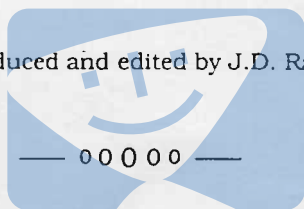


Lingua Sapientissima

*A seminar in honour of H.J. Polotsky
organised by the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
and the Faculty of Oriental Studies in 1984*

comprising
the Glanville Lecture for 1984, by H.J. Polotsky,
and papers by C.J. Eyre, F. Junge,
M.A. Leahy, J. Osing and H. Satzinger.

Introduced and edited by J.D. Ray



Smile

on my mac

CAMBRIDGE

Faculty of Oriental Studies

1987

Helmut Satzinger (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)

§ 1. In the verbal relative constructions of Old and Middle Egyptian ('formes adjectives', according to Polotsky),¹⁾ three tenses can be discerned:

1) *Perfect, or preterite.*

active participle: *s_{dm}, jrj*

two variants for the relative form: a) *s_{dmw}.f, jrjw.f* ('Clère's relative form'; mainly in the Old Kingdom); b) *s_{dm}.n.f* (which is evidently superseding the latter)

2) *Imperfect, or present tense.*

participle: *s_{dmj}, jrrj*

relative form: *s_{dmw}.f, jrrw.f*

3) *Prospective, or future tense.*

two variants for the participle: a) *s_{dmj}* (fem. *s_{dmtj}*); b) *s_{dm}.tj.fj* (fem. *s_{dm}.tj.sj*)

relative form: *s_{dmj}.f* (fem. *s_{dm}.tj.f*).

§ 2. The same tenses can be distinguished in the 'formes substantives', or that-forms.²⁾

1) Perfect: *s_{dm}.n.f*

2) Imperfect: *s_{dm}.f, jrr.f* ('imperfective *s_{dm}.f*')

3) Prospective: the '*s_{dmw}.f* form',³⁾ i.e., *s_{dmw}.f, jrjj.f*.

§ 3. The passive participles of the imperfect and prospective can be described within the framework of the (active) relative forms⁴⁾:

1) For the object (or patient) expression, the enclitic pronouns are used, as with the relative forms: *šddw nb sw hr.f* "everyone on whom (one) recites it".⁵⁾

2) The assumed passive participles can be formed from intransitive verbs: *prrw h33w hr šhr.f* "according to whose plans (one) goes back and forth".⁶⁾ Thus, Polotsky says, "Quant au 'participe passif' de l'inaccompli, ses

rapports avec la 'forme relative' du même temps permettent d'y voir, en ce qui concerne les verbes intransitifs, une 'forme relative' active moins l'agent
... 7)

None of these facts is true of the passive participle of the perfect. Therefore, a perfect passive paradigm should be discerned in its own right:

Perfect.

passive participle: *jrjj* ⁸⁾

passive relative form: *jrj.f*. ⁹⁾

§ 4. In Old Egyptian, there is a perfect passive *that*-form *sdm.w.f*, whereas the imperfect and prospective passive *that*-forms are formed analytically, i.e., by adding *tj/tw* to the stem of the verb.¹⁰⁾ By the Middle Kingdom, the passive *that*-form *sdmw.f* had practically been given up, the analytic form *sdm.n.tw.f* having taken its place.

§ 5. The distinction of three tenses can be analysed in two binary steps. The criteria for these are aspect and time-reference, respectively:

- 1) one progressive tense: *imperfect*
two perfective tenses: *perfect*, *prospective*

Of the latter:

- 2) one prospective tense: *prospective*
one non-prospective tense: *perfect*.

§ 6. Turning now to the circumstantial forms of the verb ('formes adverbiales'¹¹⁾), an analogous procedure may be attempted. Here, too, we encounter forms that can be labelled perfect and prospective, alongside forms that seem to be imperfect, since they have neither relative past nor relative future meaning. On applying the criterion of aspect, however, some of these assumed imperfect forms will turn out to be non-progressive:

1) *jw(.f) sdm.f* is not "he is listening", but rather a generalizing "he hears", "he can hear".¹²⁾ This syntagma is assumed to be composed of the topic *jw(.f)* + nexus + adverbial (= circumstantial) predicate *sdm.f*. Since the non-progressive quality of the syntagma can be due neither to the topic nor the nexus, it should be a characteristic of the predicative *sdm.f*.

2) *n sdm.n.f* is not "he is not listening", but rather a generalizing "he

cannot hear", "he is deaf/prevented from hearing/disobedient".¹³⁾

Following Polotsky,¹⁴⁾ we may use the term 'aorist' for the tense of these forms.¹⁵⁾

§ 7. Hence we gain a set of four tenses for the circumstantial forms:

1) *Perfect*.

positive: two variants, a) *sḏm.f, jrj.f* (mainly in Old Kingdom texts), and b) *sḏm.n.f* (evidently superseding the latter)

negative: *n sḏm.f, n jrj.f*

2) *Aorist*.

positive: *sḏm.f, jrj.f*

negative: *n sḏm.n.f*

3) *Prospective*.

positive: two variants, a) *sḏm.f, jrj.f* (cf. especially Polotsky's tentative grouping of the usage in clauses of purpose as circumstantial prospective¹⁶⁾), and b) ... *r sḏm* (superseding the latter)

negative, non-volitive (including non-final): *nn sḏm.f* (spelled *nn* *sḏm.f* in the Old Kingdom); volitive (i.e., final): *jm.f sḏmw* (with Old Kingdom variant *jm sḏm.f*)

4) *Present*.

positive: two variants, a) *sḏm.f, jrj.f* (becoming obsolete), and b) ... *hr sḏm* (superseding the latter)

negative: *n sḏm.f, n jrj.f* (note especially examples of verbs of quality, like *n wꜥb.sn* "without their being pure"¹⁷⁾).

§ 8. Analysis of these four tenses will involve three binary decisions. Again, the first step is based on the criterion of aspect:

1) one progressive tense: *imperfect*

three perfective tenses: *perfect, aorist, and prospective*.

The next two steps are based on criteria of time-reference:

2) one prospective tense: *prospective*

two non-prospective tenses: *perfect, aorist*

3) one past tense: *perfect*

one non-past tense: *aorist*.

§ 9. Again, the passive voice appears to be of a different structure. In all the tenses, the passive forms are derived from the active forms by means of the morpheme *tj/tw*, but not so in the perfect. Here, a paradigm exists in its own right alongside the active one.

§ 10. In Middle Egyptian, the perfect active forms of certain verbs are not used (e.g., of the intransitive verbs of motion). Similarly, the use of the perfect passive forms is restricted. In both cases the gap is filled by a form of different structure, the old perfective. In Old Egyptian the distribution of forms is not quite the same. Of certain verbs, obviously in an overlapping distribution, both the *sḏm.n.f* form and the old perfective may be used (e.g., with *ḏd* "to say"). Schenkel may be right with an interesting hypothesis of his¹⁸⁾: he has tried to show that the uses of the Old Perfective are those of an ancient middle voice, which are comparable to those of ancient Greek. This assumption could account for the old perfective gradually intruding into the system of the suffix conjugation as the middle voice became more and more obsolete as a grammatical category.

§ 11. A structural analysis like the one given above does not, by itself, yield historical results. A critical interpretation may, however, make historical developments transparent. Among the insights one may gain from our brief survey is the impression that, in a very early stage of the language, all basic tenses could be formed after the *sḏm.f* pattern. It is perhaps as the result of a later development that two other formations entered into this system: *sḏm.n.f* and the old perfective, the latter of which may primarily have conveyed a realm of middle voice/present perfect, while the *sḏm.n.f* may originally have been formed to express the contrasting active voice of the present perfect.

It was only then that it was felt necessary to distinguish the past (preterite) from perfective utterances of no time-reference (i.e., aorist). Strangely enough, the *sḏm.n.f* form then served to express the preterite (as opposed to the aorist) in positive utterances, whereas it was used for the aorist (as opposed to the preterite) in negative utterances.

	(passive voice)	+perfective		-perfective
		-prospective	+prospective	PRESENT TENSE
		PRETERITE (active)	FUTURE	
Participle	PRETERITE (passive) <i>jrjj</i> fem. <i>jrjjt</i>	<i>jrj</i> fem. <i>jrjt</i>	<i>jrj.j</i> fem. <i>jrt.j</i> ----- ↓ <i>jrj.tj.fj</i> fem. <i>jrj.tj.sj</i>	<i>jrrj</i> fem. <i>jrrt</i>
Relative Form	<i>jrjj.f</i> fem. <i>jrjjt.f</i>	<i>jrjw.f</i> fem. <i>jrwt.f</i> ----- ↓ <i>jrj.n.f</i> fem. <i>jrt.n.f</i>	<i>jrj.j.f</i> fem. <i>jrt.j.f</i>	<i>jrrw.f</i> fem. <i>jrrt.f</i>
that-form	<i>jrjw.f</i> ↘	----- <i>jrj.n.f</i> pass. <i>jrj.n.tw.f</i>	<i>jrjj.f</i> pass. <i>jrjj.tw.f</i>	<i>jrr.f</i> pass. <i>jrr.tw.f</i>

Aspect and time-reference. 1: Participles, Relative Forms, that-Forms

Smile
on my mac

- 1) H.J. Polotsky, *Les transpositions du verbe en égyptien classique* (Israel Oriental Studies 6, 1-50); for details of the relative constructions see H. Satzinger, *Attribut und Relativsatz im Alten Ägyptisch* (forthcoming). *Fs. Westendorf* I, 125
- 2) Polotsky, op. cit. 2.7.1.
- 3) For this form being the prospective *that*-form, see Polotsky, op. cit. 2.7.
- 4) See Polotsky op. cit. 2.2.2.
- 5) For the example quoted (Urk. V 96), see A.H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, p. 295, n. 4.
- 6) For the example quoted (Cairo stela CG 20539), see Polotsky, op. cit. 2.2.7 (8).
- 7) Polotsky, op. cit. 2.2.2.
- 8) Note that all forms in *-w*, quoted by E. Edel, *Altägyptische Grammatik*, § 639, are not passive participles, but rather (active) relative forms ("Clère's relative form"), e.g. *snkw fdt w3pt* "whom the four teats (?) suckled" PT 252 c; *h3d nj nbw km3w Hz3t* "a fattened calf of gold which Hezat created" PT 1029 c (Faulkner's translations).
- 9) For the pronominal subject of the passive, a mixed paradigm is used: (see Edel, op. cit. § 661 c): 1 sg. *wj*, but 2 sg. m. *k*, 2 sg. f. *t*, 3 sg. m. *f*, 3 sg. f. *s* (cf. *ntj wj jm* "where I am" vs. *ntj.k jm* "where you are", etc.): *sp3t ms(w)t w(j) jm.s jn A n B* "the nome in which I was born by A (=mother) to B (=father)" Urk. I 118,17 - 119,2; *bw pw hj(w).t jm* "that place where you were beaten" PT 1273 c; *hrw ms(w).f jm* "the day it was born" PT 27 d. For the ending *jj* see *sn.tjj sht-hip jm* "(the plumb-line ...) by means of which the Field of Offerings was founded" PT 1196 c.
- 10) There is, furthermore, a prospective passive *sdmw.f*: c.f. Edel, op. cit., §§ 564, 565; PT 1967; 1970 a.
- 11) Polotsky, op. cit., p. 26 ff.
- 12) Cf. H.J. Polotsky, *Egyptian Tenses*, § 49.
- 13) Cf. H. Satzinger, *Die negativen Konstruktionen im Alt- und Mittelägyptischen* §§ 30-37. In my original paper, Gunn's "synchronous present" *sdm.n.f* was also discussed here. This is unjustified, since this form is not circumstantial. Apart from this, recognition of this particular "synchronous present" form is a controversial matter: many will prefer to regard (e.g.) *dj.n.j n.k* as a present perfect "I have granted you", rather than an aoristic "I grant you".
- 14) See, e.g., OLZ 56 (1959) 460 (Polotsky *Collected Papers*, p. 237).
- 15) In 3.5.2 of his *Transpositions*, Polotsky speaks of "le temps aoriste *jw.f sdm.f*"; in 4.1.3 he correlates this form with *n sdm.n.f* as its counterpart.
- 16) Op. cit. 3.6.
- 17) Urk. I 205,5. It is by no means difficult to find examples of *n sdm.f* with (relative) present meaning. The problem is, however, to ascertain that these are of progressive aspect. If this is not the case (as, e.g., in many examples quoted by Gunn, *Studies in Egyptian Syntax*, pp. 100-103, and Westendorf, *Grammatik der medizinischen Texte*, § 344 a), we are dealing with the aorist rather than the present tense. It is, however, interesting to note that a form that is evidently the negative perfect form (*n sdm.f*) may have been used in place of the negative aorist form (*n sdm.n.f*).

18) W. Schenkel, 'Das altägyptische Pseudopartizip und das indogermanische Medium/Perfekt', *Orientalia* 40 (1971) 301-316.

* * *



Smile
on my mac