On the increasing relevance of time in later Late Egyptian: *jw sḏm=f* and *jw jw=f r sḏm,* and other things[*]

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Abstract

There is ample evidence to show that Late Egyptian, from the 20th dyn. onward, gradually favoured grammatical patterns that fixed an absolute time reference, as shown, *inter alia*, by several examples of *consecutio temporum*. This study first re-assesses the uses of the past and future circumstantials, showing that they do not systematically convey anteriority or posteriority, respectively. I then turn to some lesser-known uses of the past converter *wn*, demonstrating that *wn* first ceased to mark a rupture in respect with the moment of speaking before becoming more or less systematic when the temporal frame was past, even when the temporal setting was not ambiguous.

Key words

Late Egyptian, past circumstantial *jw sḏm=f, jw bwpw=f sḏm,* future circumstantial *jw (bn) jw=f r sḏm,* past converter *wn, nn* + infinitive, absolute and relative tenses, dialects.

The main thesis presented here is that Late Egyptian underwent major changes as regards the expression of time in the predicative system. There is ample evidence to demonstrate that absolute time reference gradually took a prominent place. In this paper, I first deal with the past and future circumstantial clauses, arguing that by the end of the 20th dyn., they had considerably grown away from their traditional semantic field (**1**). The past circumstantial *jw sḏm=f* can be found in contexts where anteriority is no longer present, or was at least strongly downplayed (**1.1**). In these cases, *jw sḏm=f* adds a new information without putting much stress on the chronological ordering of events. In some cases, it can also convey posteriority/sequentiality in the past, thus overlapping with the semantic domain of the sequential *jw=f ḥr sḏm*. As regards its negative counterpart (**1.2**), *jw bwpw=f sḏm*, it can of course express anterior past, but it also fairly often used to convey simultaneity, as an equivalent of MEg *nn sḏm* "without hearing". The future circumstantial *jw jw=f r sḏm* (**2**) seems to be restricted to the temporal sphere of the future (there is no example in LEg of *jw jw=f r sḏm* in narrative to indicate some prospective event in the past). One could expect that the core meaning of the future circumstantial, by symmetry to the past circumstantial, would be to express an event posterior to the main sentence. Quite to the contrary, *jw* + future III can without further distinction express anteriority, simultaneity or posteriority with respect to the main clause it is appended to.

A close study of the data suggests that Late Egyptian gradually became more involved in fixing the temporal frame of the dependant clauses, relinquishing the old system of relative tenses in favour of a new one where grammatical tenses expressed absolute time (**3**). This impression is reinforced by a re-analysis of the role of the past converter *wn* (**4**). In many examples, the converter is used in contexts already clearly set in the past, without creating this special effect of rupture that was its hallmark in earlier records. Many examples show that *wn* became more or less systematic when the temporal frame was past, even when the temporal setting was not ambiguous, which resulted in some redundancy. Finally, the growing relevance of absolute time reference in the predicative system might explain why the ubiquitous sequential *jw=f ḥr sḏm* gradually lost ground in the TIP, to be replaced by chains of past *sḏm=f* forms or present I forms with old perfective in the latest phases of Egyptian (Demotic and Coptic).

1. A re-assesment of the circumstantial past

In the specialized literature, comments on this common pattern are quite limited. The communis opinio seems to consider that the negative pattern does not much distance itself from the positive *jw sḏm=f*. This pattern has been recognized for what it is since the first half of the last century.[1] According to de Buck (1937), *jw sḏm=f* refers to relative past time, that is pluperfect. A point for discussion was the meaning of the construction when the verb *jnj* (more rarely *ṯ'j*) was used (Černý 1964).

The pattern was discussed again by Groll (1968), who mainly dealt with three points:

1. she proposed that *jw sḏm=f* of the past was restricted to transitive verbs, which is in line with the *sḏm=f* of the past in main clauses;

2. she made a sharp distinction between *jw sḏm=f* of the past, and another *jw sḏm=f* pattern which she correctly analysed as an emphatic circumstantial; this latter construction, which had obviously puzzled previous scholars like Erman, is limited in time (not after the 19th dyn.), in genre (mostly literary texts), and in the number of the verbs involved (Winand 1992: 265-279; Cassonnet 2000);

3. she once more discussed the case of *jnj* and *ṯ'j* when used in this pattern, stating that they refer to relative present time.

She did not touch upon the negative counterpart, *jw bwpw=f sḏm*. In Černý-Groll (1984), it is merely stated (§14.4.1) that *jw sḏm=f* indicates the pluperfect tense.[2] As regards the negative pattern, it is chiefly stated (§15.7) that *jw bwpw=f sḏm* can

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[1]   Erman's idea on that topic (1933: § 521) does not seem to be very precise, because of some misunderstandings on the nature (and hence identification) of the different *sḏm=f* forms.

[2]   There is a cross-refererence to § 63.2.8, where it is written that when the perfect active *stp=f* is preceded by the dependent *jw* it indicates the pluperfect tense. There is also an allusion to the case of *jnj* and *ṯ'j*, which are explained as exceptions.

indicate the pluperfect tense (ex. pAbbott 6,21-22), or the simultaneous past (ex. pBM EA 10052,4,3-4).

One can say that there is a general agreement on what *jw sḏm=f* basically means: a relative past tense.[3] The "exceptions" are not actually exceptions to the rule as they can be easily explained by the Aktionsart of the verbs involved. It is also fair to say that there is no particular discussion devoted to the pattern *jw bwpw=f sḏm*, whose semantics does not appear that different from its positive counterpart.

The continuous progresses in our understanding of ancient Egyptian in general, and of Late Egyptian in particular, make it desirable to reconsider both constructions with a fresh look. This is also being made easier by the existence of sophisticated modern databases that are most helpful in gathering the data and testing hypotheses according to multiple criteria (grammatical analysis and textual metadata).

1.1. jw sḏm=f

1.1.1. jw sḏm=f expressing relative past

As has long been recognized, *jw sḏm=f*'s main use is to express relative past. The main clause is most often grounded in the past or in the present, but there are also some examples with a future reference. The following examples illustrate the three types of temporal frame:

past time frame

Ex. 1   *z 2 wᶜr jm=sn r-ḫ'.t ḥrj-jḥ Nfr-ḥtp, jw jrj=f qnqn=sn*
"Two men among them fled before the stable master N. after/because he had beaten them" (pBologne 1094, 3,2-3)

Merenptah

Ex. 2   *j.jr=f {ḥr} it' t' mr.t m pr nb.t-ḥtp.t*
jw jt'=f k.t jw'.t 2 ḥr=j
"After having taken two other female workers from me, he took the team of weavers from the domain of Nebethotep" (pAnastasi I, 16-17)
19th dyn.

present time frame

Ex. 3   *sj ḫpr.tj m ḥnw.t t'-mḥw, jw jrj=s kj ḫpr*
"She is now the mistress of the Delta, having taken another form" (pSallier, v° 2,5)
19th dyn.

future time frame

Ex. 4   *wn(n)=w (ḥr) grḥ m p' sḥn, jw=k (ḥr) wḏ p' wsḫ r ḥn jnr, jw dj=k n'j=w ḥwtj.w ḥr=sn*
"As soon as they have finished this commission, you shall send the boat to carry stones, after having given them their superiors" (pTurin B 3,4-5)[4]
Ramses II

3   See also Frandsen's (1975: §101) and Junge's (2008: 205sq) comments.

4   The same phraseology is used in pLeiden 348, 9,8.

Ex. 5   *j.jr=k spr <r> dj.t jw=j m pʾ tʾ rsj*
         jw grḥ=k jm=f
         "You shall succeed in having me back from the South only after you shall have finished with it" (pBM EA 10412, v° 11)

         Ramses XI

Ex. 6   *ky-ḏd j.hʾb ḥr smj n pʾw jr=k nb (…) m-ḏr.t šms jʾ*
         jw jrj=k šᶜ.t m-ḏr.t=f ḥr pʾj=k nw n wḏ=f
         "Send a report about all that you did (…) through the servant Ya after having made a letter through him at the time of your dispatching him" (pAnastasi VIII, v° 7-9)

         Ramses II

Ex. 7   *j.dj=j ḫpr r-šʾᶜ 10, jw dj(=j) pʾj wrs n nfr-m-ssn.t*
         "I won't let pass 10 days without having given this headrest to Neferemsesnet" (oDeM 58, 3-4)[5]

         Ramses II

Ex. 8   *mtw=k smj n tʾtj ḥr pʾ ḥḏ ᶜšʾ ntj šmsw piʾj ḥr ḏd (…)*
         jw tʾ=k mjtj <ḥr> pʾ ḥḏ jn.w m mḏʾ.t r rsj
         "And you shall make a report to the vizier about the excessive amount of silver the official Piay says (…), having taken to the South a copy about the money and the supplies" (pBologna 1094, 6,5)

         19th dyn.

One can note immediately that when expressing anteriority in future, *jw sḏm=f* will be gradually replaced by the circumstantial future, *jw jw=f sḏm* (see 2.3).

1.1.2. jw sḏm=f with some special verbs

As already noted by previous scholars,[6] some verbs, in modern translations, are better rendered as a simultaneous process rather than an anterior one. In the corpus considered here, four verbs must be considered: *jnj* "to fetch", *tʾj* "to take", *rḫ* "to gain knowledge", and *ḥm* "to ignore". These apparent exceptions can of course be easily explained by their semantic phasal structure (Winand 2006). The first two verbs are non-durative with a dynamic post-phase (<+>≈≈≈≈ in my conventional representation of verbal actionality). When conjugated with a perfect tense, the post-phase, as expected, is selected, which is, in this particular case, dynamic.[7] Hence the meaning "having fetched, and thus bringing", which is regularly found with these verbs.[8] As

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[5]   The use of the relative past in the protasis of oaths is quite frequent: see pTurin 1880, r° 2,9.

[6]   To the reference already given above, add Frandsen (1975: § 101), who, while discussing the case of *jnj* and *tʾj*, quite correctly suggested an explanation based on the actionality (even if he does not use this terminology) of these two verbs, and Junge (2008: 205 sq), who pointed out that some verbs, because of their inherent semantics (JW: Aktionsart), can convey simultaneity : verbs of knowledge, desire and wish, to which he added *jnj* and *tʾj*.

[7]   See e.g., *Sinuhe*, R 15-16: *tj sw ḥm jj=f, jn.n=f sqr-ᶜnḫ n ṯḥnw* "and now, he was returning, bringing prisoners from Libya".

[8]   For other verbs that have a similar phasal structure, like *ḥqʾ*, *šm*, etc., see Winand (2006: 231-233; 240, n. 28).

for the last two verbs, the situation is similar except that the post-phase is static (<+>———); the basic meaning of *rḫ* is "to acquire knowledge"; the state of knowing, *sensu stricto*, only obtains with perfect tenses, as is also the case in other languages as Latin (*novi < cognoscere*), or ancient Greek (ἔγνωκα < γιγνώσκω).[9]

In Late Egyptian, the pattern *jw jn=f* "while bringing" is exceedingly well represented, the other three, although not exceptional, are less frequent. One will here note that *jw rḫ=f* (like *jw bwpw=f rḫ*, see *infra*, ex. 140) is far less frequent than *jw=f rḫ.w* or *jw bw rḫ=f*). Where the former pattern is used, it seems that there remains a trace of the process that led to the state of knowing.

Ex. 9   *(date) jw=f (ḥr) jj (r)=j r pꜣ ḫnw n Jmn-ḥtp*
         jw jn=f tꜣ sk.t
         "(Date) he came to me to the chapel of Amenhotep, bringing the foal" (oAshm.Mus 152, 3-5)[10]

         Ramses III

Ex. 10   *(date) hrw n jj jr.n tꜣtj r smtr*
         jw jtꜣ=f tꜣ js.t
         "(Date) day when the vizier came to make an inquiry, bringing the crew" (oDeM 148, v° 6)

         Ramses III

Ex. 11   *ḥnꜥ-ḏd twk ꜥšꜣ.tw m ꜥq pr*
         jw ḫm=k r sš.w
         "You are full of going in and out, neglecting the writings" (pLansing 3,4)

         20th dyn.

Ex. 12   *bwpw=tw gm.t=f jw rḫ=f s.t nb jm wp tꜣ s.t 2 j.wꜣḥ=f ḏr.t ḥr=w*
         "One did not find that he has got knowledge of any place there, except the two places he put his hand upon " (pAbbott 5,5-6)

         Ramses IX

1.1.3. jw sḏm=f providing background information

In some cases, exceptionally with *jw sḏm=f*, but more frequently with *jw bwpw=f sḏm*, the past circumstantial gives some background information on what happened in the past without expressing anteriority as regards the previous clause – or at least without laying much emphasis upon it –, as is the case in the following example, where the 3rd line beginning with *jw 4 stꜣ.t* opens a parenthesis, (re-)asserting the situation as the sender sees it.

Ex. 13   *jw=w (ḥr) ḏd n=j tꜣ md.t n k.t ꜣḥ.t m-swꜣw n ḏbꜣ*
         jw bwpw=f tḫb

> *jw 4 sṯꜣ.t <n> ꜣḥ.t nꜣ tḥb jm≠f*
> *jw dj≠j wꜥ rmṯ wꜥ ḥtr ḥr≠f*
> *jw≠w (ḥr) skꜣ pꜣ nkt m ꜣḥ.t j.gm≠w jm≠f*

"And they spoke to me about the matter of another field in the vicinity of Edfu, which had not been flooded, actually it is 4 aruras of field that have been flooded there, and I placed a man and a yoke on it, and they ploughed the lot of arable field they found there" (pValençay I, v° 5-7)

20th dyn.

In the following case, the circumstantial *jw ṯꜣj≠s* adds new information to complete the case against the accused woman. Although the stealing of the ring may have happened before that of the pick, it is actually impossible to know, and thus this question has better to be left undecided.

Ex. 14   *jw≠s ḥr jn pꜣ ḫnr*
> *jw≠f tms m-dj≠s*
> *ḫnꜥ wꜥ wšb n jmn-tḥn-nfr*
> *jw tms≠s m pꜣj≠s pr*
> *jw ṯꜣj≠s tꜣ ꜥn.t n pꜣ wšb n jmn*
> *ḥr jw jrj≠s ꜥnḫ ꜥꜣ n nb ꜥ,w,s*

"And she brought the pick, which was buried in her possession, and a copper incense burner of Amun she had buried in her house, she had also stolen the ring of the copper incense burner of Amun, although she had taken an oath by the Lord, l.p.h." (oNash 1, r° 13-15)

Seti II

In the following example, the *jw sḏm≠f* construction is obviously anterior to the discovery made by the inspectors, but it seems that the purpose of the circumstantial is less asserting the chronology than opening a parenthesis to give some details on the *modus operandi*:

Ex. 15   *gmj≠f m rꜣ-ꜥ wtn m-ḏr.t nꜣ jṯꜣ.w*
> *jw jrj≠w mḥ 2 gs m wtn m pꜣj≠f ḏrw mḥtj (...)*

"It (the tomb) was found to be in the process of being bored into by the robbers; they had (already) made 2 ½ cubits of breaking through from its northern side" (pAbbott, 2,13-14)

Ramses IX

In the last example, it seems once again difficult to consider that the main purpose of the past circumstantial is to mark anteriority with respect to the emphatic construction, which is itself used circumstantially. Quite to the contrary, the emphatic construction provides the general temporal frame within which the events recorded in the next sentences took place:

Ex. 16   *jw j.jr pꜣ ḫꜣw ḫꜣw m pꜣj grḥ*
> *jw gm≠j wꜥ br (...)*

"While the ecstatic was in ecstasy all the night, I had discover a ship (…) (*Wenamun*, 1,40-41)

21st dyn.

1.1.4. jw sḏm≠f expressing opposition

As was already pointed out by Frandsen (1975), *jw sḏm=f* can express opposition, or more correctly concession, or contrast, when introduced by *ḫr*.[11] The number of examples is quite limited:[12]

> Ex. 17   *ḫr=f*
>   *ḫr jw swḏ=j bꜣkw n tꜣ mr.t m-bꜣḥ pꜣ mr pr-ḥḏ*
>   "So he keeps saying, although I have already transmitted the product of the work of the crew of weavers to the director of the treasury" (pAnastasi VI, 20)
>
>   Seti II

> Ex. 18   *ḫr jw jrj=s ꜥnḫ ꜥꜣ n nb ꜥ,w,s*
>   "(and she brought back the pick …) although she had taken a great oath by the Lord, l.p.h." (oNash 1, r° 16)
>
>   Seti II

> Ex. 19   *bwpw=j gm ḥr, ḫr jw gm=f sw*
>   " 'I did not find Horus', although he had found him" (*Horus & Seth* 10,6)
>
>   Ramses V

This nuance of opposition can also be felt when *jw sḏm=f* is not preceded by *ḫr*:[13]

> Ex. 20   *jw=tw (ḥr ḏd)*
>   *(…)*
>   *jw ḫm=f ḏ.t=f*
>   "One says (…) but he does not know himself" (pLansing, 10,2-3)
>
>   20th dyn.

Of course, opposition does not entail that any temporal nuance of anteriority is excluded, as shown in the following example:

> Ex. 21   *jw=tw ḥr ḫpr ḥr snh n=j tꜣ mr.t r ꜥr.t*
>   *jw jtꜣ=f tꜣ mr.t*
>   "And one began to record in my charge the crew of weavers on a document although he had already taken the crew / after he had taken the crew" (pAnastasi VI, 13-14)
>
>   Seti II

> Ex. 22   *bwpw=j gm ḥsmn m-dj=f*
>   *jw dj=k n=f [ ]*
>   "I did not find natron in his possession although you had given him [ ]" (pAnastasi VI, 13-14)
>
>   Seti II

In the following example, although the temporal relation is clear enough, translating the *jw*-sentence by "after the three captains …" would be off the mark:

> Ex. 23   *šm r sn nꜣ jnb.w ḥr phwj n pꜣ dmj jn tꜣ js.t*
>   *jw jrj pꜣ 3 ḥwty.w ḥrw ꜥꜣ r=w ḥr pꜣ nšp n pꜣ dmj*

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[11]   See Neveu (2001).

[12]   In pBerlin 10497, r° 16, the restitution *[ḫr jw jr n=j] pꜣ ḥꜣtj-a jt* is debatable, at least as regards the presence of *ḫr*.

[13]   See also, with an emphatic form: *jrj sš pꜣ-bs n pꜣ-wr-m-niw.t ḥꜣw jm=w, jw dj.tw=w r djw n nꜣ js.wt wsḫ.t ntj r-ḫꜣ.t=f* "the scribe Pabes made profit with them for P., although it was for the crews of the boat he is responsible for that they had been given as rations" (oCaire Mond 175, v° 3-4).

"Going to pass the walls at the back of the village by the crew, although the three captains had raised their voices against them at the gate of the village" (pTurin 1880, r° 2,11-12)

Ramses III

1.1.5. jw sḏm=f in a "virtual" relative clause

A *sḏm=f* introduced by circumstantial *jw* can also expand a nominal phrase ("virtual" relative clause).[14]

Ex. 24   *r-ḏd ḥn=n <r> jr.t n=j wᶜ sḥn*
jw bwpw=tn šm n=f ᶜn
"You should go to carry out a commission you (lit. we) have not so far got to" (pBM EA 10053, v° 4,22)[15]

Ramses IX

As the computing of the time reference can be different for this pattern, I only mention this syntactic use in passing. The use of the *jw sḏm=f* pattern as a virtual relative clause is statistically very limited (less than 5% of the attestations). Sometimes one can hesitate between a virtual relative and a circumstantial clause when a *jw*–headed clause does not immediately follow the noun phrase, as in the following example, where the insertion of the verbal predicate, *wᶜr.w*, between the noun phrase and the *jw*-clause seems to favour the second type of analysis, i.e. circumstantial:

Ex. 25   *jw wᶜ rmṯ n tʾj=j br wᶜr jw tʾj=f (...)*
"A man of my ship fled after having stolen (…)" or "a man of my ship who had stolen (…) fled" (*Wenamun*, 1,10)

21st dyn.

1.1.6. jw sḏm=f expressing simultaneity

Except for the apparent cases of simultaneity implying verbs with a special Aktionsart (see *supra*, 1.1.2), there is one case in one of the Tomb Robberies documents where *jw sḏm=f* obviously cannot express anteriority:[16]

Ex. 26   *bwpw=j ptr=w jw wn=w tʾj ḫ.t*
"I did not see them as they broke (lit. opened) the seal" (pMayer A, v° 6,16-17)

Ramses XI

1.1.7. A difficult case

Finally, there is a case difficult to assess in the framework of Late Egyptian grammar; it appears in the last part of the *Teaching of Ani*, where it is attested four times. The *jw*

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[14]   I here kept the traditional terminology of "virtual" relative clauses (Černý-Groll 1984: 509-511), but it should be clear that one should be better advised, in Late Egyptian viewed as a synchronic system, to speak of relative clauses.

[15]   See also pDeM 1; pBM EA 10375; pVandier 1,8-9.

[16]   Thix example has of course been noted in previous literature (Groll 1968, Frandsen 1975) without offering an explanation.

sḏm=f construction, being rubricised, obviously opens a new section. One thus rather would expect a bare *sḏm=f*. Another possibility is to consider that *jw sḏm=f* more or less here functions like the sequential *jw=f ḥr sḏm*. This makes sense in the narrative as the clause introduces Ani's reaction to what his son said. As will become clear in the following (see 1.1.8), there are other cases where *jw sḏm=f* or *jw bwpw=f sḏm* have been used instead of a sequential.

Ex. 27   *jw wšb sš jnj <n> s'=f sš ẖnsw-ḥtp*
"Then the scribe Ani replied to his son, the scribe Khonsuhotep" (pBoulaq 4, 23,11-12)
21ˢᵗ dyn.

1.1.8. jw sḏm=f after another circumstantial clause

In Late Egyptian, there are several examples of one or more *jw sḏm=f* forms expanding a previous circumstantial clause. In some cases, they seem to be more or less used like a sequential *jw=f ḥr sḏm*. In the first example, it is quite clear that *jw ššp=w* cannot express **anteriority** in respect to the previous sentence, but an event slightly **posterior**:[17]

Ex. 28   *(he found them in their possession) jw dj=w st n PN*
jw ššp=w swn.t=w
"After they had given them to PN, and they had received its price" (pTurin 1887, 1,2-3)
Ramses V

In other cases, the second *jw* extend the temporal frame expressed in the previous sentence, thus expressing simultaneity, as in the following example where the chronological sequence of events is almost impossible to assert in detail; the three *jw*-clauses simply relate facts that are anterior in respect with the sequential without explicitly taking a position as to their precise relative ordering:

Ex. 29   *jw=f (ḥr) spr <r> p' ntj twk jm*
jw dj=k jn.tw n=j p' ḥ'b<=j> n=k nb ḥr=f
jw dk=j jn.tw n=j p' rr <n> nbw
jw dj=w n=j qd.t ḥḏ
"He reached the place where you are, after you have caused that was brought to me all I had written you about, and after you have cause that the golden lace be brought to me, and that one kite of silver be given to me" (pBM EA 75019+10302, 7-8)
Ramses XI

Ex. 30   *ḥr h'b n=j PN r-ḏd wḏ pr-ᶜ' ᶜ,w,s p'j=k jt*
jw jrj n=f pr-ᶜ' ᶜ,w,s p'j=f nb ẖ.t nb.t nfr.t
jw bwpwj n' sr.w w'ḥ n=f nfr [nb] <m> p' kr (...)
"PN wrote me that Pharaoh, l.p.h., sent your father after Pharaoh, his lord, had made for him all possible good things, although the officials had not left him any good thing in the boat (…), " (pGeneva D 191, v° 12-15)
Ramses XI

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[17]   Of course, the second *jw sḏm=f* still expresses anteriority in respect to the main sentence. This probably served as a transition in the evolution of the uses of *jw*.

Ex. 31   *j.jr=w dj.t {sw} <=f> ḥr t' bw'.t*
          jw=f m ḥb m [ḥ'tj]=f
          jw t'=f p'j=f nkt
          jw nk=f t'j=f ḥm.t j-jr-ḥr=f jw=f gr
          "One will place him in the cache (?), while he is in feast in his heart, having
          stolen his goods and slept with his wife in front of him who remained silent"
          (pBrooklyn 47.218.135, 5,4-5)

          Late Period

Ex. 32   *(as regards the rural estate founded by PN ... these 556 arouras of land ... he
          bought ... without any wrongdoing)*
          jw dj=f jn.tj n' dnj.t n n' 'ḥ.w <n> pr-jmn (...)
          jw dj=f wj'=w n' 'ḥ.w j.dj=f ḥḏ r-ḏb'=w (...)
          jw dj=w grḥ n=f t'j 556 n st'.t 'ḥ.t (...)
          "For he caused that the records of the fields of Amun's estate be brought (…),
          and he caused that the fields he had bought be detached (…), and one delivered
          to him these 556 aruras of arable lands (…)" (stCairo JE 31882, 1-6)[18]

          Takelot I

A special case is offered by verbs of incomplete predication like *gmj* "find" or *ptr*
"see". In the first example, the sequence of *jw=f ḥr sḏm* forms is interrupted by two
circumstantial *sḏm=f* forms, both under the scope of *gmj*. Although one must of
course understand that the action of receiving the money is posterior to that of selling,
it seems that these two circumstantial clauses are better understood as a capsule (for
the term, see Winand 2000) providing background information before the resuming of
the narrative with the next sequential. Inside this capsule, the precise ordering of
events is not the primary concern, although the linearity of linguistic expression
evidently induces some temporal sequencing, by sheer iconicity.

Ex. 33   *jw=f (ḥr) gm=w m-dj=w*
          [jw] dj=w st n PN
          jw šsp=w swn.t=w
          jw p'j ḥ'tj-ᶜ (ḥr) šsp n=w ḥ.t=w
          jw=f (ḥr) ḫ'ᶜ=w
          "He found them in their possession, (and he found) that they had sold them to
          PN, that they had received the price for them, and then the prince received from
          them some bribes, and he let them free" (pTurin 1887, v° 1,2-3)

          Ramses V

In the following example, the second *jw* is obviously still under the scope of *gmj*
like the *jw* in the previous clause:

Ex. 34   *(oath) mtw=tw gm.t=j jw sn=<j> ḥr n' rmt*
          jw dj=w n=j qd.t ḥḏ (...)
          "If one finds that I have passed by these men, and that they have given me one
          kite of silver (…)" (pBM EA 10052, v° 13,12-13)

          Ramses XI

Ex. 35   *j.ḏd mj rmt nb j.ptr=k jw=w ᶜq r-ḫnw t'j s.t*
          jw jrj=w h'w.w m n' jpd.w n p'j pr-n-st'

_____

[18]   See Menu (1989).

"Tell, please, all the men you saw enter inside this place and made their business with the furniture of this portable-shrine" (pBM EA 10403, r° 1,5-6)

Ramses XI

As already said, a sequence of *jw sḏm=f* forms sometimes appears in contexts where sequentials would have rather been expected. Compare the two following examples:

Ex. 36 *gmj*
jw thꜣ st nꜣ jtꜣ.w r-ḏr=w
jw jrj=w ḫrḫr nꜣj=w nb=w m nꜣj=sn wt.w ḏbw.w, jw=w ḫꜣc ḥr qnr
jw jtꜣ=w nꜣj=w ḫ.wt n grg pr ntj twtw (ḥr) dj.t=w n=w (...)
"It was found that the thieves had robbed them all, that they had stripped their owners of their coffins and cases, which were left in the desert, and that they had stolen their (funerary) equipment that one is used to give them (…)" (pBM EA 10403, r° 1,5-6)

Ramses XI

Ex. 37 *(those who had gone to the valley of the cedar had not yet come back)*
jw ḫdb sn bꜣtꜣ
jw=f (ḥr) wꜣḥ wc jm=sn r ḏd smj n ḥm=f c,w,s
"For Bata had killed them, and he had let one of them to make report to his Majesty, l.p.h." (*Two Brothers* 11,8-9)

19th dyn.

1.1.9. Summary

To briefly sum up this section, one must emphasize that the anterior meaning of the circumstantial past, whereas well represented, is not overwhelming. The circumstantial past can also be found in contexts where anteriority is no more present, or has been at least downplayed. In these cases, *jw sḏm=f* can express either simultaneity or, to put it differently, it simply adds a new information without putting much stress on the chronological ordering of events. In some cases, it can also convey posteriority/sequentiality in the past, thus overlapping with the semantic domain of the sequential *jw=f ḥr sḏm*. Interestingly enough, one will here immediately note that these less expected uses begin to surface in the 20th dyn., or rather the second half of the 20th dyn. One will also note that the literary texts – including *Wenamun* – do not seem to be concerned with such "innovations". This last point – interestingly enough – find some support in the next sections.

1.2. jw bwpw=f sḏm

I am now turning to *jw bwpw=f sḏm*. As is the case with any verbal pattern (Winand forthcoming b), the negative is less frequent in corpora. This of course is verified in the case of *jw bwpw=f sḏm*, but one must stress from the outset that the pattern is by no means rare.[19]

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[19] One will here note that the oldest attestation of *bwpw=f sḏm* (in its Late Egyptian form) is a circumstantial (pMond 2,8); unfortunately, the lacunae on either side prevent us from analysing its use in detail.

The negative pattern, which has of course indisputably strong semantic links with the positive one, is by no means its symmetric negative counterpart. As will be shown in what follows, the computing of time is different, not the least because it is by nature more vague to assert a precise time frame to an event that never occurred. As a matter of fact, there is much more room for overlaps between several negative constructions, as shown by phraseologically close expressions (Winand, forthcoming a).

1.2.1. jw bwpw≠f sḏm expressing relative past

The core meaning of the circumstantial clause *jw bwpw≠f sḏm*, like the positive *jw sḏm≠f*, is the expression of relative past time, but, the number of examples is not very impressive:

Ex. 38   *jn wn md.t bjn.t jw jrj≠j sw [r wᶜ] njm≠tn <r> dj.t mwt≠j j.jr-ḥr≠tn*
jw bwpw≠tn dbḥ n≠j ᶜḥᶜw
"Is there any wrong I did against one of you to let me die in front of you without having begged for me some (extra) time of life?" (pVandier 1,8-9)

TIP–Late Period

Ex. 39   *jn wn jw pʾj rmṯ nfr dj*
jw bwpw≠tn dj rḫ≠j pʾj≠f nfr m sš (...)
"Could it be that this excellent person were here and that you have let me know his excellence as scribe" (pVandier 1,11)

TIP–Late Period

As with any circumstantial clause, besides the basic meaning of anteriority, some shades of meaning can be added, like causality:

Ex. 40   *jnk [j.dj]≠j jn.tw [n≠k] pʾj≠k ḫʾw n ḥmtj m nfr*
jw bwpwj≠j ṯʾj≠f
"It is me who will bring you your surplus of copper, and a good one, since I had not taken it" (pDeM 29, v° 7)

20th dyn.

In the Ramesside period, it is not exceptional – but by no means frequent – to find this pattern in oaths for expressing anteriority in future; as will be shown below, the circumstantial past will be later replaced to express anteriority in future by the circumstantial future *jw bn jw≠f r sḏm* (see 2.3):[20]

Ex. 41   *mtw≠j dj.t ᶜq ᶜrq n jbd 3 šmw*
jw bwpw≠j dj.t 20 n dbn ḥmtj n jmn-m-jp.t (...)

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[20]   Cf. in Demotic, *m jr dj.t jr≠w jw n gr rmṯ, jw bn-p≠k dj.t rḫ(≠j) s* "do not let be made a contract for anybody before giving me notice of it" (pLouvre E 7854, 5). In Demotic, it is not uncommon to find *jw bnp≠f sḏm* in future context to express that a condition has not yet been fulfilled, hence some translations like "until, as long as" or "*ehe*": *bn jw≠w jn n≠f bd.t r-ḫrj jw bn-p≠f mḥ≠w* "one will not give him barley, for he has not completed them" (pBerlin 13633, v° 2). Compare the translation given by Vittmann (*TLA*), "Man wird ihm keinen Emmer heraufbringen, ehe er sie (die Brote) nicht vollständig geliefert hat".

"If I let pass (lit. enter) the last day of the 3rd month of Shemu without having given 20 deben of copper to Amunemope (…)" (oBerlin 10655, 3-4)[21]

Ramses III

1.2.2. jw bwpw=f sḏm with some special verbs

As already discussed above, some verbs, like *jnj*, because of their internal phasal structure (i.e. Aktionsart), seem to express simultaneity instead of anteriority. This is once again the case with *jnj* "to fetch" > perfective "to have fetched", hence "to carry, to bring":

Ex. 42   *jw=f (ḥr) jj.t*
          jw bwpwj=f jn=f
          "And he came without bringing it" (oDeM 287, 5-6)
          20th dyn.

1.2.3. jw bwpw=f sḏm providing background information

As was already the case with the affirmative pattern (see 1.1.3), even if the circumstantial clause is chronologically anterior to the previous sentence, a translation like "after that" rather misses the mark. The function of the circumstantial in those cases is actually to provide additional information, regardless of the chronological ordering of the events:

Ex. 43   *jw=s ḥr tm dj.t mw ḥr ḏr.t=f m pȝj=f sḫr*
          jw bwpw=s stȝ r-ḥȝ.t=f
          "And she did not pour water on his hands as it was his custom, and she had not made light before him" (*Two Brothers*, 4,8-9)
          19th dyn.

Ex. 44   *… jw=f (ḥr) šm.t r jr.t n ḥȝtj=s*
          jw bwpwj wᶜ ptr=s ḥrw=f
          "And he went to do as she wished, for nobody had seen her except him" (*Horus & Seth* 6,6-7)
          Ramses V

Ex. 45   *pȝw btȝ n pȝy sš 2 n pȝ ḥr pȝj=w pḥ pȝj ḥȝty-ᶜ n njw.t r ḏd n=f smj*
          jw bwpw nȝj=w jt=w ḏd n=f smj
          "This is a crime of these two scribes, that they got in touch with the mayor of Ne to make report to him, for their ancestors never made report to him" (pAbbott 6,20-21)
          Ramses IX

Ex. 46   *jw j.jr=n dj.t n=w*
          m-ḏr sḏm<=w> sw
          jw bwpwj=w šm r tȝy s.t jrm{=f}<n>
          "And we gave to them after they heard of it, for they did go to this place with us" (pBM EA 10052, 5,19)
          Ramses XI

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21   Cf. oBerlin 14214, r° 11-12; oTurin 57458, v° 2-4; oAshMus. 106, r° 3-v°1; oPetrie 67, 3-5; oGardiner 137, r° 4-8.

All the following examples have in common that anteriority is excluded beyond a reasonable doubt. The circumstantial clause actually provides additional information belonging to the same temporal sphere. For some examples, one can even suggest that were the clause not been negated, posteriority would actually have been the intended meaning. From a diachronic viewpoint – and this will be discussed in more detail in the conclusions – *jw bwpw=f sḏm* seems to be in those cases the functional equivalent of *nn* + infinitive "without doing x", a construction that was popular enough in Earlier Egyptian, but which did not survive the transition to Late Egyptian, except for some early literary compositions where the old style could still be felt (see 5, D):

Ex. 47   *ḥr jw wn=f mnj r pꜣ dmj ntj pꜣ ꜥḏd jm*
         jw=f ḥr tm {ḥr} jn.t=f
         jw bwpwj=f jn n=j jwꜣj.wt n pꜣ rmṯ ntj sw m-dj=f
         "And while he was moored to the village where the boy is, he did not bring him, nor did he bring me substitutes for the man with whom he is" (pAnastasi VI, 30-32)

         Seti II

Ex. 48   *jw=w (ḥr) jn n=j 44 ẖꜣr n jt m jt jm=f*
         jw=j (ḥr) sꜣw=w ḏrj
         jw bwpw=j ḥn m wꜥ jp.t jm=w
         "And they brought me 44 khar of grain from it consisting in wheat, and I watched overt them closely, without approaching one oipe of them" (pValençay I, v°7-9)

         20th dyn.

Ex. 49   *ḥr jrj=j hrw 5*
         jw bwpw=tw dj.t n=j tꜣj=j psš.t
         "I spent 5 days without being given my share" (oTurin 57369, r° 7)

         Ramses III

Ex. 50   *jw=f (ḥr) jr.t 15 n hrw*
         jw bwp[wj=f] jr.t ḥnw [n nꜣ] ḥrj.w ꜥꜣ n pr ẖnmw
         "And he spent 15 days without doing any task for the great chiefs of the domain of Khnum" (pTurin 1887, 2,7)

         Ramses V

Ex. 51   *jw pꜣ ḥm-nṯr (ḥr) gm.t=w m-dj=w*
         jw=f (ḥr) jṯꜣ=w
         jw bwpw=j jr nkt r=w
         "And the high priest found them in their possession, he took them back, but he did not do anything against them" (pTurin 1887, v° 1,5)

         Ramses V

Ex. 52   *jw jrj=s mnꜥ.t n 3 rmṯ m-dj=ṯ*
         jw jrj=s sẖpr=w jrm=ṯ
         jw bwpw=s nnj
         "(The lady PN went where the mass of people has already gone) after having nursed three boys with you, having raised them with you, without having been neglectful" (pBerlin 10497, r° 13-14)

         Ramses XI

I end this section with an example that is rather complex with regards the exact sequence of events. The first circumstantial (*jw jrj n=f …*) expresses relative past

tense, while the second one (*jw bwpwj n' sr.w …*) adds some background information with a contrastive effect. The third one (*jw dj ṯm' …*) seems to report a fact anterior to what is expressed in the relative clause that immediately precedes, while the last negative circumstantial clause (*jw bwpw=j …*) obviously expands the preceding sentence without involving any kind of anteriority:

> Ex. 53 *ḥr h'b n=j PN r-ḏd wḏ pr-ʿ' ʿ,w,s p'j=k jt*
> *jw jrj n=f pr-ʿ' ʿ,w,s p'j=f nb ḫ.t nb.t nfr.t*
> *jw bwpwj n' sr.w wʾḥ n=f nfr [nb] <m> p' kr j.dj=j ḥn n=f 'tp <m> ḥm'.t (...)*
> *jw dj ṯm' wʿ br ḥr=f ḥr p'j=f ḥtr*
> *jw bwpw=j wʾḥ n=f nfr nb*
> "PN wrote me that Pharaoh, l.p.h., sent your father after Pharaoh, his lord, had made for him all possible good things, although the officials had not left him any good thing in the boat I sent to him loaded with salt (…), after Tjema had sent a boat with him and his revenues, but without leaving him any good" (pGeneva D 191, v° 12-15)
>
> Ramses XI

1.2.4. jw bwpw=f sḏm expressing opposition

It is not at all natural in a narrative flow to state what never happened. As a matter of fact, events that did not occur are potentially far more numerous than the ones that actually happened. Thus, when one feels the necessity to make a negative statement that belongs to the narrative chain[22], it most often runs contrary to expectation. This explains why a negation is only very exceptionally found with narrative patterns in Late Egyptian: there are some negated examples of the sequential *jw=f ḥr tm sḏm*, but, to the best of my knowledge, none with the patterns inherited from Classical Egyptian, *ʿḥʿ.n=f ḥr sḏm* or *wn.jn=f ḥr sḏm*, which are quite popular in Late Egyptian tales and in some judicial or oracular texts.[23]

When expressing opposition, *jw bwpw=f sḏm* is sometimes preceded by *ḥr*, but it must be underlined that the presence of the particle is by no means necessary to convey this shade of meaning (cf. 1.1.4). What is more relevant for the present discussion, one will also note that although anteriority is sometimes implied, there are many cases where the chronological sequence of events is difficult to assert confidently, and there are examples where anteriority is clearly excluded, as in many testimonies in the Tomb Robberies documents.

> Ex. 54 *r-ḏd jmj jn.tw=j ʿqw m-mn.t*
> *jw bwpwj=j h'b n=k*
> *jmj jn.tw=j ʿqw m-mn.t*
> *[jw] h'b(=j) n=k …*

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[22]   Of course, a negative statement giving some background information is not exceptional.

[23]   A nice example is of course *Two Brothers* 4,9, where the exceptionality of the event is lexically expressed: *jw=f ḥr gm t'j=f ḥm.t sḏr.tj mr.tj n-ʿḏ', jw=s ḥr tm dj.t mw ḥr ḏr.t=f m p'j=f sḫr* "he found his wife lying, pretending to be ill, she did not pour water on his hand as it was his custom". See recently, Winand (forthcoming a)

"(What is your sending to me:) 'let some food be brought to me everyday', as I did not write you 'let some food be brought to me everyday', but I wrote you (…)" (oDeM 326, 3-5)

19th dyn.

Ex. 55   *j.jr=tw wḫꜣ=w m-dj=k ḥr wꜥ ꜣḥ.t n ḫꜣ-tꜣ m jw n nbj*
— *jn=w n=j* —
ḥr jw bwpw=j skꜣ m ꜣḥ.t n ḫꜣ-tꜣ m jw n nbj
"They are claimed from you because of a khato field in the island of Nebi – so they said – but I never cultivated a khato land in the island of Nebi" (pValençay I, r° 9-10)

20th dyn.

Ex. 56   *jw=w (ḥr) ḏd n=j tꜣ md.t n kj ꜣḥ.t m-sww n ḏbꜣ*
jw bwpw=f tḫb
"And they told me the case of another field in the surroundings of Edfu, but it had not been flooded" (pValençay I, r° 9-10)

20th dyn.

Ex. 57   *m pꜣ nṯr j.ḏd n=j: pš sw jrm={k}<f> ḫr=f,*
jw bwpw=f qd jm=f jrm=j
"It is the god who told me to share it with him, so he says, although he did not build in it with me" (oBM EA 5625, r° 6-8)

Ramses V

Ex. 58   *sḏm=j sft PN*
jw bwpw=j ptr m jr.t=j
"I heard (the case of) the butcher PN, but I did not see with my own eyes" (pBM EA 10052, 4,3-4)[24]

Ramses XI

Ex. 59   *ptr=j nḥꜣ n ḥḏ m-dj=f (…)*
jw bwpw=j dgs tꜣj s.t m rd.wj=j
"I saw some silver vessels, but I did not tread this place with my own feet" (pBM EA 10052, 7,6-7)

Ramses XI

Ex. 60   *sḏm=j r-ḏd wn=f m nꜣ sw.t*
jw bwpw=j ptr=f m jr.t=j
"I heard that he was in the place, but I did not see him with my eyes" (pMayer A, 3,19)[25]

Ramses XI

Ex. 61   *pš ns-jmn jrm=f*
jw bwpw=f dj.t n=j
"Nesamun partook with him, but he did not give me (anything)" (pMayer A, v° 9A)

Ramses XI

Ex. 62   *wn=f m pꜣ ḫr ḥnꜥ m pꜣ pr-n-sṯꜣ*
jw bwpw pꜣj šm

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[24]   Cf. 12,19-20.

[25]   Cf. v° 9,11.

"He was in the tomb and in the portable shrine, but this one did not go" (pMayer A, v° 10,22)

Ramses XI

Ex. 63   *mntf bʾk sw jrm nbj jmn-ḫʿw sʾ bʾk-šrj*
          jw bwpw=f dj.t n=j qd.t jm=f
          "It was he who worked it with the goldsmith Amenkhau, son of Baksheri, but he did not give me a kite from it" (pBM EA 10053,2,9)

Ramses XI

Ex. 64   *ptr ḏd=f tʾ md.t n PN*
          jw bwpw=j ḏd=s
          "Look, he told the case of PN, but I did not tell it" (pBM EA 10403, 3,7-8)

Ramses XI

Ex. 65   *r-ḏd dj sʾw kr sš bw-th-jmn jn.tw n=j šʿ.t*
          jw bwpwj=k dj.t jn.tw n=j
          "The guardian Kar and the scribe Butehamun sent me a letter, but you did not send me (one)" (p. BM EA 75020, 7-8)

Ramses XI

Ex. 66   *hʾb=k 3 sḫr.t šʿ.t n sš bw-thʾ-jmn*
          jw bwpwj=k hʾb n=j <ḥr> ʿ=k
          "You sent three letters on papyrus to the scribe Butehamun, but you did not write me about your condition" (pBN 198 I, v° 4)

Ramses XI

Ex. 67   *j.jr(=j) dj.t wsḫ.t*
          jw bwpw=k dj.t jn.tw n=j wʿ dbn nbw (…)
          "I gave you a barge, but you did not send me one deben of gold" (pBerlin 10487, v° 2)

Ramses XI

Ex. 68   *twj (ḥr) dj.t jn.tw n=ṯn pʾj ḥmn n šʿ.t*
          jw bwpwj=ṯn dj.t jn.tw wʿ(.t)
          "I send you that amount of letters, but you have not sent me any" (pLeiden I 369, 7)[26]

Ramses XI

Ex. 69   *j.jr=j sw*
          jw bwpw=k jr n=j p ʾwn nʾj=k jt.w (ḥr) jr=f n=j gr mntk
          "(Look, this commission my ancestors did previously), I will do it although you, on your side,[27] did not do what your ancestors used to do for me" (*Wenamun* 2,48)

21st dyn.

Ex. 70   *jw=n (r) jr pʾ nb nty ḥr pʾj ḥr.tw n NP (…) ḥr m-dj nʾ smḫ=w ḥr m-dj nʾ ntj bwpw=w jr=w ḥr m-dj nʾ ntj st (ḥr) šd st jw bwpw=w jr=w*

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[26]   This will remain a major theme in Demotic correspondence, see *wʾḥ=n hb j.jr-ḥr=tn sp ʿšʾj, jw bn-p=<t>n hb n=j* "we have sent letters to you many times, but you have not sent me any" (pBM EA 10498, 13).

[27]   On the use of *gr* in this case, see Chantrain & Winand (2012).

"We shall do whatever is on this decree for NP (…) and also what has been forgotten, and also what has not been done, and also what is usually recited although it has not been done" (pTurin 1985, r° 113-v°1)

22nd dyn.

1.2.5. jw bwpw꞊f sḏm in a "virtual" relative clause

The negated circumstantial can also expand an undefined NP ("virtual" relative clause):

Ex. 71   *jw p' ḥmtj (ḥr) šm.t r-ḫ'.t n' sr.w r wc ḫr (…) jw bwpwj꞊tw qrs jm꞊f*
"And the coppersmith led the officials to a tomb (…) where there had been no burial" (pAbbott 5,2-3)

Ramses IX

Ex. 72   *twn rḫ.tw r-ḏd rmṯ m(ḥ)r jw bwpw꞊f jr.t mšc [ ]*
"We know that it is a man who has (never) done such an expedition (?)[28]" (pGeneva D 407, v° 18)

Ramses XI

Ex. 73   *ḥn꞊n <r> jr.t n꞊j wc sḥn jw bwpw꞊tn šm n꞊f cn*
"Go to do for me a commission you have not gone to it already" (pBM EA 10375, v° 3-4)[29]

Ramses XI

Ex. 74   *jn wn rmṯ jw{꞊w} bwpw꞊w šn p'j꞊f cḥc, jw bwpw꞊w šn p'j꞊f pr (…)*
"is there a man whose tomb has not been looked for, whose house has not been looked for?" (tLeiden I 431, r° 16-17)

Late TIP

2. A re-assesment of the circumstantial future

Except for a short study by Wente almost fifty years ago (Wente 1968), and limited to the "virtual" relative clauses, the circumstantial future *jw jw꞊f r sḏm*, and its negative morphological counterpart *jw bn jw꞊f r sḏm*, never much attracted scholarly attention. Since Wente's study, the number of examples has dramatically increased.

If one sticks to what is traditionally assumed to be the role of *jw* in Late Egyptian,[30] *jw* + future III should express an event posterior to the main sentence (*jw* + present I expressing simultaneity and *jw* + perfect *sḏm꞊f* expressing anteriority).

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[28]   After Wente (1990: 188). See already Wente (1967: 37,v), who suggests reading *mšc* instead of *mḫn* as proposed in Černý's edition.

[29]   In this case, the presence of *cn* semantically moves the negated past form closer to the 'not yet' *bw jr.t꞊f sḏm* pattern. On *cn*, see Winand (2008).

[30]   Cf. Erman (1933: § 519-523), who is not very explicit as regards the calculus of time; Černý-Groll (1984: 571), who simply state that "*iw iw.f (r) stp.f* refers to the future-perfect tense", adding "that when *iw iw.f (r) stp.f* acts as a virtual relative clause it indicates the future tense and not the relative future"; Junge (2008: 131), who does not venture further that assessing that "Die Form wird ihrerseits durch den Konverter *jw* in den Status eines (relative nachzeitigne) Umstandssatzes versetzt".

Actually, a different conclusion must be drawn from the study of the data. First of all, there is no example in Late Egyptian of *jw* + future III in narrative to indicate a prospective event in the past (something like "he was not at that time the celebrated musician that he would become 10 years later")[31]. Quite to the contrary, *jw* + future III seems to be restricted to the temporal sphere of the future. But, instead of being limited in conveying posteriority in the future, *jw* + future III can without further distinction express anteriority, simultaneity or posteriority with regards to the main clause it is appended to. Here are the relevant examples.

2.1. Simultaneity

The circumstantial future sometimes adds information to an event that is to take place in the future without modifying the temporal reference. While the number of examples in the positive is quite limited (ex. 75-76), in the negative they are much more common (ex. 77-84). As already observed with the negative circumstantial past, *jw bn jw=j r sḏm* seems to be the functional heir of the old classical construction *nn* + infinitive (see 1.2.5). One will also note that there are no example before the second half of the 20th dyn.; the bulk of evidence, at least for the negative pattern, belongs to the Third Intermediate Period.

Ex. 75   *mtw=k tm jrj md.t*
          jw jw=tw (r) jn pḫtj=k jm=s
          "And you shall not discuss, when one will put your strength upon him" (pBM EA 10373, 4-5)

          Ramses XI

Ex. 76   *mtw=k šsp=w (…)*
          jw sš PN jrm=k
          jw jw=f (r) nw n=k
          "And you shall receive it (…), the scribe PN will be with you, and he will supervise for you" (pLeiden I 370, 13-14)

          Ramses XI

Ex. 77   *ḥr dj ptḥ jrj=k ꜥḥꜥ qꜣ jꜣw.t nfr*
          jw=k m-dj=j m jt r nḥḥ
          jw bn jw=j <m> nmḥ jm=k
          "And may Ptah let you have a long lifetime and a happy old age, being with me as a father for ever, without my being orphaned from you" (oBerlin 10630, 6-8)[32]

          Ramses III

Ex. 78   *jnn [jw?] wn bn jr PN jr.t=w m-šsr*
          jw=j (r) jr.t=w m-šsr
          jw bn jw=j (r) nnj [   ]

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[31]   The well-known example of the *Two Brothers* (5,4: *pꜣ-wn twj (ḥr) šn pꜣj smj bjn wn jw=f r jr=f m sf* "because I am still suffering of this evil action he was about to do this morning [lit. yesterday]") expresses the prospective in the past by using the past converter *wn*, which is also used to convey irrealis (e.g. pBologna 1086, 8).

[32]   The predicate is in this case a prepositional phrase, what I called elsewhere a 'futur analogique' (see Winand 1996).

"If PN would not make them excellent, I shall make them excellent, without being neglectful" (pBerlin 10497, r° 23-v° 2)

Ramses XI

Ex. 79   *jw=j (r) nṯrj bꜣ=s ḫꜣ.t=s m ẖr.t-nṯr*
jw bn jw=j (r) dj.t jrj.tw sḥtm bꜣ=s m ẖr.t-nṯr ꜥn zp 2
"I shall make divine her ba and her corpse in the necropolis, and I shall never let her ba be destroyed in the necropolis" (pBerlin 10497, r° 23-v° 2)[33]

Ramses XI

Ex. 80   *jw=j (r) pẖr ḥꜣty=s*
jw bn jw=j (r) dj.t ḫb=s m pꜣj=f ꜥḥꜥw
jw bn jw=j (r) dj.t dj=s ḫb=w m pꜣj=f ꜥḥꜥw
"I shall turn her heart, and I shall not let her hack off something from his life, and I shall not let cause that one hacks off something from his life" (pCGC 58032, 125-127)

21st dyn.

Ex. 81   *jw=n (r) jr nꜣj=n bꜣ.w ꜥꜣ.w dns.w jr=w*
jw bn jw=n (r) ḥtp n=w gr
"We shall exert our great and heavy power upon them without ever being lenient towards them" (inscr. Maatkare, 6)

21st dyn.

Ex. 82   *jw=j (r) dj.t=f m-ẖnw nꜣ ntj jw=w [r] ꜥnḫ*
jw bn jw=j (r) dj.t=f m-ẖnw nꜣ ntj jw=w (r) mwt
"I shall place him among those who will live and I shall not place him among those who shall die" (pBM EA 10321, v° 3-6)[34]

22nd–23rd dyn.

Ex. 83   *jw DN (…) r šꜥd=f m ḥsq tp=f*
jw bn jw=w dj.t šsp n=f šrj=f ꜥꜣ
"DN will slay him by cutting his head, and one will not let his older son to succeed him" (stBrooklyn 67.118, 4-5)

Sheshonq III

Ex. 84   *jw bn jw=w (r) ꜥḥꜥ <m> ms r-šꜥꜥ pꜣj ssw (r) ḏbꜣ=w n=k sš nb ntj (r)-ḥrj*
"(If the date is not respected […], they will produce an interest from year 13 onwards)" without their being interrupted till the day of refunding them back to you with all that written upon" (pLouvre E 3228E, 2,16-17)

Shabaka

2.2. Posteriority

The circumstantial future can also convey posteriority. The first evidence comes from two small oracular questions, whose precise dating cannot be ascertained. In this case, the answer to the question, which is set in the present, is evaluated according to a situation that will prevail in the future.

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[33]   Same formulation in tCGC 46891 (passim).

[34]   In the corpus of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees (Edward 1960), this kind of formulation is quite frequent (12 occurrences). See also stela Cairo JE 31882,23-24.

Except for these two (earlier?) examples, the circumstantial future always appears in orders and injunctions, expanding an imperative or a conjunctive:

Ex. 85   *jn nfr jw jw=f (r) ḫpr m-dj=s*
"Is it good that he will be with her?" (oDeM 10264)

20th dyn. ?

Ex. 86   *jn tʾj jw jw=f (r) ḫpr r=j*
"Is it a rebuff that will happen to me?" (oIFAO 694)

20th dyn. ?

Ex. 87   *mtw=k ʾtj n=s*
jw jw=k (r) gm=s r ir.t nʾj=k wpw.t jm=s (...)
"And you shall take care of it (i.e. the boat), for you shall find it to accomplish your mission with it" (pLeiden I 370, 15-16)[35]

Ramses XI

Ex. 88   *smn st n=f*
jw jw=w (r) smn n sʾ sʾ=f (...)
"Confirm them for him, and they will be confirmed for the son of his son" (stDakhleh 14-15)

22nd dyn.

Ex. 89   *j.jr=w dj.t rḫ=f wj*
<jw> jw=j r mwt
"It is when I am going to die that they make him know me" (pVandier 2,12)

TIP – Late Period

The number of examples with a negation is rather limited. In both cases, the circumstantial expresses an additional provision to a commission (ex. 90) or a will (ex. 91):

Ex. 90   *jw=f ḥr ḏd*
jmj pʾ ḫnw n qnnʾ pʾj=f nb ꜥn
jw=f m-dj=f m sḥn n pr-ꜥʾ ꜥ,w,s
jw bn jr rmṯ nb pš=f
jn=f (...)
"And he said: 'give the chapel back to Qenna, his owner, as he has it as a commission of Pharaoh, l.p.h., and nobody will share it', so he said (…)" (oBM EA 5625, v° 3-5)

Ramses V

Ex. 91   *twj (ḥr) dj.t n=s pʾj=j 2/3 [ḥr] pʾj=s 1/3*
jw bn jr šrj šrj.t (r) md.t m pʾj sḫr j.jr=j n=s m pʾ hrw
"I give her today my 2/3 in addition to her 1/3, and no son, no daughter will contest the way I acted for her" (pTurin 2021+Geneva D 409, r° 3,13-4,1)

Ramses XI

To this group, one must add all the examples where the circumstantial future is used as an attributive clause to expand an undefined NP. As shown by the data, if not but for the first two examples (ex. 92-93), the NP that anchors the circumstantial clause is always under the scope of a negation. It will come as no surprise that

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[35]   Cf. pCGC 58032, 116-118.

deontic, or rather root modality, at least as a side meaning, is most often involved;[36] the circumstantial clause is never attested in this syntactic pattern with a negation. One will note, once again, that the data do not predate the extreme end of the 20th dyn.

Ex. 92   *mtw=k {r} dj.t jn.tw n=j ṯbw n ḥḏ*
jw jw=j r swr jm=f
"And you shall bring me a silver cup I shall drink with" (pBM EA 75019+10302, 8-9)

Ramses XI

Ex. 93   *jw=k dj.t jn.tw nhꜣ n ḥbs js m ꜥrq qnw*
jw m dj [gꜣ]j=w
jw jw=tw (r) jr=w m pyr.w r wt rmṯ jm=w
"(As soon as my letter reaches you) you shall dispatch some old clothes in many stripes – do not cause them to be lacking – one shall make bandages with to wrap up people" (pBN 197 V, r° 3-v° 2)

Ramses XI

Ex. 94   *ḥr mn rmṯ jw jw=f sꜥḥꜥ[=j]*
"For there is no one who will accuse me" (pBM EA 10403, r° 3,14-15)

Ramses XI

Ex. 95   *mn wꜥ dj jw jw=n nḏnḏ ꜥnḫ=n m-dj=f*
"There is no one here we could ask for our sustenance" (pPhillipps, 14-15)

Ramses XI

Ex. 96   *mn wꜥ jw jw=f (r) ꜥḥꜥ*
"There is no one who shall stay" (oLouvre 698, v° 14-15)

21st dyn.

Ex. 97   *bn mntk wꜥ <m> nꜣj=f wpwtj.w*
jw jw=k ḏd (…)
"None of his messengers to whom you could say (…) belongs to you" (*Wenamun*, 2,54)

21st dyn.

Ex. 98   *jw mn kj šrj nmḥ*
(…)
jw jw=f (r) pš=w jm=w wpw PN
"For there is no other free child (…) who will partake them except for PN" (stDakhleh 15)

22nd dyn.

Ex. 99   *bn st m-dj(=j) šrj šr.t (…)*
jw jw=w (r) rḫ md.t njm=f dwꜣ-ḥr-sꜣ-dwꜣ
"I do not have any son nor daughter (…) who can discuss it henceforward" (pLouvre E 3228 D, 7-8)[37]

25th dyn.

Ex. 100   *mn rmṯ njm=n jw jw=f rḫ dbḥ ꜥḥꜥ n pr-ꜥꜣ ꜥ,w,s*

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[37]   There are many examples of this formulation in abnormal hieratic texts, sometimes with small variants in the formulation: *mn rmṯ nb n pꜣ tꜣ ḏr=f, <jw> jw=f rḫ jr shn.t=w* … (pTurin 2121, 8-9).

"There is no one among us who could beg for a moment of life for Pharaoh, l.p.h" (pVandier 1,9-10)

TIP–Late Period

2.3. Anteriority

The circumstantial future can also convey anteriority in the future. Quite surprisingly, the first occurrence comes from an early text, dating back to the 18th dyn., during Amenhotep II's reign, before we encounter the second example very much later, by the end of the 20th dyn.

> Ex. 101   *m-ḏd r-ntt jw=j r spr r=k*
>   *jw jw=tw r mnj r ḥw.t-sḫm n hrw 3*
>   "I shall join you in three days once having moored to Hut-Sekhem" (pBerlin 10463,1-2)
>
>   18th dyn.
>
> Ex. 102   *ḥr m dj wʾwʾ wᶜ ᶜdd ᶜʾ*
>   *jw jw=k (r) dj.t jj=f r ḥms jrm=n mj-qd PN kj mj-qd=f*
>   *(…)*
>   *jw jw=f (r) mdw jrm=f*
>   "And do not allow a youth to plot, whom you shall send to stay with us, like PN or someone else like him (…) who might speak with him" (pBM EA 10494, v° 3-5)[38]
>
>   Ramses XI

Finally, there is one unique example of a circumstantial future in the protasis of a condition. One will immediately note that the date of the text is once more late. The relevance of this case will be reserved for the general discussion.

> Ex. 103   *jr jw bn jw=n (r) gm.t=s r qnqn=s*
>   *jw=n (r) gm PN tʾj=s šrj.t*
>   "If we do not find her to beat her, we shall find PN, her sister" (pBM EA 10418+10287, 3)
>
>   Ramses XI

3. Preliminary conclusions

In the previous sections, I re-examined the uses of perfective *sḏm=f* and future III when preceded by circumstantial *jw*. As regards *jw sḏm=f*, its first meaning is, according to what is stated in teaching textbooks and grammars, to express anterior past. Some verbs, with an inchoative Aktionsart, like *jnj* or *tʾj*, or expressing the getting of knowledge, like *rḫ*, are best translated in our modern languages by a relative present tense. But this does not of course invalid the general rule. Another natural extension of the use of the circumstantial past is its ability of conveying concession and contrast, especially when negated. Once more, this does not infirm the general theory. In this latter capacity, however, the pattern *jw sḏm=f* was also used to merely express backgrounding or circumstantial events set in the past, without fixing a strict temporal relation to the main clause. In some cases, *jw sḏm=f* add extra-

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[38]   The second circumstantial future III expresses posteriority.

information that turn out to be simultaneous to the preceding clause, and sometimes, it more or less takes over the role of the sequential *jw≠f ḥr sḏm*. Although these new developments are sporadically attested before the 20th dyn., they are increasingly growing in number by the end of the 20th dyn. and the Third Intermediate Period. When negated, the circumstantial past was more than once used in a very similar way as *nn* + infinitive in Classical Egyptian, a feature that it has in common with the negated circumstantial future *jw bn jw≠f r sḏm*.

The preliminary conclusions that can be drawn from the uses of the circumstantial future are more or less similar, but with some particularities of its own. Except for one occurrence dating back to the 18th dyn., the circumstantial future, both in affirmative and negative, appear quite late in Late Egyptian. Most examples occur in the late 20th dyn. and the Third Intermediate Period. Second, the circumstantial *jw* does not seem to imply any particular temporal relationship towards the main clause. It only indicates that the dependant clause is set in future, without giving information about its precise relative setting as regards the main clause: anterior, simultaneous, or posterior. Actually all three possibilities are well attested.

This suggests that by the end of the 20th dyn. and later, Late Egyptian tried to fix the temporal frame of the dependent clauses, gradually relinquishing the old system of relative tenses in favour of a new one where tenses expressed absolute tenses.

In the next section, I will bring additional evidence of this major shift in the predicative system. I shall more particularly focus on some less known uses of the past converter *wn*. My point here is to show that *wn* was used in contexts where it would have been hardly found before. This is a strong indication of Late Egyptian's trend to (over)mark the temporal frame, even when, by more classical standards, it created some redundancy.

4. Some lesser-known uses of the past converter *wn*

According to the *communis opinio*, *wn* has two major functions: 1) the event is set in the past, 2) the moment of reference is cut off from the actual point of reference (for instance, the moment of speaking in discourse).[39] The following example illustrates this general rule:

Ex. 104   *ḏd≠f wn≠j jm jrm nꜣ rmṯ j.ḏd≠j ꜥqꜣ*
          "he said: I was there exactly with the guys I said" (pBM EA 10052, r° 4,2)

          Ramses XI

This rule has been widely used to understand that individuals that were said to have been in such function (e.g. *wn m ṯꜣtj* "who was then vizier") were no longer in the same office at the actual point of reference. The two following examples are well known in this respect; the first one reports the verdict against those who plotted against Ramses III's life, and the second one is an echo of the vicissitudes of the high priest Amenhotep:[40]

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[39]   See Winand (2006).

[40]   On this affair, see most recently Rummel (2014).

Ex. 105 *ḥrw ꜥꜣ msḏ-sw-rꜥ wn m wdpw*
"The great enemy Mesedsura (i.e. 'Ra hates him'), who was butler" (pTurin 1875, 4,3)

Ramses IV

Ex. 106 *jw j.jr=tw thj jmn-ḥtp wn m ḥm-nṯr n jmn r-šꜣꜥ jbd 6*
"It was six months after one had given trouble to Amenhotep, who was then high priest of Amun" (pMayer A, v° 6,6)

Ramses XI

In some cases, the past converter does not seem to strictly conform to this rule. The converter is used in contexts already clearly set in the past, without creating this special effect of rupture that was its earlier hallmark. In the first example, the use of the converter first seems to conform to the rule, for it is the second sentence that forces the reader to change his/her perception of the situation.

Ex. 107 *wn=j (m)-ḏr.t(=t) m snf*
mk wj (m)-ḏr(=t) m tꜣ rnp.t
"I was in your hand last year, and I am still in your hand this year" (K*RI* V, 433,16-434,1)

Ramses III

Ex. 108 *[sḏm=j] pꜣ ḏd j.jr=k pꜣ ḥꜥtj wn [m] rꜣ-ꜥ-bꜣk*
"I took notice of what you said concerning the bed which was being made" (pBM EA 10683, v° 4-5)

Merenptah

As always, one can expect some variation in close formulations, the older and newer patterns being at variance, even in one single text. This prognostic is clearly justified in our corpus. The first examples deal with daily work reports (ex. 109-110), and inventories of tools. In ex. 111, it seems difficult to explain the presence of *wn* in the second part by a difference in temporality. The same variance between *ntj m-ꜥ* and *wn m-ꜥ* can once again be observed in another document (ex. 112), without visible difference as regards the temporal frame:

Ex. 109 *nꜣ-n rmṯ wn ḥr bꜣk m hrw pn*
"The people who were working on that day" (oCaire SR 12204)

18th dyn.

Ex. 110 *jmj-rn=f nꜣ-n ḫrtj.w ntj ḥr bꜣk m hrw pn*
"List of the stone-masons who were working on that day" (oMMA 20)

Thutmosis III

Ex. 111 *gmj jm=f ḥmtj ḫꜣ m sfḫ 11, wn m-ꜥ ḫꜣwt 2*
"(One checked/investigated the storehouse) one found there 11 chisels of copper, out of use, and 2 that were in possession of Khaout" (oCGC 25798, r°2-3)

Ramses II

Ex. 112 *gmj.t m-ꜥ=f ḫnr 85, wn m-ꜥ ḫꜣwt 3, dmḏ 88*
ntj m tꜣ jnḥ.t 81
ntj m-ꜥ ḫꜣw 1, jmn-ḥtp 1, wn ḥr tꜣ 5
"Discovered by him (i.e. Kahut): 85 chisels, belonging to Khaut: 3, total 88; what was in the jar: 81; what was by Khaut: 1, (by) Amenhotep: 1, what was lying on the ground: 5" (oCGC 25803, 3-6)

Ramses II

The following example comes from a literary composition. The alternate presence/absence of the past converter seems difficult to explain along any logical analysis of the temporal reference. As the text is replete with manifestations of intertextuality and borrowings from older compositions, but also adds new lines of its own, the differences in linguistic expression probably must be explained by the chronologically different levels of the redaction:

Ex. 113 *nꜣ ntj jbj tḫj*
nꜣ ntj {ḥr} ḥꜣ, st wnḫ m pꜣq.t
nꜣ wn ḫtꜣ wbḫ
nꜣ wn m jtḫ, st ḫꜥ r-bnr
"Those who were thirsty are now drunk, those who were naked are now dressed with fine linen, those who were in rags are now with glowing linen, those who were in jail have now been released" (oTurin 57001, r° 2-5)

Ramses V

At this point, the case of the relative clauses quite naturally drops into the discussion. As is well known, when the antecedent is a defined noun, the relative clause selects *ntj* or a participle. But, as *ntj* + present I was increasingly referring to absolute present, *wn* occasionally made some appearances in past contexts, probably at first to avoid ambiguities.[41] This gradual evolution is illustrated by the following contrastive examples; it must be here noted that the literary compositions (including late ones like *Wenamun*) seem to be more conservative, avoiding the past converter when not necessary:

ntj + present I in narrative

Ex. 114 *… jw≠f ḥr tꜣj m nꜣj≠f jrj.w ꜥj.w ntj m tꜣ ꜥ.t-n-sbꜣ jrm≠f*
"And he surpassed his fellows that were in the classroom with him" (*Truth & Falsehood*, 5,2)

19th dyn.

Ex. 115 *… m pꜣj≠sn hꜣj ntj m pꜣ dmj*
"… in their stall that was in the village" (*Two Brothers*, 3,2)

19th dyn.

Ex. 116 *jw≠j ḥr šm r pꜣ ntj pꜣ wr jm*
"And I got to where the prince was" (*Wenamun*, 1,12-13)

21st dyn.

participle *wn* in narrative

Ex. 117 *jw≠n (ḥr) nw pꜣ nbw j.wn jm≠f*
"And we collected the gold that was there" (pBM EA 10053, 2,14)

Ramses XI

Ex. 118 *… jw≠tn (ḥr) jr.t hꜣw m nꜣ pr-n-stꜣ n njwt wn wꜣḥ m pr-ḥḏ (…)*
"When you did your business with the portable shrines of the kings which were in the treasure of (…)" (pMayer A, 1,9-10)[42]

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[41] This was noted by Ph. Collombert (2000) in his unpublished PhD.

[42] Although not impossible, it seems difficult to accept that the portable shrines were no longer in the treasury at the moment of the inquiry. This can be contrasted with a very similar context in

Ramses XI

Ex. 119 *jw=j ḥr gm rmṯ-js.t X Y pʾj rmṯ 2 j.wn dj r-qʾr pʾj=w nb m pʾ tʾ rsj*
"I met the crewmen X Y, these two men who were with their chief in the southern region" (pBM EA 10375, 15-16)

Ramses XI

From the end of the 20ᵗʰ dyn. – at least in non-literary texts – *nty* + present I in narrative seems to refer exclusively to a state still valid in the present:

Ex. 120 *gmj jw thʾj st nʾ jtʾ.w (...)*
jw jrj=w ḫrḫr nʾj.w nb.w m nʾj=sn wt.w (...)
jw jtʾ=w nʾj=w ḥ.wt n grg pr ntj twtw (ḥr) dj.t n=w (...)
"It was found that the thieves had robbed them (…), that they had stripped their owners from their coffins (…), that they had stolen their funerary equipment that one used to give them" (pAbbott 4,3-4)

Ramses IX

Ex. 121 *jw=n (ḥr) gm pʾ m(ḥ)r n KN (...)*
jw bn sw mj-qd nʾ m(ḥ)r.w mꜥḥꜥ.wt n nʾ sr.w ntj twn (ḥr) šm r ṯʾw jm=w m-dwn zp 2 jwnʾ
"And we found the pyramid of KN (…); it was not at all like the pyramids and the tombs of the nobles we usually go into to commit robbery" (pAbbott 4,3-4)

Ramses IX

The last example can be contrasted with the following one, also coming from the corpus of the *Tomb Robberies*:

Ex. 122 *jw=n (ḥr) jn pʾ ḥd pʾ nbw j.wn=n (ḥr) gm.t=f m nʾ mꜥḥꜥ.wt (...)*
"And we stole the silver and the gold we usually found in the tombs" (pBM EA 10054, 2,8-9)

Ramses XI

Finally, there are some pairs of examples that provide nice contrasted cases in more or less similar phraseological contexts. As expected, the variant with *ntj* usually largely predates that with the past converter:

Ex. 123 *wn.jn nw.t ḥr jt.t nʾ-n ḫbḫbj.w ntj r ḫḫ=s*
"And Nut took off the pearls that were around her neck" (Astarte 4,y)

End 18ᵗʰ – beg. 19ᵗʰ dyn.

Ex. 124 *jw=n (ḥr) nw pʾ nbw (...) ḥnꜥ nʾj=f wdʾ ꜥpr wn r ḫḫ=f*
"And we collected the gold (…) and the decorative amulets (?) that were around his neck" (pLéopold II-Amherst, 2,15-16)

Ramses IX

Ex. 125 *rwj=j bjn nb ntj m tʾ pn*
"I expelled all evil that was in this land" (Qadesh, *Poem*, § 177)

Ramses II

Ex. 126 *srwj=s pʾ m(ḥ)r j.wn jm=j*

pMayer A, r° 2,13: *ptr=j PN jw=f m-ḫnw-m tʾj s.t ntj p ʾpr-n-sṯʾ jm* "I saw PN as he was in this place where the portable shrine was".

"It expelled the illness that was in me" (pBM EA 10326, 12)[43]

Ramses XI

Ex. 127 *jst̠ jnḥ pꜣ ḫrw n nꜣ-n ḫr.w n ḫtꜣ nꜣ šms.w n ḥm=f ntj r-gs=f*
"For the armed forces of the foes of Khati had encircled the followers of His Majesty that were at his side" (Qadech, *Bulletin*, 83)

Ramses II

Ex. 128 *gmḥ=sn nꜣj=w ḫbb=w mj ḫꜣj.tjw sḫm.t wn m-sꜣ=sn*
"As they saw their slaughterers like the slaughterers of Sekhmet, who were after them" (K*RI* V, 24,7)

Ramses III

Ex. 129 *jw sš ḥw.t-nt̠r PN (ḥr) jj ꜥn jw jn=f pꜣ 3 rmt̠ ntj jrm=f*
"And the scribe of the temple PN came back bringing three guys who were with him" (pBM EA 10053,3,11)

Ramses XI

Ex. 130 *d̠d=f jn(=j) pꜣ wt n ḥd̠ (…) jrm nꜣ rmt̠ j.wn jrm=j*
"He said: 'I carried away the silver coffin (…) with the fellows who were with me'" (pBM EA 10052, 1,18)

Ramses XI

Ex. 131 *jw=f (ḥr) dj.t n=j qd.t 2 n ḥd̠*
jw=j (ḥr) gm.t=w jw=w bjn
jw=j (ḥr) šm.t r ḥꜣꜥ=w n=f
"He gave me two kite of silver, but I discovered they were bad and I went to give them back to him" (pBM EA 10052, v° 8,7)[44]

Ramses XI

Ex. 132 *m-ḫt gm.tw jw wn=f m ꜥ n ḫrwj*
jw=f bgs
"After one found that it was in a state of trouble and that it was in turmoil" (Dakleh oracular stela, 4)[45]

22nd dyn.

As already observed, the traditional – and so far exclusive – value attributed to the past converter has always been considered as a reliable tool for reconstructing prosopography. The consequence of the preceding observations is of course that caution must be strongly called for when one deals with texts dating from the second half of the 20th dyn. and later.

I now conclude this section by reviewing some uses of the past converter that once more appeared in writing by the end of the 20th dyn. and can be hardly classified as belonging to what I called Standard Late Egyptian (SLE), a designation that refers to the linguistic standard used by the scribe when making an administrative report.[46] The

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[43] Compare *jw=s ḥr dj.t sḫm=j n mr wn m jb=j* "she caused me to forget the sadness that was in my heart" (stela Turin 50058,14-15 = K*RI* III, 773,6-7).

[44] Same formulation in pBM EA 10403, r° 3,31.

[45] The word *bgs* can be analyzed as a noun (supplying a missing *m*), or possibly as a verb (cf. *Doomed Prince* 4,10) in old perfective.

[46] On this, see Winand (forthcoming b).

first case is the exceptional presence of *wn* before an emphatic form, a pattern that is actually attested only once:

Ex. 133 *wn j.jr=w pš pꜣ ḥḏ m pꜣ pr n ḏd-m-šnb* A
"It is in the house of the trumpeter A that they divided (or were used to divide) the silver" (pBM EA 10052, r° 4,21)[47]

Ramses XI

The second case is once more exceptional. As has been already observed, the conditional pattern *hn* + perfective *sḏm=f* followed by *wn* + future III is regular in the Tomb Robberies corpus to express *irrealis*:[48]

Ex. 134 *hn ptr=j, wn jw=j ḏd=f*
"If I had seen, I would have say so" (pBM EA 10052, r° 4,13)

Ramses XI

In the same corpus, instead of the regular *hn* + perfective *sḏm=f* in the protasis, the same document twice presents a variant *hn* + *wn* + perfective *sḏm=f*, mirroring the construction found in the apodosis:

Ex. 135 *hn wn ptr=j, wn jw=j ḏd=f n=k*
"if I had seen, I would have say so to you" (pBM EA 10403, v° 3,29)[49]

Ramses XI

In this respect, the unique case of *jr jw bn jw=f* to express the protasis of a conditional system is also interesting. In Late Egyptian, the verbal form in a protasis introduced by *jr* is first a subjunctive (ex. 136 and 137, before being replaced by the circumstantial Present I (138-139)[50], as shown in both cases by the presence of a negation:

Ex. 136 *ky-ḏd js bn jr qn=k n=j pꜣj=k ḫn nfr*
jw=j r jr.t gr jnk
"is not it that if you do for me your commission properly, I shall do the same as well?" (Moscow Bowl 3917b, 5)

18th dyn.

Ex. 137 *jr tm=tw rdj.t šꜥd=k*
jw=k ḥr spr r ḥꜣtj-ꜥ wsr n ḥw.t
"if one does not allow you to cut (wood), you shall get in touch with Weser, the major of Hut" (pBerlin 10463, 6)

18th dyn.

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[47] See Winand, forthcoming b, ex. 94, with commentary.

[48] See Polis (2009: 439-441 with n. 1083).

[49] Same formulation in pBM EA 10403, r° 3,31.

[50] The cases of pDeM 21, r° 3: *jr jw jrj=k pꜣ sḫn, jw=j (r) dj.t [n]=k* (…) "after having done the commission, I shall give you (…)", and of oGardiner 54, r° 2 (*jr jw wrš=k (ḥr) bꜣk m tꜣ ꜥ.t, [jw=k (r)] jn.t=s* "after having spent the day working with the she-ass, you will bring it back") are without parallel. If the verbal forms are analysed as subjunctives – a perfective with intransitive *wrš* woud raise some problems of its own – these examples would provide an intermediary stage between the older pattern *jr* + subjunctive and the newer one *jr* + *jw* + present I.

Ex. 138 *ḥr jr jw=j (ḥr) ʿm r-ḏd (…)*
jw=j (r) dj.t ptr=k pꜣ ntj jw=j (r) jr.t=[f n=f]
"but if I get to know that (…), you shall see what I shall do to him" (pGeneva D 187, v° 3-5)

Ramses XI

Ex. 139 *ḥr jr jw bn sw ḥr dj.t=f n=k*
jw=k ḥr jn n=j pꜣj=f ḥn=k
"but if he does not give it to you, you shall bring me his garment" (oVienna H9, v° 1-3)

Ramses III

The presence of a future in the protasis is thus really exceptional, and it probably cannot be but another manifestation of the same tendancy to anchor the event one is referring to to its proper temporal frame. By the way, the propension of French speaking children to introduce in the protasis a future tense ("si je viendrai …") instead of a present ("si je viens …"), which might well seem counter-intuitive, is common enough.[51]

5. Conclusion

This paper is the last in a series of studies devoted to the issue of time and aspect. In Winand (2006), I discussed with some details the intricacies of aspect in Egyptian, the complex relations between verbal actionality (and the modifications of it brought about by changes in the argumental structure) and the instructions given by grammatical tenses. I also devoted some space to the calculus of time. In an earlier paper (Winand 2000), I discussed how the chronological sequences of events could be calculated or guessed at, and which factors could favour an interpretation of a clause as fore-grounding (i.e. being part of the narrative backbone) or back-grounding (i.e. being an added circumstance to the main plot), considering different viewpoints as the grammatical tenses, of course, but also inferences that can be made from particular patterns (negative constructions, pragmatically marked sentences, etc.), or by taking into account what I called schemata of causality, being of general value or culturally conditioned.

There is ample evidence to show that Late Egyptian, from the 20th dyn. onward – even if there are sporadic traces of it before[52] – gradually favoured grammatical patterns that fix an absolute time reference, which includes instances of *consecutio temporum*. The variation observed in the following pair of examples, taken from the same text, could hardly been explained otherwise:

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[51]   The future is sometimes found in French, especially when there the conditional expresses a concession rather than a hypothesis: "*s'il reste, s'il restera toujours de quoi m'ensevelir, tout de même il n'y aura jamais eu …*" (A. Breton, ex. cited by Wilmet, 1998: § 456).

[52]   The passage of the Poem of Qadesh (§132-133: *gm.n=j pꜣ 2500 n ʿ n ḥtr wn=j m-ẖnw=sn ḫpr m gbgb.t r-ḥꜣ.t ssm.wt=j* "I found that the 2500 pieces of chariotry I was in were a heap of bodies before my horses") could be an early illustration, but one can also interpret it along the classical rule ("I found that the 2500 pieces of chariotry I **had** been in were **now** a heap of bodies before my horses").

Ex. 140 *gmj n' rmt jw bwpw=w rḫ s.t nb m t' s.t pr-ᶜ'ᶜ,w,s (...)*
"one found that the men did not get to know any place in the place of Pharaoh, l.p.h." (pAbbott 7,13-14)

Ramses IX

Ex. 141 *r-ḏd bw rḫ=j s.t nb dj m-ḫnw n' s.wt wp A*
"I do not know any tomb here among the tombs, except A" (pAbbott 5,7)

Ramses IX

This most certainly explains the presence of a past *sḏm=f* in the following example instead of a present I with an old perfective. It obviously seems unnecessary to look for semantic differences in this case as found in Earlier Egyptian between old perfective *jw=f rḫ.w* "he knows" and *jw rḫ.n=f* "he got to know".[53]

Ex. 142 *bwpw.tw gm.t=f jw rḫ=f s.t nb jm wp ...*
"One did not find that he knew any of the tombs except …" (pAbbott 5,5)

Ramses IX

The following points are the most significant and must be emphasized; they all contradict or at least nuance the basic assumption that *jw sḏm=f* only expresses relative anterior past, and *jw jw=f r sḏm* the relative posterior future.

A. In narrative, *jw sḏm=f* sometimes adds to or builds upon a previous sentence, without any nuance of anteriority. In some cases, *jw sḏm=f* is found where a sequential *jw=f ḥr sḏm* would have rather been expected in SLE. This of course is worth mentioning from a more general point of view. As is well known, the LEg sequential system (chain of *jw=f ḥr (tm) sḏm* forms), which is considered a diagnostic pattern of "Late Egyptianism",[54] did not survive in Demotic, where a chain of events in narrative is expressed by a series of past *sḏm=f* forms (for transitive verbs). Although the fact has not received much attention so far, it must here be stressed that chains of perfective *sḏm=f* forms (and/or present I with old perfective) are not completely unknown in Late Egyptian, at least by the end of the Ramesside times. They are first attested in administrative reports, i.e. in texts where the relevance of each action reported might still matter at the moment of speaking/reading. Here is a nice example from pAbbott:

Ex. 143 *r-ḏd sš A jw r-šᵓᶜ t'j rj.t ᶜᵓ.t n njw.t (...)*
ḏd=f n=j 3.t wšb.t n mdw ᶜj zp 2
sš n=w p'j=j sš ḥnᶜ p' sš spᵓ.t 2 n njw.t
ḥr ḏd n=j sš B k.t md.t 2.t
"Scribe A came to this great bank of Ne (…); he made to me three statements about extremely important cases; my scribe and the two scribes of the district of Ne took them down in writing; and then scribe B told me two other cases" (pAbbott 6,8-12)

Ramses IX

This kind of administrative style can be found in contemporary texts, like in letters:

Ex. 144 *r-ntj A B C spr r=j*
ᶜn=w n=j smj n pꜣ jrj=tn nb
sw (m) šsr
"A B and C reached me; they made a report to me about all that you did. It is excellent" (pBM EA 10100, 3-4)

Ramses XI

More exceptionally, but very much with the same spirit, a chain of perfectives *sḏm=f* and/or present I forms with old perfective can appear in earlier texts, as in the following example, where it is rather clear that the scribe's purpose is not to report the events as if they were parts of a narrative plot, but to state pragmatically the different steps taken in his quest for his missing servants:

Ex. 145 *twj ḥn.kwj n A*
jrj=f sḫwꜣ=f m-dj=j
ḏd=f n=j (...)
twj ḥn.kwj n B
jrj=f sḫwꜣ jrm nꜣj=f sš.w r-ḏd (...)
"I went to A; he has denied the fact to me; he said (…). I went to B. He and his scribes have denied the fact saying (…)" (pBologna 1086, 14-16)

Seti II

In literary texts, chain of sequentials remained the norm till the Third Intermediate Period. One must note that there is one single sequence of past *sḏm=f* forms in *Wenamun* (2,55-57), which otherwise undisturbingly uses the sequential *jw=f ḥr sḏm* from beginning to end as its narrative backbone. The surprising presence of these *sḏm=f* forms signals the deliberate shift made by the author to another register, namely that of autobiographies as they could be read in epigraphy on tomb walls or funerary stelas. One should also note that *Wenamun* offers at least one example where a sequential *jw=f ḥr sḏm* following a circumstantial past does not obviously express a posterior event but rather an event that is set in the same temporal frame as the preceding one. At this moment in the evolution of non-literary Late Egyptian (21st dyn.), one would have typically expected a chain of *jw sḏm=f* forms in such an environment. This thus adds another proof – if needed – of *Wenamun* being on the literary side:[55]

Ex. 146 *jw pꜣj=f wpwtj šm r km.t (ḥr) jj n=j (...)*
jw dj ns-bꜣ-nb-ḏd t(ꜣ)-n.t-jmn jn.tw nbw ṯbw 4 (...)
jw=s (ḥr) dj.t jn.tw n=j ḥbs.w šmᶜ.t nfr (...)
"Then his messenger who had gone to Egypt came back to me (…). Smendes and Tenetamun had caused to be brought (…) and she had caused to be brought to me clothes in fine linen of Upper Egypt" (*Wenamun*, 2,39-42)

21st dyn.

Unfortunately, the number of Late Egyptian narrative texts in the TIP is drastically limited so that it is quite impossible in the present state of documentation to evaluate properly how the new scheme propagated itself before the time when the story now preserved on pVandier was composed.

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[55]   Cf. *supra*, ex. 115.

B. Although the number of examples is not very high, the data clearly show that the circumstantial past, which could be used to express anteriority in future in most of the Ramesside period, had been replaced for this specific purpose by the circumstantial future *jw (bn) jw=f r sḏm* by the end of the 20th dyn. This once more illustrates the kind of evolution Late Egyptian was at that time undergoing, which would ultimately lead to some stronger parallelism between the temporal frame and the grammatical tenses.

C. One consequence of this is that the semantics of *jw* somehow became neutralized, merely indicating dependency without precisely stating the nature of the temporal relationship. This effect is particularly strongly felt in the future: as was amply demonstrated, the temporal reference of *jw (bn) jw=f r sḏm* can be anterior, simultaneous or posterior. In the past, *jw sḏm=f* is no longer confined to relative anterior past, but is also used more freely to add up supplementary information (simultaneity), and sometimes acts as a substitute of the sequential *jw=f ḥr sḏm*.

D. As already noted, both negative patterns *jw bwpw=f sḏm* and *jw bn jw=f sḏm* are quite often used as the LEg functional equivalents for the classical construction *nn + infinitive*. This pattern is exceedingly rare in LEg, except for some inscriptions where the influence of Classical Egyptian can be felt.[56] It is also scarcely attested in some literary compositions, whether narrative texts,[57] wisdom texts,[58] religious or royal texts.[59]

The "natural" heir to *nn + infinitive* was of course the circumstantial present *jw bn sw ḥr sḏm*. But – and this came as a surprise – this pattern is not very widespread in LEg to express this "without hearing"-notion. Examples are few, except, as a matter of fact, in a present context, and limited to the 19th dyn.[60]

> Ex. 147 *jw=j ḥr jr.t j'w.t nb ⁽³⁾ n pr-⁽³⁾ ᶜ,w,s*
>
> *jw bn twj ḥr ḫ'ᶜ=k*
>
> "I realized all the commissions of Pharaoh, l.p.h., without ever letting you down" (pLeiden I 371, r° 11)
>
> Ramses II

It must here be noted that the circumstantial present *jw bn sw ḥr sḏm*, when used in narrative, seems to retain its original value of co-extensivity (in the sense of Vernus 1986, see also Winand forthcoming a). It can thus create a contrast with *jw bwpw=f sḏm*, which considers the reported event *en bloc*. The following pair of examples captures the intended effect:

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[56]   Examples can be found in the Horemheb decree (e.g. *Urk.* IV, 2148,1), the Nauri decree (22, 26, 41), the "Poem" of Qadesh (§ 20, 248), and in the war inscriptions in Medinet Habu (K*RI* V, 62,4; 63,9; 68,7; 86,5), etc.

[57]   Khonsuemheb and the spirit, r° 9; Two Brothers 13,5.

[58]   pChB IV, v° 4,10; oVienne 8, x+2.

[59]   pTurin 1882, r° 2,1.

[60]   See already Winand (forthcoming a, 3.2).

Ex. 148 *ḥr jrj=j hrw 5*
jw bwpw=tw dj.t=w n=j <m> t'j=j pš
"And I spent 5 days, but one did not give them to me as my share" (oTurin CGT 57369, 7)

Ramses III

Ex. 149 *jw=j ḥr jr p'j ḥmn 8 jbd.w*
jw bn twj ḥr wnm ḥr swr m sḫr n rmṯ
"And I spent this amount of eight months, without ever eating or drinking like a human being" (pLeyde I 371, v° 32) [61]

Ramses II

In a present context, the two patterns can sometimes overlap, as shown in the following pair:[62]

Ex. 150 *ḥj p'j=j dj.t jn.tw n=k t' ḥms <n> šᶜ.t*
jw bn twk (ḥr) ḫsf n=j wᶜ jm=w
"What does it mean my sending to you this amount of letters without your ever replying to one of them?" (pLeiden I 367, 6)

Ramses XI

Ex. 151 *y' jḫ twj dj.t jn.tw n=tn p'j ḥmn n šᶜ.t jw bwpw=tn dj.t jn.tw wᶜ*
"What does it mean my sending to you this amount of letters considering that you have not sent me one?" (pLeiden I 369, 6-7)

Ramses XI

Be it as it is, the circumstantial present does not seem to be used anymore in the 20th dyn. to express "without hearing"-ness in narrative or in future. It had by then been replaced by *jw bwpw=f sḏm* and *jw bn jw=f r sḏm*, respectively.[63] If one considers the larger picture I am trying to sketch here, this adaptation made sense. It once more exemplifies the evolution towards a system more sensitive to time: *nn +infinitive* was of course not marked for time; it could thus be used in any temporal context. According to the ancient scheme, the circumstantial present *jw bn sw ḥr sḏm* (present I) could have been the natural candidate to succeed to *nn + infinitive*. And it was, as a matter of fact, but for a limited period of time. Its eviction in favour of tenses marked for time is thus another manifestation of the (r)evolution of the LEg predicative system.

To this, one can finally add the observations on the uses of the past converter *wn* that show that *wn* became more or less systematic when the temporal frame was past, even when the temporal setting was not at all ambiguous, which created some kind of redundancy. This is particularly clear in relative clauses, where *wn* is regularly substituted to *ntj + present I* in narrative from the second half of the 20th dyn. This means that *wn* no longer implied that the state of affair referred to in the past was no longer relevant at the moment of speaking (pluquamperfect). Such an evolution can

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[61]   Cf. *t' sn n=f A ḥnᶜ B ḥmn n rnp.t r t'y, jw bn st ḥr dj.t t'j=j psš.t* "A and B took them for themselves during all these years up to now, without ever giving my share" (pBerlin 3047, 9-10).

[62]   For the difference in meaning between the two constructions, see Winand (forthcoming a).

[63]   For Demotic, see e.g., *m jr šsp snḏ jw bn-jw jw=k jr qnb.t* "do not accept a gift without making an act" (Anchesheshonq 17,6).

for instance be traced in modern French where the past anterior is not infrequently used for referring to an action that took place in the past but whose effect are still perceptible at the moment of speaking.[64].

This evolution had also some effect – albeit limited – on some particular patterns like the protasis of the irrealis (*hn wn ptr≠f*) and the emphatic form (*wn j.jr≠f sḏm*).

6. A final remark

The nice succession of the five "canonical" stages of Egyptian, from Old Egyptian to Coptic, will probably remain unchanged in textbooks for some time, but it is contradicted by so many facts that a new model will inevitably emerge. Among others, a major point for discussion remains the transition from Late Egyptian to Demotic, which is badly understood (if understood at all).

As seen in the previous sections, Late Egyptian data show that *jw bn jw≠f r sḏm* replaced *jw bwpw≠f sḏm* as anterior future. But this does not seem to be the case in Demotic as shown by the following examples, which are far from being isolated:

Ex. 152 *bn jw(≠j) šm r nw.t jw bn-p(≠j) grg tʾj≠w-ḏj, mtw(≠j) jn nʾj≠s rmṯ r-ḫn≠s ˁn*
"I shall not go to Theben without having re-founded Teudjoi and brought back its people into it" (pRylands 9, XII,5)

Ex. 153 *jw≠f ḫpr jw(≠t) šm n≠ṯ r pʾj≠ṯ ˁwj jw bnp≠ṯ jj r jbd 4 ʾḥ.t sw 1 n pʾj(≠j) ˁwj, mtw≠ṯ mḥ pʾ ḥḏ-zp-2 4 ḥʾ.t ntj sḫ ḥrj*
"If it happens that you go in your house without coming in my house before 1st of Choiakh, you shall pay the 4 previous silver debens that are written above" (oStrasburg 1845, 8-10)[65]

This observation, which in itself does not say very much, takes a new meaning when put together with other similar facts. It is of course not the proper place here to discuss in detail the issue of dialects in pre-Coptic Egyptian.[66] But more or less brutal

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[64] E.g. "X sera déféré demain au parquet; il **avait été incarcéré** le 3 mai dernier", although it is perfectly clear that this person was still in custody at the moment of speaking. It seems that the present perfect, which remains the regular tense to be used in such cases, is discarded by some speakers who consider that a present perfect is not suited to (also) refer to a past action. Of course, other possibilities like "il fut incarcéré …" are no longer available to the vast majority of the speakers.

[65] Parallel examples are numerous: e.g. pBerlin 13535+23677, 6; pLüddeckens 13, B 17; pHeidelberg 723, 22; pBM EA 10622,16, etc.

[66] Dialectal differences, as a social reality in communities of speakers, did as a matter of fact exist in Egypt, even if it remains problematic to substantiate such a claim in the written documentation. Scholars are thus forced to be imaginative, to invent new strategies. For lack of space, I cannot here but refer the reader to forthcoming papers where I consider possible mechanisms that could explain some apparently haphazard moves in the history of ancient Egyptian. I already dealt with the issue of pre-Coptic dialects in a doctoral seminar in Liverpool (April 2014), in a paper given during the last Deir el-Medineh Conference (November 2014, see Winand forthcoming b), and it was the central theme for the Polostky Memorial Lecture I gave in Jerusalem (November 2014). In a nutshell, there are two basic strategies to show dialectal features in our corpus: the first one is to look in synchrony for variants that can be distributed geographically. Two options are equally

ruptures, like this one, in the "expected" evolution of Egyptian might suggest that Demotic broke, to some extant, with the written idiom then in use, here Late Egyptian. As a consequence, a possible explanation for this may be that Demotic was nested in a different quarter of Egypt than Late Egyptian.

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open: the first one, which is of course the most attractive, consists in mapping geographically conditioned variants found in LEg onto surviving Coptic dialects. The second option is offered by regional variants observable in Late Egyptian that left no traces in Coptic. The second type of strategies tests the hypothesis of Late Egyptian having itself a dialectal origin. The first strategy is already well-known in Egyptology. It rests upon the observation that some linguistic features could disappear only to reappear later, skipping the intermediary stage (Edgerton 1951). I propose to call this the *Bypass Hypothesis*. I have also considered two mirroring strategies I labelled the *Sudden Death Paradox* and the *Unexpected Resurrection Paradox* respectively. The first one tries to explain why some emblematic patterns that are overwhelmingly present in Late Egyptian very quickly disappeared in Demotic, like the so-called sequential *jw=f ḥr sḏm*, or why some patterns that were on the verge of grammaticalising faced a sudden, unexpected halt, and never survived the transition from Late Egyptian to Demotic. The second Paradox might help explain why some features that were gradually disappearing in LEg, becoming nearly extinct by the 21st dyn., surprisingly experienced a second youth in Demotic.

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