Some Remarks on a Newly Discovered Noun Clause Construction of Late Egyptian

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In the form of the FUTURB, iw fr sdm, Late Egyptian has preserved a Middle Egyptian iw construction of initial syntactic status. Otherwise, iw is non-initial in Late Egyptian. Constructions headed by iw may be circumstantial (i.e., an Adverb Clause) or sequential. The sequential use in past context of one particular form, iw plus dynamic PRESENT, developed into an autonomous form, the NARRATIVE (iw.f hr sdm), with a specific negative counterpart (iw.f hr tm-sdm).

Recently, J.-M. Kruchten has demonstrated that the constructions with “free iw” may have yet another function, apart from sequentiality and adverbiality, viz. nominality. Quite unexpectedly, iw clauses may function as nouns (to be more precise, as substantives). The contexts in which this phenomenon has been observed are the following: object of verbs like gml, mrl; subject of verbs like hpr. In addition, Kruchten argues that any iw found after ir in clauses of condition is to be interpreted in the same way.

Old and Middle Egyptian have a totally different category of noun clause forms. They are virtually identical with the relative forms, save for the latters’ gender and number morphemes: “imperfective” sdm.f (mrr.f), nominal sdm.n.f, and prospective sdm(w).f. They stand in marked contrast to the other set of forms that are originally main sentence forms, but were apt to be also used circumstantially. Later on, in Middle Egyptian, this use became not only dominant but rather nearly exclusive: “circumstantial” sdm.f (mrl.f), sdm.n.f, passive sdm(f), and the Old Perfective.

In the transition from Middle Egyptian to Late Egyptian, the nominal forms became restricted in their use to one particular construction, viz. to the adverb-focalizing “emphatic” sentence. It is only then that they developed into mere “emphatic forms”,

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1 Černý & Groll 1978: ch. 39; also cf., cum grano salis, Junge 1986.
2 Kruchten 1997.
5 Some other main sentence constructions remained to be used as such, although they may be used circumstantially or sequentially, as the Nominal Sentence, the Adjectival Sentence, sentences with the negations nn and n; cf. Satzinger 1993: 127; Satzinger 1994: 273.
or rather, “emphasizing forms”. (Before, they were conjugated substantival forms, or “that”-forms, in any use conceivable, not just in the “emphatic” function mentioned.) This means that Late Egyptian did not dispose of the traditional nominal conjugations. Instead, the language created other devices. The better known—and more generally used—is the infinitive, conjugated by means of the possessive pronoun (pǐy.f-sdm).7 The other one is the nominal use of the lw construction, as described by Kruchten.

Whereas the “emphatic” forms of Late Egyptian seem to number only two (i.sdım.f and i.ir.f sdm),8 Coptic has a particular Second Tense for every First Tense. In some cases, the Second Tense is homonymous with the corresponding Clause of Circumstance, though not in all dialects: e.g. S e4(ha)cth, Present tense (Future); ɛw4scth, Aorist.9 It could be envisaged that these either developed directly from the pertinent iw constructions (such as lw.f (hr) sdm, *lw hr-ir.f sdm),10 or were influenced by them. If this is right, we encounter here the same phenomenon as already earlier: the general applicability of a substantival form is narrowed down to the “emphasizing” function.

Kruchten does not seem to comment on the origin of the substantival use of the iw construction. Probably we have to take into account the fact that it is obviously limited to particular constructions. It is not found, for instance, after prepositions: this remains the exclusive domain of the conjugated infinitive, pỳ.f-sdm. As mentioned above, the nominal use of the iw constructions has been seen by Kruchten in subject phrases of intransitive verbs like hpr and in object phrases of transitive verbs like gmì, mrl; furthermore, in clauses of condition with ir + iw.

The intransitive verb hpr may be uni v a l e n t (“to come into existence”): n hprt pt, n hprt tì (CT 6, 282a-b); ṻg n hprt 3st “before Isis had come into being” (CT 4, 76 c); and it may be b i v a l e n t (“to become something”): ink pw hpr im.tn “I am he who has been transformed to be like you” (CT 4, 228b); tm.hr.s hpr m hsbt “then it will all end up in worms” (P. Ebers 102 = 296).11 There are, however, cases where the subject is realized as zero, which is the rendering of a pronominal expression that does not refer to a specific antecedent (we could say that it is the equivalent of an indefinite pronoun): ir wn hpr.O [emph.] mi dq ... “should things (however) happen as was stated...” (ZAS 77, 1942, 61, l. 16);12 hpr.n.O r.s, nn wi ḫn.tq; ṱm.ni, nn wi m hr-lib.sn “it happened, however, that I was not with (them); (they) burnt to death while I

7 Cf. Satzinger 1976: 11-12 (1.1.3). Connotation of past time reference may be explicitly expressed by using the "past infinitive" construction, pì-sdm i.ir.f "that he has/had heard"; cf. Satzinger 1976: 1. cit.; Černý & Groll 1978: § 51.9.
9 Cf., e.g., Polotsky 1960: 400.
10 Before Coptic times, however, hr could not expand iw.
11 The translation follows Westendorf 1962: §275.1; Gardiner 1957: §432 has “it will not result in worms”.
12 For the construction see Satzinger 1993: 133, in particular ex. 29.
was not among (them)” (Sh. S. 130–131). In these cases the noun phrase in second position (between the verb phrase, e.g. *tm.hr.s hpr, hpr.n r.s*, and the adverb phrase, e.g. *m hsbt, nn wi m hr-lb.sn*) has two syntactic functions: it is the subject of the verb, and it is also the subject of the embedded Adverbial Sentence.\(^\text{13}\)

The transitive verb *gmi* may be *b i v a l e n t* (“to find something/someone”): *n gm.n.s bw ...* “she could not find the place (where it was done)” (P. Westcar 12, 3), and it may be *t r i v a l e n t* (“to find something/someone in a place, state or activity”): *gm.n.i sw rl PSp st* “I found out that he knew it (already)” (Shipwrecked Sailor 157); *gm.n.f s im ḫ hr mryt, NN rn.f* “he found a man standing on the riverbank whose name was NN.” (Peasant R 36 = Bt 16); *ir z nb gm.n.(i) m spt tn šibt nt ky r.f* “so as to any man whom I found in my name, there being a loan of cereals of someone else to his debit” (Urk. I, 254, 17). There are cases where the object is zeroed: “I found out, that he ...” may be expressed in Late Egyptian by *iw.i hr gmt.f r-dd ...*, but also by *iw.i ḫ hr gm.O r-dd ...*, cf. *iw.n (hr) gm.w r-dd ...* LRL 18, 15, as opposed to *ir iw.i (hr) gm r-dd ...* LRL 42, 2–3 (both examples are quoted below in full), or *ir iw.i (hr) mī r-dd mīṭy pīy.l-[šmysw] “if I should learn that my retainer is right,” LRL 42,4–5. In all these cases, too, the noun phrase in second position has two syntactic functions: it is the object of the verb, and it is the subject of the embedded Adverbial Sentence.\(^\text{14}\)

As for the origin of the substantival use of *lw* in question, it can be easily imagined to lie in sentences with zero subject of verbs like *hpr*, or with zero object of verbs like *gmi*, *ptr*, etc.: a sentence like Kruchten’s example no. 11, *hpr lw mn m šnwt*, can be traced back to a Middle Egyptian *iw hpr.n.Ø nn wn m šnwt* “a situation happened when there was nothing in the granaries”.

The sentence with trivalent *gmi* may in Late Egyptian have the same tripartite structure as in Middle Egyptian (Verb—Noun—Adverb): *iw.i (hr) gm.t.f hms (m) tšy.f-rt* “I found him sitting in his loft” LES 66,3–4 (Wenamun 1,48); the pronoun *f* is at the same time the object of *gmi* and the subject of *hms*. But this is not necessarily so.

\[
\text{[iw.i (hr) gm.t.s] \ [m-dr prl.s m pšy.s-w-pr, iw.s m 'q m pšy.s-ky]}\]

“I found her after she had gone out of her one house, being about to enter her other one” LES 75, 2–4

(Wenamun 2, 76)

\[
\text{[iw.n (hr) gm.w] \ [r-dd bw-pwi(w) ft]}\]

“and we found that they (=the writings) were not erased”, lit. “and we found them, to say: they have not been erased” LRL 18, 15–16, or


14 In these cases, it is the condition of X that is found out. If it is, however, the identity of X that is found out, X is not the subject of the embedded Adverbial Sentence but rather the predicate of an embedded Nominal sentence: *gm.n.j hšw “I found a snake” + hšw px “it is a snake”, “it being a snake” > gm.n.j hšw px “I found out that it was a snake” (Shipwrecked Sailor 61).
“if I find out that this workman has been right ... I shall give to him ... because of them” LRL 42, 2–3.

Though the pronouns $s$ and $w$ are here, too, the objects of $gmi$, they cannot anymore be regarded as the subjects of the following phrases, $m-dr ...$ and $r-dd ...$, respectively. If the object to be found is of concrete nature, the construction tends to be segmented $(\text{Verb} + \text{Noun}) \text{ Adverb}$. If, however, the object to be found is of an abstract nature (viz. a situation or the like), the language seems to segment the utterance after the verb, the noun probably being zeroed, whereas the adverb clause assumes the perfect shape of a (Late Egyptian) Clause of Circumstance:

\[ \text{lim tw gm.s} [\text{iw irf.(hr) nw m-s} \ldots] \]

“let her find out that his eye is seeing ... well” (Kruchten’s example no. 1), which is originally perhaps “let her find (a result, a state), his eye seeing ... well,” but later it will have been interpreted as “that his eye is seeing ... well”.

A similar interpretation may apply to $ir lw...$: assuming a zero pronoun after $ir$, we arrive at $ir \emptyset \text{ lw.f hr sdm} “as for (a situation:) him hearing”.

Kruchten’s defends L. Depuydt’s idea that Late Egyptian $inn$ derives from Middle Egyptian $ir \text{ wnn}$. By making here an attempt to adjourn my synthesis of the Late Egyptian Clause of Condition$^{15}$ we will be in a position to submit that hypothesis to a structural test.

The Late Egyptian Clause of Condition

A new feature of Late Egyptian is the particle $hn$, the origin of which is probably an imperative of $hnn$ (in construct state), in its special meaning “agree”: it combines with initial constructions (PERFECT, IMPERFECT, PRESENT; Nominal Sentences/Cleft Sentences; $wn-/lmn-$$)^{16}$ and yields clauses of unfulfilled condition: $hn ptr.i “agree (= let us assume): I saw (something)” > “if I had seen (something)”. 

Late Egyptian has preserved the normal Middle Egyptian conditional construction, $ir \text{ sdm.f}$, and the periphrastic construction $#ir \text{ wnn}.f + \text{Adverb Phrase / Gerund}^{17}#$, the first being of perfective aspect, whereas the second is used in Late Egyptian for both

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15 Satzinger 1976: 1.3.2; 1.4.2; also cf. Satzinger 1993: 134–135.
16 Satzinger 1976: 109–114: 1.4.2.2–1.4.2.2.2.
17 “Gerund” is a term I suggest to use for $hr-\text{sdm} (> \emptyset-\text{sdm}), m-iyt$ and $r-\text{sdm}$ in their functions as predicates of the PROGRESSIVE/PRESENT, the INGRESSIVE, and the FUTURE, respectively. These “gerunds” (as compounds of preposition + infinitive) may also be used freely (as in $m-l/i. \text{it.i hr mdt n.i } “\text{when he sees my father talking to me}”). This is, however, distinct from free combinations of prepositions with the infinitive (as $hr \text{ sdm “because of hearing”, m sdm “when hearing”}$.}
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progressive and non-progressive utterances, though in literary texts only.\textsuperscript{18} In \textit{ir sdm.f} the classical distinction between prospective \textit{sdm(w).f} (real condition) and subjunctive \textit{sdm.f} (potential condition)\textsuperscript{19} has probably been given up.

A Late Egyptian innovation is found in the use of \textit{ir} before initial constructions, with no \textit{wn} intervening: \#1 \textit{Nominal Sentence}/Cleft Sentence\textsuperscript{20}/\textit{wn lm-nn-}\textsuperscript{22}/"emphatic" forms\textsuperscript{23}#. Another innovation is the use of \textit{iw} constructions after \textit{ir} (as mentioned above). As for the morphological identity of this \textit{ir iw.f ( ) sdm}, the evidence seemed confusing:\textsuperscript{24} \textit{ir wn iw.f (r) sdm}, found in an early Ramesside letter, is clearly \textbf{FUTURE}, converted to past ("FUTURUM IN PRÆTERITO").\textsuperscript{25} Another letter, of 21\textsuperscript{st} dynasty date, has \textit{ir iw.f (hr) tm sdm},\textsuperscript{26} obviously the negative \textbf{NARRATIVE}. Other instances, however, both non-literary and literary (royal inscription), have the \textit{iw} construction of the negative \textbf{PRESENT TENSE}, \textit{ir iw bn sw} + Adverb Phrase / Gerund. Kruchten has produced arguments for assuming that, in principle, the construction is \textit{ir + iw} construction, the latter being used nominally: \textit{ir iw.f hr sdm} “as for (the fact) that he hears”.

As for the semantic \textit{raison d'être} of this \textit{ir iw.f hr sdm}, I have tried to show\textsuperscript{27} that this is a new way to express a potential condition, in other words a Late Egyptian substitute for the Classical \textit{ir + subjunctive sdm.f}.\textsuperscript{28} Kruchten’s analysis would account for this quite well. Of course, “as for (the fact) that he hears” is also the basic meaning of Classical \textit{ir sdm.f}. But having become grammaticalized even before the Old Egyptian period, this meaning was certainly not felt any more: it had rather become the standard expression of the clause of condition, “if...”. In contrast, the recently coined \textit{ir iw.f hr sdm} was very much nearer to the original meaning, “as for (the fact) that he hears”, and had probably a potential connotation.

\textit{ir + iw} is not limited to the \textbf{PRESENT} construction. We also find the \textbf{PERFECT}, \textit{ir iw sdm.f},\textsuperscript{29} the negative \textbf{FUTURE} \textit{ir iw bn iw ( ) sdm},\textsuperscript{30} the \textbf{Nominal Sentence},\textsuperscript{31} and \textit{in ir iw wrš.k hr bšk}, “even if you should spend the whole day working”,\textsuperscript{32} the form

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{18} Satzinger 1976: 54–56: 1.3.2.1.1.3.
  \item \textsuperscript{19} Satzinger 1993: 132–133.
  \item \textsuperscript{20} Satzinger 1976: 56–57: 1.3.2.1.2.1.
  \item \textsuperscript{21} Satzinger 1976: 57–60: 1.3.2.1.2.2.
  \item \textsuperscript{22} Satzinger 1976: 61: 1.3.2.1.2.3.
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Satzinger 1976: 62: 1.3.2.1.2.4.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Satzinger 1976: 74–76: 1.3.2.2.1.1.; Kruchten 1997: 60–61.
  \item \textsuperscript{25} Satzinger 1976: 212–215: 2.4.2.
  \item \textsuperscript{26} \textit{ir iw.k tm gmt.f} “in case you don’t find it” P. Strasbourg 39, vso., 3; see Satzinger 1976: 75.
  \item \textsuperscript{27} Satzinger 1976: 73–79.
  \item \textsuperscript{28} Satzinger 1993, 134–135.
  \item \textsuperscript{29} Kruchten 1997: 64: ex. 23.
  \item \textsuperscript{30} Kruchten 1997: 63: ex. 21.
  \item \textsuperscript{31} Satzinger 1976: 79: 1.3.2.2.1.4.; Kruchten 1997: 62: ex. 13.
  \item \textsuperscript{32} Hieratic Ostraca 49, 3 rto., 2.
\end{itemize}
following $iw$ is obviously an "emphatic" form of Middle Egyptian appearance.

The conditional particle $inn$ is yet another Late Egyptian innovation. It is followed by initial constructions: the TENSES, viz. PERFECT, PRESENT, and FUTURE, as well as $wn$- and $mn$-. In general, the $inn$ construction yields a real condition. $inn$ $iw.f$ $r$ $sdm$, however, is obviously of potential meaning.

The structural analysis shows that $inn$ $sw$ $hr$ $sdm$ is hardly rivalled by the construction that is assumed (by Depuydt and also Kruchten) to be its origin, viz. $ir$ $wnn.f$ $hr$ $sdm$. The distribution of the two constructions is quite distinct: whereas the $inn$ construction is found exclusively in non-literary texts, the $ir$ $wnn$ construction never is. For $inn$ $sw$ $hr$ $sdm$, I can quote these instances: $hr$ $inn$ $tw.j$ ($djt$ ...$///$ O. DM inv. no. 1082, vs. 3 (see Černý 1941: 108 (15)); $hr$ $inn$ $tw.tw$ $hr$ $djt$ $n.s$ ... O. DM 663,5; $inn$ $tw.k$ ($djt$ ... LRL 68,2 (see Černý 1941: 108 (14)); $inn$ $tw.t$ $hr$ $djt$ $p3-k3$ O. Berlin 12630 (ed. Allam); a negative instance is $hr$ $inn$ $bn$ $tw.k$ $hr$ $djt.w$ ... O. Edgerton I. 2–3 (see Černý 1941: 108 (16)). $Ir$ $wnn.f$ $hr$ $sdm$, on the other hand, is extremely rare, and it is never attested in non-literary texts. This supports Depuydt's assumption that $inn$ is a phonetic rendering of what $ir$ $wnn$ had become in the spoken language of the New Kingdom. Wherever $ir$ $wnn$ appears in the Ramesside period it is a classicism. There is a significant structural difference between the two constructions. Whereas $ir$ $wnn.f$ $hr$ $sdm$ contains a fully conjugated verb, $inn$ is followed by initial constructions, e.g. $[inn]$ $[sw$ $hr$ $sdm]$, $[inn]$ $[sdm.f]$, $[inn]$ $[iw.f$ $r$ $sdm]$. This attests to what F. Junge called Gliederungsverschiebung (shift of segmentation), a very typical structural innovation of Late Egyptian as compared with Middle Egyptian (like $[nfi.f]$ $[hr$ $sdm]$ > $[nt]$ $[sw$ $hr$ $sdm]$).

Another rival couple of forms are $inn$ $lw.f$ $r$ $sdm$ and $ir$ $lw.f$ $hr$ $sdm$, both with potential meaning. The $inn$ construction is attested in texts that are part of the core of Late Egyptian writing: tomb robbery documents, and Adoption Papyrus, rto., 23 (JEA 26, 1940, pl. VI). The $ir$ construction is found much more often. However, some of the attestation is in literary texts (which do not necessarily display purely Late Egyptian features). A typical expression is $ir$ $lw.$ ... $hr$ $gm$ "in case ... find(s) out":

LRL 42,2–4; Mayer A 8,13; Černý 1967: XVI, 4–5; similarly, with ‘$ml$ “to learn”: LRL 42,4; ib. 71,6; with other verbs: LES 70,5 (Wenamun 2,32; $dd$); ib. 73,6–7 (Wenamun 2,60; $ph$); P. B M 10 052,1, 19–20 ($$m$); RAD 77, 15 ($iri$); in literary texts: LES 18,1–2 (Orb 8,5; $gm$ “to find” [bivalent]); LES 33,1–2 (Blinding of Truth 5,6; $m$$dw$); EHT I, 33,12 (P. Anast. I, 21,1; $m$$fi$); Amenope 17, 11–12 ($nw$). It may

38 Of the same verb, also the "irregular" negative example mentioned above, $ir$ $lw.k$ $tm$-$gmt.f$ $P.$ hierat. Strasbourg 39, vso., 3; see Satzinger 1976: 75; Kruchten 1997: 60.
be assumed that there was a slight difference in meaning, "as for (the assumption:) he
listening", and a construction that oscillates between "if he will listen" and "if he would
listen" (though the full-fledged unfulfilled condition is expressed differently, viz. \(hn \, sw \, h{r} \, sdm, \, wn \, iw{:i} \, r \ldots\)). Unless the meaning of the two constructions is different, the \(inn \, iw\) construction would be—from the viewpoint of economy—superfluous, the \(ir \, iw\)
construction being a good Late Egyptian form to convey the potential Clause of
Condition.

\textbf{Real and potential conditions:}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \(ir^{39}\) \quad \textit{sdm.f} (the Middle Egyptian construction)
  \item \(\uparrow ir^{40}\) \quad \textit{wnn} + \text{PRESENT}^{41} (sw > f!)
  \item \(ir^{42}\) \quad \text{TENSES: PERFECT}^{43}
    \begin{itemize}
      \item past converter \textit{wn}-
    \end{itemize}
    \begin{itemize}
      \item Nominal Sentence
      \item Cleft Sentence
      \item Existential Sentence: \textit{wn-}, *\textit{mn-} \quad \text{"emphatic" construction}
    \end{itemize}
  \item \(ir^{45}\) \quad \textit{iw} \quad \text{TENSES: PERFECT, PRESENT (sw > f!), FUTURE}
    \begin{itemize}
      \item Existential Sentence, \textit{wn-}, \textit{mn-} \quad \text{"emphatic" construction}
    \end{itemize}
  \item \(inn^{46}\) \quad \text{(potential meaning)} \quad \text{< ir \, wnn ?} \quad \text{TENSES: PERFECT, PRESENT, FUTURE}
    \begin{itemize}
      \item Nominal Sentence
      \item Existential Sentence: \textit{wn-}, \textit{mn-} \quad \text{"emphatic" construction}
    \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

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39 Satzinger 1976: 1.3.2.1.1.
40 Satzinger 1976: 1.3.2.1.1.
41 Stative and progressive utterances; very scarcely attested.
42 Satzinger 1976: 1.3.2.1.2.
43 Černý & Groll 1978: 62.4.1
44 Černý & Groll 1978: 62.4.1
45 Černý & Groll 1978: 62.4.3–5; Satzinger 1976: 1.3.2.2.
46 Černý & Groll 1978: 62.5; Satzinger 1976: 1.4.2.1.
Unfulfilled conditions:

hn\(^{47}\) TENSES: PERFECT

*Nominal Sentence

Cleft Sentence

Existential Sentence: wn-, *mn-

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\(^{47}\) Černý & Groll 1978: 62.6.1; Satzinger 1976: 1.4.2.2.


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