” are also voiced by Satzinger–Shisha-Halevy *The Snark* 173. Curiously enough, Depuydt himself, who was the first to use this designation in 1983 (Depuydt *Standard Theory*), in a later paper treats Polotsky and “the Standard Theory” separately (Depuydt *On Distinctive and Isolating Emphasis* 50–51; in fn. 55 the author refers to F. Junge and W. Schenkel in this connection).

⁴⁸ Polotsky *Les transpositions* §3.8. Also see §8 above.

⁴⁹ See list in Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §41, and §3 above.

⁵⁰ Satzinger postulates a minimal construction *#iw + noun#* (see his contribution in this volume); however, in order to prove it one should have clear examples of this type of sentence similar to *mk wi* “here am I”. An example quoted by him is *Neferti IIb* (Helck *Die Prophezeiung* 12): *i[w] hry-hbt ' n B'st, ity nb.n, Nfr.ty rn.f* “Da ist ein Großer Vorlesepriester der Bastet, Herrscher, unser Herr, mit Namen Nfr.tj” (Helck 12: text; *ibid.* 16: translation). An exactly parallel, “normal” existential construction with *iw wn* is *Westc. 6,26: iw wn nds, Ddi rn.f* “there was a commoner, whose name was Djedi” (Gardiner *Grammar* §107,2 No. 3). Indeed, sporadic instances of this “abnormal” construction may be found; see, e.g., *CT III 134f T3Be* (S1C and T2Be have a different text); however, in a similar passage from the same coffin T3Be, *CT III 134i*, an adverbial complement is present to complement the *iw* construction as expected. As “an extremely rare case in the classical language” of the construction *#iw + noun#*, Loprieno *Ancient Egypt* 122 and 167 quotes *CT IV 29e: iw sšp, dd N pn, iw knh dd N pn*, which he translates, “‘There is light (*sšp*),’ says the Deceased; ‘There is darkness (*knh*),’ says the Deceased”, i.e., he takes both *sšp* and *knh* as substantive subjects of *iw*; however, Schenkel *Tübinger Einführung* 215 (last example) correctly analyses *sšp* and *knh* as old perfectives in an impersonal use of a construction *#iw + old perfective#* with adjectival meaning (Gardiner *Grammar* §467), and translates, “Es ist hell, wenn dieser NN. (es) sagt; es ist finster, wenn dieser NN. (es) sagt”. Therefore, Loprieno’s deduction is more than doubtful: “This seems to prove that, at least historically, the origin of *jw* has to be sought in a verbal lexeme indicating existence: ‘there is’, ‘it happens that’, and the like” (p. 167). Differently, Gardiner thought that *iw* is followed by an adverbial predicate and therefore needs a subject, either personal or impersonal (see fn. 46), and remarks: “It is hardly possible to regard *šdm.f* in *iw šdm.f* as a virtual noun clause acting as the subject of *iw*, for this would yield the meaning ‘that he hears is’, i.e., exists or comes about; we have no warrant for a use of *iw* with existential meaning” (Gardiner *Grammar* §461, Obs. 1).

With *mk* two distinct structures are attested: type (1) with two elements, e.g., *mk wi* “here I am”,⁵¹ i.e., with #(a) *mk* = predicate⁵² + (b) substantival element (dependent personal pronoun or a noun) = subject# making up a complete, minimal presentative sentence, and type (2) with three elements, in which the substantival element of the basic construction type (1) is specified in different ways by an extra element (c). This situation can be represented as follows:

(1) (a) particle predicate + (b) substantival subject

mk + *wi*

(2) (a) particle predicate + (b) substantival Subject + (c) specification

mk + pronoun / noun + (c) specification.

A fairly complete list of the constructions attested in the basic structure type (1) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject, or complete sentence# is as follows:

(1.1) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject#: e.g. (a) *mk* (b) *wi* “here am I”;⁵³ (a) *mk* (b) *bi'yt hprt m rk it.k* “here is (lit. ‘behold’) a wonder which happened in the time of your father” (*Westc.* 6,15); (a) *mk* (b) *ddt r sš n t'ty* “here is what is said of the vizier’s chief scribe”,⁵⁴

(1.2) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject = complete sentence with *pw*#: e.g. (a) *mk* (b) *dhr pw* “see, it is bitter” (*Urk.* IV,1087,9); (a) *mk* (b) *irrt.sn*

⁵¹ Gardiner *Grammar* §234, p. 179 n. 3. Other examples are listed in Meeks *Année lexicographique* III/108.

⁵² Although it is probable that *mk* was originally composed of “an obsolete imperative” *m* as the predicate + a “suffix-pronoun” *k* as the subject (Gardiner *Grammar* §234), it behaves like a deictic particle that presents, as it were, before the eyes of the listener / reader a person or an item of information that is relevant for the actual speech situation. Grammatically, *mk* is the predicate and the following pronoun or noun is the subject. In this respect, *mk* exactly parallels Greek ἰδοὺ / ἴδε with nominative: “ἴδε with nom[inative] as object is explained by the fact that, like ἰδοὺ, ἴδε has become a stereotyped particle of exclamation. So have ἄγε and φέρε...” (Moulton *A Grammar* III/231). A similar analysis applies to Biblical Hebrew *hinnēnī* “here I am”, where *hinnēh* is the predicate and the suffix-pronoun *-nī* is the subject (see §17,4 below), as well as to Italian “Eccomi!”. This kind of sentence is explicitly presentative (§11). A similar opinion is found in Loprieno *Ancient Egypt* 168: “The other frequent initial particle [besides *iw*] is *mk* ‘look, behold’ (...). It too can introduce adverbial, pseudo-verbal, or verbal sentences, conveying a ‘presentative’ function (see Hebrew *hinneh*), i.e., relating the event described in the predication not, like *iw*, to the speaker’s sphere, but rather to the moment or the situation in which the speech act is performed”. The author brings *Sh.* S. 106-108 as an example. However, while the pragmatic function of *mk* is correctly recognized by Loprieno, its syntactic function is not.

⁵³ The examples quoted here are taken from different sections of Gardiner *Grammar* (§§149,1; 234; 324; 414,1; 422,1), Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §43, David *m.k + forme nominale* 119, and from a handwritten notebook of examples by Polotsky himself. In translations I make use of Simpson *The Literature*.

⁵⁴ Faulkner *The Installation* 22 translates as follows: “See men say of the vizier’s chief scribe”, which is a more appropriate rendering of *mk tw dd.tw* (see pattern 2.4 below). In this text from the tomb of Rekhmirē at Thebes, *mk* is frequently used with the pragmatic function of calling the listener / reader’s attention to important items in the instruction.

pw r šhtyw.sn “see, that is what they are accustomed to do to peasants of theirs” (*Peas.* B 1,44–45);

(1.3) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject = a prospective *sđm.f#*: e.g., (a) *mṭn* (b) *ir.i šmw* “see, I will spend the summer here” (*pHeqanakht* 2,29);⁵⁵ (a) *mk* (a) *wnn rn.k r nḥḥ* “behold, your name shall exist for ever” (*Siut* 4,23);⁵⁶

(1.4) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject = a non-verbal negative sentence#: e.g., (a) *mk* (b) *nn km n ḏd n.k st* “see, there is no profit for him who says it to you” (*Peas.* B 1,203–204); (a) *mk* (b) *nn s(t) m ‘ft qsnt* “see, it is not a burdensome ‘squeeze’” (*pHeqanakht* 1,12–13);⁵⁷

(1.5) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject = a non-“emphatic” subject *sđm.n.f#*.⁵⁸ e.g., (a) *mk* (b) *pḥ.n.n ḥnw* “see, we have reached home” (*Sh. S.* 2); (a) *mk* (b) *h’b.n.i ḥr ḥn.k r imy-r pr* “behold, I have written (lit. ‘sent’) commending you to the steward” (*P. Kah.* 31,19);⁵⁹

(1.6) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject = a passive *sđmw.f#*: e.g., (a) *mk* (b) *ms(w) n.k ḥrdw 3* “behold, three children have been born to you” (*Westc.* 11,5).⁶⁰

A list of the constructions attested in the basic structure type (2) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject + (c) specification# is as follows:

(2.1) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject = dependent pronoun + (c) specification = adverbial phrase#: e.g., (a) *mk* (b) *wi* (c) *r-gs.k* “see, I am at your side” (*Sh. S.* 108);

(2.2) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject + (c) specification = preposition + infinitive#: e.g., (a) *mk* (b) *tw* (c) *ḥr ḏd* “behold, one is saying” (*P. Kah.* 28,36);

(2.3) #(a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject + (c) specification = old

⁵⁵ Johnson *The Use of the Particle mk* 79, E 24b. An example of the equivalent construction #*mk* + dependent personal pronoun + preposition *r* + infinitive# is E 16a *ibid.* 76.

⁵⁶ Translation of *Siut* 4,23 by Gardiner *Grammar* 178. The *wnn.f* form is prospective *sđm.f* rather than “forme emphatique” as labeled by David *m.k* + *forme nominale* 119 (see fn. 5 above). A similar type #*mk* + *sđm.f* of an adjective-verb# is *P. Kah.* 15.1, 30/6–8: *mk qsn irrt m ḥnw y ḥt nbt* “see, what is being done in the Residence is more painful than anything” (Johnson *The Use of the Particle mk* 80, E 26).

⁵⁷ Johnson *The Use of the Particle mk* 80, E 25c.

⁵⁸ This *sđm.n.f* functions as the grammatical subject of the preceding predicate *mk*. As such it does not carry the “emphatic” function of highlighting a following adverbial predicate. Contrast type (2.7) below.

⁵⁹ Of this type are E 14–15 and 17b–18 in Johnson *The Use of the Particle mk* 76–77.

⁶⁰ Examples of the equivalent construction #*mk* + dependent personal pronoun / noun + old perfective# are E 16b and E 19a in Johnson *The Use of the Particle mk* 76–77.

perfective#: e.g., (a) *mtn* (b) *nb ht* (c) *sdr(w) ib(w)* “behold, the (former) possessor of wealth passes the night thirsty” (*Adm.* 7,10).

(2.4) # (a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantival subject + (c) specification = circumstantial *sdm.f*#: ⁶¹ e.g., (a) *mk* (b) *s(y)* (c) *iw.s m-ḥsf.k, Imnt Nfrt m-ḥsf.k* “Siehe sie kommt dir entgegen, ‘der schöne Westen’ (als Göttin gedacht) dir entgegen” (*Pyr.* 282b); ⁶² (a) *mk* (b) *wi* (c) *šm.i r.i, pḥty.k m-‘.i* “see, I go off with your strength in my hand”; (a) *mk* (b) *tw* (c) *dd.tw* “see, men say” (*Urk.* IV,1090,15); ⁶³

(2.5) # (a) *mk* = predicate + (b) substantive introduced by *ir* “as to” (*casus pendens*)⁶⁴ + (c) specification = main sentence#: e.g., (a) *mk* (b) *ir sr sdm m wn-ḥr*, (c) *smi mw t’w n irrt.f nbt* “see, as for the magistrate who judges in public, water and wind make report of all that he does” (*Urk.* IV,1088,8–9; cf. Faulkner *The Installation* 22 and 24); (a) *mk* (b) *ir t’ty*, (c) *mk nn* (read *n*) *bnri is pw* “behold, as to the (office of) vizier, behold it is not pleasant” (*Urk.* IV,1087,7–8);

(2.6) # (a) *mk* = predicate + (b) *sdm.f* introduced by *ir* “if” (protasis) + (c) specification = main sentence (apodosis) #: e.g., (a) *mk* (b) *ir di s snd.f ḥḥ n sp*,

⁶¹ According to Gardiner, “With *sdm.f* form, curiously enough, the event which *mk* serves to picture is nearly always, not present, but future” (§234, No. 13–15). Of the three examples he quotes only one is of the type under discussion, i.e., *mk ib.k šsm.f n.k sw* (*Urk.* IV,519,14), which Gardiner translates: “behold, thy heart shall guide thee for thyself”; however, a translation in the present seems quite possible: “see, your heart guides you, your members obey to you...”. The other two examples are of type *mk* + prospective *sdm.f* (see type 1.3 above) and do not pose any problem. On the contrary, a pattern #subject + prospective *sdm.f* does constitute a problem because, as far as I know, it is attested only after the non-enclitic particle *in* “indeed” (Gardiner *Grammar* §227,2). See §15 below, type (1e).

⁶² Sethe *Übersetzung* I/299. In one of Polotsky’s notebooks reference is made to a parallel passage in *CT* VI 232g, where we find in (c) an old perfective instead of *sdm.f*: (a) *mk* (b) *s(y)* (c) *iy.t(i) m-ḥsf.i, Imnt Nfrt iy.t(i) m-ḥsf.i* “see, she has come to meet me; the Beautiful West has come to meet me” (Faulkner *The Ancient Egyptian CT* II/202). This substitution means, on the one hand, that the two constructions play a similar circumstantial role; on the other hand, however, they convey a different time setting — present (“see she is coming”) in the *Pyr.* text, versus past (“see, she has come”) in that of the *CT*. The paradigmatic substitution of *sdm.f* with the old perfective proves, along with other arguments, the syntactic status of circumstantial *sdm.f*. On the same page of his notebook, Polotsky collected similar cases of circumstantial *sdm.f* in commutation with the construction #preposition + infinitive#.

⁶³ Another instance of this sentence is presented as fragmentary in *Urk.* IV,1091.11 but is almost complete in Faulkner *The Installation* fig. 2, line 16.

⁶⁴ *Casus pendens*, or extraposed or topicalized element, functions as protasis, e.g., in the example quoted here: “see, as for the magistrate who judges in public = if we talk of the magistrate...”; see §15 below. This case is basically the same as the next (2.6) with *ir* + *sdm.f*, i.e., the *sdm.f* is used as a noun, “as for the fact that shall hear = if he shall hear”. As Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* 5–6 fn. 9 observed, “The form after *jr* (*jn-*, *m’-*) must be a ‘that-form’, witness the negation by *tm*, but it is neither the *mrr.f* form (*jnn-*) nor the prospective form (*jnt-*, *m’-* / *m’n-*...). The details are still very obscure”.

(c) *iw nkt im.f n 'd' m rh n rmt* “but if a man inspires excessive respect (lit. ‘behold, if a man gives the fear of him a million times’), there is something wrong about him, in the opinion of the people” (*Urk.* IV,1091,8–9; cf. Faulkner *The Installation* 22 and 27);

(2.7) # (a) *mk* = predicate + (b) extraposed substantival element (*casus pendens*, or protasis)⁶⁵ + (c) specification = substantival verb form functioning as main sentence (apodosis) with “emphatic” function#: ⁶⁶ e.g., (a) *mk* (b) *ntr*, (c) *rdi.n.f 'nh.k, in.f tw r iw pn n k'* “behold, as for God, it is by bringing you to this island of a *ka* that he has caused you to live” (*Sh.* S. 113–114).⁶⁷

The above list shows how complex and varied are the constructions attested with *mk*.⁶⁸ I shall try now to classify them in comparison with the constructions attested with *iw* on the basis of definite principles and criteria as far as possible. They are as follows: first, what corresponds to *mk* is *iw.f* or *iw(.f)* or *iw* + a

⁶⁵ This is a case of extraposition or topicalization without an indicator (see §15 below).

⁶⁶ The same pattern, but without any “emphatic” function, is found, e.g., in *Sh.* S. 10–11: (a) *mk rf* (b) *n* (c) *ii.n.n m htp*, (c) *t'.n, ph.n sw* (see fn. 68). Here the *sdm.n.f* is presentative, i.e., announces a piece of information as an item in the news, like in *Sh.* S. 2–3: *mk ph.n.n hnw* of type (1.5).

⁶⁷ Cf. Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* 22, who observes: “However, these examples are not conclusive”. The probability of such “emphatic” verb forms after *mk* is considerably strengthened by examples with distinctive *mrr.f* forms provided by Johnson *The Use of the Particle mk* 79: *mk dd.i wg n.k hr ih* “see, why must I scold you?” (E 21a); *mk dd.k ib.k hft hrw nfr* “see, it is for a holiday that you should take thought” (E 21b). Further, two examples with #*mk* + “emphatic” *sdm.n.f*#, of type (2.7) but without the extraposed element, are given by Johnson, *ibid.*: [*m*]/*tn iy.n.i min' m hntyt*, *ir.n.i 'qw.tn r nfr* “see, it is after I had fixed your rations liberally that I came south here” (E 22); *mk grt iy.n.i min' m hntyt, hsb.n.k n.i qdb n 'ht 13 m it-mh hr [w']t.f* “see, it is after that you reckoned for me the rent of 13 arouas solely in northern barley, that I came south here” (E 23).

⁶⁸ A passage like *Sh.* S. 2–11 shows how the different constructions with *mk* interact with one another in actual texts, beyond individual examples quoted out of context. In this text, the two particles *mk* govern the constructions that follow (this is indicated with a→): (a→) *mk* (b) *ph.n.n hnw* [type 1.5], (b) *šsp hrpw* [type 1.6], (b) *hw mnit* [type 1.6], (b) *h'tt* (c) *rdi.t(i) hr t'* [type 2.3], (b) *rdi hknw* [type 1.6], (b) *dw' ntr* [type 1.6], (b) *s nb* (c) *hr hpt sn-nw.f* [type 2.2], (b) *ist.tn* (c) *ii.t(i) 'd.t(i)* [type 2.3], (b) *nn nhw n mš'.n* [type 1.4], (b) *ph.n.n phwy W'w't* [type 1.5], (b) *sn.n Sn-Mwt* [type 1.5]; (a→) *mk rf* (b) *n* (c) *ii.n m htp* [type 2.7], (b) *t'.n*, (c) *ph.n sw* [type 2.4] “See, we have reached home; the mallet has been taken; the mooring post has been driven in; the prow rope has been set upon the ground; praise has been rendered; God has been thanked; every man embraces his companion; our crew is returned safe; there has been no loss to our troops; we have reached the limits of Wawat; we have passed by Senmut. See then, now we return in peace; we attain our land (lit. ‘our land — we attain it’).” I have revised the translation of Simpson *The Literature* 50–51 in order to show that the different pieces of information follow one upon the other in a sequence, on the same level of communication. Alternatively, in some cases a “pseudo-verbal construction” could be interpreted as circumstantial, e.g., *s nb hr hpt sn-nw.f* could be rendered, “every man embracing his companion”.

substantive, not *iw* alone;⁶⁹ second, on the basis of the criterion of paradigmatic substitution, the elements that occur in the same slot of the sentence have the same function and are basically interchangeable, although, of course they remain distinct;⁷⁰ third, on the basis of this criterion, the different constructions attested after *iw* are all circumstantial, while those attested *immediately* after *mk* are all substantival; fourth, in evaluating the function of both *iw* and *mk* it is necessary to establish whether or not the sentence would be complete without them.

On the basis of these principles and criteria, the constructions with *mk* fall into three categories:

(1) Patterns (1.1–1.6) show the basic structure #(a) particle predicate + (b) substantival subject#. This is the basic structure of the presentative sentence (§11 above), i.e., (a) here is/see/behold = grammatical predicate + (b) X = somebody/something, or the fact that... = a complete sentence, with the function of the subject. The (b) element is, in turn, a dependent pronoun or a noun, a *pw*-construction, a prospective *sdm.f*, a negative construction, a non-“emphatic” *sdm.n.f*, or a passive *sdmw.f*.⁷¹

⁶⁹ This means that *iw* is either followed by its subject or shares the subject of the next verb form; see §12 above.

⁷⁰ An application of this principle is the analysis of the variants of a *CT* formula (see §8 above). Loprieno *Ancient Egypt* 148 criticizes the “strictly substitutional analysis” of the “Standard theory” based on Polotsky’s approach. It is true that “paradigmatic substitution does not justify by itself a homogeneous treatment of... different morphological and semantic realities...”; actually, other criteria need to be involved in order to reach a correct analysis (as an illustration, I would refer to my treatment above of the different constructions with *mk*). In any case, eventual misuse of paradigmatic substitution (see, e.g., fn. 75 below) does not justify the rejection of this fundamental criterion of syntactic analysis. No semantic or pragmatic approach can bypass or supersede actual grammatical and syntactic analysis conducted within a text-linguistic approach. I would therefore hardly recommend a resolute statement such as the following: “In recent years, the limits of this [substitutional] approach have become evident. First of all, the restricted inventory of sentence patterns licensed in Middle Egyptian seems to be at odds with the variety of stylistic forms and devices documented in the classical literature; examples are the semantics of tense and aspect and pragmatic topicalization or focalization phenomena — two areas which are not adequately addressed in the Standard theory” (Loprieno *Ancient Egypt* 148). Even less would I subscribe to the conclusions of Collier *Predication* 64–65, based as they are more on general linguistics than on analysis of the texts. I would rather observe that linguistic theory should adjust to actual grammatical and syntactical analysis, not vice versa. In the same vein, Collier *Grounding* 58 voices his disagreement with “the notion of paradigmatic substitution based on non-verbal parts of speech”, presuming to have demonstrated that “the circumstantial *sdm(=f)/sdm.n(=f)* are not grammatically adverbial, but are simply verbal verb-forms (indeed the ‘ordinary’ verbal forms of Middle Egyptian)...” (*ibid.*). I can only reiterate that strong arguments are available to prove that even when circumstantial *sdm.f* and *sdm.n.f* forms are not grammatically marked as such, they are still circumstantial syntactically (see §12 and fn. 78 below). Further, I would refer to §§13 ff. below for a discussion on new trends.

⁷¹ It will be difficult, if not impossible, to convince anyone that, e.g., type (1.5) (a) *mk* (b) *ph.n.n hnw* is basically different from (a) *iw Wsir* (b) *ph.n.f st.i* (*CT* III 350d, fn. 45) if one does not recognize, on the basis of paradigmatic substitution, that the first belongs to the #(a) predicate

(2) In patterns (2.1–2.4) the basic two-element structure is specified with the addition of a third construction, circumstantial in nature, which is, in turn, an adverbial phrase, a preposition + an infinitive, an old perfective, or a *sdm.f*.

(3) In patterns (2.5–2.6) *mk* is not an integral part of the sentence, which is basically composed of two parts — (b) a topicalized substantive or *sdm.f* functioning as a protasis, and (c) a main sentence functioning as an apodosis. This analysis also applies to pattern (2.7) because an “emphatic” verb form cannot be part of the same sentence with a preceding substantive since it does not play a circumstantial role (differently from *sdm.f* in type 2.4).

From the point of view of the basic structure, *mk* is usually an integral part of the sentences of type (1) because it is their grammatical predicate,⁷² while sentences of type (2) are complete without *mk*.⁷³ This does not mean that *mk* is useless in type (2) either; in fact, it makes the presentative character of the sentence explicit as we shall see in a moment.

Taking into account the constructions attested with *iw* (§3 above), we shall have to say that *iw* is excluded from patterns (1.1–1.6) and (2.1–2.7) but is

+ (b) subject# indicative presentative pattern (§11 above) while the second belongs to the #(a) subject + (b) predicate# indicative predicative pattern (§4 above).

⁷² The adverb “usually” in the sentence above betrays a margin of doubt in the analysis. Actually, while type (1.1) is not a sentence without *mk*, types (1.2–6) are, although their syntactic status would be different, i.e., not presentative but circumstantial or “emphatic”. However, the legends as well as the titles of literary compositions and the initial rubrics of funerary books are implicit presentative sentences in the sense that the grammatical predicate *mk* “here / this is...” does not appear but is implied (see below). This is possible because the presentative sentence is not really predicative (i.e., it does not say anything new = predicate concerning a given topic = subject) but rather conveys a piece of information globally as an item in the news (see §11 above). A non-“emphatic” presentative *sdm.n.f* is strongly suggested by comparing *Sh. S. 2: (a) mk (b) ph.n.n hnw* “see, we have reached home” (quoted above, type 1.5) with *Sh. S. 113: (b) ph.n.k wi* “you have reached me”.

⁷³ Johnson *The Use of the Particle mk* 80 correctly notes the ambiguous status of *mk*, in the sense that “the particle *mk* seems to be a bound element of a unit, with a syntactic function, but at other times not to be bound and to be filling no syntactic function in the following sentence”. The author goes on to say that *mk* “was included by Polotsky in his list of particles and equivalents which are followed by the circumstantial and combine with it to form independent main clause compound constructions”. Note, however, that according to Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §41 the circumstantial combines with *mk* + a dependent pronoun, not with *mk* alone. Further, Polotsky does not posit a complete parallelism between *mk*, on the one side, and *iw* and ‘*h*’.*n*, on the other. In fact, he does not explicitly affirm that the verb form in the construction *mk sdmw.f* is circumstantial and even hypothesizes that, in certain cases at least, an “emphatic” verb form may follow *mk* (see fn. 67 above). For my part, I have argued above that a *sdm.f* or a *sdm.n.f* directly following *mk* (i.e., without a preceding nominal element) is either presentative or “emphatic”, not circumstantial. Therefore, Johnson’s contention that the circumstantial function was originally carried out by *iw*, which was later suppressed when *mk* was added because the two particles are mutually exclusive, postulates a purely hypothetical process, which is ultimately unnecessary and even unlikely because, in its turn, *iw* does not head a circumstantial construction alone, but rather together with a suffix personal pronoun or a noun as I have argued above.

attested in patterns (2.1–2.4).⁷⁴ Because the basic patterns (2.1–2.4) are also attested without either *mk* or *iw*, four possibilities are feasible, e.g., for type (2.1): (a) *mk* (b) *wi* (c) *r-gs.k* = explicit presentative sentence, vs. (a) *iw šdw.k* (b) *m šht* “thy field-plots are in the country” (*Peas.* B 2,65; Gardiner *Grammar* §117,1, p. 93 No. 1) = indicative sentence, vs. (b) *pṛt h’t* (c) *hft wdw.f* “going up and going down happen according to his command” (*Sin.* B 49–50)⁷⁵ = implicit

⁷⁴ Satzinger *Die Protasis* (a) & (b) identifies a “tripartite pattern” with “predicative nucleus/subject/adverbial predicative extension” and a “pseudo-bipartite pattern” with “predicative nucleus/ø ‘subject’/adverbial predicative extension”. The problem is that he does not distinguish between *iw* and *mk*. From my analysis above, it follows that, first, *mk* governs an independent personal pronoun (or a noun), while *iw* governs a suffix personal pronoun (or a noun); second, *mk* can form a complete sentence with a pronoun (or noun) without an adverbial element while *iw* can not; third, *mk* can govern a verb form directly, i.e., without a preceding pronoun (or noun) while *iw* cannot — in any case, *iw* shares the pronoun (or noun) of the following verb form (see fn. 45 above). The conclusion to be drawn, in my view, is that *mk* is a particle, while *iw* is an auxiliary (like *wnn* and ‘*h’.n*’) as Polotsky maintained (§3 above). Therefore, there is no question of a “pseudo-bipartite” pattern. With *iw*, the pattern is always tripartite, while with *mk* both a “real” bipartite pattern and a “real” tripartite pattern are attested. Furthermore, I do not see on what basis Satzinger posits the compound “*jw* + ‘emphatische’ Konstruktion”, given that his exx. 9–12 are, in my view, indicative *iw sdm.n.f* constructions, while his ex. 13 is an “emphatic” *sdm.f* governed by *mk*, not by *iw*, and the verb form in his Ex. 14, with *isṯ*, is uncertain [see Satzinger *Die Protasis* (a) 128 & (b) 273].

⁷⁵ This is part of a description of Sesostri I. Schenkel *Standardtheorie* tries to show that Polotsky’s theory would have been different if his research had started not with a sentence of what he calls type (1): *ii.n.i ṣ’ r nis r.k* “Ich bin hierher gekommen, um dich (im Auftrag meines Vaters Cheops) zu rufen” (*Westc.* 7,20), but rather with his type (2): *mk wi iy.kwi* “Siehe, ich bin gekommen” (*Westc.* 8,12). Having affirmed that in 1944 Polotsky *Études* clarified sentence type (1) and then, in 1965 *Egyptian Tenses*, sentence type (2), Schenkel argues: “Hätte Polotsky seinen zweiten Schritt vor dem ersten getan, gäbe es keine Standardtheorie” (Schenkel *Standardtheorie* 160). On this basis, he proposes his “invertierte Standardtheorie”, i.e., he starts from sentence type (2) and tries to clarify sentence type (1) in view of the former. He repeatedly states that his aim is “wissenschaftsgeschichtlich”, i.e., he wishes to clarify the origin of what Polotsky called the Second Tense from the point of view of the history of language, because he basically accepts its function of stressing the adverbial predicate, e.g., in the example quoted above (*Westc.* 7,20), “Nicht das kommen ist also das wesentliche Neue der Aussage, sondern der Zweck des Kommens” (*ibid.* 141). However, the base of his reasoning appears flawed to me because he starts by comparing the above sentence type (1), which is “emphatic”, with sentence type (3): *hrt.k m pr.k* “Dein Bedarf (ist) in deinem Haus” (*Peas.* B 1,124), which, according to my analysis, is an implicit presentative sentence. In other words, the informational value of the two sentences is not comparable, because type (1) is predicative, while type (3) is not. Actually while Schenkel’s sentence type (3) is also attested with *mk* and *iw*, sentence type (1) is attested with *mk* but not with *iw*. Concerning the seven “Erweiterungen”, or grammatical elements that complement the “Satzkern” or predicate, listed by Schenkel (*Standardtheorie* 145–147), I would say that they are so different syntactically and functionally that the whole list is misleading. In fact the seven “Erweiterungen” are as follow: negations (I); an extraposed subject substantive (II); *iw* (III), which Schenkel calls a “situierende Partikel” (see my discussion on the construction #noun + *sdm.f* in §15 below); an extraposed substantive, not only used as subject (IV); a “verbal Topic”, i.e., a *mrr.f* form with or without a governing preposition (V), a substantive or a “verbal topic” introduced by *ir* “as to” (VI), and a “relationierende Partikel” like *isṯ* “in the meantime” (VII). Pace Schenkel, I would say that this is an example of incorrect use of the principle of functional

presentative sentence, vs. (a) *ib.k* (b) *m ˆ.k* “your heart being in your hand” (Sh. S. 16)⁷⁶ = a circumstantial sentence.

Actually, on basis of the evidence available I tend to think that the presentative sentence can be either explicit or implicit, i.e., with or without *mk*, and in both cases it is an indicative independent sentence; differently, the circumstantial sentence, although externally identical with it, depends on a preceding indicative main sentence. Only the speech situation, or co(n)text, can help distinguish one from the other. A clear case of an implicit presentative sentence is that of “les légendes se rapportant à des personnes figurées”, i.e., the legends, or the explanatory captions accompanying the illustrations. An example (of type 2.4) quoted by Polotsky is: *Mn-ḥpr-Rˁ snq.f mwt.f ˁst* “Thutmosis tétant sa mère Isis” (Polotsky *Les transpositions* 31), lit. “(here/this is) Thutmosis while he sucks his mother Isis”. Other cases of implicit presentative sentences type (1.1) are the titles of literary compositions, e.g., (b) *sbˁyt nt imy-r niwt ˁty Pth-ḥtp* “(here/this is) the teaching of the City Governor and Vizier Ptahhotpe”, or the initial rubrics of the funerary books, e.g., (b) *r n prt r pt* “(here/this is) a spell for ascending to the sky” (CT III 61a), also attested without introductory *r n: prt r pt* “(here/this is a spell for) ascending to the sky” (CT III 62i).⁷⁷

What has been said proves, in my view, that, on the one hand, *mk* has certain similarities to *iw*, but, on the other hand, the constructions with *mk* are much more varied. Therefore, it is not correct to put *mk* and *iw* on the same footing, as some do, or to decide the functions of *iw* on the basis of those of *mk*.⁷⁸

interchangeability, or paradigmatic substitution (see §13 below). Finally, in his “wissenschaftsgeschichtlich” explanation of sentence type (1), *ii.n.i ˁ r nis r.k*, Schenkel, rather boldly, combines the pattern of sentence type (2), *mk wi iy.kwi*, with that of his Ex. (11): *rmm.sn iw.f hr sdm* “Weinen sie: (So) hört er” (*Merikare* C 5,7), as follows: from an original hypothetical sentence **iy.n=i ˁ: iy.kw, r nis r=k* ‘Wenn ich hierher kam: (So) kam ich, um dich zu rufen’, sentence type (1), *ii.n.i ˁ r nis r.k*, came into existence by elision of the second “coming”, which was redundant. Another case of incorrect use of the principle of paradigmatic substitution seems to me Satzinger *Die Protasis* (a) & (b), in which in order to clarify the nature of the verb form *ir sdm.f*, the author studies the different constructions attested in the bipartite and tripartite patterns, and puts on the same level auxiliaries such as *iw* and forms of *wnn*, which govern suffix personal pronouns, and particles such as *mk*, *ist*, the negation *nn* and the relative pronoun *nty*, which govern independent personal pronouns (see fn. 74 above).

⁷⁶ The complete sentence is translated in Simpson *The Literature* 51: “Then you can reply when you are interrogated with self-assurance”.

⁷⁷ See my review of Faulkner *The Ancient Egyptian CT*. Variants with *mrr.f* instead of the infinitive prove the substantival character of *mrr.f* itself; see Polotsky *Les transpositions* §2.4.1, pp. 14–15.

⁷⁸ Therefore, Collier’s choice in *The Circumstantial sdm(f)* of analysing the constructions with *mk* in order to deny the existence of the adverbial transposition of the verb is unfortunate, and his deductions are hardly sound. Collier *Predication* restates the same view on the basis of linguistic speculations, rather than actual analysis of texts, in confrontation with F. Junge. Indeed, he is more familiar with Junge’s doctrine than with that of Polotsky, as David *m.k + forme nominale* has observed. Further, Johnson *The Use of the Particle mk* 76–79 has addressed numerous

13 Assessment of New Trends

In 1986, a conference on Egyptian grammar was held in Helsingør, Denmark, with the aim of assessing the current state of research. The title of the conference was *Crossroad: Chaos or the Beginning of a New Paradigm*. Two more such conferences were held (in 1990 in Los Angeles and in 1994 at Yale). From the proceedings (*Crossroad I, II, and III*), it appears that the so-called “Polotskian paradigm”, or “Standard Theory”, was at the centre of the discussion as from the first conference. It seems that in the second conference the debate became more heated, but it eventually calmed down in the third.⁷⁹

Some of the participants in the first conference thought that the “Standard Theory” should be thrown away, while others thought that it should be kept and eventually revised. Among the main issues raised was the necessity of going beyond the sentence and looking at its (exterior) “context” (or extra-linguistic factors) as well as its (interior) “co-text” (or sequence of sentences, etc.). One of the most recurrent objections to Polotsky's approach maintained that it was too syntactic and not sufficiently textually oriented. Loprieno, for instance, noted a strong “influence of a post-structuralist context in the field of general linguistics...”. He described the situation prevailing among Egyptologists at the time (specifically since 1979) by pointing out “the «discourse» character of many modern productions... and, generally speaking, a positive concern about diaphrasal features—what is now labelled «context grammar»... or «discourse analysis»..., or «pragmatics»... etc.”.⁸⁰ In general, the “structuralist approach” of Polotsky came under widespread criticism. As Loprieno noted:

examples showing that, unlike *iw*, both circumstantial and nominal forms of the conjugated verb are attested after *mk*, not to mention the difference concerning the personal pronoun, which appears in the dependent form after *mk*, while it appears in the suffix form after *iw* (see above).

⁷⁹ This is the impression one gets from reading the concluding remarks of the three papers by Johnson “*Focussing*”, Junge *How to Study*, and Loprieno *As a Summary*, respectively. In the words of Loprieno, “In this respect, one can notice a marked evolution since the first *Crossroad*: while syntax, under the pressure of the emerging post-Polotskian debate, was the main area of interest both in Helsingør 1986 and Los Angeles 1990, Yale 1994 has shown the appropriation by Egyptologists of broader aspects of grammatical research. The debate on the Standard theory has been replaced by, or better expanded into, a discussion on the role and the limits of Egyptian as a case study for general linguistic investigation... In conclusion, I would like to stress... that the debate on the adequacy of the Standard theory has lost its virulence, and a form of reorganization of the models underlying our analysis of Egyptian syntax seems now to be in place, although the specific features of the emerging new models are still quite fluid” (Loprieno, op.cit 369, 382).

⁸⁰ Loprieno *Egyptian Grammar* 255; see critical remarks by Shisha-Halevy *The Narrative Verbal System* 250. Callender *Discourse* introduces into Egyptian the fourfold distinction of “discourse”—narrative, expository, procedural and hortatory — that is rather common among American linguists, a distinction that I did not find useful for Biblical Hebrew (Niccacci *On the Hebrew Verbal System* 119). In my opinion, this genre-based distinction is not really helpful in syntactic analysis, simply because the same verb forms are used in more than one genre of discourse.

Structuralism in its different shapes (*pars pro toto* Polotsky 1976 [*Les transpositions*]) has surely proved and is still proving very powerful in Egyptology, having also been able to incorporate at least two transformational attempts (Callender 1975 [*Middle Egyptian*] and Junge 1978 [*Syntax*]). But if we have met in Helsingør, it is primarily because in recent times—from 1979 onward—scholars have felt increasing difficulty in accepting all the implications of the structuralist model. I identify the origin of these difficulties in the emerging *consciousness* of a *textual dimension* of Egyptian grammatical phenomena...⁸¹

To this I would object, at least, because one can hardly say that Junge kept to the model of Polotsky, as I have shown above (§12). Loprieno himself, despite his declared intention of not dismissing Polotsky altogether, accepts Junge's analysis that the basic sentence consists of two noun phrases, that all kinds of *sdm.f* are verbal and that *iw* is a particle, and thus lets the whole Polotskian theory collapse.

Concerning the recurrent objection that Polotsky's approach is too bound to the single sentence and disregards the text as a sequence of sentences (as in the above quotation of Loprieno), I would observe that what is implied here is a discussion between opposite methods that have been labelled "bottom-up" vs. "top-down".⁸² Like Polotsky, I also adopted a basically bottom-up approach. We need to remember that Egyptian, like Biblical Hebrew, is a dead language, and no competent speaker is available; therefore a top-down methodology is risky. We have to learn a dead language from a careful reading of good texts, starting from selected passages that can help us detect the function of the different

⁸¹ Loprieno *Egyptian Grammar* 255–256. More recently, Loprieno *Ancient Egyptian* 163 wrote: "The difference between the linguistic levels of clause vs. discourse has not played any tangible role in the Standard theory, which – as one will recall – was primarily interested in the sentence level". As an example of his approach, Loprieno examines exx. (92) *Pt.* 7–19, (93) *Peas.* B 1,135–137, and (94) *Sh.* S. 2–7. These texts are really appropriate to show how elements of the language open an initial text segment. However, I did not see the reason why, e.g., in Ex. (92) *ity nb.i tni hpr(w)* "Sovereign (...), my lord! Age (...) has showed up...", *tni hpr(w)* is, in his view, a main sentence and not a subordinate one simply because it is not introduced by a particle of "initiality". The fact that *tni hpr(w)* comes after "the initial vocative phrase 'Sovereign my lord'" does not make it "paratactically annexed to" it (*ibid.* 164) because a vocative, even when it is found at the opening of a direct speech, is not its actual beginning. I would say that the three passages quoted by Loprieno are examples of implicit (exx. 92–93) or of explicit (Ex. 94) presentative sentences (see §11 above). Further, because I conducted a similar analysis of *Sh.* S. 2–11 (i.e., the same text as that of Loprieno's Ex. 94, but with more extended discussion; see fn. 68 above) on the basis of Polotsky's theory, I would say that Loprieno's critique of the "Standard Theory" does not apply to Polotsky. It might rather apply to F. Junge; actually, more than once I have had the impression that his criticism is directed against Junge, rather than against Polotsky.

⁸² The opposite approach is advocated by Eyre *Approaches*; see remarks by Johnson "Focussing" 403. I have discussed this issue as far as Biblical Hebrew is concerned in *On the Hebrew Verbal System* 118.

sentence types *in the text*. This means studying each sentence, not in isolation, but in relationship with the other sentences to which it is linked. In my opinion, only a grammar established by means of careful and flexible text-linguistic research can be a firm basis for higher-level discourse analysis (see §16 below).

As for Polotsky, I would say that his research is certainly concerned with the sentence, and rightly so, also because Egyptian is so rich and obscure that one needs to start from small units. However, I know from direct experience that his analysis of the sentence was based on a strong consciousness of the text as an organized structure of communication. This is made visible in the terminology that he uses. For instance, he speaks of “initial” vs. “non-initial” verb forms, on the one hand, and of continuation, circumstantial and prospective verb forms, on the other (§3 above). On the basis of these criteria a reading of complete texts can be done, and a suitable high-level linguistic analysis can be developed.

Let us consider what Polotsky said at a symposium on the “Bible and Ancient Egypt” held at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mount Scopus, in April 1984:

In order to show that contrasts, alternations, — in short, all kinds of syntactic relationships, are real and not invented by grammarians, they should be documented by examples in which *the related features occur alongside one another in actual context*.⁸³

Indeed, our duty is “to get a ‘real’ language and to avoid ‘doing violence’ to the texts as we translate them”, as required by the participants in the Helsingør Conference;⁸⁴ however, it is also our duty not to “do violence” to the syntax of Egyptian in the name of extra-linguistic or general-linguistic tenets.⁸⁵ The task ahead of us is, in my opinion, to carefully progress from the syntactical analysis of sentences in the text, to higher-level discourse-linguistic or text-linguistic analysis. One level need not and should not exclude the other. However, again I wish to emphasize that syntactic analysis is the basis for higher-level linguistic investigations.⁸⁶

⁸³ Polotsky *A Note* 158; italics added. On the basis of Polotskian theory a “macrosyntax”, or “narrative syntax” can be outlined as it appears in Shisha-Halevy *The Narrative Verbal System* 250–251 (in confrontation with Doret *The Narrative Verbal System*); yet, according to the same Shisha-Halevy, Polotsky did not possess a consciousness of the text as such (see fn. 90 below).

⁸⁴ Johnson “*Focussing*” 409. Ironic comments on “some Egyptological translations” which, as Loprieno *Egyptian Grammar* 258–259 put it, are lacking in “what makes a *texture* out of a mere sequence of sentences”, seem to have become rather fashionable among grammarians. See also remarks by Junge *A Study* 194–196 on “Emphasis inflation and counter hypothesis” (= Junge *Emphasis* 16–18).

⁸⁵ As did Ritter *Das Verbalsystem*; see my review of this volume.

⁸⁶ I personally adopt the text-linguistic approach outlined by H. Weinrich (see §16 below), an author highly esteemed by Polotsky (see Polotsky *A Note* 157).

Another recurrent objection to the Polotskian theory is “a lack of verifiability” on the morphological level.⁸⁷ Polotsky himself was, of course, well aware of this problem, mainly because of the insufficient intelligibility of morphology in Middle Egyptian writing systems. However, his argument was based on criteria other than morphology, especially the functional interchangeability of the verb forms and their correspondent negative system.⁸⁸

I believe that, on the one hand, pointing to the inadequacy of morphology and explicit markers for identifying the different classes of the verb forms posited by Polotsky and, on the other hand, distrust of the principle of functional interchangeability, or paradigmatic substitution, and increasing interest in general linguistics have resulted in a situation that, in my view, resembles chaos more than any “beginning of a new paradigm”.⁸⁹ Actually, a good number of scholars here and there hold views that are reminiscent of Polotsky, while at the same time rejecting or disregarding basic categories of his theory, such as the distinction of the parts of speech substantive / adjective / adverb with their respective verb forms,⁹⁰ and the nature of *iw* and *‘h’ .n*. It seems that they adopt

⁸⁷ According to Depuydt *New Horizons* 403–405, “subject and predicate do not describe empirically verifiable linguistic signals”. He suggests, instead, “property”, or “that which is attributed”, instead of predicate, and “the constituent to which this property is attributed”, instead of subject. However, I do not see this proposal as an improvement simply because “property” can hardly be said to be more “empirically verifiable” than the time-honored categories of subject and predicate.

⁸⁸ In addition to Polotsky’s main writings, I refer here to his *Randbemerkungen*, a review article of Schenkel *Die altägyptische Suffixkonjugation*. This paper is essentially a reaffirmation of the three classes of the grammatical elements in Egyptian—substantive, adjective and adverb (see §1 above), and a critique of Schenkel’s “Nomina-actionis-Theory” on the origin of the verb forms (see on this point also the critique of Hintze *Überlegungen* 61–72). Despite reservations raised against Polotsky’s view of the Second Tenses by Shisha-Halevy *Coptic Grammatical Categories* 63–64, Polotsky reaffirmed his theory of “transposition” in Coptic. This theory presupposes, of course, a neat distinction of the three classes of grammatical categories of speech (Polotsky *Grundlagen* I/1–8). In principle, Shisha-Halevy’s distrust of theory, or of “synthesis”, specifically of “pre-fabricated, pre-analytic entities” in grammar (*ibid.* 16), is sound. However, his negative pronouncement, even if it is valid for Coptic, need not affect the speech categories as such. As an alternative to this “theory / synthesis” concerning the basic parts of speech, Shisha-Halevy proposes “structurally conceived categories or category groupings and role relationships: ‘form-classes’ defined by position and commutation” (*ibid.* 16). Yet, I hardly understand how it is possible to identify structural categories or groupings if not on the basis of a theory. Do position and commutation not also require a specific understanding of function(s)? For a discussion of Shisha-Halevy’s approach see Depuydt *New Horizons*.

⁸⁹ The preliminary note in Johnson *Focussing* 401 applies, more or less, to myself: “The following remarks are those of a person who began studying ancient Egyptian as a structuralist and generative or transformational grammarian and who has not had the opportunity in the last few years to become familiar with all the complaints registered by linguists against those approaches or to digest fully the various theoretical systems being used to replace them”.

⁹⁰ Shisha-Halevy *Coptic Grammatical Categories* 63–64 summarizes his main reservations concerning Polotsky’s view of the Second Tenses. He declares himself “agnostic about the alleged

random solutions *à la Polotsky* according to their taste and *ad-hoc* interpretations without claiming any coherence, system or theory. Still other scholars profess total distrust and seem to describe Egyptian as a “primitive language”.⁹¹ Others look for other ways or criteria of analysis such as “thought couplets” or verse structures that in my view override plain syntactic analysis.⁹² Even more scholars invoke general-linguistic categories such as theme/rheme, topic/comment and apply them to Egyptian without proper syntactic analysis of texts. I had this impression, e.g., while reading Junge *A Study* 201–204 on the “‘pairing of foci’ in balanced sentences (‘Wechselsatz’)”, as he applies the situation of English to that of Egyptian (= Junge *Emphasis* 24–26).

substantival nature of the form”, and on p. 73 he writes that “the nominalness of the theme is not incontestably established”. Frankly, I do not see why Polotsky’s “statement (of the nom. nature of the form) is... circular” (*ibid.* 64). Shisha-Halevy also criticizes the association of the Second Tense with the Bipartite pattern. Indeed, “the Second-Tense modifier construction [i.e., the adverbial predicate, if I understand correctly] is only one in a list of at least five major patterns...” (*ibid.*) as Polotsky himself recognized as he spoke of “emplois abusifs”, or of “extension of the basic function”; Polotsky, however, remarked that “it is not in the least suggested that they should ‘be dismissed as improper uses’. They can be ‘dismissed’ only in the sense that they do not invalidate the definition of the basic function” (Polotsky *Coptic Conjugation* 254). A further reservation by Shisha-Halevy concerns a certain underestimation of the “macrosyntactic aspect” because, in his view, Polotsky “nowhere formalizes the context (or rather the cotext, i.e., the syntactically and not merely situationally relevant segment of the text) as a part of an ultra-clausal pattern...” (*ibid.*). On the last point see my comment above in this section.

⁹¹ Eyre *Was Ancient Egypt* opposes the “syntactic mode” of the “Standard Theory” to the more “pragmatic mode” of Gardiner’s grammar. See critical remarks in Junge *How to Study* 398–400. In an appendix (*ibid.* 407–425), Junge discusses the positions of a number of colleagues (J. Allen, A. Loprieno, D. Sweeney, Th. Ritter, and P. Vernus). Further, Satzinger *May Themes Follow* 293 observes that “authors use these terms [i.e., pragmatics, focus, topic, etc.] in a variety of meanings”, while Sweeney *What is a Rhetorical Question?* 331 explicitly states: “I wrote this paper as an experiment, a departure from my normal structuralist approach, to see whether starting out from a purely pragmatic viewpoint would give interesting results for Egyptian linguistics. In the end my results are negative; I don’t think we can say anything about the syntax of rhetorical questions [i.e., the issue of the author’s paper]. I suspect that the syntactic form of rhetorical questions is dictated not by their force as speech acts but by their verbal or non-verbal constituents”.

⁹² The position of Foster *Thought Couplets* (and earlier studies of the same author) have been justly criticized by Greig *The sdm=f* 276: “Foster’s analysis appears at times to be almost entirely translation-based, distinguishing only the criterion of whether or not a verbal form can be ‘read’ or translated in a way which seems semantically satisfactory to the individual taste of the translator”. Foster is also criticized by Zonhoven *Polotsky*, although in his analysis of Sinuhe, Zonhoven follows the “versification of Foster” (*ibid.* 58): “This complexity [of co-ordinate and subordinate clauses] goes in certain narrative sequences in Sinuhe far beyond the purported simplicity of the grammatical selfcontainedness of the thought couplet structure of Foster, who shows little concern for the analysis of organisation in larger semantic units and their syntactic interconnections” (*ibid.* 84).

14 *Subject–Predicate, Topic–Comment, Theme–Rheme,
Emphasis / Stress / Betonung*

A lot of discussion—and confusion, I am afraid—prevails in this field. A major reason for this confusion is, in my opinion, the fact that different levels of the language are envisaged by scholars without any clear indication thereof.⁹³ Personally, I speak of subject-predicate at the level of the sentence. At this level, the subject is the given information and the predicate is the new information. We need to state from the beginning that a verb need not automatically be the predicate, and a substantive or a non-verbal element need not automatically be the subject; in fact, new information may be conveyed by the verb, as expected, as well as by any non-verbal element, as not expected, and the type of sentence changes accordingly. Further, at sentence level, the subject is the same as topic and theme, while the predicate is the same as comment and rheme (see further §15 below).

In my view, the classic distinction between “particulars” and “universals” is still valid although modern scholars disregard it.⁹⁴ “Particulars”, such as proper names, pronouns and substantives, are expected to function as subjects, while “universals”, such as verbs, adjectives, common and abstract substantives, are expected to function as predicates. When this is the case, the sentence is plain, or unmarked; when the opposite is the case, the sentence is “cleft”, or marked. With reference to the above distinction between indicative and “emphatic” verb forms (also called first tenses and second tenses, respectively; see §§3–4), indicative verb forms constitute plain sentences while “emphatic” verb forms constitute marked or cleft sentences. In the cleft sentence, the usual roles are reversed, i.e., what is expected to be the predicate is demoted to the role of the subject and what is expected to be the subject is promoted to the role of the predicate.⁹⁵

⁹³ Among the different authors who dealt with this complicated issue, I mention Junge *How to Study Egyptian Grammar*, and Satzinger *May Themes Follow*.

⁹⁴ See exposition in Lyons *Introduction* §8.1.3.

⁹⁵ I posit a basic convergence of “emphasis” with predicate, or “rheme”, or new information, and of “non-emphasis” with subject, or “theme”, or given information, but several grammarians think differently. E.g., Doret *Cleft-sentence* 58 writes as follows: “Au niveau grammatical, elles [i.e., the types of cleft sentence with *in* + noun or with *ink*] présentent la succession sujet (nom / pronom) + prédicat (participe / *sdm.w.f*). Au niveau énonciatif, c’est le sujet qui est le porteur du rhème, et l’ordre sera donc marqué, dans la mesure où il n’y a pas correspondance entre les deux niveaux, correspondance basée sur l’affinité sujet / thème et prédicat / rhème”. However, let us consider Doret’s Ex. (1) *CT V 338c: in N pn* (var. *ink*) *šd sw m ‘wt Hw* “(Et voilà que cet N / Je navigue dans cette barque sur les canaux de Hotep:) c’est cet N / moi qui l’ai tirée (i.e., la barque) des membres de Chou / Hou” (Doret *Cleft-sentence* 65). It seems to me that what carries the “rheme”, or the new information, is indeed the nominal element introduced by *in*, i.e., *N pn / ink*; however, this element can hardly be called subject in a marked sentence like this, in which the new element is *who* took away the ship, not the taking away itself. In other words, the usual roles

In this context, we can understand the meaning of “Emphasis / Stress / Betonung”. At the level of the sentence, they are equivalent—all related to the predicate. In a plain sentence, “Emphasis / Stress / Betonung” falls on the verb or on a “universal” term that is expected in such a role, while in a marked or cleft sentence, it falls on a “particular” term that is not expected in such a role.⁹⁶

As mentioned above (§11), a distinction needs to be made between grammatical and syntactical levels. The term “grammatical” designates the components of the subordinate sentence, while the term “syntactical” designates the components of the super-ordinate sentence. Referring back to the diagram in §12 concerning the *iw sdm.f* construction, *iw* is the *grammatical* predicate and the suffix *.f* is the *grammatical* subject of the under-ordinate (incomplete) sentence, while *iw.f* is the *syntactical* subject and *sdm.f* is the *syntactical* predicate of the super-ordinate sentence.

are reversed in comparison with the corresponding plain, unmarked sentence like: “This N has taken away the ship”, in which the taking away is the new information, or the predicate, and “this N” is the subject. Therefore, saying that the subject carries the rheme sounds contradictory to me; if this is the case, it is no longer the subject, i.e., the “support” of the new information, but it is the predicate, or the new information itself. Equally disturbing is the analysis of a passage from papyrus Ebers in Borghouts *Prominence* 66, Ex. (79): *in m irf ini.f sw...* “who in fact is the one who will fetch it...?”. The author observes that in this example “*in* occurs as a comment pointer before a frontally extraposed subject which, in that position, is focussed upon as the topic at the same time”. In my view, the interrogative pronoun *m* is the new information, or the predicate, while the following *sdm.f* is the given information, or the subject; i.e., what the sentence is all about is *who* will fetch, not the fetching itself; further, the interrogative pronoun is not “frontally extraposed” at all because it is the main part of the sentence and therefore it cannot be called “extraposed”. Indeed, it is essential to understand that a verb form is not automatically the predicate and a nominal element is not automatically the subject; these are their expected roles in a plain sentence, but a reversal of roles is found in the marked, or cleft sentence (see Polotsky’s quotation in fn. 120 below). It seems to me that a similar confusion is found in Satzinger *May Themes Follow* 294, who writes: “Both theme and rheme can be either subject or predicate”, and Vernus *Le rhème marqué* 335–336, who speaks of “*thème marqué*” and “*rhème non marqué*” (his position is, however, elaborate).

⁹⁶ I would say, therefore, that the distinction between predication and “Betonung” done by Schenkel *Einführung* 159 in order to negate the Polotskian theory of the “emphatic” construction is inconclusive. More specifically, I do not see on which criteria we are to evaluate the difference between “ein gewisser Akzent” and “eine besondere Betonung” in the following statement of Schenkel: “Daß in der ‘emphatischen’ Konstruktion *ein gewisser Akzent* auf dem bewußten adverbialen Ausdruck liegt, ist durchaus richtig gesehen... Irreführend dagegen ist die Erwartung *einer besonderen Betonung*. Daß eine solche im Textzusammenhang oft nicht auszumachen war, hat denn auch bisweilen zu einer gewissen Irritation geführt” (ibid.; italics added). Actually, the predicate carries emphasis / Betonung by definition, because it is the new information. If the predicate is an element that is expected to have this function, as is the verb, the emphasis is not particularly felt but is there and the sentence is plain; if, however, the predicate is an element that is not expected in such a function as a non-verbal element, which usually functions as a subject, a predicate or a complement, then the emphasis is better felt and the sentence is cleft, or marked (see the theory of “universals” vs. particulars” in §14 above). This is a point of syntactic analysis, not of feelings or “irritation” based on personal interpretation.

A third linguistic level to be determined, besides the grammatical and the syntactical ones, is the text. An indicative sentence can stand alone in the text, while a cleft sentence cannot, nor can sentences with continuative, circumstantial, or prospective verb forms, which must rely on an indicative sentence. In terms of Weinrich's text-linguistics (see §16 below), indicative verb forms constitute the main line of communication, or foreground, while non-indicative verb forms constitute a secondary line of communication, or background. Textually, background depends on foreground.

We find, therefore, three main levels of text-linguistic analysis: the sentence (grammar), the inter-sentence units (syntax) and the text (text-linguistics). These three levels must be based one upon the other and support one another in order to have a correct analysis.

15 *Anticipatory Emphasis, Extraposition, Cleft Sentence*

A sentence of the basic type subject-adverbial predicate admits different realizations. Four possibilities are attested:

(1) Non-verbal sentences in which both components are substantives. In this case, the usual order is predicate-subject and the sentence is predicative (cf. §11 above).

(2) Non-verbal sentences in which the first component is a substantive and the second an adverb or adverbial phrase. In this case the order is subject – predicate and the sentence is presentative (see §11 above).

(3) The first component is a substantive verb form (*mrr:f*, or *sḍm.n.f*), the second is an adverbial construction. In this case the sentence is “emphatic” or cleft (see §§10.14 above).

(4) The first component is substantival and the second is a non-verbal sentence, or a circumstantial verb form *sḍm.f* / *sḍm.n.f* / stative. This phenomenon is called “anticipatory emphasis” by Gardiner *Grammar* §§148 (“anticipatory emphasis in verbal sentence”) and 147 (“anticipatory emphasis in non-verbal sentences”).

The case of “anticipatory emphasis” is complicated and has aroused considerable confusion among grammarians. In a passage such as ‘*nty n.i-im(y) sw*’ “the incense, it belongs to me” (*Sh. S.* 151), *n.i-im(y) sw* clearly constitutes a complete non-verbal sentence with *n.i-im(y)* as the predicate and *sw* as the subject. Therefore ‘*nty*’ does not belong to this sentence *grammatically* although *semantically* it represents a necessary piece of information. Therefore, it is inappropriate to say that “the subject is put at the head of the sentence” (Gardiner *Grammar* §147), because ‘*nty*’ is not the grammatical subject of the sentence. The correct analysis is as follows: given a basic sentence with usual word order, such as “the incense (subject) belongs (predicate) to me (adverbial complement)”, one of its elements—e.g., the subject—is taken out and placed in front position, or extraposed as “topic”, the (former) subject then being

represented by a pronoun in the original sentence. The result is: “As for the incense, to me it belongs”.⁹⁷

Two problems arise at this point: first, what is the grammatical-syntactical function of the extraposed element *'nty*, and, second, is it correct to say that the phenomenon we are discussing signals “emphasis”? In traditional terminology, *'nty* is called “pendens”, or “casus (or ‘nominativus’) pendens”. Although I myself have adopted this designation for practical purposes, I must say that the analysis implied by this designation is not correct. Actually *'nty* is not “pendens”, as if it was an element pending in the air, but is functionally equivalent to a complete circumstantial sentence linked to a following main sentence. In traditional terminology, again, the circumstantial sentence is called ‘protasis’ and the main sentence ‘apodosis’ (see on “Double Sentence” §5b above).

I think that this analysis is valid for every language that admits of this type of construction. The correct analysis was presented many years ago for French by Ch. Bally, a linguist highly esteemed by Polotsky:

Cette dernière [i.e., the subordinate clause, or protasis] peut être explicite: «*Quant il pleut, je reste à la maison*»—«*Si vous désobéissez, vous serez punis*», etc. Ou bien on peut la mettre en lumière par échange fonctionnel: «*Il fait froid, nous ne sortirons pas*» (= «*Puisqu’il fait froid*»); «*Par ce moyen, je réussirai*» (= «*En procédant ainsi, si je procède ainsi*»); «*Lentement, il avançait sur la route*» (= «*En marchant lentement, pendant qu’il marchait lentement*»)(...) «*Cet élève, je l’aime bien; cet élève, je lui ai donné un livre*;

⁹⁷ The principle underlying this analysis is clearly stated in Satzinger *May Themes Follow* 295: “A formal characteristic of these topicalized structures is a ‘comment’ that is formed by a complete sentence: ‘as for him, he is/does X’; ‘when it dawned, one came to call me’”. Satzinger also correctly defines the terms “topicalization” and “focalization” as he writes: “We should be strict in reserving the term ‘topicalization’ for phenomena like the frontal exposition, be it with *jr* or without... And we should reserve ‘focalization’ to utterances with rhematic expressions that are raised in a particular way, viz. the cleft sentence construction with *jn*” (*ibid.*). On the other hand, Vernus *Sujet + sdm.f* correctly remarks on the confusion prevailing among grammarians on this issue as he writes: “Le débat sur la construction [i.e., subject + *sdm.f*]... a été obscurci par une regrettable confusion: la valeur d’emphase attribuée à l’anticipation du sujet. Il vaut mieux limiter le terme ‘emphase’ aux phénomènes de ‘focalisation’ ou de ‘rhématisation’, surtout depuis les découvertes de Polotsky qui a généralisé le terme dans cette acception. Or, dans la construction sujet + *sdm.f*, l’anticipation du sujet ressortit, non à une rhématisation, mais à une thématisation” (*ibid.* 197). In my view, on the one hand, it is correct to say that the subject in this construction is not “rhematic”, i.e., it receives no emphasis; on the other hand, it is not “thematic” either, except when it is “topicalized” as in the example above: “As for the incense [topicalized element], to me it belongs”. In the latter instance, the thematic/topicalized element does not belong to the following verb form but constitutes a separate sentence by itself. Therefore, it seems inappropriate to treat the construction subject + *sdm.f* as a “thématisation... progressivement affaiblie” in parallel with a “thématisation forte” introduced by *ir* (Vernus *Sujet + sdm.f* 198). Simply, subject + *sdm.f* is the circumstantial counterpart of the indicative construction *iw.f* / substantive + *sdm.f* (see fn. 110 below).

etc.»; ce cas a été appelé *nominativus pendens* (...) mais (...) il est lui aussi assimilable à une subordonnée (= «Pour cet élève, quant à cet élève, puisqu'il est question de..., s'il est question de...», etc.) (Bally *Linguistique* 65).

Therefore, just as it is not correct to speak of a *subject* put at the head of the sentence, the same is valid with regard to a *genitive*, or *adverbs* or *adverbial phrases* put at the head of the sentence as suggested by Gardiner *Grammar* §147, and elsewhere. Yet Gardiner *Grammar* §149 correctly remarks that such constructions also appear introduced by *ir* “as to”, “concerning”; actually, this remark confirms the analysis suggested above—that the non-verbal element is used adverbially and functions as a circumstantial clause, i.e., *'nty* is equivalent to “as for the incense”, “if we speak of incense”, or the like. However, Gardiner’s designation of “anticipatory emphasis”, with or without *ir*, is incorrect (see below).

Thus, the phenomenon we are talking about can be called by a more current designation: “topicalization”. In fact, the term “topic” can be aptly used to indicate the *casus pendens*. However, it should be clear that this “topic” and the following “comment” do not belong to the same sentence; together, they constitute a double sentence that is indivisibly composed of two members—a circumstantial element (protasis) and a main sentence (apodosis).

As a consequence, I do not think that emphasis is the semantic or pragmatic function of this construction, or double sentence, at all. Actually, emphasis is conveyed by means of the cleft sentence (or various “emphatic constructions”, both adverbial and adjectival; see fn. 5 above). In the cleft sentence, the circumstance (adverbial element) is the predicate, and it therefore bears the emphasis — it is the “new” element of the *one sentence*; in the *double sentence*, on the contrary, the circumstance does not belong to the main sentence but constitutes a syntactically subordinate sentence and is therefore not entitled to any emphasis.⁹⁸

A thorny problem is the analysis of the basic construction #substantive + verb form (or non-verbal sentence)#. As far as the construction #noun + *sḏm.f*# is concerned,⁹⁹ two main views have been maintained. As Doret put it, “For Westendorf... this construction constitutes a grammatical unity equivalent to the ‘pseudo-verbal’ constructions. For Schenkel, it is a loose construction consisting of extraposed noun subject followed by *sḏm.f*” (Doret *A Note* 37). Doret concluded his study by positing two constructions: “a ‘pseudo-verbal’ construction in which the noun, emphasized or not, constitutes a unity with an

⁹⁸ A totally different view is proposed by Vernus *Observations* 336–337: “En effet, la topicalisation est un phénomène qui concerne un segment d’énoncé, érigé en thème marqué, mais non une phrase complète”.

⁹⁹ Doret *A Note* treats only #noun + *sḏm.f*# excluding cases in which a pronoun, instead of a noun, precedes the verb.

adverbial, i.e., circumstantial *sdm.f*, and a loose construction in which the extraposed Noun is the emphasized subject of the prospective verb form" (p. 45). In the concluding fn. 63, Doret refers to newly-published works of F. Junge (especially *Syntax*), who also considers circumstantial the verb form in the construction #noun + *sdm.f*# but, unlike Doret, affirms that the noun preceding *sdm.f* is never emphasized.

Actually the situation is more complex, if we try to get a fairly complete spectrum of the constructions attested with the basic pattern #substantive + verb form (or non-verbal sentence)#. The main problem is to find criteria for distinguishing what Doret called "a grammatical unity equivalent to the 'pseudo-verbal' constructions", in which the substantive constitutes one sentence with what follows, from the "loose construction" in which the substantive is extraposed, i.e., does not belong grammatically to the following sentence. The main criterion is, of course, whether or not what follows the substantive (noun or pronoun) constitutes a complete sentence without the substantive; however, this is not easily established. I think that a good controlling factor is whether or not a specific realization of the pattern #substantive + verb form (or non-verbal sentence)# is also attested preceded by *iw*: if the answer is positive, the whole construction forms one sentence; in another view, the initial substantive does not belong to what follows but is extraposed and the complex constitutes two distinct but related sentences. I will call the former type (1), and the latter type (2).

This criterion presupposes the Polotskyan doctrine that *iw* is followed by a subject and by an adverbial element, i.e., #*iw* + (grammatical) subject# functions as the (syntactic) subject and the adverbial element functions as the (syntactic) predicate (§3 above);¹⁰⁰ furthermore, the same constructions are also attested without *iw*, in which case they are the circumstantial counterparts of the constructions with *iw*, or they are presentative sentences.¹⁰¹

Here is a list of the different realizations of the basic type (1) #substantive (noun or pronoun) + verb form# vs. same constructions introduced by *iw* (1a–d), or by *in* (1e). In these cases the two members of the construction constitute one sentence:

(1a) #substantive + *sdm.f*# vs. #*iw.f* / substantive + *sdm.f*#: e.g., *mw m itrw swri.tw.f mr.k* "the water in the rivers is drunk if you desire" (*Sin. B 233*)¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ This basically corresponds to the "pseudo-verbal construction" of Gardiner *Grammar* §319 ff.; see fns. 46 and 50 above.

¹⁰¹ See Polotsky *Egyptian Tenses* §§4–15 and 42. For "presentative" constructions, see §11 above.

¹⁰² Gardiner's translation, "the water in the rivers, it is drunk if thou desirest" (*Grammar* §148), shows that for him *mw m itrw* is not part of the sentence but is extraposed. However, the same construction is also attested preceded by *iw* (see next example above), as well as by *mk* (see type

vs. *iw r n s nhm.f sw* “a man’s mouth saves him” (Sh. S. 17–18; Gardiner *Grammar* §463 No. 1);

(1b) #substantive + *sdm.n.f#* vs. #*iw(.f / substantive) + sdm.n.f#*: e.g., *wgg ’s.n.f wi* “infirmity has overtaken me” (Sin. B 168–169; *Grammar* §414, 1 No. 3) vs. *iw Wsir ph.n.f st.i* “Osiris has reached my place” (see fn. 45 above);

(1c) #substantive + old perfective# vs. #*iw.f / substantive + old perfective#*: e.g., *t’w.k n ’nh ndmw m šrt.i* “thy breadth of life is sweet in my nostril” (Urk. IV,944,1) vs. *iw hnkst.k nfr.ti m-b’h Pth-Skr* “thy hair is beautiful in the presence of Ptah-Sokaris” (BD 386,13–14; cf. Gardiner *Grammar* §320 No. 48–49);

(1d) #substantive + preposition–infinitive# vs. #*iw.f / substantive + preposition–infinitive#*: e.g., *htw hr gmgm, t’ hr mnmn* “the trees cracked and the earth shook” (Sh. S. 59–60; cf. Gardiner *Grammar* §322 No. 5) vs. *iw mš’ pn n nsw hr m’* “this army of the king looked on” (Hamm. 110,5–6; cf. Gardiner *Grammar* §323 No. 5);

(1e) #independent pronoun + *sdm.f / sdm.n.f* vs. #*in + substantive + sdm.f or sdm.n.f#*: e.g., *nts rdi.s* “it is she who shall give” (P. Kah. 12/9)¹⁰³ vs. *in ntr wd’ f* “it is god who shall judge” (Urk. I,23,16; cf. Gunn *Studies* 59 No. 3); *ink pr.n.i* “it is I who have come forth” (CT II 154g; cf. Gardiner *Grammar* §147, p. 115 No. 6) vs. *in s’ k mry.k snl.n.f n.k irty.ky* “it is your beloved son who has fixed your eyes for you” (Pyr. 644; cf. Gunn *Studies* 59 No. 7).¹⁰⁴

Here is a list of the different realizations of the basic type (2) #substantive or substantival verb-form + independent verbal or non-verbal sentence# in which the two members do not belong to the same sentence:

(2a) #extraposed substantive (= casus pendens / protasis) + *sdm.f* (= apodosis)#: e.g., *ntr nb dd wnm.i bwt.i, wnm.f hn’ i* “(as for) every god who

2.4 in §12 above); therefore, that phrase and the following *sdm.f* form a single sentence, lit. “the water in the rivers is (in the situation that / while) it is drunk...” (see fn. 45 above). Actually, in this construction, the *sdm.f* interchanges with an adverbial complement as in *iw šdw.k m šht* “thy field-plots are in the country” (Peas. B 2,65) vs. *psšw m ’wnw* “the apportioner is (now) a spoiler” (Peas. B 1,248; Gardiner *Grammar* §117).

¹⁰³ As Gunn *Studies* 60 correctly observes, “an entirely different case” is what we find, e.g., in the phrase *ink mr.f nfrt msd.f dwt* “I am he-loves-what-is-good-and-hates-what-is-bad”, where *sdm.f* acts as a noun, or rather, as an epithet. A similar case is represented by the epithet *mrr.f irr.f, msdd n ir.n.f* (see §10 above). In Niccacci *Sul detto* 76, I identified this “epithetical” *sdm.f* (in one case also an “epithetical” *sdm.n.f*) in a series of invocations to the gods *Hh*; indeed, in a previous parallel series of invocations in the same text, nominal constructions appear instead of “epithetical” *sdm.f* (and *sdm.n.f*) forms, i.e., a substantive, a participle, or a relative form.

¹⁰⁴ Gunn *Studies* 58–61 discusses the problem posed by this construction with *sdm.n.f* that appears as a variant of what Gardiner *Grammar* §373 calls “the participial statement”. In his words, “The difference between this construction and that with perfect participle is not yet clear to me” (*ibid.* 60).

may say that I should eat my detestation, he will eat it with me" (CT VI 198p)¹⁰⁵ vs. (with explicit extra-posing particle *ir*) *ir ḥm r pn, n 'q.n.f n pr.n.f m ḥm* "as for anyone who does not know this spell, he does not go in and out, being ignorant" (CT IV 326k S1P);¹⁰⁶

(2b) #extraposed substantive (=casus pendens/protasis) + "emphatic" verb form *mrr.f*#: e.g., *wi' R', sqdd.f m igpt* "(as for) the bark of Rē', even in the cloudy sky it sails" (lit. 'it is in the cloudy sky that it sails'; CT IV 125c S1P);¹⁰⁷

(2c) #extraposed substantival verb form *mrr.f* (= casus pendens / protasis) + apodosis#: *rmm.sn, iw.f ḥr sdm* "if they cry, he hears" (*Merikare* C 5,7);¹⁰⁸ *mrr ṯw it.k, ir.k n.f išt* "if/since your father loves you, what will you do for him?" (CT V 122 G1T G2T A1C);

(2d) #extraposed substantive (= casus pendens / protasis) + negative construction#: e.g., *ḥtp-k', n(n) 'q(.f) r ḥt.i* "(as for) filth, it shall not enter into my belly" (CT III 104 S1C^a; 128e) vs. (with the more usual construction) *n(n) 'q ḥtp-k' r ḥt.i* "filth will not enter into my body" (CT III 104c B2Bo etc.);¹⁰⁹

(2e) #extraposed substantive (= casus pendens / protasis) + substantive–pw construction#: e.g., *ḥknw pf ḏd.n.k int.f, bw pw wr n iw pn* "(as for) that spice which you didst speak of bringing, it is the main thing of this island" (*Sh. S.* 152; Gardiner *Grammar* §147, p. 115 No. 1);

(2f) #extraposed substantive (= casus pendens / protasis) + adjectival sentence#: e.g., *ḥbswt.f, wr sy r mḥ 2* "(as for) his beard, it was greater than two cubits" (*Sh. S.* 63), and *'ntyw, n.i-im(y) sw* "(as for) the incense, it belongs to me" (*Sh. S.* 63; Gardiner *Grammar* §147, p. 114 No. 1–2).

I would conclude that Doret is basically correct in affirming that both types are

¹⁰⁵ Strangely enough, Faulkner *The Ancient Eg. CT* II/185 translates as follows: "(My detestation is faeces, I will not drink its sister urine,) (even though) every god has said that if I will eat what I detest he will eat with me".

¹⁰⁶ Instead of an extraposed substantive, as in CT IV 326k, the preceding sentence has an extraposed substantival verb form *ḏd s*, but the syntactic structure remains the same: *ḏd s r pn, 'q.f r imnt r-s' prr.f* "If a man utters this spell, he enters into the West after he goes out" (rather than "A man should utter this spell when he enters into the west after he goes out", as translated in Faulkner *The Ancient Eg. CT* I/266) (CT IV 326l; same text in CT IV 342d).

¹⁰⁷ Cf. CT IV 125f B2L *wi'.i, sqdd.f m-ḥnw igpw* "(as for) my bark, even in the middle of the cloudy sky it sails". In the parallel passage CT IV 144n the verb form is not "emphatic" but prospective: *wi'.i, sqd.f m-ḥnw igp ḥn' šmsw R'* "(as for) my bark, it will sail in the middle of the cloudy sky together with a Follower of Rē'". The parallelism with CT IV 125c.f must have escaped Faulkner, who translates CT IV 144n as follows: "a sailor who navigates within the clouds of the sky in company with the Followers of Rē'" (Faulkner *The Ancient Eg. CT* I/248, with fn. 6 on p. 249).

¹⁰⁸ This frequently quoted text is labelled "Merikara XLVII" in Helck *Die Lehre* 86.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. CT III 103de. Similarly BD 85,5, p. 184,10–11.

attested, i.e., the “pseudo-verbal construction” made up of a noun + circumstantial *sdm.f*, as Westendorf maintained, as well as the “loose construction” advocated by Schenkel. One should observe, however, that the latter is not only “loose” but actually constitutes a double sentence, in the sense that the extraposed substantive constitutes a sentence by itself, because it functions as a *casus pendens*, or a protasis, while the following *sdm.f* (or other construction) functions as the apodosis. In any case, there is no question of “anticipatory emphasis”. On the one side, in type (1) the substantive is not “anticipated” but occupies its expected position and, on the other side, in type (2) the “anticipated” substantive receives no “emphasis”, or “stress”, or “Betonung”, except in type (1e), but is rather extraposed as the topic of the following sentence.¹¹⁰

III Application of Polotsky’s Approach to Biblical Hebrew

In my study of the Biblical-Hebrew verb-system, I was very much inspired by Prof. Polotsky’s structural approach. I also tried to integrate into my research the text-linguistic approach proposed by H. Weinrich. I would like now to provide some hints on how to develop such an approach, both structural and text-linguistic, and illustrate some parallel structures occurring in Egyptian and in Biblical Hebrew.

16 H. Weinrich — A Text-Linguistic Approach

I think we can advance our understanding of the Middle-Egyptian verb system by adopting the text-linguistic approach proposed by Weinrich *Tempus*.¹¹¹ Three

¹¹⁰ With regard to the two examples quoted by Doret A Note 43, I would not affirm that “the construction Noun + *sdm.f* in narrative sometimes has the same continuative function as the non-initial *sdm.n.f*”; I would rather say that this construction is circumstantial and constitutes a single sentence (see my type 1a above). This analysis seems to apply to the quotation from *Beni Hasan*, *hst.i ph.s pt* “while my praise reached the heaven”, as well as to that from the inscription of *Khnumhotep*, *šwty.f ib’.sn m hnw m q’bt.f* “while his two feathers danced as (i.e., when he was) a child at his mother’s breast” (*ibid.*). Further, *pace* Doret A Note 45, I do not believe in the existence of “a loose construction in which the extraposed noun is the emphasized subject of the prospective form”. I think that in the construction #noun + prospective *sdm.f*#, the noun does not form a single sentence with the following verb form because such a construction is not also attested preceded by *iw*; rather, the noun is extraposed and as such, it does not receive any emphasis (see my type 2a above). My analysis of type (1) proposed above corresponds to that of Polotsky, quoted as a personal communication in Depuydt *On Distinctive* 50–51: “According to Polotsky, Noun + *sdm.f* is not a special construction, but simply *jw* + noun + *sdm.f* minus *jw*, or the adverbial counterpart of *jw* + noun + *sdm.f*. Morphologically speaking, this is confirmed by the fact that the *sdm.f* in both *jw* + noun + *sdm.f* and noun + *sdm.f* is adverbial. Syntactically speaking, since *jw(.f)* is followed by adverbial verb forms in compound tenses, the removal of *iw* must result in an adverbial verb form”.

¹¹¹ From time to time, one reads something on this perspective in Egyptological literature; see, e.g., Shisha-Halevy *The Narrative Verbal System* 250–252, and Depuydt *The Meaning* (for earlier

basic oppositions provide the guidelines of the analysis: first, direct speech (*besprechen*) vs. historical narrative (*erzählen*); second, temporal axis (*Zeit*, time) vs. verbal tense (*Tempus*); third, main line of communication (*Vordergrund*, foreground) vs. off-line of communication (*Hintergrund*, background).¹¹²

In historical narrative, for instance, the verb forms belonging to the axis of the past constitute the main line or foreground of communication while the verb forms belonging to both the axis of the present and that of the future constitute the off-line or background. The background verb forms depend syntactically on the foreground verb forms. In Egyptian, the indicative tenses and their corresponding continuative forms (§3 above) convey foreground information in the three temporal axes (past, present, and future), while non-indicative tenses (i.e., second tenses, circumstantial and dependent prospective forms: §§4, 6)

bibliography, see fn. 6, *ibid.* 21). Following Polotsky and others, Depuydt correctly understands the primary function of *iw* as “relating the statement to the time of speaking” (*ibid.* 30). He also correctly notes that the construction *iw sdm.n.f* is mostly attested in biographical inscriptions rather than in true narrative (compare discussion by Shisha-Halevy *The Narrative Verbal System* 249–250). Further, Depuydt rightly criticizes Doret and Schenkel, who consider *iw sdm.n.f* a narrative tense, and affirms that such are rather *‘h’.n sdm.n.f* and other constructions without *iw*. Yet instead of basing his analysis on grammatical and syntactic categories such as subject and predicate, which he rejects as inadequate (not to say dangerous, *ibid.* 30–31), and instead of adopting criteria of syntactic and textual analysis such as paradigmatic substitution, Depuydt tries to explain the “three hard facts about the independent *iw*” on the basis of its etymology from “*iw* come”, and therefore “there has come to be” (*ibid.* 30). Depuydt’s three “hard facts” are “that *jw* does not occur with substantival verbs, substantival and adjectival sentences, or negations” (*ibid.* 31). In my opinion, his reasoning appears speculative, based on diachrony, i.e., on supposed etymology, rather than on synchrony and actual analysis of texts.

¹¹² Shisha-Halevy *Stability* presents a series of rather swift pronouncements on word order, subject, “grammatical subject (and predicate)”, and pragmatics vs. syntax. I agree with what the author writes on the last issue on p. 79: “I reject the *a priori* distinction of ‘syntactic’ and ‘pragmatic’ word order, as if the syntactic features of *la parole*, of a text and of its texture were in some way transcendental, abstracted or independent of its contextual or situational functions”. However, I hardly understand what follows: “Incidentally, the exiling from syntax to pragmatics of the issues of information structure and the high-level signification of macro-syntactic grammar such as narrative grounding and perspective is a lamentable sign of the times, associated with the *per se* welcome surge in sociolinguistic awareness, discourse analysis and the study of spoken language. But—if I may be excused some slight exasperated irony—written language—and the *dead* written language, too—has been known to present grammatical systems worthy of study, and by no means second-hand or reflected or deficient” (*ibid.* 80). I do not quite see what exactly is labeled “a lamentable sign of the times”. In my view, Weinrich’s foreground vs. background distinction is basic for a correct analysis of any narrative, because it can be profitably applied to every text, both written and oral, with no preference for the latter. Actually, Weinrich *Tempus* applied this approach to several modern Western languages (German, French, Italian, English, Spanish), and in part also to classical languages and to medieval narrative. Weinrich’s approach has also been applied to Latin by Rosén *Exposition* and to the teaching of Italian by Bagioli–Deon *Il tempo verbale*. It has also been applied to Biblical Hebrew by Schneider *Grammatik* and by myself in Niccacci *The Syntax* and in *Lettura sintattica*. Hereafter I am also proposing its first application to Egyptian.

convey background information. The following table is provisional and far from complete:

Temporal axis	Direct Speech	Historical Narrative
Present / main level of communication	<i>iw.f. sdm.f</i> (habit) → continuation <i>sdm.f</i> <i>iw.f + hr / m</i> + Infinitive <i>iw.f</i> / Noun + Stative <i>mk sw + sdm.f</i>	
Present / secondary level	Noun + <i>sdm.f</i> → continuation <i>sdm.f</i> Noun + <i>hr / m</i> + Infinitive Pseudo-verbal Sentence	(Contemporaneity = secondary line) Noun + <i>sdm.f</i> Noun + <i>hr / m</i> + Infinitive Noun + Stative
Past / main level	<i>iw sdm.n.f</i> → continuation <i>sdm.n.f</i> (Oral Narrative) <i>h'.n sdm.n.f</i> → continuation <i>sdm.n.f</i> <i>h'.n.f</i> + Stative <i>h'.n.f + hr</i> + Infinitive	<i>h'.n sdm.n.f</i> → continuation <i>sdm.n.f</i> <i>h'.n.f</i> + Stative <i>h'.n.f + hr</i> + Infinitive
Past / secondary level	circumstantial <i>sdm.n.f</i> Noun + Stative Noun + <i>hr</i> + Infinitive	circumstantial <i>sdm.n.f</i> Noun + Stative Noun + <i>hr</i> + Infinitive
Future / main level	Prospective <i>sdm.f</i> <i>iw + r</i> + Infinitive	
Future / secondary level	Prospective <i>sdm.f</i>	(Prospection = secondary level) <i>wnt.f + r</i> + Infinitive (Gardiner Grammar §332)

A corresponding table for Biblical Hebrew is as follows (cf. Niccacci *On the Hebrew Verbal System* 120–121):

Temporal axis	Direct Speech	Historical Narrative
Present / main level of communication	Non-verbal sentence	Non-verbal sentence (Contemporaneity = secondary line)
Past / main level	(<i>x-</i>) <i>qatal</i> → <i>wayyiqtol</i> (in series = main line)	<i>wayyiqtol</i> → <i>wayyiqtol</i> (in series = main line)
Past / secondary level	<i>x-qatal</i> (etc.)	<i>x-qatal</i> (etc.)
Future / main level	<i>x-yiqtol</i> → <i>w^eqatal</i> (in series = main line)	
Future / secondary level	<i>x-yiqtol</i>	<i>x-yiqtol</i> / <i>w^eqatal</i> (custom, description, prospection = secondary line)

Whereas I have studied Biblical Hebrew for years, I did not have the opportunity to do similar research on Egyptian. Besides, one can easily observe that Egyptian is much more complex and rich in verb forms and grammatical constructions than Biblical Hebrew. Moreover, Egyptian is a strongly diversified language throughout the different periods of its long existence, whereas Biblical Hebrew had a much shorter history and also underwent a process of

standardization, especially from the point of view of the verb system.¹¹³ It is easy, therefore, to anticipate that applying Weinrich's approach to Egyptian will prove much more complicated than applying it to Biblical Hebrew.

(Egyptian—Oral narrative, axis of the past)

- (a) 'h'.n ikm.f minb.f htp.f nt nsywt hr(w) Then his shield, his battle-axe and his armful of javelins fell
- (b) m-ht spr.n.i h'w.f after I had made his weapons go out¹¹⁴
- (c) rdi.n.i sw' hr.i 'h'w.f I had made his arrows pass by me
- (d) sp.n iwtt and nothing had been left
- (e) w' hr hn m w' one following the other¹¹⁵
- (f) ↑ hm'.n.f wi Then he charged me
- (g) ↑ st.n.i sw but I shot him"
- (h) 'h'w.i mn m nhbt.f my arrow sticking in his neck
- (i) ↑ sbh.n.f He shouted
- (j) ↑ hr.n.f hr fnd.f and fell upon his nose
- (k) ↑ shr.n.i {n} sw <m> minb.f and I felled him <with> his axe
- (l) ↑ wd.n.i išnn.i hr i't.f Then I raised my war cry over his back
- (m) 'm nb hr nmi while every Asiatic screamed
- (n) ↑ rdi.n.i hknw n Mntw Then I gave praise to Montu
- (o) mrrw.f hb n.f while his supporters were mourning him
- (p) hq' pn 'mmwnnši rdi.n.f wi r hpt.f and this prince Ammunenshi took me in his arms (Sin. B 134–143).

(Egyptian—Direct speech, axis of the present)¹¹⁶

- (a) iw min ib.f i'(w) Today his (i.e., god's) heart is appeased
- (b) w'r w'r n h'w.f If a fugitive flees because of his situation,
- (c) iw mtrw.i m hnw my renown is in the Capital.

¹¹³ I was unable to detect any significant change in the syntax of the verb in Biblical Hebrew through the ages—indeed, changes may be more easily detectable in morphology and in semantics—despite the arguments of many grammarians to the contrary. See my analysis of parallel sections of 2 Samuel 5–7 and 1 Chronicles 11, 13–17 in Niccacci *Lettura sintattica* §§21–23, and my reviews of Young *Diversity* and of Zevit *The Anterior Construction*, esp. pp. 521–522.

¹¹⁴ Var. R 135–136: m-ht pr.n(i) m h'w.f “after I had escaped (‘had gone out’) from his weapons”. Compare Gardiner *Notes* 54, and translations by Simpson *The Literature* 65 and by Lichtheim *Ancient Egyptian Literature* 228.

¹¹⁵ Besides the authorities mentioned in the previous note, compare Blumenthal *Zu Sinuhes Zweikampf*, and Fecht *Sinuhes Zweikampf* 480–483.

¹¹⁶ Translators (see fn. 114 above) use past verb forms to translate the “emphatic” mrr.f forms in this passage (b, d, f, h): “A fugitive fled... A wanderer wandered...” etc. However, on the one hand, mrr.f by itself refers to the axis of the present and, on the other, the passage illustrates Sinuhe's situation in general terms. Actual reference to Sinuhe's past situation employs sdm.n.f verb forms in the previous context, e.g., “(God acts in such a way as to be merciful) n ts.n.f im.f, th.n.f r kt h'st to one whom he had blamed, one whom He causes to go astray to another land” (Sin. B 148–149; Simpson *The Literature* 65). The meaning of the passage is that Sinuhe has no reason any longer to remain away from his homeland.

- (d) *s'' s''y n hqr* If a wanderer wanders because of hunger,
- (e) *iw.i di.i t n gsy.i* I give bread to my neighbor.
- (f) *rww s t' f n h'yt* If a man departs from his land because of nakedness,
- (g) *ink hdt p'qt* I have white cloths and fine linen.
- (h) *bt' s n-g'w h'b.f* If a man runs for lack of one to send,
- (i) *ink 's' mrt* I have many servants.
- (j) *nfr pr.i* My house is fine,
- (k) *wsh st.i* my dwelling is wide,
- (l) *sh'w.i m 'h* the thought of me is in the Palace. (*Sin.* B 149–156).

In *Sin.* B 134–143, which is an oral narrative (i.e., made by Sinuhe about himself), the main line is represented by a '*h'.n* construction in sentence (a) as is frequently the case in historical narrative. This information is specified by means of a series of secondary-level constructions, the first of which is governed by the subordinating conjunction *m-ht* + *sdm.n.f* (b) to indicate information prior to the axis of the past of the main line, and is followed by two continuative *sdm.n.f* forms (c–d), coordinate to the previous one and expressing the same time value (i.e., the pluperfect), while the next sentence is circumstantial to them (e). The *sdm.n.f* forms in sentences (f–g, i–l, n) are governed by the initial '*h'.n* and convey main-line information, while sentences (h, m, o–p) are circumstantial, each depending on the previous sentence with main-line *sdm.n.f*.¹¹⁷

In *Sin.* B 149–156, which is direct speech, the main line in the axis of the present is represented by *iw.f sdm.f* constructions (a, e), *#iw.f* + adverbial predicate# (c), *#ink* + substantive# (g, i), and by presentative sentences with two *sdm.f* forms of adjective-verbs (j–k) or with non-verbal constituents (l). Sentences (b, d, f, h) are substantival *mrr.f* forms in adverbial use, i.e., function as protases (§10 above).

As examples of Biblical-Hebrew narrative and direct speech, let me briefly quote the following passages:

(Biblical Hebrew — Historical narrative, axis of the past, no emphasis in verb-second sentences)¹¹⁸

- (a) *wayyō' mer 'ēlōhîm, y'hî 'ôr* Then God said: 'Let there be light';
- (b) *way'hî 'ôr* and there was light.

¹¹⁷ These *sdm.n.f* forms (and the construction #substantive + *sdm.n.f*# in sentence p) are main-line because they are continuative forms of the construction with '*h'.n* in (a); in other words, it is as if they were a series of '*h'.n sdm.n.f*. I do not think that a main-line, or indicative "bare" *sdm.n.f* exists in Classical Egyptian (see fn. 13 above). Speaking of "a chain of the type '*h'.n sdm.n.f*... *sdm.n.f*... *sdm.n.f*", in which the initial '*h'.n* may be considered to apply to all *sdm.n.f* forms", Depuydt *The Meaning* 22 refers to a paper by J. H. Johnson in *Serapis* 6 (1980) 69–73 (not available to me).

¹¹⁸ The English translation of the biblical texts is taken from the Revised Standard Version or from the version of the Jewish Publication Society with modifications.

- (c) *wayyar' 'ēlōhīm 'et-hā'ôr kî-tôb* And God saw that the light was good;
 (d) *wayyabdēl 'ēlōhīm bēn hā'ôr ūbēn hāhōšek* and God separated the light from the darkness.
 (e) *wayyiqrā' 'ēlōhīm lā'ôr yôm* God called the light Day,
 (f) *w'ēlāhōšek qārā' lāy'êlā* while the darkness he called Night.
 (g) *way'êhî 'ereb* And there was evening
 (h) *way'êhî bōqer* and there was morning —
 (i) *yôm 'ehād* day one¹¹⁹ (Gen 1:3–5).

(Biblical Hebrew—Historical narrative, axis of the past, emphasis)

- (a) *wayyibrā' 'ēlōhīm 'et-hā'ādām b'šalmô* So God created man in his image
 (b) *b'šelem 'ēlōhīm bārā' 'ôtô* it is in the image of God that he created him,
 (c) *zākār ūn'qēbā bārā' 'ôtām* it is male and female that he created them (Gen 1:27).

(Biblical Hebrew — Direct speech, axis of the future, emphasis in verb-second sentences)

- (a) *w'ē'im-mā'ēn 'attā l'šallēah* “But if you refuse to let them go,
 (b) *hinnēh 'ānōkî nōgēp 'et-kol-g'êbûl'kā baš'pard'ē'im* behold, I will plague all your country with frogs,
 (c) *w'ēšāraṣ hay'ōr š'pard'ē'im* and the Nile shall swarm with frogs.
 (d) *we'ālû* They shall come up
 (e) *ûbā'û b'êtekā ûb'hādar miškāb'kā w'ē'al-miṭṭātekā ûb'êbêt 'ābādeykā ûb'ē'ammekā ûbetannûrekā ûb'miš'ārōteykā* and shall go into your house, and into your bedchamber and on your bed, and into the houses of your servants and among your people, and into your ovens and your kneading bowls
 (f) *ûb'kā ûb'ē'amm'kā ûb'kol-'ābādeykā ya'ālû haš'pard'ē'im* it is on you and on your people and on all your servants that the frogs shall come up” (Exod 7:27–29 = RSV 8:2–4).

In Biblical-Hebrew narrative, *wayyiqṭol* starts the main line, and also continues it in a series of coordinate main-line verb forms. In Gen. 1:3–5, all the sentences are of this type except (f) and (i). Sentence (f) differs from (e) by having the verb form in the second place. This signals a tense shift from *wayyiqṭol* (e) to *waw-x-qāṭal* (f) of the same verb. The function of this tense shift can be inferred negatively: if we had another *wayyiqṭol* in (f), the two sentences would have been coordinate and conveyed two pieces of information of the same level and

¹¹⁹ The phrase *yôm 'ehād* may be analysed as a presentative sentence with ellipsis of the subject, i.e., “day one <is/was this>”. A similar non-elliptic case occurs, in direct speech in the axis of the future: *pesaḥ hû' laYHWH* “It is/will be Passover for the Lord” (Exod 12:11).

would (usually) have been sequential, i.e., “God called the light Day, **and then he called* the darkness Night”. Instead, by shifting to *waw-x-qaṭal*, the second piece of information is conveyed as non-sequential / concomitant / circumstantial to the first: “God called the light Day, *while* the darkness *he called* Night”. In text-linguistic terms, this is a tense shift from the main line (e) to the secondary line (f) of communication. The latter sentence is syntactically dependent on the former, in the sense that it cannot stand alone in the text; although it is *grammatically* independent (since it is not governed by any subordinating conjunction like *kî, ’āšer, l’ma’an*, etc.), it is *syntactically* dependent.

The same tense shift from *wayyiqṭol* to *x-qaṭal* occurs in Gen. 1:27, which is also a passage of historical narrative. Here too a shift occurs from a main line (a) to a secondary line of communication (b–c); however, the context shows that the sentences (b–c) highlight a non-verbal detail already conveyed by the first main sentence (a); actually, the complement “in his image” in (a) is resumed as the main information (i.e., as the syntactic predicate) in (b) and is further specified, again as the main information, in (c). In other words, (a) is a plain sentence conveying a new piece of information, which is then taken up again in (b–c) to be commented upon. The meaning is: exactly “in the image of God” was the human being created, and this is realized by the fact that he is differentiated as “male and female”.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ Functionally, *wayyibrā’* is the main information and the predicate in sentence (a), while it becomes the “support” of the new information in (b–c); in classical terminology it becomes the “subject”. Reluctance by grammarians to accept this analysis (see, e.g., Groß *Doppelt besetztes Vorfeld* 48–49) may be due to the fact that the grammatical and the syntactic levels of the sentence are not clearly distinguished. The exact analysis was indicated in a masterly fashion by Polotsky on the basis of 2 Corinthians 4:3 (see Ex. 7 in §6 above): εἰ δὲ καὶ ἔστιν κεκαλυμμένον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν, ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις ἐστὶν κεκαλυμμένον “Even if our gospel is veiled, it is for those who are destined to perish that it is veiled”. He wrote as follows (note that what he called “logique” corresponds to what I call “syntactic”): “A ne considérer que la forme, on ne remarque aucune différence entre les deux verbes [i.e., ἐστὶν κεκαλυμμένον]. Tous deux sont «prédicats» dans le sens attaché à ce terme par la grammaire scolaire, où il désigne tout simplement, en ce qui concerne la phrase verbale, ce que les Arabes appellent *fi’l* «action» par opposition au *fā’il* «celui qui exécute l’action» et au *maf’ul* «objet ou résultat de l’action». Mais lorsqu’on en envisage la valeur logique, on constate qu’ils diffèrent du tout au tout. Nous voici en présence d’un cas typique où termes logiques et grammaticaux ne se recouvrent pas. Au point de vue logique le verbe n’est prédicat que dans la première phrase [i.e., εἰ δὲ καὶ ἔστιν κεκαλυμμένον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν]. Sa force prédicative s’y épuise toute. Une fois énoncé, il n’offre plus d’«intérêt» à l’auditeur. Si on le reprend dans la seconde phrase, «ce n’est que pour appuyer» le complément adverbial (ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις) qui est, lui, «la partie à laquelle on s’intéresse» de la proposition, autrement dit le prédicat; le verbe, «déjà connu de l’auditeur», est devenu le sujet logique. Dans le texte grec, cette relation entre le verbe et le complément adverbial se dénonce dans l’ordre des mots: le complément est placé avant le verbe” (Polotsky *Études* 24–25; compare the quotation from Polotsky *Les transpositions* 15 in fn. 5 above). As Polotsky observed, the shift on the part of the verb form from the function of the “logical” or syntactic predicate to the function of the “logical” or syntactic subject is signalled in Greek by the placement of the complement before the verb, i.e., by the demotion of the verb to the

In the direct-speech passage from Exod 7:27–29, the main line of information in the axis of the future starts with a non-verbal sentence in (b), whereas sentence (a) is of course circumstantial with conditional meaning. It continues with main-line *w^eqaṭal* in a series of coordinate, sequential verb forms (c–e). The sequence is then discontinued in order to highlight the complements that are put before the verb form (i.e., sentence type *x-yiqṭol* in f). These complements become the main information, or the (syntactic) predicate, while the finite verb form becomes their “support”, or the (syntactic) subject. Clearly, the tense shift *#wayyiqṭol* (main line, or foreground) → (*waw-*) *x-qaṭal* (secondary line, or background)# in historical narrative functionally parallels the tense shift *#w^eqaṭal* (main line, or foreground) → (*waw-*) *x-yiqṭol* (secondary line, or background)# in direct speech. Both *wayyiqṭol* and *w^eqaṭal*, along with other main-line verb forms and constructions, constitute plain sentences, which convey an event or information in a global way, while (*waw-*) *x-qaṭal* and (*waw-*) *x-yiqṭol* constitute marked sentences, which convey a detail of an event or of information.¹²¹

A text, usually comprising both narrative and discursive sections, originates from a series of main-line verb forms coherently connected with self-same forms in Biblical Hebrew and/or with continuative forms in Egyptian, as well as with secondary-line verb forms and other non-verbal constructions. A speaker / writer conveys his information in a structured way according to his strategy of communication by choosing appropriate verb forms and constructions. It is understood that he wishes the listener/reader to recognize and follow his personal way of communicating his information and consequently his intention. Clearly, the verb system is crucial for a correct interpretation of a text, i.e., an interpretation that tries to avoid re-structuring the information in a different way from that adopted by the speaker/writer and rather tries to understand and evaluate it.¹²²

second position in the sentence. This corresponds exactly to the situation in Biblical Hebrew, where the first place of the predicative sentence is taken by the predicate itself, and therefore the simple fact of a different word order results in a completely different type of sentence. The word order in the sentence in Biblical Greek as compared to Biblical Hebrew is the topic of my paper *Marked Syntactical Structures*. A similar distinction between “logical” and “grammatical” predicate is advocated by Junge *Emphasis* 66–68 who, correctly in my view, criticizes the exclusion of the “grammatical” predicate from Egyptian, despite counterarguments by Collier *Predication* 22–29. In his last publication, Polotsky abandoned the terminology “logical subject” and “logical predicate”, which had become rather unpopular, but not the substance of his analysis (see fn. 39 above).

¹²¹ See Niccacci *Marked Syntactical Structures* 9–13.

¹²² The contention by Foster *Thought Couplets* 145 that “the Standard Theory does not work very well with those literary texts which comprise ancient Egyptian *belles lettres* or ‘poetry’” does not apply to Polotsky, at least if one is able to perceive the coherence of his theory. Besides, Foster’s own approach is mostly based on interpretation (see fn. 92 above).

We are now in a position to appreciate the following definition of “text” by H. Weinrich [*with additions for Egyptian and for Biblical Hebrew*]: “A text is a logical (i.e., intelligible and consistent) sequence of linguistic signs [*particularly indicative/initial constructions in Egyptian, and wayyiqtol/w^eqatal in Biblical Hebrew*], placed between two significant breaks in communication [*i.e., non-indicative/non-initial constructions in Egyptian, and [waw-] x-qatal/yiqtol, or other non-verbal constructions in Biblical Hebrew*]”.¹²³

Thus, the secondary line of communication comprises two main functions that we can call “emphatic” and “non-emphatic”, or circumstantial, respectively. A major difference is that Egyptian has two morphologically different sets of constructions, one for the “emphatic” function, i.e., the substantival verb forms, and one for the “non-emphatic” function, i.e., the circumstantial verb forms (see §1 above), while Biblical Hebrew has one set only, with the finite verb in the second place of the sentence (i.e., *x-qatal/yiqtol*), for both, and the context alone shows which function applies in each case.

17 Parallel Structures in Egyptian and in Biblical Hebrew

What follows is a brief survey of points of similarity between Hebrew and Egyptian that emerged from my research on Biblical Hebrew syntax of the verb under the inspiration of Polotsky’s approach.¹²⁴

Let us start with a preliminary note about the method of analysis. Polotsky’s method is correctly described as structuralist; however, it was more a practical than a theoretical approach. It was characterized by a passionate, strenuous perusal of texts with the aim of finding good examples, especially parallel structures capable of showing how different grammatical elements interchange to fulfil the same functions, or contrastive structures showing opposing functions, always with a careful attention to morphology. My research concentrated on the verb forms and other non-verbal constructions attested in Biblical Hebrew, which I tried to classify adopting the text-linguistic approach of H. Weinrich (see §16).

In the following list of parallel structures in Egyptian and in Biblical Hebrew, I do not intend to imply any diachronic link or dependence of one language on the other; actually, my research is not intended to be diachronic at all.

(1) In *A Note* 158, Polotsky pointed out a remarkable similarity between Late Egyptian and Biblical Hebrew concerning an opposition of verb forms in historical narrative and in direct speech, respectively. He compared the Late

¹²³ English translation by W. G. E. Watson in Niccacci *The Syntax* 56. The original definition, in German, is found in Weinrich *Tempus* 11.

¹²⁴ For a presentation of parallel structures in Late Egyptian and in Biblical Hebrew, see Loprieno *The Sequential Forms*.

Egyptian “narrative past *iw.f ḥr sdm* and a retrospective tense *sdm.f*”— the first used for *Erzählung*, the second for *Rede* (F. Hintze), or for “narration” and “discours” (E. Benveniste), respectively — and the Biblical Hebrew narrative *wayyiqṭol* vs. *qāṭal* of report. To better explain the difference between the two verb forms, he referred to French which, along with other Romance languages, makes a clear distinction between “il chanta” (passé simple) for historical narrative and “il a chanté” (passé composé) for direct speech. The first Biblical-Hebrew example he quoted was: *wayyillāḥem yô’āb b’rabbat b’nê ‘ammôn wayyilkōd ‘et-‘îr hammēlūkâ* “Then Joab waged war against Rabbah of the Ammonites and captured the royal city”, with *wayyiqṭol* forms for historical information, vs. *niḥamtî b’rabbâ, gam-lākadtî ‘et-‘îr hammāyim* “(Then Joab sent ambassadors to David to say,) ‘I waged war against Rabbah and I also captured the city of waters’” (2 Sam 12:26–27), with *qāṭal* forms for direct-speech report.¹²⁵ For Late Egyptian, he quoted (“Erzählung”) *iw.f ḥr pḥ p’ sšd n t’ šri(t)* “er erreichte das Fenster der Fürstentochter” (*Doomed Prince* 6,6) vs. (“Meldung”) *pḥ w’ n rmt p’ sšd n t’y.k šri(t)* “Jemand hat das Fenster deiner Tochter erreicht” (*Doomed Prince* 6,7).¹²⁶

(2) In Egyptian, Polotsky was able to identify the function of the first tenses vs. the second tenses in contextual proximity and opposition. As parallel verb forms in Biblical Hebrew we have primarily *wayyiqṭol* for the main line of narrative vs. *x-qāṭal* for the secondary line in narrative, and *w^eqāṭal* for the main line in direct speech in the axis of the future vs. *x-yiqṭol* for the secondary line in the same axis (see §16 above). Thus, we have a first group comprising the first tenses, or indicative verb forms, in Egyptian, together with main-line *wayyiqṭol* and *w^eqāṭal*, or verb-first constructions, in Biblical Hebrew, on the one hand, and a second group comprising the second tenses, or “emphatic” verb forms, in Egyptian, paralleled by the secondary-line *x-qāṭal* and *x-yiqṭol*, or verb-second constructions, in Biblical Hebrew, on the other hand. In Polotsky’s terminology, the first group is indicative and the second is non-indicative, or “emphatic”; in Weinrich’s terminology, the first group conveys main line or foreground information and the second group conveys secondary-line or background information. Let us illustrate the situation of the second group by reviewing the main functions of the verb forms and constructions involved in separate parallel lists: (2.1) for Egyptian and (2.2) for Biblical Hebrew.

(2.1) Functions of the substantival verb forms, or second tenses, in Egyptian:

(2.1.1) “emphatic”, as #(syntactic) subject substantival verb form +

¹²⁵ Many such examples are available; see Niccacci *The Syntax* §23. In A Note 158 Polotsky also referred to Loprieno *The Sequential Forms*, who also compared Egyptian and Biblical Hebrew.

¹²⁶ Polotsky himself referred to his earlier treatment of this passage in *Ägyptische Verbalformen* 274, fn.4. He also quoted *Wen-Amun* 1,4 vs. 1,53, and 2,45 vs. 2,46.

highlighted adverbial predicate#: *stt b'.i m rmtw imyw Iw-nsrsr*, (d) *stt.i ds.i m ntrwt* “It is with the people who are in the Island of Fire that my soul makes love, it is with the goddesses that I myself make love (lit. ‘the-fact-that-my-soul-makes-love is with-the-people..., the-fact-that-I-myself-make-love is with-the-goddesses’)” (see Ex. 1, §6 above); *hnwt.i, irr.t p' ib hr m* “my mistress, wherefore art thou in this mood? (lit. ‘the-fact-that-you-make-this-heart is because-of-what?’)” (Westc. 12,21; Gardiner *Grammar* §440,6 No. 6);

(2.1.2) “non-emphatic”, as #(grammatical) subject substantival verb form + (grammatical) predicate substantival verb form# (Wechselsatz, or Balanced/Correlative sentence, see §5 above): *mrr.f irr.f* “The-fact-that-he-likes [subject] is the-fact-that-he-does [predicate]” (Pyr. §412b); *pr.r.tn r pt m nrwt, pr.r.i hr-tpt dnhw.tn* “If you go up to the sky as vultures, I go up on the tip of your wings (lit. ‘the-fact-that-you-go-up-to-the-sky-as-vultures is the-fact-that-I-go-up-to-the-sky-on-the-tip-of-your-wings’)” (CT III 61h-i; see Ex. 12, §8);

(2.1.3) “non-emphatic”, as #substantival verb form as “casus adverbialis” (protasis) + main sentence (apodosis)#: *pr.r.sn r pt m bikw, iw.i hr dnhw.sn* “if they go up to the sky as falcons (lit. ‘[as for] the-fact-that-they-go-up-to-the-sky-as-falcons’), I am on their wings” (CT III 100h-i; see Ex. 13, §8); *rmm.sn, iw.f hr sdm* “if they cry (lit. ‘[as for] the-fact-that-they-cry’), he hears” (Merikare C 5,7; see §15, 2c above);

(2.1.4) “non-emphatic”, as #adjectival predicate + (syntactic) subject substantival verb form#: “Reddjetet was in travail *qsn mss.s* and her bearing was painful (lit. ‘the-fact-that-she-was-bearing was painful’)” (Westc. 9,22; Gardiner *Grammar* §442,2 No. 1); *iwty thh.f rdyt m hr.f* “one who does not transgress the charge laid upon him” (lit. ‘one-who-is-not the-fact-that-he-transgresses-what-has-been-placed-upon-him’)” (Urk. IV,97,8; Gardiner *Grammar* §443);

(2.1.5) “non-emphatic”, as #verb form + object substantival verb form#: *mr.n.f wi rh.n.f qnn.i* “and he (i.e., prince Ammunenshi) liked me because he knew/realized that I was valiant (lit. ‘the-fact-that-I-was-valiant’)” (Sin. B 107); *iw grt wd.n hm.f prr(.i) r h'st tn* “His Majesty commanded me to go forth to this desert” (Hamm. 113,10; cf. Gardiner *Grammar* §442 No. 6);

(2.1.6) “non-emphatic”, as #(grammatical) predicate substantival verb form + *pw* as (grammatical) subject#: “as to (the phrase) ‘his heart is drowned’ *mhh ib.f pw* this means that his heart is forgetful (lit. ‘it-is/means the-fact-that-his-heart-is-forgetful’)” (Eb. 102,15; Gardiner *Grammar* §442,3); *h' Imnt Nfirt m hsfw s pw* “(it-is/means) that the Beautiful West rejoices (lit. ‘the-fact-that-the-Beautiful-West-rejoices’) at the approach of a man / someone” (CT V 28c B1C);¹²⁷

¹²⁷ This is a rubric at the end of Spell 366. B2L^a has a similar text, serving, however, as an initial rubric: *r n h' Imnt Nfirt m hsfw s* “Spell for the Beautiful West to rejoice at meeting a man /

(2.1.7) “non-emphatic”, as #noun/preposition + substantival verb form#: *ky si' hrd hrw mss.tw.f* “Another (way to) know about a child (on the) day it is born” (Eb. 97,13; Gardiner *Grammar* §191 No. 7); *wnm.k špssw n dd nsw* “thou shalt eat fine things of the king's gift (or giving)” (Westc. 7,21; Gardiner *Grammar* §442,5 No. 6).¹²⁸

(2.2) Functions of the verb-second (*x-qaṭal/x-yiqṭol*) constructions in Biblical Hebrew:

(2.2.1) “emphatic”, with #verb-second construction + highlighted adverbial predicate#: “So God created man in his image — *b^eselem 'ēlōhīm bārā' 'ōtô* it is in the image of God that he created him...” (Gen 1:27; see §16 above); “and (the frogs) shall go into your house, and into your bedchamber and on your bed...—*ûb^ekā ûb^eamm^ekā ûb^ekol- 'ābādeykā ya'ālû haš^epard^e 'îm* it is on you and on your people and on all your servants that the frogs shall come up” (Exod 7:28–29; see §16 above);

(2.2.2) “non-emphatic”, with #verb-second + verb-second constructions balancing each other#: *w^ehāyâ hû' yihyeh-l^ekā l^epeh, w^eattâ tihyeh-llô lē'lōhīm* “and thus he shall be a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God (lit. ‘and it shall come to pass the-fact-that-he-shall-be-a-mouth-for-you and the-fact-that-you-shall-be-as-God-for-him’)” (Exod 4:16); *hû' yalw^ekā, w^eattâ lō' talwennû, hû' yihyeh l^erō'š, w^eattâ tihyeh l^ezānāb* “He (i.e., the sojourner) shall lend to you, and you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail” (Deut 28:44);

(2.2.3) “non-emphatic”, with #a verb-second construction as “casus adverbialis” (protasis) + main sentence (apodosis)#: *habbōqer 'ôr, w^ehā'ānāšîm šull^ehû hēmmâ waḥāmōrēhem, hēm yāš^e'û 'et-hā'îr, lō' hirhîqû, w^eyôsēp 'āmar la'āšer 'al-bêtô* “When the morning was light, they were sent away, they and their asses. When they left the city and did not go far, Joseph said to his steward... (lit. ‘[as for] the-fact-that-the-morning-became-light... [as for] the-fact-that-they-left-the-city, did-not-go-far...’)” (Gen 44:3–4; cf. Niccacci *The Syntax* §105);

(2.2.4) “non-emphatic”, with #adjective-verb/pronominal predicate + verb-second sentence as subject#: *ṭôb [predicate] 'āšer lō'-tiddôr [subject] miššetiddôr w^elō' t^ešallēm* “It is better that you shall not vow than that you shall vow and shall not pay” (Qoh 5:4 = RSV 5:5); “And the people of Israel said, *mî*

someone” (CT V 23a). Being an initial rubric (i.e., a kind of title of the spell), CT V 23a has a different structure from that of CT V 28c: it is a presentative sentence with *r n* “spell of / for” governing a substantival *mrr.f* form (see Ex. 10, §7, and §12 above). Faulkner's translation is based on an incorrect analysis: “The Beautiful West is joyful at meeting this man”, as it takes *pw* as an adjective referring to “man” (Faulkner *The Ancient Egyptian CT II/7*; see my review 455–456).

¹²⁸ Also of this type is CT V 23a (fn. 127).

[predicate] *’āšer lō’-’ālā* [subject] *baqqāhāl mikkol-šibṭê yiśrā’ēl ’el-YHWH* ‘Which of all the tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly to the Lord?’” (Judg 21:5);

(2.2.5) “non-emphatic”, with #main sentence + verb-second sentence as object#: “Then Noah awoke from his wine *wayyēda’ ’ēt ’āšer ’āsâ-lô b’no haqqāṭān* and knew what his youngest son had done to him” (Gen 9:24); “And (God) said (to Moses)... *w’ḥannōtî ’et-’āšer ’āḥōn, w’riḥamtî ’et-’āšer ’ārahēm* and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy” (Exod 33:19);

(2.2.6) “non-emphatic”, with #main sentence (foreground) + verb-second sentence as a circumstance (background)#: *wayyiqrā’ ’ēlōhîm lā’ôr yôm, w’lāḥōšek qārā’ lāyēlā* “God called the light Day, while the darkness he called Night” (Gen 1:5); “Thus says the Lord... behold, I will strike the water that is in the Nile with the rod that is in my hand, *w’nehepkû l’dām, w’haddāgâ ’āšer-bay’ôr tāmût* and it shall be turned to blood, while the fish in the Nile shall die” (Exod 7:17–18);

(2.2.7) “non-emphatic”, with #preposition/prepositional phrase + verb-second sentence used as “nomen rectum”#: *b’rē’šît bārā’ ’ēlōhîm ’ēt haššāmayim w’ēṭ hā’āreṣ...* “When God began to create heaven and earth (lit. ‘At the beginning of the-fact-that-God-created-heaven-and-earth’)...” (Gen 1:1); “But (Moses) said, ‘Oh, my Lord, *š’laḥ-nā’ b’yad-tišlāḥ* send, I pray, some other person (lit. ‘send... by the hand of the-one-whom-you-shall-send’)” (Exod 4:13).

In sum, the constructions of the second group in Egyptian, as well as in Biblical Hebrew, have both “emphatic” and “non-emphatic” functions. The essence of “emphatic” function (2.1.1 and 2.2.1, respectively) is that the verb forms involved serve to highlight a non-verbal element of the sentence which thus becomes the new element or, in traditional terms, the predicate, while the verb functions as its “support”, or the subject (see fn. 120). This is, however, only one of the functions listed above. What is common to all these functions is that the verb forms involved function not as verbs but as substantives. In Egyptian, they are also substantival morphologically, while in Biblical Hebrew, they are not morphologically different but are demoted from the first place of the sentence, which is the place of the predicate, to the second place, which is the place of the non-verbal elements (subject, object, indirect complement, or adverb).

The two lists above are exactly parallel, except for function no. 6. On the one hand, a *mrr:f pw* construction (2.1.6) is not attested in Biblical Hebrew and, on the other hand, a circumstantial function of the verb-second constructions (2.2.6) has no counterpart in Egyptian, because Egyptian has distinctive verb forms, different from the second tenses, for the circumstantial function (see §1 above).

That the different constructions listed above really function as substantives is easily proven as we compare them with structures comprising actual substantives. Thus, for #substantival subject + adverbial predicate# (2.1.1/2.2.1) compare *sh'w.i m 'h* “the thought of me is in the palace” (*Sin.* B 156), and *nepeš habbāsār baddām* “the life of the flesh is in the blood” (Lev 17:11); for #substantival subject + substantival predicate# (2.1.2/2.2.2) compare *phti N phti Stš* “the strength of N is the strength of Seth” (see §11 above), and *'ānī YHWH* “I am the Lord” (Gen 15:7); for substantives used adverbially (2.1.3/2.2.3) compare *r' nb* “every day”, and *hayyôm* “today”; for the *mrr.f pw* construction compare, e.g., *R' pw* “he is Rē” (Gardiner *Grammar* §111), and for the circumstantial function of a verb-second construction compare a similar function of a non-verbal sentence, e.g., “And the Philistine went on closer to David, *w^ehā'îš nōšē' haššinnâ l'pānāyw* while the man who carried his shield walked in front of him” (1 Sam 17:41). As for the other functions—verb forms as subjects (2.1.4/2.2.4), objects (2.1.5/2.2.5), or governed by a noun and/or a preposition (2.1.7/2.2.7), they are so typical of substantives that there is no need to provide examples.

A major problem of Egyptian as well as of Biblical-Hebrew verbal theory is that the same structures — the second tenses and the verb-second structures, respectively — are sometimes “emphatic” and sometimes “non-emphatic”. This is actually one of the main reasons why many grammarians do not see any consistency and prefer to adopt an *ad hoc* approach. However, I have tried to show that, despite problems of interpretation in specific cases, the Polotskian theory appears perfectly consistent if one takes as basic the substantival function of the second tenses in Egyptian (and of the verb-second structures in Biblical Hebrew). The fact that “emphasis” is only applied in one of the various patterns attested in Egyptian, i.e., (2.1.1), depends on the fact that only in this pattern does a complete reversal of functions take place, i.e., the verb, which is a “universal” category, and as such can be predicated of many “individual” categories, or subjects, becomes the syntactic subject (the “given” element, or the “theme”), while a subject, or an “individual” term, becomes the syntactic predicate (or the new element, or the “rheme”; cf. §14 above).¹²⁹

¹²⁹ See Niccacci *The Syntax* §6, and Niccacci *Simple Nominal Clause* 216–217. This structure is also called the “cleft sentence” (see fn. 5), “frase scissa” in Italian. However, as Polotsky aptly remarked, “Dans les constructions égyptiennes il n’y a rien qui puisse évoquer l’idée de ‘coupure’ ou de ‘cleaving’”. Si les constructions européennes (et néo-éthiopiennes) correspondantes se sont vu donner des noms comme ‘Cleft Sentence’, ‘sætningskløving’, ‘phrase coupée’, cela est dû au fait que la nominalisations du verbe s’effectue dans elles, non pas morphologiquement comme en égyptien, mais syntaxiquement, c’est-à-dire dans la forme de sous-phrases, ce qui a pour effet que la phrase ‘plane’ sous-jacente est ‘coupée’ en deux (ou ‘dédoublée’) et que la vedette est ‘arrachée’ à la proposition dont elle fait partie originellement pour en être placée dans une autre” (Polotsky *Les transpositions* 17–18). Compare, in English, the plain sentence “A faulty switch caused the trouble”, with its “cleft” counterpart “It was a faulty switch that caused the trouble”

Biblical Hebrew differs from Egyptian in that the same structures with the finite verb in the second place, with no morphologically distinctive marks, are used for “emphasis” as well as for “non-emphasis” but are marked for syntactic dependence only. No syntactic criteria are available to distinguish one function from the other; only speech-situation and context can help.

(3) Egyptian *mk* “behold” is parallel with Biblical-Hebrew *hinnēh*. As presentative particles (also called “quasi-verbs”), both can either be part of a sentence, as in type (1) in §12 above, and in *hinnēnî* “Here I am”, or can modify a complete sentence, in which case they are not part of the sentence that they introduce but only modify its pragmatic force, as in type (2) in §12 above, and in *hinnēh ’ābîkā ḥōleh* “(Someone said to Joseph,) Behold, your father is ill” (Gen 48:1).¹³⁰

(4) The analysis of the non-verbal sentence shows similarities in Egyptian and in Biblical Hebrew. Besides the two-member pattern, in both a three-member pattern is attested, usually analysed as a sentence with a pronominal “copula”. Actually, I have tried to show that in a Biblical-Hebrew sentence the basic slots are two — that of the predicate and that of the subject; to these two additional slots can be added — one in front-dislocation, with the function of *casus pendens*, and one in rear-dislocation, with the function of apposition. For the *casus pendens* in Egyptian, see my treatment of “anticipatory emphasis” in §15 above; for apposition, see my discussion of the three-member, or ternary pattern of the non-verbal sentence in §11 above. “Copula” is not a category of Egyptian or Biblical-Hebrew syntax.

Finally, in Biblical Hebrew a three-member pattern of a non-verbal sentence is attested and exactly parallels the Egyptian pattern; e.g., *’ēlleh hēm b’nē yišmā’ēl* “these are the sons of Ishmael (lit. ‘these are they, i.e., the sons of Ishmael’)” (Gen 25:16), compared with *bwt.i pw ḥs* “my abomination is excrement (lit. ‘my abomination is this, i.e., excrement’)” (Gardiner *Grammar* §130; see fn. 38 above).

(Huddleston *Introduction* 459). I can add that in Biblical-Hebrew verb-second constructions, as in the Egyptian second tenses, the sentence is one, not “cleft”, but, differently from Egyptian, in Biblical Hebrew the nominalization of the verb form is not morphological but is signalled by its demotion from the first to the second place of the sentence.

¹³⁰ Cf. Niccacci *The Syntax* §§67–72.

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