

Original article

NEGATIVE AORIST FORMS FROM AMARNA

Osman, O.

Lecturer of Ancient Egyptian Language, Faculty of arts, Sohag Univ., Sohag, Egypt

E-mail: [amr\\_nour40@yahoo.com](mailto:amr_nour40@yahoo.com)

Received 5/9/2015

Accepted 18/11/2015

**Abstract**

When the Egyptian language was transformed from Middle Egyptian to Late Egyptian, new morphemes appeared, such as the new negative particles  $\text{bw}$  and  $\text{bn}$ . The appearance of these new morphemes led to the emergence of new negative forms. The Amarna period saw the change of the negative particle  $n$  with the new one  $\text{bw}$ . Before the Amarna period, there are no negative aorist forms with the new negative particle  $\text{bw}$ . There are only the two classical aorist forms  $n \text{sdm.n.f}$  and  $n \text{rh.f}$ . The Amarna period presented the new negative aorist forms  $\text{bw sdm.n.f}$  and  $\text{bw rh.f}$ .

**Keywords:** Amarna language, Aorist, Negative aorist, Late Egyptian negative particles,  $\text{bw sdm.n.f}$ ,  $\text{bw rh.f}$

**1. Introduction**

The Amarna period attested not only many political and religious changes but also it presented many new features which led to the emergence of the new phase. It can be said that the Amarna period had the major role in the

**1.1.  $\text{bw sdm.n.f}$  form**

This form is the successor of the middle Egyptian negative aorist form  $n \text{sdm.n.f}$  [1-4] with the same meaning and function. Like its ancestor, the classical  $n \text{sdm.n.f}$  form, it denotes the inability or impossibility of doing something or performing an action [3,5-7]. This form is an emphatic [3,8] or nominal [1]. Often, it emphasises an adverbial adjunct which follows it and represents an adverbial phrase which

development of language from middle Egyptian to late Egyptian. Before the Amarna period there are no negative aorist forms with the new negative particle  $\text{bw}$ . There are only the two classical aorist forms  $n \text{sdm.n.f}$  and  $n \text{rh.f}$ .

was preceded by a noun phrase [8]. The noun phrase is the subject of the sentence, while the adverbial phrase is the predicate [8]. Winand supposed that this form had only one occurrence in the eighteenth dynasty, from the time of Horemheb, in what is called by him "néo-égyptien partiel" and "néo-égyptien mixte" [2,7]. The attestation is from the decree of Horemheb [9-11]

**Ex. (1)**



*hr iw bw gm.n.tw p3y dhri m-<sup>c</sup>.sn*

"But one cannot find this leather with them."

But before this instance, this form also occurs on a statue, now in

**Ex. (2)**




*bw shm.n.i shr n hm.f*

"I do not forget a counsel of his majesty".

Moreover, *bw sdm.n.f* is one of the innovations of the language of Amarna [1] and did not appear before the Amarna period [13-15]. It came into being when the new morpheme *bw*

New York, of the general Horemheb from the time of Tutankhamun [10,12].

were used more frequently than the old one  *n*. It appears during the Amarna period in royal (monumental), private tombs texts and Hieratic papyri, It was formed in many instances

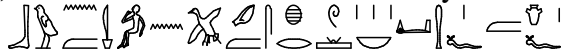
**Ex. (3)** " First instance is from the boundary stelae [10,16].



*ptr bw gm.n.<.i> sy...*

"Behold, I do not/cannot find it..."

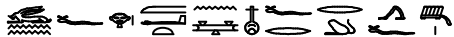
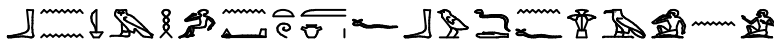
**Ex. (4)** "Second is from the tomb of Meryre"



*bw nm<h>.n p3-sdm shrw nb di hm.f m ib.f* [17,18]

"The one, who hears every counsel, which his majesty puts (it) in his mind, will not become poor" [19].

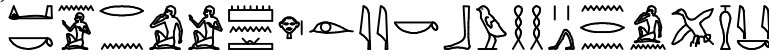
**Ex. (5)** Third instance is from the tomb of Rames.



*bn nmh.n di tw m ib.f bw dd.n.f h3 n.i wnn.f hr mt n nfr r ph im3h* [18,20]

"He who puts you into his heart will not be poor. He cannot say: Would that I have, while he is upon a good road until he reach honour".

**Ex. (6)** The forth and fifth instances are from the tomb of Tutu.



*di.k n.i rn.i mn hr iry.k bw hhi.n rn n p3-hsy.k* [18,20]

"May you cause my name to endure on all that you have made. The name of the one whom you have favored does not go". [8,21]

**Ex.(7)**



*bw ms.n hh n d3mw iw.k rnp.ti mi p3-It n nh.ti dt nhh* [10,18,22]

"Millions of youths cannot give birth and you are vigorous like Aten. You will live forever, eternally."

Moreover, it could be noted that there is one occurrence of the form *bw*

*sdm.n.f* on a letter form the time of Akhenaten.

**Ex.(8)**



*bw ir.n.i mtw[k] h3b n.i hr p3-nty nb iw.i r dd...* [23]

"I cannot act, and (you) will send to me about all what I shall say..."

*Bw* in this instance is written with the form  $\text{J}^e$  which was used on the Hieratic Papyri [23] and docketts [24]. The *bw sdm.n.f* form continued in usage in the nineteenth and twentieth dynasties in all genres of texts. In Addition, it was not restricted to any location [1]. It exists alongside with the other negative aorist form *bw sdm.f*; the

### 1.2. *bw rh.f* form

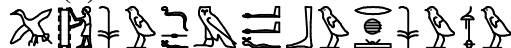
This form is the successor of the classical negative aorist form *n rh.f* [3,7,25]. **bw rx.f** is more similar to the synthetic system of middle Egyptian and it was not made periphrastic before the Demotic phase. Its periphrastic form *bw ir.f rh* is supposed to be attested in the twenty-fifth dynasty [2,3,26], although the writings claimed for it are more likely to be due purely to phonetic reasons [2,10,27]. Although the form *bw rh.f* is more similar to the negative past form *bw sdm.f*, it does not indicate the past tense but it denotes present tense [8]. *bw rh.f* is the negative counterpart of the first

**Ex.(1)** this instance is destroyed



*bw rh...* [16]

**Ex. (2)** the second instance is



*p3-kd sw ds.f m wy.f bw rh sw hmw* [10,16,31]

"The one who fashioned himself with his own hands, whom the creator does not know him".

**Ex. (3)** the third instance from the tomb of Tutu



*bw rh sr irr.f n p3y.f iry* [10,18,21]

"An official does not know what can he do to his companion".

**Ex. (4)** the last instance is on a Hieratic letter



*bw rh.i gm...* [24]

"I cannot find..."

The late Egyptian periphrastic form *bw ir.f rh* for which Winand supposed the first attestation in the end of the third intermediate period in the



main aorist form in the historical and monumental texts or what is called by Winand "néo-égyptien partiel" and "néo-égyptien mixte" during this period [2]. But it must be noted that, the negative aorist form *bw sdm.f* is not attested in any texts from Amarna or the eighteenth dynasty [2].

present form *sw rh.w* [26,28]. The *bw rh.f* form is attested in personal names during the Middle Kingdom [29,30]. In these names the negative particle *bw* was written abbreviated with the sign  $\text{J}$  only and not in its complete form  $\text{J}$  [19]. The *bw rh.f* form has four occurrences in the texts of Amarna. Two are from the boundary stelae, one is from a private tomb and other is on a Hieratic letter. All the forms of *bw rh.f* have the full written form of *bw*  $\text{J}$ / $\text{J}^e$ . The first instance, which is from the boundary stelae, is destroyed.

twenty-fifth dynasty occurs in the later New kingdom. It is dated from the end of nineteenth dynasty or the beginning of twentieth dynasty.

*bw ir.tw rh šri gm.tw m p3-nty sšs3* [32]



"One does not recognize out a little one, but it is the skilled one who is found".

Table (1)

<b>Bw</b> Orthography	Form	Reference	Source
	<i>bw sḏm.n.f</i>	Davies I 35 [17]; Sandman 1938, 5(5) [18]	Tomb of Meryse.
	<i>bw sḏm.n.f</i>	Davies IV 35(2) [20]	Tomb of Rames.
	<i>bw sḏm.tw</i>	Davies V 2(6) [32]	Tomb 14(May).
	<i>bw p3y.f sḏm</i>	Murnane-Van Siclen 1993, 20(K20=X2) [16]	Boundary S tela K, X.
	<i>bw p3y...</i>	Murnane-Van Siclen 1993, 20 (K20) [16]	Boundary S tela K
	<i>ptr bw sḏm.n.f?</i>	Utk. IV 1968(11) [10]; Murnane-Van Siclen, 1993, 21 (K1=M2) [16]	Boundary S tela K, M.
	<i>lw bw sḏm.f</i>	Murnane-Van Siclen, 1993, 21 (K2=M4) [16]	Boundary S tela K, M.
	<i>bw r ḥf?</i>	Murnane-Van Siclen, 1993, 21, K2, X4 [16]	Boundary S tela K, X.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Murnane-Van Siclen, 1993, 22 (K5-6) [16]	Boundary S tela K.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Murnane-Van Siclen, 1993, 22 (K5-6) [16]	Boundary S tela K.
	<i>bw r ḥf</i>	Utk. IV 1971(12-13) [10]; Murnane-Van Siclen, 1993, 23, K9 [16]	Boundary S tela K.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Davies VI 15(2) [21]; Sandman 1938, 74(1). [18]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Davies VI 15(2) [21]; Sandman 1938, 74(1-2). [18]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Davies VI 15(8) [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Davies VI 15(9) [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Davies VI 15(9) [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Davies VI 15(10) [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.f?</i>	Davies VI 15(10) [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.n.f</i>	Davies VI 15(13) [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw...</i>	Davies VI 17 [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Davies VI 17 [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.n.f</i>	Davies VI 17 [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Davies VI 17 [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw r ḥf</i>	Davies VI 17 [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Davies VI 19 [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw...?</i>	Davies VI 21(8) [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw...?</i>	Davies VI 21(27) [21]	Tomb of Tutu.
	<i>bw...?</i>	Davies VI 34 [21]	Tomb of ???
	<i>bw sḏm.n.f</i>	Feet 1930, Pl. 29(19) [24]	Letter on a Hieratic Papyrus
	<i>bw r ḥf</i>	Feet 1930, Pl. 27(18) [24]	Letter on a Hieratic Papyrus
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Pendlebury 1951, Pl. 85(14) [25]	Hieratic Docket
	<i>bw sḏm.f</i>	Pendlebury 1951, Pl. 85(14) [25]	Hieratic Docket
	<i>bw...</i>	Pendlebury 1951, Pl. 89(121) [25]	Hieratic Docket

## 2. Conclusion

From the thirty-three occurrences of the morpheme *bw* in the royal monumental, tombs texts, Hieratic papyri and dockets there are only two occurrences of *bw* with the short writing *b*. One is from the boundary stela and the other is on a Hieratic docket. All the others attestations were written with the complete *bw*, twenty-seven attestations were written and four were written *tab*. (1). All the

forms with  are on Hieratic papyri and docketts, while the other form  were used on the boundary stelae and tombs texts. In the boundary stelae, the classical negative particles *n* and *nn* do not appear. Also in some private tombs, specifically those of Rames and Tutu there are no appearance to the particles *n* and *nn*. The new morphemes *bw* and *bn* which were used in the texts of Amarna are already attested previously. The difference is that these morphemes were used more frequently in Amarna texts than before. Also, these new morphemes were used in the tomb texts, which were rare before and after the Amarna period. In Amarna period there was a tendency to use the new morphemes such as the negative particles *bw* and *bn*. If we keep in mind that the boundary stelae had been erected before the private tombs, it can be said that the officials followed the king in the usage of these new language features. The morpheme *bw* in this period is still an extra element and was not yet combined with the verb which followed it, *p3y* or *iri* which occurred in the Late Egyptian texts. In the Amarna texts there are no occurrences of the aorist form *bw sdm.f*, all the forms *bw sdm.f* are the negative perfect *bw sdm.f*.

## Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Edward Love for correcting my English and to Professor Joachim Friedrich Quack for his feedback on a draft of this article and giving me a lot of worthwhile comments.

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