

# Expressions of Royal Agency: Forms of the Verb in the Old Kingdom Event Autobiography

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In Old Kingdom autobiographies, completed action, of the speaker or of the king, is not simply completed.<sup>1</sup> After discussing the tensing of the speaker's actions in the "ideal autobiography," I focus on the forms of the verb associated with the three terms that define the Old Kingdom "event autobiography":<sup>2</sup> the king's initiating agency, the speaker's action in response, and the king's praise of and reward for such actions of the speaker.<sup>3</sup> While both the king's and the speaker's actions can be expressed in the accomplished *sdm.n=f* other forms of the verb are found as well. Only the king's actions—never the speaker's—can be, and often are, in the past tense *sdm=f*. Conversely, only the speaker's actions—never the king's—can be, and in a few texts regularly are, in an exceptional extended construction of a form, the pseudoparticiple, that otherwise expresses a resultative or consequential aspect ("I am in such state as a result of ..."). It is proposed that these selections of forms of the verb contribute to the expression of the king's agency in the event autobiography.<sup>4</sup>

## PRESENT-TIME RELEVANCE AND LASTING CONSEQUENTIALITY

In the Egyptian autobiography, the speaker's actions in the past are presented as having lasting consequentiality in the open-ended present of their inscription (see, further, Michael Silverstein, this volume, for an analysis of voicing in ancient Egyptian autobiographies as "consequent eternal" reportage). In the Old Kingdom ideal au-

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2. While the terms "ideal autobiography" and "event autobiography" are both misleading (Stauder-Porchet 2017 and Stauder-Porchet, this volume), I retain them here for the sake of convenient reference.

3. For this tripartite module, see Stauder-Porchet 2017, 227–30, 245–50, 255; Stauder-Porchet, this volume.

4. For bibliographical references to the (publications of the) texts quoted below, see Klothe 2002, 3–49; Stauder-Porchet 2017, 317–29; Strudwick 2005. Translations of the forms in the present article are to gloss the analysis that is proposed, rather than being elegant or even natural in the target language. The discussion concentrates on those forms of the verb that are affirmative, in many clauses, and, for the most part, with the verbal event fully asserted. It differs variously from the analyses of the same forms in Doret 1986, 24–27, 61–66, 97–98, 117 (table 2), and generally followed since. A paper with the more linguistic part of the argument is in preparation by the author. For the resultative construction discussed below, see Stauder 2014a, 112–19.

tobiography, the completed actions of the speaker<sup>5</sup> are anchored to an opening sequence that relates them to the present situation of speech inscribed in the funerary chapel.<sup>6</sup> For example (with the opening sequence italicized):

*pr.n(=i) m niwt(=i) h3.n(=i) m sp3t(=i)*  
*ir.n(=i) m3't n nb=s shtp.n(=i) sw m mrrt=f ...*

*wp.n(=i) snwi r htp=sn ...*  
*rd.n(=i) t3 n hkr ...*  
*hrs.n(=i) iwt(i) z3=f ...*

*I have come out from my town, gone down from my district*

(i.e., I am now in this my funerary chapel, addressing you)

*after I have performed Maat for her master, satisfied him with what he loves ...—*

after I have judged two brothers to their satisfaction ...

after I have given bread to the hungry ...

after I have buried the one who had no son ...

(Neferseshemre; time of Teti)

Beginning in the later Sixth Dynasty, the speaker's actions can be preceded by *iw*, a particle that anchors the events directly to the speech situation.<sup>7</sup> This change correlates with broader innovations in the later Sixth Dynasty ideal autobiography: among these, the opening sequence is reinterpreted, or dropped altogether, notably in texts in which the ideal autobiography and the event autobiography begin to intermingle.<sup>8</sup> Without the (full) opening sequence, the speaker's completed action must now be anchored directly to the speech situation in the funerary chapel, a function that is performed by *iw*:<sup>9</sup>

5. Generic characterizations of the type *ink*, "I am one who ..." (commented upon by Vernus, this volume, and Silverstein, this volume), which are exceedingly common from the early Middle Kingdom on, are also found in the Old Kingdom ideal autobiography but remain more limited there given a format that consists mainly of finite forms of the verb (discussion: Stauder-Porchet 2017, 177). Note, furthermore, that the forms of the verb in main clauses in the Old Kingdom ideal autobiography are in the accomplished *sdm.n=f*, so that the speaker's actions are presented as completed, even though they are notionally generic and habitual; thus, for instance, *rd.n(=i) t3 n hkr*, "I have given bread to the hungry," not *\*wn(=i) rd(=i) t3 n hkr*, "I used to give bread to the hungry" (for [apparent] exceptions, some of which have to do with the patterning or poetic form of the inscriptions, see Stauder-Porchet 2017, 171–72, and 172 n. 6).

6. For an analysis of this opening sequence, Stauder-Porchet 2017, 183–92; Stauder-Porchet, this volume; Stauder-Porchet 2008 (with further references). Linguistically, all events are in the *sdm.n=f*, an accomplished aspect and anterior relative tense. The initial events of having come from the places of the living (*pr.n(=i) m niwt(=i) ...*) are in a form—the *sdm.n=f*, contrasting with the pseudoparticiples for events that affect their subject such as here events of directed motion—that presents the events as requiring some further semantic elaboration to yield a semantically complete sequence (Stauder 2016). This elaboration is given by the whole series events that follow (having performed Maat, having judged parties, etc.: *ir.n(=i) m3't ... wp.n(=i) snwi ...*). The whole set of events is thus hooked on the semantically incomplete initial events of having come from the places of the living, implying to the tomb including the funerary chapel on whose very walls the ideal autobiography is inscribed.

7. Stauder-Porchet 2017, 185–86, 192 n. 39, 294.

8. Stauder-Porchet 2017, 290–94.

9. Note that the change from earlier Sixth Dynasty autobiographies (without *iw*) to later Sixth Dynasty ones (often with *iw*) is therefore not linguistic in nature, but directly reflective of changes in the genre itself.

*iw rd.n(=i) t3 n hkr hbs n h3y iw d3.n(=i) ...*

I have given bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked; I have ferried over ...  
(Sabni II; later reign of Pepi II;<sup>10</sup> the beginning of the ideal autobiography)

*ink dd nfr n(=i) whm mrrt ...*

*iw rd.n(=i) t3 n hkr hbs n h3y ...*

I am one who speaks so that it be perfect for me, who repeats what is desired ...

I have given bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked ...

(Pepinakht-Heqaib, cols. 1–2; early reign of Pepi II; the beginning of the overall inscription<sup>11</sup>)

Like in the ideal autobiography, the speaker's actions in the Old Kingdom event autobiography have lasting consequentiality in the open-ended present of their inscription in stone.<sup>12</sup> There are, however, a series of additional complexities in the expression of completed actions in event autobiographies. As to be seen in the remainder of this article, these have to do with what defines the event autobiography, the presence of the king.

#### FROM DETACHED PAST TO PRESENT TIME CONSEQUENTIALITY: FIFTH DYNASTY ROYAL INSCRIPTIONS AND THE FIRST EVENT AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The event autobiography, which emerges by the end of the Fifth Dynasty, has a significant prior genealogy in early and mid-Fifth Dynasty inscriptions that feature the king acting and/or speaking in relation to the official, with both the king and the official in the third person (NN #89, Werre, Niankhsekhmet, Washptah). While inscribed in the funerary chapel of the official, these texts are in fact royal texts, the inscription itself being a gift by the king to the official.<sup>13</sup> In the king's voice, the texts recount highly ceremonial occasions of royal action in relation to the official. Some include various elements of an episodic narrative development.<sup>14</sup> Forms of the verb in the main chain of events<sup>15</sup> are—not the accomplished *sdm.n=f*<sup>16</sup>—but the past tense *sdm=f* and the

10. Chronology of the tombs in Qubbet el-Hawa after Vischak 2015, 230–37.

11. See, further, Stauder-Porchet 2017, 191–92.

12. In general, note that ideal and event autobiographies are inscribed in the same places and have similar voicing and address. In addition, observe that the construction *iw sdm.n=i* (with *iw* anchoring the completed event to the present situation of speech) is regularly used for the speaker's action in several event autobiographies (below, 227 and n. 36).

13. Stauder-Porchet 2017, 35–73; Stauder-Porchet, this volume.

14. Stauder-Porchet 2017, 55–56.

15. As generally throughout the present paper, I concentrate on those verbal events in the main chain of events that are affirmative and fully asserted (leaving out forms of the verb in the so-called emphatic construction).

16. During the Fifth Dynasty, the accomplished *sdm.n=f*, preceded or not by *iw*, is found regularly in royal and nonroyal decrees, and in texts to do with the rightful construction of the tomb (e.g., Merikhufu, Hetepherakhti). In these texts, the actions of the (royal or nonroyal) speaker have present-time relevance, often in direct relation to the very place of their inscription.

*sdm.in=f*.<sup>17</sup> The *sdm.in=f* is a narrative past expressing that an event is in sequence to another. The past tense *sdm=f* expresses a completed past tense with no lingering relevance to the moment of speech.<sup>18</sup> For example:

... *sk* ... *hsf 3ms wn m ' hm=f r rd n sm wr-r*  
*dd hm=f r=f* ...  
*sk* ... *sk* ... *wđ hm=f wd.t m zš hr iz=f nt(i) m hrt-ntr*  
*rd hm=f ir.t n=f ' im* ...

... As ..., the *ames*-scepter that was in His Majesty's arm *opposed itself*<sup>19</sup> (lit. to the foot of) the *sem*-priest Werre.

His Majesty *said* about him ...

As ..., and as ..., His Majesty *decreed* that it be put in writing on his tomb that is in the necropolis.

His Majesty *caused* a document to be made from it ...

(Werre; time of Neferirkare)

... *hr* ... *rd.in hm=f tw3.t=f* [...] *hr-* 'w  
*ihr* ... *nr.in=sn '3 wr* [...] ...  
*ihr* ... *m3 sw hm=f i.sn[=f t3]* ...

... Then ... *and* His Majesty *caused* him to be supported [...] immediately

17. NN #89, only past tense *sdm=f*: col. 1 *rd hm=f*; col. 2 *rd=f*; col. 6 *s'k [hm=f]*. — Werre, only past tense *sdm=f*: col. 2 *hsf 3ms*; col. 3 *dd hm=f*; col. 6 *wđ hm=f*; col. 7 *rd hm=f*. — Niankhsekhmet, *sdm.in=f* and possibly past tense *sdm=f*: A.2 *rd.in hm=f*; A.5 *\*d.in hm=f*; B.1 *dd.in hm=f* – possibly A.4 *ir.t k3t*, A.4 *hpr š*, A.5 *m3.t irrt* (if not, as seems equally possible, subjunctives dependent on A.2 *rd.in hm=f*). — Washptah, both *sdm.in=f* and past tense *sdm=f*: A.4 *rd.in hm=f*, A.6 *nr.in=sn*; B.1 *rd.in hm=f*; B.2 *dd.in=sn*; C.5 *wđ.in=f*; D.2 *rd.in hm=f*; D.3 *rd.in hm=f*; D.7 [...] *.in hm=f*; D.8 *dd.in* [...] – A.7 *m3 sw hm=f*; B.3 *dd=sn*; B.4 *dd hm=f*; B.8 *dd.t* [...] (passive); B.10 *rd hm=f*; D.9 *rd hm=f*. Reasons for the alternations between *sdm.in=f* and the past tense *sdm=f* between and within these texts deserve further study.

18. The present analysis of the value of the past tense *sdm=f* as a completed past tense with no lingering relevance to the present (similarly Doret 1986, 24 with n. 96; Allen 2013, 132–35) is based on two converging considerations. (i) The past tense *sdm=f* is never used with the speaker's actions in the Old Kingdom autobiography. In both the ideal and the event autobiographies, the speaker's actions have a lasting consequentiality in the present. The exclusion of the past tense *sdm=f* with the speaker's actions is then best accounted for under an analysis of the form as expressing a completed past with no lingering relevance into the present. (ii) With exceedingly few exceptions, the past tense *sdm=f* is never preceded by *iw*, differing from the accomplished *sdm.n=f*, which commonly is (thus: hardly ever *\*iw sdm=f*, contrasting with the regular occurrence of *iw sdm.n=f*; this near-entire exclusion of *\*iw sdm=f* concerns all types of texts in which the past tense *sdm=f* not preceded by *iw* is attested, including both Fifth Dynasty royal inscriptions [the present section] and Sixth Dynasty event autobiographies [for which see below]). The distribution points to a semantic incompatibility between the two elements, the particle *iw* and the past tense *sdm=f*. Among other dimensions in a complex functional profile, the particle *iw* serves to relate an event to the here-and-now of the speech situation (as in, e.g., *iw sdm.n(=i)* for the speaker's action found in both the ideal and event autobiographies). This near-entire exclusion of *\*iw sdm=f* is then best accounted for under an analysis of the past tense *sdm=f* as expressing a completed past with no lingering relevance into the present. (NB: Two exceptions to the incompatibility of *iw* and the past tense *sdm=f* are the following, none from autobiographies. The first is *iw rd hm=f htm wdw r=s* ..., "His Majesty has had the decrees about it sealed ..." (Senedjemib-Inti C, 23; Brovarski 2001, 104a, fig. 3b, 23). The construction is perhaps explained as an exceptional combination of the past tense *sdm=f* as an index of royal agency (for which see below) with *iw* to underscore the consequentiality of such action here. The second possible exception is Khentika D.12, generally read *iw dbh(=i) sn m- ' hm n nb(=i)* [...], "I have asked them from the Majesty of my lord [...]" (e.g., Kloth 2002, 211–12), but just as possibly *iw dbh.n(=i) s m- ' hm n nb(=i)* [...], "I have asked it from the Majesty of my lord [...]" (Stauder-Porchet 2017, 197), if not altogether a mistake for *iw dbh<.n>(=i) sn* ...).

19. Translation *ad sensum* of *hsf*. The more precise semantics of the term in this text are discussed by Vernus, forthcoming.

Then ... *and* they (the royal children) *feared* very greatly [...] ...

Then ... *and* His Majesty *saw* him smell[ing the ground] ...

(Washptah A.3–7; time of Neferirkare)

The same forms of the verb, the past tense *sdm=f* and the *sdm.in=f*, are found together in the royal funerary complex in inscriptions related to the above royal texts given to officials:<sup>20</sup>

*ds nsw*

*rd hm=f nis.t n=f ...*

*dd.in hm=f n=sn ... dd.in=sn hr hm=f ... dd.in hm=f ...*

The king's person—

His Majesty *caused* that ... be summoned to him.

*And* his Majesty *said* to them ... *And* they *said* to His Majesty ... *And* His Majesty *said* ...

(Sahure, causeway: SC/north/2003/05; el-Awadi 2009, pl. 13)

In the royal funerary complex and in the nonroyal funerary chapel alike, these royal texts are set in a narrative past that is detached from the present. The distance reflects the highly ceremonial nature of the occasion of royal action that is inscribed.

The event autobiography emerges against the backdrop of these earlier royal texts, after signification experimentation during the mid-Fifth Dynasty.<sup>21</sup> Like the royal texts of the early-Fifth Dynasty (NN #89, Werre, Niankhsekhet, Washptah), inscriptions such as Debeheni (in the first person), Shepsesptah (in the third person), and Kaiemtjenenet (also in the first person) use the *sdm.in=f* and the past tense *sdm=f* and are set in a distant past.<sup>22</sup> The earliest preserved event autobiography, Senedjemib-Inti A.1 (time of Izezi), is transitional in several respects.<sup>23</sup> The forms of the verb reflect this experimental stage. While the *sdm.in=f* is not used anymore, the past tense *sdm=f* continues to be (below: boldfaced, not underscored). In addition, the *sdm.n=f* preceded by *iw* is as well (boldfaced and underscored), for the first time in an inscription centering around the king in relation to the official (in the first person). After Senedjemib-Inti's titles and the date, the first, shorter part of the inscription describes the official's general action in accord with the king's desire, as a past habitual (*wn(=i) ir(=i)* ... , "I used to act ...," 7–8). This functions as a background to the main part of the inscription, centering on an occasion of royal reward for the official (9–14):

*iw rd.n n(=i) izzi w3d sm 'w izn n [h]h [...] hm=f*

*sk sw m st- 'sk hpr 'h '(=i) hr š*

20. Stauder-Porchet 2017, 64–71, 129–32.

21. Stauder-Porchet 2017, 147–65, 225–33.

22. **Debeheni**, mostly past tense *sdm=f*, marginally *sdm.in=f*: 7 *dd.in [hm=f]* – 5, 6 *wđ (igr) hm=f*; 8 *rd.t n=sn nbw (?)*; 19–20 *ir.t wđ*; 21 *rd igr hm=f*. — **Shepsesptah** (not a continuous narrative text, but with past events interspersed), past tense *sdm=f*: 3 *rd n=f hm=f*; 6 *hr hr sw hm=f*. — **Kaiemtjenenet**, mainly *sdm.in=f*, also past tense *sdm=f*: E.x+10, B.x+10, C.x+14 *rd.in hm=f*; B.x+5, B.x+9, D.x+5, C.x+8 *dd.in hm=f* – E.x+8 *in.t n(=i) wđ*; possibly E.x+9 *iw=i* (if not an unaccomplished *sdm=f*); D.x+1 *hpr swt skđwt*; C.x+1 *hpr sdjt*; C.x+2 *hpr swt iwt* – at the end of the inscription, the singular *iw sdm.n=f* in C.x+15 is outside the narrative proper, for the effective and lasting establishment of an invocation-offering that the king has just ordered; while the king's order is set in the distant past of the ceremonial occasion, the official's execution of that order is presented as having lasting effect: C.x+14–15 ... [*rd.in hm=f ... iw rd.n h3ti-* ... , "... His Majesty *caused* that (there be established ...). The count *has caused* that (there be established ...)."

23. Stauder-Porchet 2017, 147–53.

*rd hm.f tz.t=f r hḥ(=i) [...]*

*rd hm.f wrh.t(=i) m 'nd sm 'r.t iwj(=i) r-gs hm=f in shḏ [irw šn] pr- '3 [...]* ...

*iw ir.n n(=i) [izzi wḏ] zš hm=f m db 'wi=f ...*

*r hzt(=i) hr h[t] nb irt.n(=i) [r špss] r nfr [r] mnḥ hft st-ib [n]t hm=f r=s*

Izezi *has given* me a [ne]cklace in Upper Egyptian malachite [...] His Majesty.

As he (the king) was in the place of the document, and as I happened to be on duty in the work shop,

His Majesty *caused* that it be tied to my neck [...]

His Majesty *caused* that I be anointed with unguent and that my flesh be purified in presence of His Majesty by the inspector [of hairdressers of] the Palace, [...] ...

[Izezi] *has made* for me [a decree] that His Majesty wrote with his own fingers ...

to praise me for all things that I have done [excellently], perfectly, diligent[ly] conforming to His Majesty's desire about it.

(Senedjemib-Inti A1, 9–14; time of Izezi)

The alternation in the verbal forms that describe the royal action is principled.<sup>24</sup> The first and the last—the king's reward and his decree for praising the official (*iw rd.n ... iw ir.n ...*, both in the *sdm.n=f* preceded by *iw*)—frame the overall event as having lasting consequentiality. These actions are also the ones that are explicitly to the benefit of the speaker (... *n(=i)*, “to/for me”). They have lasting consequentiality to the speaker because they are the king's response to the speaker's action (ll. 7–8, “I used to act ...”; and ll. 13–14, “has made a decree ... to praise me *for all things that I have done ...*”), such response of the king being made everlastingly manifest through its being inscribed on the facade of the official's funerary chapel. The second and third sentences, by contrast, recount the ceremonial occasion of kingly reward as a short episodic narrative set in a detached past (*rd hm.f ...*, “His Majesty caused ...,” twice in the past tense *sdm=f*).

As the historical sequence sketched above documents, the rise of the event autobiography (in the first person) out of a tradition of initially royal texts (speaking the king's voice) implies a broader reorientation from a detached past into a past with present-time consequentiality. As in other respects, Senedjemib-Inti A1, from the time Izezi, is transitional. The two central sentences in 9–14 are a short episodic narrative set in a detached past in the tradition of the early and mid-Fifth Dynasty royal inscriptions discussed above (Werre, etc.). The outer framing sentences in 9–14, by contrast, display the consequential tensing that would be characteristic of the event autobiography in the Sixth Dynasty.

## THE KING'S INITIATING AGENCY

In the Sixth Dynasty event autobiography, the speaker's actions are given increasing space. These actions, which have present-time relevance, are in the *sdm.n=f*, preceded or not by *iw*<sup>25</sup> (for another, rare, expression of the

24. The alternation also makes for a symmetrical patterning and contributes to a more generally elaborate poetic form of the composition, for which see Stauder-Porchet 2017, 150.

25. References and examples below, 3, n. 36, and 5, n. 44.

speaker's action, see below, 5). Like the speaker's action, the king's initiating agency can be expressed in the *sdm*. *n=f*, preceded by *iw*. For example:

*iw rd.n hm=f [...] n ir.n(=i) n rd(=i) h3 inr nb [...]*

His Majesty *has caused* [that ...] that I have done. I have not caused any block to go down [...].  
(Khenu, 3–5; time of Unis or early Sixth Dynasty)

*iw h3b.n w hm=f r hrp k3t nt mnw=f m iwnw*

His Majesty *has sent* me to direct the work of his monument in Heliopolis.  
(Nekhebu B [Cairo], 2; time of Pepi I;<sup>26</sup> similarly in the later Sixth Dynasty<sup>27</sup>)

But the king's action is also commonly expressed by one of the two forms that were regularly used in the (initially royal) texts discussed in the previous sections, namely, the past tense *sdm=f*:<sup>28</sup>

*rd hm=f h3y(=i) r sdm w'.k n wnt t3iti z3b t3ti nb sr nb im wp(w)-r(=i) w'.k*

His Majesty *caused* that I descend to hold a hearing (of the case) alone, there being no vizier whatsoever nor official whatsoever there except I alone.  
(Weni, col. 11–12; time of Merenre)

*h3b w hm=f r hrp k3t m | hwt-k3 iry [...]/r3-3w [...]*

His Majesty *sent* me to direct work in the *ka*-house Iry[...] /<sup>29</sup> in Turah [...].  
(anonymous, Cairo CG 1433, x+5; time of Teti; similarly in the mid- and later Sixth Dynasty<sup>30</sup>)

The past tense *sdm=f*, in the active and in the passive, is also commonly used for the king appointing the official into some office, implying subsequent action:<sup>31</sup>

26. Similarly Nekhebu A (Boston), 2, 2–3, 6, 8.

27. Harkhuf, right, 4, 10; Pepinakht-Heqaib 4, 7, 10; Iny B.x+2; Sabni II (QH 35e), 1; Djau of Deir el-Gebrawi 10, 21. Also, rarely, in the passive: *iw(=i) h3b.k r kbn* ..., "I have been sent to Byblos ..." (Iny A.x+7); similarly Hatnub Graffito 6.

28. The other form, the *sdm.in=f*, is by and large absent from Sixth Dynasty event autobiographies. This is because the form expresses a narrative past in sequence while the genre does not, in general, include episodic narratives, unlike the Fifth Dynasty inscriptions discussed above (2). Rare occurrences of the *-in*-marked constructions are from autobiographies of expedition leaders in Qubbet el-Hawa, which, significantly, also display other elements of a renewed episodic development (Sabni son of Mekhu 17, *dd.in[.t]*; also as analytic *wn.in=f hr sdm*, Harkhuf, left, 6–7; Sabni son of Mekhu 14; a special case is Qar 3 *rd.in hm=f*, see Stauder-Porcher 2017, 300–302).

29. Split column.

30. Weni, 17, 28, 38, 40, 43, 46; Harkhuf, right, 5.

31. The official's appointment can also be expressed in altogether different constructions that set the king's name or reign under focus. In the active, e.g., *in tti nb(=i) (w)d w m z3b 'd-mr (w)d w m hri-tp nsw rd.n hm=f ir.t n(=i) n rh hm=f rn(=i) m i3t z3 n 'w=f ny wnt h3 nb sh3 n=f w dd.n=f s3(r)*, "It was Teti, my lord, who placed me as territorial administrator, who placed me as royal chamberlain; His Majesty did it for me for because His Majesty knew my name in taking a scribe for his ability, there not being any advocate who had mentioned me, having spoken his desire for a favor" (Hezi 1–2, translation Stauder-Porcher 2015, 192 with the notes there; observe the subsequent emphasis on the reason of the appointment, which is given ample textual development). In the passive, e.g., *rd.n.t m mdh-nsw ... m rk tti*, "It was in the time of Teti that I was appointed royal builder ..." (Izi, 3).

*wḏ w ḥm=f* [*m wr ḥrp ḥmwt ...*]

His Majesty *appointed me* [great director of artists ...].  
(Sabu-Tjeti A.1–2; time of Pepi I or later)<sup>32</sup>

*ink ḥwn t3z mḏḥ ḥr ḥm n ppy*

*wn(=i) m z3b 'ḏ-mr nḏ.t n(=i) ḥri-tp nsw nḏ.t n(=i) smr [...]* *imi-r3 ḥm-nṯr smr nb nt(i) m niwt tn ḥr ḥr(=i)*

*nḏ.t n(=i) smr w 'ti ...* *ḥr ḥm n ppy nḏ.t n(=i) smr w 'ti s 'k.t(=i) r pr nsw [...]* *n ir m s3r n rmt nb ir.t s3rw [...]* *in ḥnw 'š3 'š3 ḥr ḥm n mr.n-r' nḏ.t n(=i) sm3 mnw [...]*

I am a youth who tied the headband under the Majesty of Pepi.

When I was territorial administrator, I *was appointed* royal chamberlain. I *was appointed* companion [...] and overseer of priests, every companion in the city being in my charge.

I *was appointed* sole compa[nion ...] under the Majesty of Pepi. I *was appointed* sole companion, I *was made to enter* the royal house [...]—this has not been done as a favor for any other person.

Favors *were done* [...] by the Residence very greatly under the Majesty of Merenre. I *was appointed* a stolist of Min [...].

(Tjeti-Kaihap 3–7; time of Merenre)<sup>33</sup>

As noted above (2), the past tense *sḏm=f* expresses a completed past with no lingering relevance to the moment of speech. In the Sixth Dynasty, the form is accordingly never used in the ideal autobiography, which is all about the speaker's actions. Nor is it used for the speaker's actions in the event autobiography. However, as the examples above illustrate, the same form is used, in alternation with the *iw sḏm.n=f*, in the event autobiography for expressing the king's initiating agency or appointment of the speaker. As to be seen below (4), the form is also used for expressing the king's praise of and reward for the speaker's action. In the event autobiography, the (active or passive) past tense *sḏm=f* is thus by and large restricted to royal agents<sup>34</sup>—unlike what was the case in the Fifth Dynasty inscriptions discussed above.<sup>35</sup> Given such restriction, the form becomes a de facto index of royal agency in event autobiographies. Expressing a completed event with no lingering relevance into the present time, the past tense *sḏm=f* projects a temporal plane different from the lasting consequentiality of the speaker's

32. Similarly, e.g., B.2–3; Kagemni B.2; Weni, cols. 3, 9, 33; Nekhebu B (Cairo), 2–3.

33. Similarly, e.g., Nekhebu B (Cairo), 4–6.

34. One possible exception is *iḥr iw=i r ḥnw ḥz w ḥm=f ...* (Nekhebu B, 9), depending on how *iw=i* is analyzed. After *iḥr*, a past tense *sḏm=f* is possible (compare Shepsestah 6 *iḥr ḥz sw ḥm=f ...*, “Then, His Majesty praised him ...,” here with an event of praise), thus: “Then, I *came back* to the Residence. His Majesty praised me ...” A more likely analysis is with an unaccomplished *sḏm=f* in asyndetic dependency before the main clause, the event of praise being the rhetorically more important of the two, thus: “Then, *as I came back (was coming back)* to the Residence, His Majesty praised me ...” Regarding Khentika D.12 *iw dbḥ(=i) sn ...*, or *iw dbḥ.n(=i) s ...*, or even *iw dbḥ<.n>(=i) sn ...*, see above n. 18.

35. In the Fifth Dynasty, the past tense *sḏm=f* is found with all types of subject. Given the nature of the texts, the subject is most commonly the king, but other types of subjects are found as well: full nouns (Werre, col. 2 *ḥsf 3ms*) and pronominal ones, in the first person (Senedjemib-Inti C, 26 *dbḥ(=i)*, if not a V-passive, as suggested by Klothe 2002, 211–12) and in the third (NN #89, col. 2 *rd=f*; Washptah B.3 *ḏd=sn*). This lack of any restriction on pronominal subject is in contradiction with the canonical paradigm set up in Doret 1986, 117, table 2, column “transitive verbs,” and generally followed since. Note, furthermore, that in the Fifth Dynasty, the past tense *sḏm=f* is by no means limited to transitive verbs (as per the canonical paradigm in Doret 1986, 117, table 2) but found with intransitive ones as well (Kaiemtjenenet D.x+1 *ḥpr swt skḏwt*; C.x+1 *ḥpr sḏ3t*; C.x+2 *ḥpr swt iwt*; possibly Niankhsekhet A.4 *ḥpr š*; on the case of Werre, col. 2 *ḥsf 3ms*, which is probably transitive here too, see Vernus, forthcoming).



actions. This difference functions as an index of an essential separation of the king from the speaker, the former inhabiting a sphere of his own.

The use of the past tense *sdm=f* to express the king's initiating agency in event autobiographies is common during the earlier Sixth Dynasty (Teti–Merenre). Also expressing the king's initiating agency, *iw sdm.n=f* is documented from the late Fifth through the late Sixth Dynasty (Izezi–Pepi II) and is common particularly in event autobiographies of expedition leaders of the mid- and later Sixth Dynasty (Nekhebu, Harkhuf, Pepinakht-Heqaib, Iny, Sabni II). In these texts, the speaker's action, while still subordinate to the king's initiating agency, receives an ampler textual development than in earlier and other Sixth Dynasty texts. The *iw sdm.n=f*, expressing the speaker's completed action with present-time relevance, is here extended to express the king's initiating order as well:

*iw h3b.n* (w) *hm n nb(=i) r irt wshti '3 m w3w3t r shdt thnwi '3 r iwnw*  
*iw(=i) pr:k r w3w3t hn' t3zt nt mš' 5 iw i'3w shp.n(=i) hr imntt izbt nt w3w3t r int t3zt nt mš'(=i) m*  
*h3p n zp d(=i) it.t tbt p3t nt z iw ir.n(=i) wshti ptn r h3t w hm n nb(=i) hr hr=s*

The Majesty of my lord *has sent* me to make two large barges in Wawat to transport two large obelisks downstream to Heliopolis.

I have gone out to Wawat with a troop of five soldiers. The auxiliary troops whom I had paid (lit. pacified) were on the west and the east of Wawat to bring my troop of soldiers back in peace. Not once did I allow that the sandal or loaf of a man be taken. I *have made* these two barges in accord with what the Majesty of my lord Horus would praise me about.

(Sabni II, QH 35e, 1–3; later reign of Pepi II)<sup>36</sup>

Occasionally, the past tense *sdm=f* can be found alongside *iw sdm.n=f* for expressing the king's initiating agency in the same composition, the contrast being exploited for stylistic effect. Harkhuf's three journeys are thus introduced in a way that forms a symmetrical "A-B-A" pattern (*iw sdm.n=f* – *sdm=f* – *iw sdm.n=f*), possibly to underscore the second journey as the first undertaken by Harkhuf alone:<sup>37</sup>

*iw h3b.n w hm n nr:n-r' nb(=i) hn' it(=i) smr w'ti hri-hb iri r izm r wb3 w3t r h3st tn ...*  
*h3b w hm=f m sn-nw zp w'.k ...*  
*iw gr h3b.n w hm=f m hmt-nw zp r izm ...*

The Majesty of Merenre, my lord, *has sent* me with my father, the sole companion, lector priest, Iri, to Iam, to open up the way to this foreign land. (I ...)

His Majesty *sent* me a second time, alone. (I ...)

His Majesty, moreover, *has sent* me a third time to Iam. (I ...).

(Harkhuf, right, 4, 5–6, 10; early reign of Pepi II)

In Nekhebu, the king's orders of mission are in the *iw sdm.n=f*, like the speaker's actions in response. Contrasting with these, the king's appointments of the speaker are set in the past tense *sdm=f*, as are the appointments of the speaker's elder brother in the following section, in obvious parallelism:<sup>38</sup>

36. Similarly, e.g., Nekhebu A (Boston), 2, 2–3, 6, 8; B (Cairo), 2; Iny B.x+2; Harkhuf, right, 4, 10; Pepinakht-Heqaib, 4–5, 7–8, 10.

37. Note that the past tense *sdm=f* in the second journey can not be dismissed as a mere faulty omission of the tense-aspect marker *-n-*, given that the alternation in verbal forms (*sdm=f* rather than *sdm.n=f*) is correctly correlated with the absence of *iw*.

38. On the complex composition of Nekhebu B, modulating from an event autobiography to an ideal autobiography-like final section, see Stauder-Porcher 2017, 250–55.

*iw h3b.n w hm=f ... ir.n(=i) ... iw h3b.n w hm=f ... iw [...].n(=i) ... iw h3b.n w hm=f ... iw [š] 3d.n(=i) ... iw h3b.n w hm=f ... iw ir.n(=i) ...*

“His Majesty *has sent* me ... I have acted ...—His Majesty *has sent* me ... I have [...] ... – His Majesty *has sent* me ... I have [d]ug ...—His Majesty *has sent* me ... I have acted ...”  
(Nekhebu A [Boston])

*iw h3b.n w hm=f r hrp k3t nt mnw=f m iwnw  
ir.n(=i) r hzt hm=f iw it.n(=i) rnpt 6 im hr hrp k3t ...*

... gm.n w hm=f m kd n `š3t

nd n(=i) hm=f shd n kd | imi-r3 kd | mti n s3 nd n(=i) hm=f ... nd n(=i) hm=f ...

... ink hzy snw=f ir wn(=i) m-ht sn(=i) imi-r3 k3t [...]m-z[...] wn(=i) hr zš wn(=i) hr š '=f  
ihr nd.t n=f shd n kd wn(=i) hr m3wt=f ihr nd.t n=f ... wn(=i) ... ihr nd.t n=f ... wn(=i) hr hk3 n=f  
niwt ... ihr nd.t n=f ... wn(=i) hr ip n=f išwt=f nb ... ihr nd.t n=f ... wn(=i) hr w hm=f ...

His Majesty *has sent* me to direct the work on his monuments in Heliopolis.

I have acted so that His Majesty praised (me). I have spent six years there directing work ...

... It is as a builder among many that His Majesty found me.

His Majesty *appointed* me an inspector of buildings and director of builder/controller of a phile. His Majesty *appointed* me ... His Majesty *appointed* me ...

... I am one praised by his brothers. When I was in the service of my brother, the director of work [...], I used to write, I used to carry his palette.

Then, he *was appointed* overseer of construction; I used to carry his measuring rod. Then, he *was appointed* ...; I was ... Then, he *was appointed* ...; I was governing the city for him ... Then, he *was appointed* ...; I was counting all his goods ... Then, he *was appointed* ...; I was doubling him ...

(Nekhebu B [Cairo], 2, 2–3, 4–6; time of Pepi I)

## THE KING'S PRAISE

Fully developed Sixth Dynasty event autobiographies often consist of modules expressing that the king's initiating agency and subsequent action of the speaker lead to the king's praise of such action (with or without associated rewards).<sup>39</sup> The king's praise of the speaker's action, which can be the object of considerable rhetorical elaboration, is sometimes in a habitual aspect in the past (“used to praise me”); more commonly, it is in a completed past. In the latter case, the form of the verb is almost invariably the past tense *sdm=f*, in the active or in the passive:<sup>40</sup>

39. Stauder-Porchet 2017, 227–30, 245–50, 255; Stauder-Porchet, this volume.

40. An exception, in the active, is [...] *hz.n w hm=f hr=s*, “[...] His Majesty *has praised* me about it” (Khenu, x+2; time of Unis or early Sixth Dynasty). Another exception, in the passive, is *hz.k hr=s in nb(=i)*, “I *have been praised* about it by my lord” (Qar 6; time of Merenre). The former is early in the history of the genre and may therefore reflect a time when conventions regarding the expression of the king's praise were still stabilizing. The latter is from a text that is already moving beyond the classic format of the Sixth Dynasty event autobiography: the text is innovative in regard to phraseology (Moreno García 1998), combines elements

*ir.n(=i) z3b 'd-mr m rk wnīs*  
*wn ḥm=f ḥz=f w wr r ḥt nb*  
 [...]
 *ḥz w ḥm=f ḥr=s wr (r) ḥt nb*

In the time of Unis, I acted as a territorial administrator.  
 His Majesty used to praise me greatly, more than anything  
 [I ...]

His Majesty *praised* me *about it* more than anything.

(Kagemni A.2–3; time of Teti. Note, first, an expression of general praise in the reign of Unis, in the past habitual [*wn ḥm=f ḥz=f w*]; then of praise about a specific action of the speaker [*ḥr=s*, “about *it*”], in the past tense *sdm=f* [*ḥz w ḥm=f ḥr=s*].)

*ḥz.t b3k im m ḥm n stp-z3*  
*rd.t n(=i) ssd 'fdt ḥr 'ntiw ... rd.t ... rd.t ...*

This servant (i.e., the speaker) *was praised* in the Majesty of the Palace.

There *was given* to me a *sesedj*-box containing myrrh ... There *was given* ... There *was given* ...

(Sabni, son of Mekhu, 14–16; mid-Pepi II)

As just discussed (3), the expression of the king’s installing the speaker in function and/or sending him in mission is generally in the past tense *sdm=f* in the earlier Sixth Dynasty and in the *iw sdm.n=f* in the later Sixth Dynasty (with chronological overlap). Remarkably, the expression of final praise and rewards by the king does not undergo a similar change over time but remains in the past tense *sdm=f*. In later Sixth Dynasty inscriptions, this can result in a formally distinct expression of, on the one hand, the king’s initiating agency and the speaker’s action in response (now both in the *iw sdm.n=f*), and, on the other hand, the king’s praise and rewards (unchanged in the past tense *sdm=f*). Linguistically, the royal praise is thus set apart, as the culminating point of the tripartite sequence “king’s order—speaker’s action—praise”:

*iw ḥz3b.n w ḥm=f r ḥz mr n 3ḥ-bit nt ḥr <r> š3d=f*  
*iw |š|3d.n(=i) sw n rnpt 3 r iwt(=i) r ḥnw sk sw ḥr mw*

*ḥz w ḥm=f ḥr=s*

*rd n(=i) ḥm=f nbw 'nhw t3-ḥnkt*

*wn '3 ḥzz w ḥm=f ḥr ḥzbt w ḥm=f ḥr=s m nḥt(=i) r irrt nb [m] k3t nb ḥzbt.n w ḥm=f ḥr=s*

His Majesty *has sent* me to plan for the canal of Akhbit-of-Horus and to excavate it.

I *have dug* it in three years until I have come back to the Residence as it (the canal) was under water.

His Majesty *praised* me about it.

His Majesty *gave* me amulets in gold and bear-and-bread.

Great was His Majesty’s praise of what His Majesty sent me about, in my success in all that needs to be done [in] every work that His Majesty has sent me about.

(Nekhebu A [Boston], 6–8; similarly 2–6, 8–9; B [Cairo], 2)<sup>41</sup>

of the event and ideal autobiographies, and consists of a single realization of the scheme “king’s order—speaker’s action—king’s praise,” projected over the whole text (Stauder-Porcher 2017, 297–302).

41. Similarly, *iw ḥz3b.n w ḥm n mr:n-r' nb(=i) ḥn' it(=i) smr w'ti ḥri-ḥb iri r i3m r wb3 w3t r ḥz3t m iw ir.n(=i) s n 3bd 7*

*iw h3b.n w hm n nfr-k3-r' nb(=i) r hnti-š*  
*iw in.n(=i) kbnt 1 imww 3tp hr hd '3mw '3mwt*

*hz w hm n nb(=i)*

*st3.t(=i) r hnw-*

*nd.t n(=i) smr w'ti hri-hb htmw-ntr*

*wn(=i) hms(=i) r wnm t3 m stp-z3 sk wr st-ib nt hm=f r m33 wnm(=i) t3 r mrti(=i) nb*

The Majesty of Neferkare, my lord, *has sent* me to Khenti-she.

I *have brought back* 1 gyblite ship and cargo ships laden with silver and Asiatic men and women.

The Majesty of my lord *praised* me.

I *was introduced* into the Inner Palace.

I *was appointed* sole companion, lector priest and god's chancellor.

I used to sit down to eat bread in the Palace for great was His Majesty's desire to see me eat bread,  
 more than anyone like me.

(Iny B, x+2–7; time of Pepi II)<sup>42</sup>

As discussed, the past tense *sdm=f* was commonly used in Fifth Dynasty inscriptions such as Werre, etc.—inscriptions that are in fact royal texts. In the earlier Sixth Dynasty event autobiography, the form expressed both the king's initiating agency and his praise of the speaker's actions. In the later Sixth Dynasty event autobiography, the form is retained only to express the king's praise of the speaker's actions. The royal praise represents the culminating point in the event autobiography, as well as being its very root historically.<sup>43</sup> The continued use of the past tense *sdm=f* for expressing the royal praise and rewards, down to the end of the Sixth Dynasty, can be seen as pointing back to such origin of the genre itself.

## THE SPEAKER'S ACTIONS EXPRESSED BY A RESULTATIVE CONSTRUCTION

In event autobiographies, the speaker's actions consisting of active transitive events are generally expressed by a form of the *sdm.n=f*, preceded or not by *iw*.<sup>44</sup> In a few instances, however, an altogether different construction is found:

*in.n(=i) inw im=s nfr k'h hz.t hr=s '3 wrt*, "The Majesty of Merenre, my lord, *has sent* me with my father, the sole companion and lector priest, Iri, to Iam, to open the way to this foreign land. I *have done* it in seven months and I *have brought back* from it tribute that was perfect and rare. I *was praised* for it very greatly" (Harkhuf, right, 4–5).

42. Similarly, in the passive, *iw(=i) h3b.k r kbn hr hm n mr:n-r' nb(=i) iw in.n(=i) ... iw in.n(=i) ... hz.t(=i) hr=s m stp-z3 rd.t n(=i) nbw*, "I *have been sent* to Byblos under the Majesty of Merenre, my lord. I *have brought back* ... I *have brought back* ... I *was praised* about it in the Palace. I *was given* gold" (Iny A, x+7–10).

43. Stauder-Porchet, forthcoming; Stauder-Porchet, this volume.

44. In the absence of *iw*, some adverbial expression is highlighted and sometimes even under narrow focus. The construction is common particularly in the earlier Sixth Dynasty (Teti–Merenre). E.g., in a text with no direct expression of verbal agency, *k.n(=i) r hnw m rk [tti] [ir].n(=i) [...] hr mry-r' i[r.n(=i)] hri-hb hr mr:n-r'*, "In Teti's time I entered the Residence. Under Meryre I accomplished [the office of ...]. Under Merenre I accomplished the office of lector-priest" (NN #93, 3–4). In a text with the king's appointment in the past tense *sdm=f*, e.g., *ir.n(=i) ... m rk wnis ...*, "In the time of Unis, I performed (the office of ...)" (Kagemni A.2; and *wd w wd w hm n tti [nb(=i) ... m ...]*, "The Majesty of Teti [...] appointed me [...]" B.2). With the king's appointment itself in a focusing construction, e.g., *in tti nb(=i) (w)d w m ... (w)d w ... ir.n(=i) zš hr hm=f m-h3t zšw ir.n(=i) sr hr hm=f m-h3t srw*, "It was Teti, my lord, who placed me as ..., who placed me as ... I performed the office of scribe with His Majesty at the very

*sh3.k n=f htp pn n hrw 17 ...*

*š'.k n=f wšht m šnd ...*

I have had this offering table go down for him (the king) in seventeen days ...

I have cut for him a barge of acacia wood ...

(Weni, col. 44–45; time of Merenre)

The form—conveniently referred to as “pseudoparticiples”<sup>45</sup>—conveys a resultative aspect.<sup>46</sup> Schematically, it expresses: a state of the subject; a state of the subject resulting from some previous event; or a past event that has affected the subject, resulting in a state of the subject.<sup>47</sup> With syntactically transitive verbs, the subject of the pseudoparticiples is generally the participant that has registered a change of state, the Patient,<sup>48</sup> an “active” reading being by and large limited to lexical statives such as *rh*, “know” and *hm*, “not know.”<sup>49</sup> Active transitive constructions of the pseudoparticiples such as the ones quoted above are therefore highly remarkable: the event is dynamic and transformative, but it is not the subject that registers a change of state (another participant, the direct object, does: the “offering table” undergoes a change in position as a result of being transported; the “barge” comes into existence as a result of being fabricated).<sup>50</sup>

The textual distribution of the construction is equally remarkable. Leaving aside one instance in the Pyramid Texts, which is singular in other respects as well,<sup>51</sup> the Old Kingdom occurrences are the following:<sup>52</sup>

Cairo CG 1433 (Kloth #87) (time of Teti)

- x+1 (Urk. I, 86, 4) *ir.k*, “I have acted”

front of scribes, I performed the office of an official with His Majesty at the very front of officials” (Hezi 1–3). The construction with *iw* (*iw sdm.n(=i)*) is common particularly in the later Sixth Dynasty (Merenre–Pepi II; see examples above, 3 and n. 36).

45. I keep the label, which harkens back to the early history of the field, precisely because it is meaningless, hence immediately recognized as conventional.

46. Or “consequential aspect” in the sense used by Silvertstein, this volume.

47. In further details: Stauder 2014a, 110–12, 118–19.

48. With a dynamic reading, e.g., *iw(=i) h3b.k r hwt-nhw in h3t[i- ...]*, “I was sent to Hatnub by the princ[e ...]” (Hatnub Graffito 6, 4); with a nondynamic reading, e.g., *iw twt=i shr m nbw šndyt=f m d'm*, “My statue is overlaid with gold, its kilt with electrum” (Sinuhe B 307–308).

49. Beyond *rh*, “know” and *hm*, “not know” and outside event autobiographies, two further instances are *i.mr.k i.nd=k ...*, “I desire that you save ...” (CT VI, 220j L2Li) and ... *wnt b3k im šnd dd st*, “what this servant (= I) was afraid of saying” (Sinuhe B 215). Both are with events (“desire,” “be afraid”) that score very low on the scale of semantic transitivity (Stauder 2015, 263–65). A similar analysis applies to occurrences with *ib*, “think” (Stauder 2015, 264).

50. Note that the following development concerns only such active transitive uses of the pseudoparticiples with dynamic events. With lexical statives (e.g., *rh*, “know”), as well as with dynamic events that are either intransitive and subject-affecting (e.g., *pri*, “go out”) or transitive and passive, the use of the pseudoparticiples is fully regular: it is not restricted in the corpus in any way, nor does it carry any of the additional levels of meaning described below.

51. Pyr. 21 10d<sup>PN</sup> (PT 690) *wd.ñ mdw*, “Command ...!” or “You command ...” This remains singular in the whole corpus of the Pyramid Texts. It also differs from the other instances of the construction in the Old Kingdom in not being for a past event (compare the interpretations of the passage in Allen 2015, 288; Topmann, *TLA*; Stauder 2014a, 114).

52. The list includes syntactically transitive verbs used intransitively (such as *iri*, “make (something), act,” *d3i* “cross [the river]”). This is because the same verb, in the pseudoparticiples, triggers a passive or passive-like reading (“has been/is made of”) elsewhere. The active reading, with a subject other than the participant typically affected by the event, is therefore remarkable, grouping such instances with the others in the list.

## Weni (time of Merenre)

- col. 6 (Urk. I, 99, 10) *dbh.k*, “I have asked”
- col. 10 (Urk. I, 100, 9) *ir.k*, “I have acted”
- col. 10 (Urk. I, 100, 11) *ir.k*, “I have acted”
- col. 22 (Urk. I, 102, 17) *mꜣ.k*, “I have directed”
- col. 30 (Urk. I, 104, 10) *ḏꜣ.k*, “I have crossed over”
- col. 36 (Urk. I, 106, 4) *ir.k*, “I have accomplished (the office of ...)”
- col. 37 (Urk. I, 106, 11) *ir.k*, “I have accomplished (every work)”
- col. 44 (Urk. I, 108, 1) *shꜣ.k*, “I have had go down”
- col. 45 (Urk. I, 108, 4) *š.k*, “I have cut”

## Sabni son of Mekhu (mid-Pepi II)

- cols. 3–4 *shꜣp.k*, “I have satisfied”
- col. 4 *rd.k*, “I have caused that ...”
- col. 6 *[zb]ḥ.k*, “I [have sent]”
- col. 13 *wꜣh.k*, “I have laid down”
- col. 19 *ḳrs.k*, “I have buried”

## Khnumhotep’s inscription in Khui’s tomb (QH 34e) (early Pepi II, for Khui’s tomb)

- (Urk. I, 141, 2), *in.k*, “I have brought back”

## Derkhesef’s graffito in Hatnub (Hat. Graf. 4) (time of Pepi II)

- col. 4 *in.k*, “I have brought back”
- col. 5 *s’nh.k*, “I have nourished”

Idi son of Shemai, Nagḥ Kom el-Koffar (Qift), text ‘A’<sup>53</sup> (time of Horus Demedjibtawi, Eighth Dynasty)

- l. 6 *rd.k*, “I have caused that ...”

As the above list demonstrates, the construction is tightly associated with the genre of the event autobiography: Cairo CG 1433, Weni, Sabni son of Mekhu, and Idi son of Shemai are event autobiographies, while the much shorter and less formal inscriptions of Khnumhotep and Derkhesef are inspired by event autobiographies in their phraseology (see the appendix). Furthermore, fourteen out of a total nineteen occurrences (74%) are from two texts only, Weni and Sabni son of Mekhu, which are also among the most complex and elaborate event autobiographies of their time.<sup>54</sup> In other event autobiographies, more regular expressions of past events, such as (*iw*) *sdm.n(=i)*, are found (see above, and the contrasting pairs quoted below). The active transitive construction of the pseudoparticipial with dynamic events thus appears to be a marked option, with an additional expression of some sort that is itself related to the event autobiography in some way yet to be determined.

To go further, two observations are key. First, as noted, the use of the pseudoparticipial with active transitive events other than lexical statives is by and large limited to event autobiographies. The same construction is never found for expressing completed active transitive events in other textual genres or formats such as letters, decrees, or the ideal autobiography. Second, all occurrences of the construction are in the first person. In the context of an autobiography inscribed in a funerary chapel, this is not a mere grammatical category in an abstract paradigm,

53. For this text, Mostafa 2014, 156, fig. 21, pl. 28, 155–76.

54. For Sabni son of Mekhu, Stauder-Porchet 2017, 275–83; for Weni, Stauder and Stauder-Porchet, forthcoming.

but the speaker. In the event autobiography, the construction is never used with the other main participant as its subject, the king. Nor is it ever used with the king in any other type of text set in the past. Weaving these observations together, the active transitive construction of the pseudoparticipial with dynamic events appears to be licensed as an extension of the resultative semantics that generally define the form. In his funerary chapel, the speaker presents an action of his as having affected him in a lasting manner.<sup>55</sup> (The following are possible paraphrases: “I *am in a state of* having done so-and-so ...,” “I *possess the fact of* having done so-and-so.”)

But this analysis is still incomplete in one respect. If one were to stop here, the extended construction of the pseudoparticipial would be about making it even more fully explicit that the speaker’s actions have lasting consequentiality. This is the case in the Old Kingdom autobiography in general (see above, 1), and the construction would then be expected to occur in both the event and the ideal autobiographies. Yet, it is entirely lacking in the latter.<sup>56</sup> The conditions licensing the extended construction of the pseudoparticipial under discussion must therefore include elements to do with what defines the event autobiography specifically. In contrast to the ideal autobiography, where the king is absent, the event autobiography is all about the speaker’s relation to the king: the speaker’s actions are framed by the king’s agency, he acts upon the king’s order, and does so in order to earn his praise and reward. The extended construction of the pseudoparticipial thus appears to provide an expression to the fact that the speaker’s action upon the king’s order has resulted for him in a lasting state of inhabiting the role of an ever-worthy recipient of the king’s praise:

*rd w hm=f m smr w’ti ...*

*ir.k r hzt (w) hm=f m irt(=i) stp-z3 ... ir.k mr-kd r hzt w hm=f hr=s r ht nb*

His Majesty appointed me sole companion ...

I *am here having acted* in accord with what His Majesty would praise me about in my performing the escort duty ... I *am here having acted* in accord with what His Majesty would praise me about, more than anything.<sup>57</sup>

(Weni, cols. 9–11)

As discussed before (above, 3), the past tense *sdm=f* is commonly used in event autobiographies of notably the early and mid-Sixth Dynasty for expressing the king’s initiating agency. As the above list of occurrences demonstrates, the extended construction of the pseudoparticipial for expressing the speaker’s action is of considerably more limited distribution. In the two earlier texts in which it is found, Cairo CG 1433 (time of Teti) and Weni (time of Merenre), it correlated with the use of the past tense *sdm=f* for expressing the king’s initiating agency.<sup>58</sup> In these two texts, an expression of the speaker finding himself in a state as a result of his action for the king (the extended construction of the pseudoparticipial) is thus associated with an expression of the king’s essential separation (the past tense *sdm=f*: above, 3).<sup>59</sup>

55. This is semantically akin to the cross-linguistically well-documented category of the “possessive resultative” (for which see Nedjalkov and Jaxontov 1988, 22–26).

56. In Doret’s (1986) analysis of the construction of the pseudoparticipial under discussion as expressing a (narrative) past tense on the same plane as the past tense *sdm=f*, the lack of occurrence of the construction in the ideal autobiography was accounted for by the present-time relevance of the genre. Doret’s analysis, however, is made impossible by the general resultative, subject-affecting semantics of the pseudoparticipial in all other earlier Egyptian constructions and texts.

57. On the analysis of ... *r hzt w hm=f hr=s* with a relative form, see Doret 1986, 25 n. 110.

58. In Sabni son of Mekhu, the king’s agency is expressed altogether differently, but the extended construction of the pseudoparticipial correlates with the king’s praise and rewards, see below. The other occurrences of the extended construction of the pseudoparticipial represent instances of a secondary textual history of the construction, for which see the appendix.

59. In Weni, the distribution of forms is generalized even to one case in which the speaker acts independently of the king

**īr.k** r hzt w ḥm=f hr=s r [...] ...

**rd** ḥm=f pr smr wr-r' ...

**h3b** w ḥm=f r ḥrp k3t m | ḥwt-k3 irγ[...] / r3-3w [...] |

I *am here having acted* in accord with what His Majesty would praise me about, more than [...] ...

His Majesty *caused* the companion Werre to go out ...

His Majesty *sent* me do direct work in the *ka*-house Iry[...] / in Turah [...].

(Cairo CG 1433, x+1–5)

**h3b** w ḥm=f r m3' mš' pn 5 m zp 5 ...

**īr.k** r hzt w ḥm[=f hr=s r ḥt nb]

His Majesty *sent* me to conduct this expedition five times ...

I *am here having acted* in accord with what [His] Majesty would praise me [about, more than anything.]

(Weni, cols. 28–29)—Contrast with, for example:

**īw** gr **h3b.n** w ḥm n nb(=ī) r štp ḥ3swt ptn

**īw** **īr.n(=ī)** r hzt nb(=ī) r mnḥ r ḥt nb

The Majesty of my lord, moreover, *has sent me* to satisfy these foreign lands.

I *have acted* in accord with what my lord would praise, effectively and more than anything.

(Pepinakht-Heqaib, cols. 7–8)

**h3b** w ḥm[=f] r ḥwt-nbw ...

**sh3.k** n=f ḥtp pn n hrw 17 ... **š'.k** n=f wsht m šnd ...

[His] Majesty *sent* me to Hatnub.

I *am here having had* this offering table *go down* for him in seventeen days ... I *am here having* cut for him a barge of acacia wood ...

(Weni, cols. 43–45)—Contrast with:

**īw(=ī)** **h3b.k** r ḥwt-nbw in ḥ3ti- ' [...] ...

**īw** **sh3.n(=ī)** bīt inr 300 n hrw 1 [...] ...

I *have been sent*<sup>60</sup> to Hatnub by the hereditary prince [...]

I *have had* three hundred blocks of travertine *go down* in a single day [...].

(Hatnub Graffito 6, 1–2; time of Pepi II)

telling him to do so; here too, however, the speaker's action is linked to the king's, through the general patterning of the inscription and the long-distance parallelism with the provisioning for the royal tomb in the final, culminating section of the inscription (see Stauder and Stauder-Porchet, forthcoming): **[d]bh.k** m- ' ḥm n nb(=ī) ... **rd** ḥm=f d3 ḥtmw-nṯr ḥn' ..., "I *am here having asked* the Majesty of my lord that ... His Majesty *had* a god's sealer cross the river with ..." (Weni, col. 6). The correlated forms in Weni may be contrasted with the more regular expressions in: **īw** **dbh.n(=ī)** m s3r m- ' ḥm n nb(=ī) ... **īw** **rd.n** ḥm=f in.t ..., "I *have asked* as a favor from the Majesty of my lord ... His Majesty *has caused* that there be brought ..." (Djau of Deir el-Gebrawi, 7–10; similarly 20–21; time of Pepi II).

60. With **īw(=ī)** **h3b.k** the regular passive counterpart to **īw** **h3b.n** w (ḥm=f ...).



A further confirmation of the analysis proposed here can be found in the contrast between the two constructions, the active transitive pseudoparticiple and the *iw sdm.n=f*, in events of burying someone in Sabni son of Mekhu:

*krs.k z pn m iz=f mh<ti> nhb*

I am here having buried this man in his tomb to the north of Nekheb.

(Sabni son of Mekhu, col. 19)

*iw krs.n(=i) it(=i) pn m iz=f n hrt-ntr*

I have buried my father in his tomb in the necropolis.

(Sabni son of Mekhu, col. 12)

This alternation is principled, as becomes apparent when the structure of the whole composition is considered. In the main part (cols. 1–16), Sabni has the corpse of his father, who had died on an expedition abroad, brought back to Egypt and buried; he then brings back all foreign produce that his father had gathered, all the way to the royal Residence. In the second, shorter part of the inscription, Sabni is ordered by the king to bury another official and does so (cols. 16–19). Sabni's actions of bringing back his father's corpse along with foreign produce, and his later action of burying another man on the king's order, all belong to the event autobiography semantically. In Sabni's inscription, they lead up to the king's praise and rewards. Linguistically, they are phrased with the extended construction of the pseudoparticiple. Burying one's own father, on the other hand, relates to the semantic domain of the ideal autobiography.<sup>61</sup> In Sabni's inscription, this action of the speaker is not followed by the king's praise or reward. Nor is the extended construction of the pseudoparticiple used. Thus, considering the inscription as a whole:

... *shp.k h3swt ptn* [...] ... *rd.k f[3].t=f in t3zt nt pr-n-dt(=i)* ... *[zb]?k šps-nsw iri* ...  
*ii.n rf iri pn in.n=f n(=i) wd [r] hzt(=i) hr=s dd r wd pn iw(=i) r ir[t] n=k ht nbt ikrt m isw*  
 <n> *sm pn 3 [nfr] n int [ir]=k p<n> m h3st t[n]*

... I am here having satisfied these foreign lands [...] ... I am here having caused that it (my dead father's body) car[ri]ed with the troops of my funerary estate (i.e., not using the king's means) ... I am here having [sent]<sup>2</sup> the royal nobleman Iri ...

When this Iri came back, he had brought to me a decree [to] praise me about it. It was said by this decree: "I (the king speaking) am to do for you all matters excellent as a counterpart to this great and [beautiful] action consisting in bringing back this [father] of yours from th[is] foreign land."

*iw krs.n(=i) it(=i) pn m iz=f n hrt-ntr* ...

I have buried this my father in his tomb in the necropolis ...

*w3h.k inw nb* ...

*h3.t b3k im m hm n stp-z3 rd.t n(=i) ssd 'fdt hr 'ntiw ... rd.t ... rd.t ...*

I am here having laid down all the produce ... (i.e., brought them to the Residence)

61. Stauder-Porcher 2017, 199–200, 217–18, 282, and compare, for example, Djau of Deir el-Gebrawi, cols. 5–6, for the construction with the *iw sdm.n=f*.

This servant (i.e., the speaker) *was praised* in the Majesty of the Palace. There *was given to me* a *sesedj*-box containing myrrh ... There *was given* ... There *was given* ...”

... *dd.in[.t n] b3k im* ...

*krs.k z pn m iz=f mh<ti> nḥb*

*rd.t n(=i) 3ht ... 3 nfr hzt b3k im*

... It [was] then said [to] this servant: “... the king’s order ...”

I *am here having buried* this man in his tomb to the north of Nekheb.

There *was given to me* a field ... Great and beautiful was the *praise* of this servant.

(Sabni son of Mekhu)

### SUMMARY

In the Old Kingdom ideal and event autobiographies, the speaker’s actions in the past are presented as having lasting consequentiality in the open-ended present of their inscription. Beyond this, the ideal and the event autobiographies differ in their selection of forms of the verb, in ways that tell something about the two genres.

In the ideal autobiography, the speaker’s generic actions in the past (in the accomplished *sdm.n=f*) are anchored to an opening sequence that defines the time and place (the chronotope) of the speech situation in the funerary chapel now that the speaker has left the place of the living: “I have come out from my town ..., (only) after I have performed *Maat* ...—after I have ..., after I have ..., after I have ...” In later Sixth Dynasty ideal autobiographies, as the opening sequence and the genre were undergoing various changes, the particle *iw* begins to be used to anchor the speaker’s completed actions directly to the open-ended present time of speech inscribed in stone.

In the event autobiography, things are more complex in relation to what defines the genre, the central presence of the king. Prior to the rise of the event autobiography, early and mid-Fifth Dynasty texts that stage an episode of ceremonial occasion of the king’s interaction with the official (e.g., Werre, Washptah), presented from the king’s perspective with the official in the third person, were tensed in a narrative past, detached from the present (past tense *sdm=f* and *sdm.in=f*). In a time of experimentation, a series of mid-Fifth Dynasty inscriptions were similarly tensed in a detached past, some including considerable narrative development inscriptions (thus, Kaiemtjenenet, with the official already speaking in the first person). Contemporary with Kaiemtjenenet, the first event autobiography, Senedjemib-Inti A1, is transitional in its tensing as it is in other respects. The king’s reward of, and praise for, the speaker’s action are, for the first time, in the *sdm.n=f* preceded by *iw*, expressing their lasting consequentiality for the speaker. But the ceremonial occasion itself of handing out rewards to the official is presented in a detached past (past tense *sdm=f*), like in the earlier texts that spoke the king’s voice.

In the developed Sixth Dynasty event autobiography, the distribution of the past tense *sdm=f* is significant. The form (which expresses a completed past with no relevance to the present) is never used for the speaker’s actions, reflecting the fact that these have lasting consequentiality in the open-ended present of their inscription, just like they do in the ideal autobiography. The past tense *sdm=f* is, on the other hand, regularly used for the king’s initiating agency and the king’s final praise of the speaker’s actions. In being limited to royal agents in the event autobiography, the form becomes a *de facto* index of royal agency. In setting the king’s action on a different temporal plane than the speaker’s actions, it is expressive of an essential separation of the king from the speaker.

In later Sixth Dynasty event autobiographies in which the speaker’s action is more developed, the king’s initiating action comes to be regularly expressed like the speaker’s action, in the *sdm.n=f* preceded by *iw*. Meanwhile, the expression of the king’s praise of and reward for the speaker’s actions continues to be expressed in the past

tense *sdm=f*, as before. In these later Sixth Dynasty inscriptions, the king's praise is thus set apart linguistically from both the king's initiating agency and the subsequent speaker's action, and highlighted as the culminating point of the sequence.

Regarding the speaker's actions in the event autobiography, these are regularly expressed by the *sdm.n=f*. Whether preceded by *iw* or not, this is interpreted as having present-time relevance, in relation to the general speech situation. Yet, in very few texts, some of which counting among the most complex of the Sixth Dynasty (Weni, Sabni son of Mekhu), an altogether different expression is given to the speaker's actions. This consists of an extended construction of a form (the pseudoparticiple) that expresses that the subject is in a state as a result of a previous event. The construction is limited to the event autobiography, a genre in which the speaker's action is entirely framed by the king's agency. It provides a stylistically marked expression to the fact that the speaker's action upon the king's order has resulted for the speaker in a lasting state of inhabiting the role of an ever-worthy recipient of the king's praise.

### **Ideal autobiography**

*speaker's actions in a completed past with lasting consequentiality:*

- *sdm.n=f*, anchored to the opening sequence defining the speech situation;
- *sdm.n=f*, anchored to *iw* (later Sixth Dynasty)

### **Prehistory of event autobiography** (early/mid-Fifth Dynasty, e.g., Werre, Washptah)

*initially royal texts, speaking the king's voice—narrative past, detached from present:*

- past tense *sdm=f* and/or *sdm.in=f*, variously combined

### **Event autobiography**

*king's initiating agency:*

- past tense *sdm=f* (Izezi–Merenre)—on a temporal plane distinct from the speaker's actions, expressing an essential separation of the king
- *iw sdm.n=f* (Izezi–Pepi II; more common in later Sixth Dynasty)—harmonized to expression of speaker's action

*speaker's action upon the king's order* (for active, dynamic, and transitive events):

- *sdm.n=f*, preceded by *iw* or not—completed past with lasting consequentiality
- rarely, an extended construction of the pseudoparticiple, a resultative form—expresses that the speaker's action upon the king's order has resulted for the speaker in a lasting state of inhabiting the role of an ever-worthy recipient of the king's praise—(being exclusive to the event autobiography, the construction would be revived occasionally in later times, functioning as an index of the genre itself; see appendix)

*king's praise and reward for the speaker's action:*

- past tense *sdm=f* (throughout the Sixth Dynasty)—in the later Sixth Dynasty, the only event in the past tense *sdm=f*, highlighting the king's praise as the culminating point of the sequence.

## APPENDIX: BORROWINGS AND REVIVALS: SECONDARY TEXTUAL HISTORIES AND INDEXICAL LOAD OF THE EXTENDED CONSTRUCTION OF THE PSEUDOPARTICIPLE

I have described above the expressive functions of the extended construction of the pseudoparticipial, as used for the speaker's actions in three event autobiographies of the Sixth Dynasty, Cairo CG 1433 (time of Teti), Weni (time of Merenre), and Sabni son of Mekhu (mid-Pepi II). During the reign of Pepi II, the construction is also found in Khnumhotep and Derkhesef (see the list above). Both texts are short and differ from the above in not being inscribed in funerary chapels that belong to the speaker: Khnumhotep is inscribed on a pillar in the tomb of one of his two patrons, Khui (QH 34e), and Derkhesef is inscribed in the natural rock in a quarrying site (Hatnub Graffito 4). The two inscriptions also differ from the ones discussed above in not being event autobiographies: while a speaker reports his past actions, these are not set in relation to a king's initiating agency nor do they lead up to the king's praise.

*hrp-sh hnm-htp dd=f*  
*iw(=i) pr.k hn' nb(=i) h3ti- ' htmw-ntr | ttī/hwi | r | kpn/pwnt | ... zp*  
*iw in.k m htp ir.n(=i) h3swt ptn*

The director of the hall, Khnumhotep says:

I have gone out with my lord, the count and god's sealer Thetji/Khui to Byblos/Punt ... times (?).

I *have brought back* things from there in peace, after I had traveled these foreign lands.

(Khnumhotep, on pillar E2 in Khui's tomb, QH 34e; early Pepi II; Edel 2008, fig. 68; Urk. I, 140, 16–141, 3)

*shd wi3 nfr-h3 z3 dr-hsf dd=f*  
*iw(=i) b3k im pr.k ... iw(=i) h3.k s' rk.n(=i) wi3 m- '(=i)*  
*in.k im mhy m mw s' nh.k t3zt*

The inspector of the boat, Neferha's son Derkhesef says:

I, this servant, have come out (... Eighty men have sailed to north ...) I have come down after I had the boat completed under my authority.

I *have brought* it *back* from there, floating in the water. I *have nourished* the troops.

(Hatnub Graffito 4; time of Pepi II)

While not event autobiographies themselves, the two inscriptions make use of a phraseology that is allied with, or possibly even derived from, event autobiographies of expedition leaders. They could therefore have taken up the extended construction of the pseudoparticipial as part of a more general phraseological inheritance and/or attempts to emulate aspects of the event autobiography. In the process, any awareness of the complex semantic value described for Cairo CG 1433, Weni, and Sabni son of Mekhu was lost (both Khnumhotep's and Derkhesef's inscriptions are very simple and the king is entirely absent; hence also the plain rendition in the translations above).<sup>62</sup> Instead, the construction, in Khnumhotep's and Derkhesef's short and less formal inscriptions, comes to function as a token of the lofty written language associated with the high textual genre from which it has been derived.

Slightly later, in the Eighth Dynasty, the construction recurs in another place where a borrowing is suspected:

62. Note further, how—solely in Khnumhotep's inscription—the extended construction of the pseudoparticipial is preceded by *iw*. This also points to an almost mechanical takeover of the construction.

*rd.k in.t htw-t3w nw š inw m sdr r [...]*

I have caused that there be brought masts of cedar-timber which are brought from *Sedjer* to [...]. (Idi son of Shemai, Nag<sup>c</sup> Kom el-Koffar (Qift), text 'A', l. 6; time of Horus Demedjibtawi, Eighth Dynasty; Mostafa 2014, 156, fig. 21, pl. 28, 155–76)

Unlike Khnumhotep and Derkhesef's inscriptions, this is an event autobiography, including a king's order of mission, expressions of the exceptionality of the speaker's action, and the king's praise (now mostly broken). The reactivation of the format of the Sixth Dynasty event autobiography is remarkable, at a time when the genre had already evolved into substantially other directions.<sup>63</sup> In the text, the speaker, Idi, is sent by the king to Elephantine to bring back a sarcophagus for the king, as well as pieces of funerary equipment for his own father. Could it be that Idi (or someone working for him) was aware of another inscription in which the speaker is sent to bring back funerary equipment for the king, namely, Weni's, one of two Sixth Dynasty event autobiographies that feature prominently the extended construction of the pseudoparticiples under discussion? And/or could it be that Idi, while on mission at Elephantine, saw the inscription of Sabni son of Mekhu, the other Sixth Dynasty autobiography that features prominently the construction?<sup>64</sup>

Some two centuries later, in the Middle Kingdom, the extended construction of the pseudoparticiples is found again. This recurrence is limited to very few places only:<sup>65</sup>

- Hor, Wadi el-Hudi 143, 10 *in.k*, "I have brought back";
- Semti, BM EA 574, 14 *wd.k*, "I have placed";
- Djehutihotep, 2–3 (Urk. VII, 47, 14) *rd.k*, "I have caused that";
- Ikhernefret, 10 *ir.k*, "I have acted";
- Sobekherheb, Serabit el-Khadim IS 161, 13, *ir.k*, "I have acted";<sup>66</sup>
- Sinuhe B 45, B 114 *dd.k*, "I said."

The first five instances in the list are in autobiographies. As phraseological contexts also indicate, the construction is a revival from Sixth Dynasty event autobiographies. In *Sinuhe*—a literary narrative composition that is strongly evocative of the inscriptional genre of autobiographies—the construction is part of a broader set of intertextual strategies pointing to autobiographies and the associated cultural significations. In the Twelfth Dynasty, the extended construction of the pseudoparticiples under discussion has thus become a stylistically high-flown index of the genre of the autobiography itself.<sup>67</sup>

63. For changes during the later Sixth Dynasty, leading to the dissolution of the classical Sixth Dynasty autobiography into new forms, see Stauder-Porchet 2017, 284–310.

64. Attesting to such circulation, it has been noted that Shemai, Idi's father, could be mentioned in the Elephantine archive (Brovanski 2013, 101).

65. For these Middle Kingdom uses, Stauder 2014b, with further discussion.

66. Bonnet and Valbelle 1996, 122–24, fig. 145; Tallet 2012, 1:136–38, doc. 161, figs. 8-3 and 8-15; 2:100–101. Epigraphically, the sign of the eye (*ir*) is damaged but remains reasonably clear. A reading with a subjunctive ("May you act...") is less likely in context. I thank Vincent Morel for having drawn my attention to this occurrence of the construction.

67. One additional occurrence is Mutter und Kind V.10–VI.1 Spruch F *ir:kw*, "I have made." In this formula of uncertain dating (Middle or early New Kingdom), the construction may have become a mere token of antiquated language (Stauder 2014b, 180 n. 39).

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