CHAPTER V

THE BIPARTITE AND MULTIPARTITE PROVERBS

1. Bipartite Proverbs in Demotic and Greek: Introductory Remarks

Bipartite proverbs consist of two clauses: when a proverb contains two independent clauses, it is termed a “proverb with coordination”, and when it contains one independent and one subordinate clause, it is termed a “proverb with subordination”.

In demotic bipartite proverbs, the distinction between independent and subordinate clauses is based mainly upon the usage of clause markers (for instance, the marker ἵνα introducing circumstantial clauses), while, in Greek, bipartite proverbs are marked by conjunctions, some of which introduce independent clauses and some subordinate ones (for example, the coordinating adversative conjunction ἀλλά ‘but’ contrasted with the subordinating final conjunction ἵνα ‘so that’).

The independent clauses used in bipartite proverbs have the same characteristics as those in monopartite proverbs. In other words, they express a statement or give a piece of advice or a warning, employing mostly constructions in the indicative in the first case, and imperatives or vetitives/prohibitions in the second. In both cases, most of the verb forms used are related to the omni-present sense.

Finally, to avoid confusion, a clear distinction should be made between a monopartite sentence whose units are doubled (in most cases the object of a verb or the predicate of a construction with the verb ‘to be’, the latter only in a Greek clause) and a bipartite proverb that involves (at least) two essential units doubled (in most cases the verb forms and their objects or the subjects and their predicates, the latter only in Greek clauses). Examples of such cases are the monopartite proverb G27: οὐ χαλεπὸν ἐπίστασθα καὶ ἐν λόγῳ νευκηρίασθαι and the bipartite one G195: ὁ μηδὲν ἄδικον οὐδὲνος δεῖται νόμου πρὸς γὰρ τοὺς πανηγοῦς εἰσὶν οἱ νόμοι ἔξευγομένοι (the latter is fully quoted in the course of the analysis below).
2. Demotic bipartite proverbs with coordination and subordination

2.1. Coordination in Demotic Bipartite Proverbs

In comparison to demotic monopartite proverbs, the range of omnipresent-related verb forms that are employed in the independent clauses of demotic bipartite proverbs is smaller. These are: the habitual; the second present; some indicative $sdm=f\bar{s}$; the adjective-verb; the sentence with adjectival or adverbial predicate; the nominal sentence, and the cleft sentence. Such constructions are commonly combined, being linked logico-semantically or through a common referent.

Starting with the use of a habitual in the first independent clause [dbA], firstly, there is the case of a habitual combined with another habitual. An instance of this is proverb D101: $hr\;\acute{s}p=w\;tp-n-izut\;nb\;r\;\acute{w},y\;b\nu\nu-ir=w\;\acute{s}p\;zd\;‘\text{All kinds of cattle are welcomed in a house; a thief is not welcomed,}^{1}$ where the constituent clauses are parallel. The figure of parallelismus membrorum is employed here through the repeated use of the same verbal constructions (that is, $\acute{s}p$ in the habitual).$^{2}$

In addition, in proverb D102: $b\nu\nu-ir\;rmt-ntr\;m\bar{w}h\;n\;th\bar{z}\;b\nu\nu-ir=w\;m\bar{w}h\;n=f\hspace{0.17cm}h^\prime=f\hspace{0.17cm}‘\text{The man of the god does not burn to injure, lest he is burned himself,}^{3}$ two negative habituals are combined, with the second habitual playing the same role as the habitual used after a vetitive (that is, translated as ‘lest something happen to x’). This type of logico-semantic link between two negative habituals, however, is not the rule in demotic bipartite proverbs. Thus, in proverb D103: $b\nu\nu-ir\;ps\;\acute{s}y\;m\bar{w}f\;h\bar{l}=f\;b\nu\nu-ir\;ps\;tbe\;\acute{sm}\;iy\;ks\;‘\text{The fate does not look ahead and the retaliation does not go and come wrongfully,}^{4}$ for instance, the two habituals describe simultaneous actions and are simply juxtaposed instead. Finally, it should be mentioned that there are no examples of coordination in demotic proverbs involving the use of a negative habitual preceding an affirmative habitual or two affirmative habituals combined.

Thirdly, there is one example in which an independent clause with a habitual is employed with an independent cleft sentence, namely

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1 Ankh. 20/15.
2 Parallelismus is common in this type of structure—for this, see also D187, in which the verb $\acute{s}f$ ‘to return’ is repeated in both clauses. For a discussion of this figure, see VI.5.
3 Ins. 30/10.
4 Ins. 33/4.
5 See also Ins. 33/10 and 33/11.