THE RELATION BETWEEN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN FORM *bw rḫ.f* AND THE TERM "مش " (MESH) IN EGYPTIAN SLANG

By

Emad Mahmoud Edreis Mohamed

Teaching Assistant at Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Arts, Assiut University.

Abstract

The paper entitled 'The relation between the ancient Egyptian term *bw rḫ.f* and the term (**Mesh**) "مش" in Egyptian slang' deals with the character of the construction *bw rḫ.f* and its extension in Coptic **mese** which represents inability to do something. From which the common negative style in the new Egyptian slang (**Mesh**)"مش" has been derived, which also represent inability to do something.

ملخص:

عنون البحث " العلاقة بين الاصطلاح المصري القديم *bw rḫ.f* والاصطلاح الدارج "مـش" فـي اللهجـة المصـرية الحاليـة كعلاقـة بـين اللهجـة المصـرية الحديثـة الدارجة واللغة المصرية القديمـة " للتعرف علي طبيعـة التركيبـة *bw rḫ.f* وإمتداها في القبطية **mese** والتي تمثل عدم القدرة علي فعل الشيء والتي إشـتق منهـا اصـطلح النفي المصري الحديث فالشائع في اللهجة المصرية "مش" والذي يعبر ايضا عن عدم القدرة على فعل الشيء.

Introduction

bw in Coptic is ⲙⲉ, it has been written as ⲙⲉ, and rarely as ⲙ. It is used for negation before verbal statements, with relative shapes and with Interrogative clauses as in *ist bw* "not true? "ⲙⲉⲙⲉⲙⲉ.[1] Moreover, it was used as negative and occurred in proper names at the beginning of the early Middle Kingdom.[2] With the beginning of the reign of Akhenaton, the negative particle *bw* became more common than the negative particle *n* in El-Amarna texts. With the beginning of the 19th Dynasty, it is used increasingly, not only before verbal form but also within the periphrastic construction *bwpwy.f sḏm*. The particle ⲙⲡⲉ is the sole negative particle in Coptic used to negate the basic tenses and the imperatives.[3]

Based on the importance of this construction, it must be studied separately. The verb *rḫ* means "to learn", "to find out", to experience and to express the idea "to know". The Egyptian mostly used the stative of *rḫ*: "being in the state of having learned" means "to know".[4] Actually it is a derivative construction of transitive form. As in Classic Egyptian, it has an active pseudo-participle; it is negated mostly by a particular form *bw rḫ.f*. It may be used as a noun which is common or infinitive

348

which is rare.[5] It keeps its simple form in all registrations of genres literature. It is the direct predecessor of Demotic and Coptic forms.[6]

The Construction *bw rḫ.f*

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The verb *rḫ* is always used without an auxiliary in Classic Egyptian,[10] *bw rḫ.f* is the successor of negative correlative of pseudo-participle *iw.f rḫ.w* by using particle *n*,[11] as in this example:

Ex. (1):

𓇋𓅯𓀁𓏲𓏏𓅯𓀁𓏠𓂋𓈖𓇋𓇋𓊪𓏲

*iw.i rḫ.kwi st **n rḫ.tn st***

I know it, you do not know it. (Nu, 112, 3)

𓈖𓂝𓂋𓏲 *bw rḫ.k* "you do not know" [12] is the main point of study and is considered as a part of Late Egyptian negative aorist. It also expresses inability to do something. [13] It is derived directly from the form *n rḫ.k* of Classic Egyptian which was negated by the affirmative form *iw.f rḫ.w*[14] Therefore the example of the negative aorist *rḫ* brings an evidence that the Middle Egyptian verb forms were freed from any additions or markers when the phonetic changes of the end of 18th Dynasty occurred. During Late Egyptian, it remained with the same form and temporal value, [15] that give us a logical reason why the negative aorist of *rḫ* follow up alone into Late Egyptian. The negative of *rḫ.f* (*n rḫ.f* "he do not know") in Middle Egyptian became *bw rḫ.f* in Late Egyptian which normally turned out into *bw iri.f rḫ* as negative aorist, [16] but *bw iri.f rḫ* is not mentioned before the 25th Dynasty when the common pattern was eventually extended to *rḫ*; clearly by analogy with the other verbs.[17] The

development of this construction appears clearly in the next schedule:

Middle Egyptian	Transitional Egy.	Late Egyptian	Coptic
n rḫ.f	*n rḫ.f* *bw rḫ.f*	*bw rḫ.f* *bw iri.f rḫ*	ⲙⲉϣⲁϥ

Since this construction is considered as a part of negative aorist; it takes the complete form of the negative aorist in Late Egyptian which is not attested before the 25th dynasty.

Ex. (2):

imi rḫ.tw ḫd ḫnt n'Itn bw iri.w rḫ n3 ḫd ḫnt (n) p3 sw

One do not know the downstream and upstream on Aton, you do not know the path of the sun towards; downstream and upstream. (Urk. VI, 125, 2)

This construction appeared in two different forms which were more common in Late Egyptian; each one has its usage and meaning in texts:

-*bw rḫ* + **noun/pronoun:**

In most cases, the most frequent form existed with complete form and has a value expressing, meaning "not known, not know".[18]

Ex. (3):

bw rḫ.k p3 sḫr n ḥ3ty.i

You do not know the nature of my heart. (LRL, 68, 8-9)

-bw rḫ + **infinitive:**

It represents the less frequent construction, meaning "not try, not try to, not be willing to" (non-complete),"not be able to, not able" (complete),[19] or perhaps/possibility.[20]

Ex. (4):

iw bw rḫ n3y.i mr ḫ3swt ḥnꜤ n3y.i wrw ḏd n.n st iw

Neither my foreign countries nor my superiors have not been able to say: "They came". (KRI II, 115, 9-14)

This construction extended in Coptic as old conjugation ⲙⲉϣⲁⲕ,[21] the direct successor form of it was *bw rḫ.k*

𓆓𓂝 𓏎 𓏏,[22] as Late Egyptian negative aorist, this construction was indicated inability to do something,[23] perhaps/possibility.[24]

Ex. (5):

ⲙⲉϣⲁⲕ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ ⲛ̄ϭⲓ-ⲡⲏⲓ ⲛ̄ⲓⲟⲩⲇⲁ ⲉⲛⲉⲓⲡⲉⲑⲟⲟⲩ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ

You do not know; the house of Israel shall not hear all this evil.
(Gen, 32, 20)

The most important point here is the close relationship between this construction **"ⲙⲉϣⲁ="** in Coptic and The term **"مش"** **(Mesh)** in the Egyptian dialect which is used till now in the Egyptian daily life as an expression indicates to "Unknowing things".

When you hear this term in Egyptian dialect, there are questions that should come up in your mind, what is the meaning of term **"مش"***(Mesh)? Is it a real negative particle in Arabic language? What does it mean? What is its original source?*

For all previous questions paper studied this construction separately, and it took special importance in the study. Actually when dealing with Egyptian in Arabic in daily dialect, you find that the term **"مش"(Mesh)** used numerously in speech referring to hesitancy or incapacity or unknown things, as you ask someone if he is going to his work or not? He may reply "*I do not know if I*

will eat or not" (**مش عارف هأكل ولا لا**) (referring to hesitancy), or "*I will not eat*" (**مش هأكل**) (referring to incapacity). You could ask another one; do you write your paper? He might answer "*I don't know how to write a paper*" (**مش عارف اكتب المقال**) *(for more examples see the schedule*[25]*).*

If you scrutinize in this term you will see the close relationship with the Coptic expression "**ⲙⲉϣⲁ=**". Then as some scholars thought that the original source of Egyptian slang term "**مش**"(**Mesh)** is hieroglyphic *bw rḫ* as indirect source as etymological of Coptic "**ⲙⲉϣⲁ=**" which is considered the direct source of this term.

So that after this explanation, if this construction is followed by infinitive, most probably the suitable translation of would be (Late Egyptian *bw rḫ.f* and its Coptic successor **ⲙⲉϣⲁϥ**) is "He does not know how to + Action". As said; he doesn't know how to eat, he doesn't know how to sleep, and he doesn't know how to hear. Moreover, if it is followed by a noun, the most suitable translation of it would be "he does not know + noun) as we say; he doesn't know the man, he doesn't know his way and he doesn't know the house.

So that the perfect translation of the Ex. 2.3.2(4) was *(My foreign countries and my superiors do not know how to say to me: "They came.")*, then the Ex. 2.3.2(3) has a suitable translation *(You do not know the nature of my heart.)*

Ex. (6):

tw.i ꜥnḫ.k(wi) m pꜣ hrw bw rḫ.i ꜥ.i n dwꜣ

I am alive today; I do not know my condition of tomorrow. (P. Leiden I, 366, rt)

Ex. (7):

bw rḫ.i ph n nꜣ mdwt ꜥꜣyw ꜥꜣyw iḏd pꜣ ḫꜣty-ꜥ n niwt

I do not know the purpose of the very serious charge which the monarch of the city has said. (Abbott 6, 17-19)

Ex. (8):

bw rḫ.i st nb

I do not know any place. (Abbott 5, 7)

Referances

(1) Wb. I. 453.

(2) Brovarski (1989: 729-730).

(3) El-Hamrawi (2007: 33).

(4) Selden (2013: 126).

(5) Neveu (1998: 84).

(6) Winand (1992: 239). Satzinger (1976: 188).

(7) Selden (2013: 126).

(8) Neveu (1998: 84).

(9) Winand (1992: 239). Satzinger (1976: 188).

(10) Frandsen (1974: 37).

(11) Frandsen (1974: 37). Gunn (1924: 98).

(12) Erman (1894: 129).

(13) Junge (2005:100).

(14) Frandsen (1974: 37). Satzinger (1976: 188).

(15) Kruchten (1999: 32).

(16) Kruchten (1999: 32). Gardiner (1957: 376).

(17) Winand (1992: 240).

(18) Neveu (1998: 84). Winand (1992: 240).

(19) Neveu (1998: 85).

(20) Erman (1933: 129).

(21) ⲙⲉⲩⲉ, ⲙⲉⲩⲁ=: S. form, ⲙⲉⲣⲉ=; A. Form. Vb. not know, ⲙⲉⲩⲉⲕ; "you knows not"- ⲙⲉⲩⲉ=, Crum (1939: 201-202). Westendorf (1965: 108).

(22) Polotsky (1969: 476). Edgerton (1931: 31).

(23) Junge (2005: 100).

(24) Erman (1933: 129).

(25) Schedule show the close relationship between Arabic Egyptian slang "مش"(Mesh) and Coptic ⲙⲉϣⲁ=

Arabic	Coptic	Hieroglyphic	English
مش عارف مش عارف أسمع مش عارف أروح/أذهب	ⲙⲉϣⲁ= ⲙⲉϣⲁⲓⲥⲱⲧⲙ ⲙⲉϣⲁⲓⲙⲟϣⲉ	*bw rḫ* *bw rḫ.i sḏm* *bw rḫ.i šm*	**Do not know** **I do not know how to hear** **I do not know how to go**

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     Period from Naga-ed-Der, Diss., Chicago Uni., Chicago.

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