

Helmut Satzinger:

On Some Aspects of *jw* in Middle Egyptian

1. The matrix #*jw* + noun + adverb#

Independent adverbial sentences are, as a rule, "introduced" by what is usually labelled the "particle *jw*". This applies both to sentences with adverbs and prepositional expressions in the predicate slot and to those whose predicate is an adverbial verbform.

jw + noun + prepositional phrase

(1) *jw hrw h^cw m hrt-ntr* "The sound of rejoicing is in the necropolis" *CT* 4, 97a

With pronominal theme: *jw.f* + prepositional phrase

(2) (*prr.sn r pt m bjkw*) *jw.j hr dnhw.sn* "(When they ascend to the sky as falcons,) I am on their wings" *CT* III, 100–101

(3) *jw.f r smr* "He shall be a companion" *Sinuhe* B 230

jw + noun + adverbial verb form

With stative: *jw* + noun + stative

(4) *jw NN. rh nhtj jptw ntj(tj) m (m)fk³t prr(tj) R^c jmjw(tj?).sn* "NN knows those two sycamores which are of turquoise, between which Rê comes forth" *CT* II, 388 o–p

With progressive gerund: *jw.f* + *hr sdm*

(5) (*jn NN. jr nn n hntjw*) *jw.f hr jwt r jnt šps* "(It was NN. who made these pictures) while he was coming to fetch the alabaster" *Hatnub* 25, 19–20

With future gerund: *jw* + noun + *r sdm*

(6) *jw k³.k r rdj.t jrjj.j phwj, h^cw.j m hnw* "Your ka will grant me to reach my end, my body being at home (Lichtheim)" *Sinuhe* B 203–204

With circumstantial *sdm.f*:

(7) *jw r n s nhm.f sw, jw mdw.f dj.f t³m n.f* "A man's mouth can save him. His speech makes one forgive him (Lichtheim)" *Schiffbr* 17–19

2. Indefinite noun as subject

When the theme is an indefinite noun the meaning of the sentence with initial *jw* has a character that is notably different as it is an expression of existence ("there is..."), rather than location, or the like.

#*jw* + noun# is a thetic expression, comparable to a Semitic "minor clause", or "one-term sentence" (Lipiński *Semitic Languages* § 50.4), such as #**han* + noun# (Heb. *hinnē*, Arab. *ʔinna*, etc.), which cannot be analysed as a sentence consisting of theme and rheme. Nevertheless, #*jw* + noun# is a bipartite construction. It is the construction that constitutes the matrix of all Old and Middle Egyptian tripartite *jw* constructions, #*jw* + noun + adverb#. To wit: this is not an adverbial sentence, #noun + adverb#, that is introduced by a "particle" *jw*, but rather is it an adverbial sentence which is embedded into the *jw* matrix. The mechanics of this embedding can be best understood if we proceed on the construction with an indefinite noun (for which see above, exx. 7 and 8). The rhematic expression #*jw* + noun^{indef}# "there is a N." is expanded by a restrictive locative expression that confines the validity of the utterance to, e.g., a particular place: "there is a N. in P." Indefinite nouns tend to be rhematic, whereas definite nouns tend to be thematic. If there is a definite noun in the respective position in the construction in question the rhematic weight is shifted to the adverb: "the N. is in P."

3. Bipartite versus tripartite adverbial sentence

As there is a "tripartite adverbial sentence" (i.e., an adverbial sentence which is embedded in the *jw* matrix) along with the (bipartite) adverbial sentence proper, we are confronted with the question as for the functional difference (semantic and/or syntactic) between the two constructions. The traditional answers to this question lie on two different levels.

- The "pragmatic" answer claims that the *jw* matrix anchors the communication in the time of the speaker: "The function of *jw* was discerned by Gunn. [Note 47 refers to Gunn *Studies* 98 n. 1; Gunn *sixth dynasty letter* 247.] It has the effect of relating the statement to the sphere of interest and to the time of the speaker..." (Polotsky *Tenses* 17 (§ 35)). "In addition linguists tend to agree with the point originally made by Gunn, that the syntactic function of the word *jw* is to bring the words it introduces out of the background of the speaker's frame of reference and into the foreground" (Ray *To be* 225). In fact, it is primarily the subject that is "anchored" by *jw*; secondarily also the rheme, according to its temporal connotation (e.g., *r sdm* is relative future).

- The syntactic answer is that the employment of the bipartite adverbial sentence is by and large restricted to circumstantial and sequential use, but also to utterances with optative meaning.³ The tripartite adverbial sentence is found, on the other hand, in sentences of initial status (indicative main sentences). Independent adverbial sentences are, as a rule,

³ Cf. *tʔw n nḥ r fnd.k* "The breath of life to your nose!" Cairo Stela CG 20164 (vd. Gardiner *Grammar* 94 n. 2).

”introduced” by *jw*. This applies both to sentences with adverbs and prepositional phrases in the predicate slot and to those whose predicate is an adverbial verbform.

Both explanations are marred to a certain extent by the fact that there is a condition under which the dichotomy of bipartite vs. tripartite is neutralized. If the subject is a personal pronoun the bipartite construction cannot be employed: Old and Middle Egyptian do not dispose of a form of the pronoun that could function as the subject in the adverbial sentence proper, viz. the bipartite adverbial sentence⁴ (by Late Egyptian times, a new paradigm was created to fill this gap: *tw.j, tw.k, tw.t, sw*, etc.). The tripartite construction #*jw.f* + adverb# is found under all circumstances, no matter whether in initial status or in circumstantial or sequential employment, although it is not obvious why the anchoring in the time of the speaker should be obligatory with pronominal subjects, though not with substantival subjects.

4. Zero subject

When speaking of pronominal subjects it is worth mentioning that also the zero subject (Gardiner *Grammar* § 123) belongs here. It has the semantic value of an indefinite pronoun or similar.

jw + zero + prepositional phrase

(16) ”... offerings to this NN.”, *jw* Ø *n jt.s Wsjr* ”as belong to her father Osiris” *CT* 7, 544c (B9C).⁵

jw + zero + stative

(17) ”The Two Truths have judged,” *jw* Ø *šw(.w) m mtrw* ”though one was void of witnesses” *PT* 317b.

(18) ”Come and go down there,” *jw* Ø *nfr(.w)* ”and things will be well” *CT* 3, 4f.

(19) *jw grt* Ø *wr(.w) r ‘b^c* ”It is even more than exaggeration” *Lebensm.* 6.

⁴ The absolute pronoun is used, though only rarely, when the pronoun is topicalized, or focalized. For examples see Gardiner *Grammar* § 116, end; Edel *Grammatik* § 914; Sander-Hansen *Grammatik* § 705; Sander-Hansen *Studien* § 476.

⁵ Var. *iw nn n it.f Wsjr* ”these belong to his father Osiris” *CT* 7, 544c (B3C).

With a *zero* subject, the embedding in an *jw* matrix is indispensable, just as with a pronominal subject.

5. Further verbal expressions in the *jw* matrix

Above, *jw* constructions with a stative or one of the gerunds have been mentioned. In addition, there are also *jw* constructions with embedded *s_{dm}.f* and *s_{dm}.n.f* and with the passive *s_{dm}(w)*. The *s_{dm}.f* form can be found in two different structures – one tripartite, #*jw* subject *s_{dm}.f#*, and one with no subject expression intervening between *jw* and the verb, #*jw s_{dm}.f#*. The latter is found in most instances of verbs of quality (Satzinger *jw.f s_{dm}.f*).⁶ As for *s_{dm}.n.f*, the normal construction is #*jw + s_{dm}.n.f#*. In Old Egyptian, a few cases of #*jw + noun + s_{dm}.n.f#* can be found instead (Allen *Inflexion* § 415; after *m/m.k.*, § 416); in addition, there are a few examples of this in the Coffin Texts (E.g., *jw h³.n n.t bjk* ‘The falcon has screamed for you’ *CT* 1,73d–74a (B3Bo)). Also the passive *s_{dm}(w)* is never found with preceding subject (that is, if such construction exists it will in most if not all cases be thought to be formed, not with the passive *s_{dm}(w)*, but rather with the Stative).

	<i>jw + noun + verb...</i>	<i>jw + verb...</i>
<i>s_{dm}.f</i> , verbs of quality	(<i>jw.f nfr.f</i>) (<i>jw N. nfr.f</i>)	<i>jw nfr.f</i> <i>jw nfr N.</i>
<i>s_{dm}.f</i> , other verbs	<i>jw.f s_{dm}.f</i> <i>jw N. s_{dm}.f</i>	(<i>jw s_{dm}.f</i>) (<i>jw s_{dm} N.</i>)
<i>s_{dm}.n.f</i>	— (except Old Egn.) — (except Old Egn.)	<i>jw s_{dm}.n.f</i> <i>jw s_{dm}.n N.</i>
passive <i>s_{dm}(w)</i>	— —	— <i>jw s_{dm}(w) N.</i>
Stative	<i>jw.f s_{dm}w</i> —	— (except some cases of 1sc) —

⁶ As a passive counterpart of *iw(f) s_{dm}.f*, we find *iw s_{dm}.tw.f*, and hardly ever *iw.tw s_{dm}.tw.f*; never, though, **iw.tw.f s_{dm}.tw.f*, nor **iw.tw noun s_{dm}.tw.f*.

(Rarely attested constructions in parenthesis.)

It is obvious that the structures with the subject expression between *jw* and the verb form conform to the basic tripartite *jw* construction mentioned above, #*jw* noun adverb#. The other type of structure, with no subject expression after *jw*, can also be matched with it, at least in a historical perspective, if we assume that it originated in constructions with a zero subject of *jw*.

It must be stated, though, that such a construction is not on a par with the zero subject constructions of Middle Egyptian as mentioned above. Whereas in *jw.Ø sdm.f*, *jw.Ø 3h* etc. the subject of *jw* and that of the verb are coreferential (the common *signifié* is the indefinite idea expressed by zero), they are not so in *jw.Ø sdm(.n).f*: the verb has another subject, this time a personal or substantival one which is not expressed by zero. However, these two cases are on different levels in terms of diachrony. Whereas the pattern *jw* + zero + stative is living Middle Egyptian, i. e., it is formed along the lines of this idiom, the pseudo-bipartite pattern must be regarded as a grammaticalized structure that cannot be analyzed anymore within the Middle Egyptian system (Satzinger *jw.f sdm.f*).

6. Substantival verbal forms after *jw*?

One of the popular basics of the Polotskyan system is that – in independent, non-sequential main clauses – the rhematic verb forms are distinguished from the rhematizing ("emphatic") forms by the presence of *jw* (we may assume that also the verb forms display different features in each case, though this is but rarely visible in the writing).

Independent perfect *jw sdm.n .f* (transitive):

(20) *jw jr.n.j mj n3 dd.n.k* "I have acted according to what you have said" *P. Westcar* 6,1 (cf. Polotsky *Tenses* § 38)

Substantival *sdm.n .f* in "emphasizing" use:

(21) *jr.n.j grt m'h't tn... n mrwt šsp 3bwt sntr htpw-ntr...* "I only made this tomb... for the sake of receiving provisions, incense, and divine offerings..." *Brit. Mus.* 575 (cf. Polotsky *Tenses* § 39)

On the other hand, the adverb-rhmatizing construction is in its origin just an adverbial sentence, the rhematizing effect being based on the fact that the subject is an embedded verbal sentence. One may ask why – in contrast to the normal adverbial sentence – it should not be able to be embedded into an *jw* construction. And in fact, there are some instances of *sdm(.n).f* after *jw* that give the impression to be "emphatic". Reduplication occurs with the *sdm.f* of IIIæ infirmæ verbs in the following:

(22) "Good speech is more hidden than greenstone," *jw gmm.tw.s m-^c hmwt hr bnjjwt* "yet it may be found among maids at the grindstone" *Ptahhotep* 59 (L 2) (cf. Polotsky *Tenses* 9–10, n. 22)

(23) "She cries bitterly for you," *jw rmm.s tw hr rmw.k m grh 3pdw m hrw* "and that she weeps for you is precisely on account of your fish(ing) by night and your fowl(ing) by day" *Kemyt* § VII (cf. Polotsky *Tenses* 9–10, n. 22)

Though both of these examples are classical literature the manuscripts quoted are not of the classical period.⁷ Both are school texts of the New Kingdom that reproduce classical literature. The living language of their time is mirrored in Late Egyptian, and in this language system Second Tenses ("emphatic" forms) may very well be transposed to clauses of circumstance by being embedded into the *jw* construction (*jw j.jr.f sdm*, etc.). Hence, the two examples are not reliable testimonies for the use of substantival forms after *jw*.

Most intransitive verbs do not occur in the rhematic *sdm.n.f* form. Hence an intransitive *sdm.n.f* should be of substantival nature, as in the following case.

(24) "For you were brought up as a pupil of my majesty;" *jw hpr.n.k js m sdtj hm.j, sb3tj w^c n h.j* "you have grown up as a foster child of my majesty, the sole pupil of my palace" *Ikhernofret stela*, Berlin 1204, 6–7

However, the dichotomy of the suppletive system of the perfect tense is not simply transitive vs. intransitive. It is only certain classes of the intransitive verbs that use the stative instead of *sdm.n.f*. The verb *hpr*, however, is not one of them.⁸ – Note that the enclitic particle *js* employed here.

The notional characteristic of the "emphatic" construction is the rhematization of an adverb. This is obvious in the following instances of *jw* + *sdm.n.f*.

(25) "The majesty of my lord dispatched me to hack out Wawat and Irtjet," *jw gr h3b.n w(j) hm n nb.(j) r shtp h3swt (j)ptn* "but now the majesty of my lord dispatched me in order to pacify these countries" *Urkunden* I, 134,3.

⁷ I am indebted to W. Schenkel for having drawn my attention to this fact.

⁸ Cf., e.g. *hpr.n sft.f nhbwt* "His seven neck-vertebrae have come into being" *PT* 511b. With "emphatic" meaning, expressed by an enclitic particle (for which vd. infra): *hpr.n jr.f n.k nn* "How has this happened to you?" *PT* 931a.

(26) "What you have done is more than anything;" *jw hm jr.n.k ʿdsrwʿ hhw nw zp* "indeed, it is millions of times you have done magnificent things (?)" *Urkunden I*, 63,8.

It must be noted, however, that the verb form is separated from *jw* in each case by an enclitic particle, such as *gr*, *hm*; and compare the employment of *js* in ex. (24). It may be assumed that it is these that cause the "emphasizing" (i.e., de-rhematizing) effect. In fact, this can also be observed in sentences where there is no verb present at all, or a stative, a form that cannot have substantival function.

(27) *j(w).k rr m nn* "Are you really this one?" *PT 428b* (would be Coptic $\epsilon\kappa\omicron \chi\bar{\iota} \pi\alpha\iota\Box$)

(28) "The stealing done by the robber is the misdeed of one who is poor;" *jw.k swt s³.t(j) m t³.k* "you, however, are sated with your bread" *Eloquent Peasant B 1*, 124–125

(29) *jw grt Ø wr r ʿb^c* "It is even more than exaggeration" *Lebensm.* 6

The adverb-rhematizing effect can only be due to these particles, viz. *rr*, *swt*, *grt*. If this is so there is no need for a rhematizing verb form.

7. On essence, nature and origin of *jw*

The basic pattern of *jw* is thethetic expression #*jw* + noun#, "there is N." Whereas this is very rarely encountered as such it is a very productive matrix into which an adverbial sentence is embedded. By stating that "there is N.", or N. exists presently, it anchors the subject of the adverbial sentence in the time sphere of the speaker (independent main sentence), in the context of the report or narrative (sequential sentence) or of the cotext (clause of circumstance).

Constructions with a verbal expression in the adverb slot appear in Middle Egyptian already grammaticalized. *Jw sdm.n.f* is the independent form of the (transitive) perfect and cannot, in Middle Egyptian, be analysed as consisting of an adverbial sentence (zero + *sdm.n.f*) which is embedded in the *jw* matrix. Similarly, *jw sdm.f* (in particular, *jw nfr.f*) is the independent form of the aorist. Not even *jw.f sdm.f* can be analysed in Middle Egyptian: whereas the "circumstantial" *sdm=f* in free use is of progressive meaning ("while he was listening", or sim.) the form in question, the independent aorist *jw.f sdm.f*, is of perfective aspect ("he is one who hears", "he can hear", etc.).

The nature of *jw* may be expected to mirror its historical background, its "roots". *Jw* has the department of a verb – the suffix pronoun serves as its subject. If *jw* is a verb it is intransitive, and univalent. In respect to tense/aspect/mood (TAM) it is a defective verb: it has only one

tense form, *viz.* a s t a t i c indicative present. This is strange indeed and hampers the verbal interpretation: first, suffix-conjugated verb forms are basically of dynamic meaning ("he sits down", "he falls ill", etc.); second, there is no indicative *sdm.f* form of present tense reference, neither dynamic nor static.

If the verbal hypothesis is to be maintained we have to look for comparable roots from which *jw* may be derived. Of course it is possible that the etymon of *jw* is not preserved in Egyptian.

Thus, some assume that it is related to the Semitic root HJH (Hebrew *hāyā* "he was", etc.; so already ERMAN *Verhältnis* 107). But as long as *jw* can be derived from a verbal root attested in Egyptian this will be the first choice.

j "to say" is a verb of very limited use, partly auxiliary: *sdm.jn.f* < **sdm-j.n.f*. Usually, verbs meaning "to say" are used as auxiliaries (cf. Satzinger *conjugations*) for agentive expressions, and not utterances on a position or situation, such as *jw.f* ³ "he is (presently) here", or *jw.f m htp* "he is in peace". Some other verbs must be rejected because of negative semantics: *jwj* "not to be"; "to have no boat"; "to cut off"; "to be evil"; also "to lament", "to complain". Mostly, the verb $\overset{\text{I}}{\wedge} jwj$ "to come" has been considered. But *jw.f* cannot be derived from any form *jwj.f* with present tense reference. The meaning "there is..." can only have developed from a present perfect tense, "he has come" > "he is now here" – a *sdm.f*, of initial status (main sentence form), *viz.* a rhematic perfective *sdm.f*. Of course, Middle Egyptian *jw* cannot just be analysed as a form of the verb *jwj*. If at all, it can only be seen as a petrified or grammaticalized form. Compare the rection of *jwj* with the meaning of prepositions in the *jw* clause: *jwj.f m P.* could mean, "he has come from P. (and is now here)", whereas *jw.f m P.* means, in the contrary, "he is in P." This grammaticalization must already have been accomplished in some Proto-Egyptian stage. Therefore the verdict (Depuydt *Egyptian jw* 29) that *jw*, being exclusively in initial position, must be substantival if it derives from a *sdm.f* verb form, such as *jwj.f*, is not cogent: the rule that sentence-initial verb forms without *jw* are by necessity substantival does not apply to Old Egyptian and even less so for that Proto-Egyptian state when *jw* developed out from a form of *jwj* "to come".

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