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## On Dynamic Canonicity in Late-Egyptian: The Literary Letter and the Personal Prayer\*

Orly Goldwasser, Jerusalem

But what botanist would think of attacking his problems otherwise than by a minute examination of individual specimens, considered in relation to the soil in which they have grown, to the climate, in fact to the total environment?

Alan H. Gardiner, *The Theory of Speech and Language*, Oxford 1932, 6

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\* I wish to dedicate this manuscript to Prof. Sarah Groll as a token of appreciation and respect of her invaluable contribution to the study of Late Egyptian.

<sup>1</sup> This paper might give the impression to some readers as bearing too much on a different field of study than linguistics, that of literary criticism. Nevertheless, in the last decade, at least since the days of "Russian Formalism", linguistics and literary criticism have become inseparable disciplines. The linguistic units are recognized as the building blocks of any oral or written text. Thus, the reigning theories of the century, such as Structuralism, Formalism, Functionalism, Pragmatics, and Socio-linguistics, are all considered interdisciplinary semiotic models.

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## 0 *The process of canonization*

The process of canonization is usually looked upon as a procedure of acceptance of a certain text as legitimate by the "dominating circles" within a culture. This specific product is preserved by the community in order to become a part of its historical heritage. Nevertheless, canonicity might be a dynamic procedure, or a static one. In the first case a certain text becomes a productive model, while as in the second, a text is accepted as a finalized product in the aggregate of texts of the culture<sup>2</sup>.

However, dynamic canonicity may also take place in the domain of the linguistic system. In a decision, though rarely enacted, the dominating circles may officially accept forms belonging to the vernacular into the official texts of the culture. Here also, this act should be carefully discerned from procedures where a finalized text, containing innovating forms is accepted as a final product into the official repertoire. Dynamic canonicity in language means the intrusion of new grammatical and lexical forms into texts that already form part of the official repertoire, into places that they were not allowed to enter before. This act might stem from changes in decorum, or from strong pressures exerted on the canonized culture, or from a combination of the two.

### 0.1 *Dynamic canonicity in the repertoire*

The literary letter is one of the clearest examples for dynamic canonicity in the literary repertoire of Late-Egyptian (L.E.). The letter has established itself as a vigorous productive principle in the 19th dynasty's repertoire, eventually creating a new literary genre.

Letter writing started as early as the Old Kingdom, stemming from the elementary need for information exchange on the daily life level. During the New Kingdom, due to the

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<sup>2</sup> Even-Zohar, *Polysystem Studies*, 6-9, and passim; pAnast. II 9,2 - 10,1 contains a "private piety" hymn which was probably accepted as a final product into the aggregate of school texts, and thus might be regarded as an example for static canonicity; see below chapter 4.

expansion of the Egyptian Empire and the growing importance of the administrative network, letters started gaining a new status within the corpus of texts. While they have kept their position as a main information exchange channel, canonized letter writing became one of the most important training fields of the Egyptian scribe. Yet, the growing importance of the genre is probably the reason for its movement to the center of the repertoire. From the status of an administrative tool, it moves into the literary repertoire par excellence<sup>3</sup>. The letter becomes a new *literary model*, with the culmination of this process manifesting itself in the shape of an imaginary letter, which sheltering subjects usually confined to other genres, such as: wisdom and religious literature, eulogies of the king, geographical lists, and "scientific" literature, all *embedded* into the genre.

The inclusion of "the letter of Hori" in the canonical tradition of the Egyptian literature, is a process which constitutes a basic mechanism that adjusts the aggregate of canonical texts to the social circumstances.

The term canonicity is socio-culturally dependent. The case of the "Letter of Hori" is an excellent example of the correlation between the literary product and society, or more correctly, the establishment. By the act of legitimization (making it a school text) the system will preserve it in the inventory, and will secure its perpetuation.

## 0.2 *Dynamic canonicity in language*

Since the beginning of the New Kingdom, and even earlier<sup>4</sup>, we find limited cases of infiltrations of the colloquial into the written texts. During the Amarna Period the appearance of the "written as if spoken"<sup>5</sup> language in the texts is clearly a formulation of an innovative elite: the king and his followers.<sup>6</sup> For the first time in the history of the New Kingdom the "vernacular" is *officially* allowed into the aggregate of texts that formed the official repertoire. A new set of syntactical forms were then canonized. These forms are mostly noticeable in the items of the repertoire that were inaccessible until that time to the undercurrents of the spoken language: the official religious texts, royal eulogies, etc.

Since then, the "written as if spoken" language became an important component of the Egyptian texts, now infiltrating, in various degrees, almost all genres of the Egyptian repertoire. As a result of this process, the prevailing system during the 19th and 20th

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<sup>3</sup> Posener, in: *Gedenkschrift Otto*, 392.

<sup>4</sup> For a recent discussion see Junge, in: *Lingua Sapientissima*, 47-56.

<sup>5</sup> For this terminology Gregory, *Journal of Linguistics* 3 (1967), 177-198.

<sup>6</sup> For a recent discussion see the doctoral dissertation by Tobin, *The Intellectual Organization of the Amarna Period*.

dynasties, offered the writer a much wider choice of grammar and lexic when compiling a text. Now, choices are available from the Pyramid texts to the newly formed forms of the vernacular. Nevertheless, this choice was rule-governed. With a closer examination of L.E., some of these rules will be reformulated here and the remaining range of choice for the individual writer will be defined.

### 1 *The relevance of register variations to the procedures of canonization*

The study of the register variations of pAnastasi I is relevant to the study of the procedures of canonization, as it enables us to get an insight into the mechanisms of the process. The act of canonization is an act carried out by institutions (representing the dominating circles). These institutions act within a certain linguistic system. The definition of a register is a given text answers the question what kind of language do the institutions find adequate for use in a certain context? What permits the appearance of a certain discourse in a certain text?

Register is a concept that Halliday and others have developed to help us account for the relations between linguistic structures used, and features of the situation in which we use them<sup>7</sup>. The building blocks of the register are grammatical and lexical components taken from a prevailing system. When the writer and the potential audience belong to the same social context, the reasons for the choice of a certain register variation and its possible effect on the potential reader coincide.

Being removed more than three thousand years from the social context of the L.E. text, approaching the study of a register in three stages (although never fully realized due to our limitations) will be suggested, as follows:

- (a) Definition of grammatical and lexical components involved in the register. This is a synchronical study that has to take into account diachronical data. The method used was defined by Groll as "synchronic-comparative"<sup>8</sup>.
- (b) Definition of other components of a register (see below).
- (c) Definition of the effect of the text on the potential reader.

A whole world of aesthetic and social presuppositions, connotations and associations intervenes between us and the ancient reader, the narratee. We can partially try to bridge this gap in a careful reconstruction of some of these presuppositions and connotations. The connotations might be grammatical or lexical.

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<sup>7</sup> For a more detailed discussion of registers s. Goldwasser, in: *Studies Lichtheim*, 213-227.

<sup>8</sup> Groll, *OLP* 6-7 (1975-6), 238-246.

In summary, our interest lies in what Culler defines as the "conditions of meaning,"<sup>9</sup> and in what Hawkes has recently proposed as "a concern not with *content*, but with the *process* by which content is formulated."<sup>10</sup>

### 1.1 *The definition of a register*

In defining of the notion of "register", the approach of Hasan has been chosen<sup>11</sup>. She distinguishes a set of five factors that create a register variation:

- (a) subject matter of the discourse
- (b) situation-type for discourse
- (c) participant roles within a discourse
- (d) mode of discourse
- (e) medium of discourse

## 2 *The three main registers of pAnastasi I*

pAnastasi is a literary letter (by genre), which contains three main registers<sup>12</sup>: the register of adulation (1,1 - 2,7), the register of congratulations (2,7 - 4,5), and the register of the subject-matter of the letter (4,5 - end).

### 2.1 *The register of adulation*

- (a) Subject matter of discourse: Titles, education and competence of Hori and the addressee (minor changes in field, scribe-soldier).
- (b) Situation-type of discourse: A polite letter exchange.
- (c) Participants role: Two scribes of similar official rank (established in this register).
- (d) Mode of discourse: Adulations (mostly nouns or nominalized forms, 3rd person).
- (e) Medium of discourse: Written text, in hieratic script, on a very fine papyrus-roll.

The combination of "nameness" and the use of 3rd person, enhances the effect of disengagement, and its official use of language.

<sup>9</sup> Culler, *Structuralist Poetics*, VII.

<sup>10</sup> Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics*, 158.

<sup>11</sup> Hasan, in: *Class, Codes, and Control*, 272; see also Goldwasser, in: *Studies Lichtheim*, 213.

<sup>12</sup> For a detailed specification of the verbal forms appearing in each register in the papyrus see Goldwasser, in: *Studies Lichtheim*.

## 2.2 *The register of congratulation*

- (a) Subject matter of discourse: Congratulations for the present, future and the next world.
- (b) Situation type of discourse: A polite letter exchange.
- (c) Participants role in the discourse: Two scribes (as above).
- (d) Mode of discourse: Congratulatory, almost sole use of the 2nd person optative *sdm.f*.
- (e) Medium of discourse: Papyrus etc. (same as above).

The use of the 2nd person optative creates only partial engagement; the archaic language (very close to Middle Egyptian), probably contributes to the same effect.

## 2.3 *The register of the subject-matter: the multi-layered register*

- (a) Subject matter of discourse: Various subjects interlacing – "the competent scribe," "wicked, yet well-off," administrative problems, geographical issues.
- (b) Situation type for discourse: A bitter contention (change!).
- (c) Participants role in discourse: (as above).
- (d) Mode of discourse: Polemic, ironic, sarcastic, preaching.
- (e) Medium of discourse: Papyrus roll (as above).

This register is a multi-layered<sup>13</sup> register containing various subjects appearing in interlaced discourses. We assume that the change in subject (a) and mode (d) allowed the introduction of a vast new range of grammatical and lexical forms.

All the components of the 19th dynasty literary L.E. are represented<sup>14</sup>:

- I. The "written as if spoken" language.
- II. M.E. and earlier forms.
- III. Literary L.E. forms.

In the next paragraph we shall try to follow by a detailed case-study, the process (one of many) of a sub-register change within the multi-layered register.

## 2.4 *Grammatical "register markers" within the multi-layered register*

The negation *nn* is always found in the papyrus in discourses referring to more abstract subjects or moral issues. In these cases the text tends to move into more literary sub-registers, recognized by a higher percentage of literary grammatical and lexical forms, often including the M.E. negations *nn* and *n*. The movement from one register to another is at times very sophisticated. A discourse might consist of a cluster of two or three sentences

<sup>13</sup> Fairclough prefers the term "mixed register," see Fairclough, in: *Functions of Style*, 120 ff.

<sup>14</sup> See Goldwasser, in: *Studies Lichtheim*.

only. Nevertheless, the fact that all sub-registers discussed form part of the master multi-layered register, predicts a priori discourses in which "written as if spoken" and literary language intertwine more explicitly than in the first two registers of the papyrus.

#### 2.4.1 The case of the construction *nn 0-N sdm.f*

This rare M.E construction<sup>15</sup> is still in vogue in the literary system of the Ramesside period. Although rare in L.E, the *nn 0-N sdm.f* appears also in the inscription of *Kyky s3 Mwt*, and is described by Vernus as "la construction [...] assez rare, appartient à la langue littéraire du M.E. et N.E."<sup>16</sup> It seems that the undefined noun is obligatory in the negated construction.<sup>17</sup>

The construction appears twice in pAnastasi I:

(1) pAnst. I 28,2 *nn 0-pr-‘-ib stn.f r-h‘w.i*

"There is no brave warrior who can measure (himself) with me."

This sentence appears after a circumstantial first present, being part of a register dealing with the subject of the "competent scribe", evidently a more abstract subject than the previous geographical register. The *nn 0-N sdm.f* is followed by a subjectless stative (*wn.kwi*), two adjectival sentences strongly marked "literary" by the particle *wsy*<sup>18</sup>. A literary emphatic form *iy.k*<sup>19</sup>, subjectless statives in a circumstantial role: *bnd*, *3tp*, and a *nn sdm.f*. The noun *pr-‘-ib* and the verb *stn* mostly appear in literary texts<sup>20</sup>. The combination *pr-‘* probably evokes connotations to the bravery of the king.

The discourse (28,2 - 28,4) does not contain any Ramesside article; the possessive, definite and indefinite articles are absent, and thus probably the effect of the colloquial is reduced.

<sup>15</sup> Gunn, *Studies*, 144-5.

<sup>16</sup> Vernus, *RdE* 30 (1978), 126-7, n.69.

<sup>17</sup> Westendorf was the first to suggest that in the construction *N sdm.f* the verb acts as an adverbial predicate. This view was not accepted by Schenkel. Recently, Doret has suggested that the homograph *N sdm.f* harbours two different forms: one with a circumstantial *sdm.f* and one with a modale prospective form. See Westendorf, *MIO* 1 (1953), 337-43; Schenkel, *ZAS* 92 (1965), 68; Polotsky, *Transpositions*, 31-2; Doret, *JNES* 39 (1980), 37-45; Vernus, in: *Festschrift Westendorf*, 197-212.

<sup>18</sup> This particle is typical of the literary lexicon, see Lesko, *Dictionary of Late Egyptian I*, 127-8; *Wb. I* 359; Erman, *NäG*, § 684.

<sup>19</sup> Groll, *JNES* 28 (1969), 189.

<sup>20</sup> See pAnastasi I: Gardiner, *Eg. Hier. Texts I*, 15\*, n. 10; Lesko, *Dictionary of Late Egyptian I*, 175.



(2) pAnst. I 12,5 *nn 0-nḥn n d3mw.i stn.f r ḥ'w.i*

"There is no stripping of my generation who can measure (himself) with me."<sup>21</sup>

This sentence appears after a discourse (11,8 - 12,5) which is concerned with the subject of "True Scribe". Unexpectedly this is rather non-literary in character. The paragraph opens with strong non-literary markers: *bn tw.k m sš bn tw.k m w'w . . . bn tw.k ḥr 'wti*; definite and possessive articles dominate: *t3-st, n3-sšw, p3-w'r, p3y.i-smi, p3-iḥ, p3-shnt, p3-iḥ*.

One sentence before the *nn 0-N sdm.f*, a sudden change occurs. Two *k3 sdm.f* appear in a row. The *k3 sdm.f* is a M.E. form which continues to exist in the Ramesside literary texts. The form is absent from the "written as if spoken" system<sup>22</sup>.

Even though dealing with the relatively literary subject, the paragraph contests with the more daily-life aspects of the scribal occupation. Prosaic problems concerning official registration as a scribe and a soldier probably allows the inclusion of many non-literary grammatical forms. As in the geographical paragraph, the discourse is abundant with words written in the syllabic writing.

We believe that the sudden change in the cluster *k3 iri.i w'w k3 iri.i sš nn nḥn n d3mw.i stn.f r ḥ'w.i* (12,4 - 12,5), is a result of two facts: (a) The cluster moves to the more abstract field of the scribal profession, which alludes to the first register of the text, the register of adulation. (b) The first part of the discourse appears as a citation from Amenemope's letter. That might return to a possible insinuation concerning the qualities of Amenemope as a scribe, a quality that is questioned again and again through the letter. A rather obscure metaphor in the text might belong here, a metaphor not completely understood to the modern reader<sup>23</sup>. In a discourse dealing with the "low class" of Amenemope's style, Hori blames him: *iṯi.n.k šdh 3bh ḥr p3wr*. Hori probably refers here to the inadequate melange of two sorts of wines; and the metaphor might refer to Amenemope's incautious use of different language variations, that should rightly be used in different contexts, something like our concept of registers. By the sudden move to the higher language (when describing himself!) Hori might prove to the learned reader his different and cautious use of language.

The discourse closes with a "written as if spoken" form which is obviously direct speech, probably a citation (*ndnd s m-di mwt.f iḥ n n3y.i-ḥwtiw ...*).

<sup>21</sup> Erman saw this construction as a rare *sdm.ty.fy* (*NäG*, § 446). For the translation see Gardiner, *Eg. Hier. Texts I*, 15\*.

<sup>22</sup> Gardiner, *EG*, §§ 242, 450 d; Erman, *NäG*, § 675; Groll, *OLP* 6-7 (1975-6), 238; Vernus, *RdE* 30 (1978), 128; Korostovtsev, *Grammaire du Néo-Egyptien*, 154; see also *KRI* II, 39 (109), "The Poem."

<sup>23</sup> See Fischer-Elfert, *Papyrus Anastasi I*, Wiesbaden 1983, 51.

One example of the more Ramesside construction (though still literary!) *bn 0-N sdm.f* is also found in the text. The *bn 0-3'' wh' f st* (28,6) appears in a rather emphatic Ramesside micro-context, preceded by the first present of which the subject is the noun *n3y.k-sddw* followed by a non-literary circumstantial form *iw.w thth*. It is also noteworthy that the noun 3'' "foreigner, interpreter" is common in L.E., frequently found in the non-literary texts of the period.<sup>24</sup>

### 3 Papyrus Turin A as a test case for the theory of registers in L.E.

This miscellany, probably dated to the 20th dynasty<sup>25</sup>, was chosen by us as another example for the operation of register variations in L.E. Our concern here is with *verso* 2,10 - 5,10 published in hieroglyphic transliterations by Gardiner<sup>26</sup> and by Caminos<sup>27</sup>. The text is a model letter which is part of other school miscellanies that take place on the *verso*. It should be classified by genre as a literary letter. Leaving aside grammar and lexis there are two other criteria: (a) Its inclusion on a school miscellanies papyrus and (b) The text contains verse points; besides acting as a possible metric division, this act appears during the Ramesside period as a "literary" marker inserted by the writer. Normative and versed administrative letters like pAnastasi VI constitute one end of the spectrum of literary texts in L.E.<sup>28</sup> (These two criteria belong to the "medium of discourse").

Vs. 2,10 - 4,10 of pTurin A contain an exquisite administrative model letter, dealing with the conscription of certain people for forced labor. The text makes use of an excellent "written as if spoken" register variation. The text elaborates on the use of *bn - iwn3* versus *bn*, emphatic forms, and what seems to be the choice of the right relative form after a defined or undefined noun. Yet, the fact that the letter belongs to the literary repertoire allows the inclusion (even into the normative administrative register) of grammatical and lexical forms usually absent from the "written as if spoken" texts. e.g., an adjectival sentence which includes *wsy* (vs. 4,5). If the letter was indeed written during the 20th dynasty, and is not a mere copy of a 19th dynasty letter, the appearance of *p3-wn* is also an archaism, characteristic of literary use<sup>29</sup>. The combination *p3-wn* with the meaning of

<sup>24</sup> Lesko, *Dictionary of Late Egyptian I*, 2.

<sup>25</sup> Gardiner, *JEA* 42 (1956), 8-9.

<sup>26</sup> Gardiner, *Ramesside Administrative Documents*, 123-4.

<sup>27</sup> Caminos, *Late Egyptian Miscellanies*, 508-510.

<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, the inclusion of the verse-points is optional; we shall deal with this subject elsewhere.

<sup>29</sup> On the *p3-wn* see Goldwasser, in: *Pharaonic Egypt*, 51.

"because" is often found in the non-literary texts of the 19th dynasty, but becomes very rare in the non-literary texts of the 20th dynasty.

Nevertheless, lines 4,10 - 5,2 bring a sudden change in the text. Two sentences that seem to be proverbs or sayings, introduce a more archaic form: *bn ntk 0-i3wt hm.f ntr bn ntk 0-'dd swg3 hm.f 'nh*. The two *hm.f* are classical virtual relative forms<sup>30</sup>. comparable form may be found in the "Dream Book" of the 19th dynasty. The sentence *dd md.wt in.s rsw.f hr st.f*: "Spell that should be said by a man who wakes up rooted to the spot" is interpreted by Groll as containing the circumstantial *sdm.f* acting as a virtual relative clause, defining the undefined noun<sup>31</sup>. The next line introduces a M.E. emphatic form *3bb.k* (see also pAnast. I 1, 5-6); after a partially broken part we clearly identify a *nn hpr ntr.w min3 rmt wpwt.f ds.f* (5, 5); line 5, 10 offers a *nn pr.t(?)s* and a *nn tkn mw(?)w3t.f(?)*. The text breaks after this line.

If we look for the possible reasons for the grammatical changes appearing at the end of the letter, we shall find that they occur along with the change in subject matter of the discourse, from the administrative realm to the more abstract, moral and religious realm. It is with the appearance of these more abstract and moral issues that the register marker *nn* makes its first appearance. There is also a change in mode of discourse, from a preaching-sarcastic mode the discourse moves into a praise to Thot.

By no means have we done justice to this fine letter of pTurin A. Detailed discussions on the *nn* negation in the text and many other grammatical problems will be saved for a latter occasion.

#### 4 *The personal prayer and the theory of dynamic canonicity in L.E.*

During the 18th dynasty, on the periphery of the Egyptian socio-cultural system, a new sub-culture emerged on the fringes of the written literature. Short texts, mostly written on ostraca or as graffiti, disclose the existence of a new genre in the Egyptian literary tradition<sup>32</sup>. These texts bear witness to the existence of a new ideology that was only implicitly and very partially manifested until then in the texts of the system. A direct path is now

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<sup>30</sup> Gardiner, *EG*, 149; Non-literary L.E. would have probably shown a \**0-N iw.f hm*; see Černý - Groll, *LEG*, §§ 37.4, 54.1, 54.2.

<sup>31</sup> Groll, in: *Pharaonic Egypt*, 81; also cf. Allen in this volume.

<sup>32</sup> Even Assmann that advocates early "fore-runners and foreshadowing" for these ideas admits that they appear for the first time as a definable, separated genre only in the non-royal texts of the "private piety", during the New Kingdom: Assmann, in: *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt*, 68-82.

formed from man to god, without the old intermediaries as the king or *m3't*. It is the will of god that acts directly on man<sup>33</sup>.

During the days of Ramesses III, probably due to the growing ideological crisis, the royal canonized repertoire is ready to accept the new genre, and moves it to the center of the repertoire. Thus a legitimization is given to the new ideas by incorporating the texts into the king's prayer. The king puts himself in the position of "the weak", as a humble human being. Nevertheless, the canonized system does not accept the text as a final product, but as a new productive model open to variations, changes and fragmentation, exhibiting a procedure of dynamic (non-static) canonicity.

The incorporation of the new genre into the older texts of the repertoire, causes it to be identified as a register within a text. We shall exemplify this situation in three prayers of Ramesses III.

#### 4.1 Prayers to Amon as a case study for dynamic canonicity

##### 4.1.1 The "Gold Tablet" prayer to Amon (KRI V, 221-223)

This literary text<sup>34</sup>, emerging from the royal circle is a canonized product of the *Weltanschauung* of the time. It is by genre a prayer to a god that yields to the modern definition of genre (if we take Jonathan Culler's definition for example) as "a set of conventions, an implicit code between the writer and the reader". Each genre contains obligatory elements, that create the genre "vraisemblance"<sup>35</sup>. Here it will require a worshiper and a god, a certain degree of humiliation, and a certain range of subjects.

Upon careful examination of the "Golden Tablet" prayer, we shall soon find two prominent registers. The first contains subjects mostly of mythological-theological order, well known from texts like pBoulaq 17<sup>36</sup>. The language is typical to this kind of religious register, called by Vernus "Egyptien de tradition", basically dependent on the systems of Middle Egyptian *langue* but with subtle intrusions from later phases like the *pr.sn* which obviously is a descendent of either an emphatic *pr.n.f* or *pr.r.f* (the similar formula in

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 75-78.

<sup>34</sup> For this text see also Junge, in: *Lingua Sapientissima*, 48-49.

<sup>35</sup> Culler, *Structuralist Poetics*, 145-48.

<sup>36</sup> Assmann, *Re und Amun*, 170 ff.

pBoulaq 17 shows a *pr.r.n.f!*<sup>37</sup>). In the first part of the Gold Tablet the Ramesside articles are almost absent and the negation is the M.E. negation *n*. Suddenly a rather conspicuous change may be perceived. Starting from line 9 on the tablet (KRI V, 222, 14 ff.) almost every sentence projects many Ramesside articles and in the following lines we encounter the typical "colloquial" forms of the first present *tw.k {hr} rs.f tw.k {m} mniw.f tw.k {hr} swd3.f*, all with the omission of a preposition. The reason for this change is most probably the movement from one register to another; from the mythological-theological register we move into the sphere of personal religion. Hereby not only the grammar is changed, but the lexis as well. Many of the lexical items enumerated by Brunner<sup>38</sup> as typical to the sphere of personal religion are found in this part of the text: *mtn, p3-m33, dmi.k, hn, sndm, dm, di.k sw hr mw, ndm*, etc.

Thus we find the change in register in complete adherence with Halliday's recent definition of a register as "a configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field mode and tenor. But since it is a configuration of meanings, a register must also include the expressions, the lexico-grammatical and phonetical features that accompany or REALIZE these meanings."<sup>39</sup>

Nevertheless, we should keep in mind that even if containing some prominent forms of the vernacular, the personal prayer still makes part of the literary discourse. This will allow the use of the *nn* negation and words like *hnr* which are usually confined, during the 20th dynasty, to the literary texts.

#### 4.1.2 The "Double Stela" from the "Cour de la Cachette" (KRI V, 237-246)

These twin stelae contain a prayer of adulation to Amon, but they differ widely in the grammatical forms used. The left hand stela opens with the sentence *ink s3.k pr.n.i hnty.k* (KRI V, 239,5) and it goes on exhibiting a variation of literary L.E. which includes many M.E forms like *sdm.n.f* (many occurrences), emphatic *wr3.f*, a "that form"- *m didi ib.i* and so on. Only few Ramesside articles make their appearance. On the right-hand stela (KRI V, 243 ff.) the king calls himself *p3y.k-b3k, p3y.k-3ri* (several times) and the text shows many more non-literary L.E affinities, like *p3-i.ir.k, mtw.f sdm, iw bn, i.ir swd3, i.ir.k*, etc. The stela contains many examples of the Ramesside articles, and in its last part moves into an even more colloquial register which having turned to an administrative subject is built of building blocks similar to that of the vernacular. It might be assumed, in

<sup>37</sup> Möller, *Hieratische Lesestücke II*, 34, VI, 4; Assmann, *Re und Amun*, 173 transcribes here *pr.r.n rmtw m irtj.fj hpr.n ntrw tp r3.f*; there is no *n* in the hieratic text after the *hpr*.

<sup>38</sup> Brunner, in: *LÄ IV*, 955.

<sup>39</sup> Halliday - Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*, 38-9.

this stage of examination, that the nouns *p3y.k-šri* and *p3y.k-b3k*<sup>40</sup> are what Halliday and Hasan defines as "indexical features" of a register<sup>41</sup>. As opposed to the term *s3.k*, these terms herald a more personal father-son relationship. Support for this assumption may be found in the short text also dated to the period of Ramesses III<sup>42</sup>, where a change in register occurs along with the appearance of the lexical item *p3i.k-šri*.

## 5 Words of conclusion

This study of instances of *parole* is dependent on the Polotsky-Groll structuralistic description of the *langue* (which is of course not innocent of pragmatic observations even though not always defined as such). We differ from the pragmatic studies that determines, for example "that here a "cleft form" is required". Indeed it is, but in literary L.E., there is a variety of choices available to the writer among several options of the same syntactic and pragmatic order. Here the writer's choice is governed, on the one hand, by the rules of the canonized aggregates, and on the other hand by the poetic preferences of the individual. Nevertheless, during the 20th dynasty the canonized aggregate is still attentive to the changing socio-ideological equilibrium in the Egyptian society, and the repertoire of the period can be safely determined as a "innovatory" repertoire<sup>43</sup>.

Returning to Gardiner's metaphor once more, the Late-Egyptian language may be viewed as a wide and varied forest. A forest where species can be described as individual specimens, and where their relation to their surrounding species must be taken into account. Yet the history of the specimen must not be overlooked, nor the crucial question to which we have turned: why does this specific specimen grow in this specific part of the forest?

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<sup>40</sup> Brunner, in: *LÄ IV*, 956.

<sup>41</sup> Halliday - Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*, 38.

<sup>42</sup> Vernus, *BIFAO 75* (1975), 109.

<sup>43</sup> Even-Zohar, *Polysystem Studies*, 11 ff.

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