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The Poetical Stela of Thutmose III

(Cairo Museum 34010)

Part I

Prologue



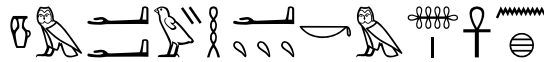
dd-mdw in imn-r^c nb nswt t3wi



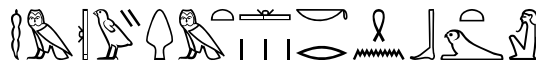
ii.ti n.i h^c.ti [n] m3 nfr(w).i z3.i ndti.i MN-HPR-R^c nḥ(.w) dt



wbn.i n mrwt.k ib.i 3w(.w) m iww.k nfrw r r-pr.i



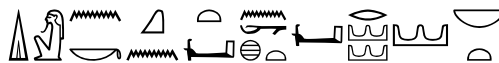
hnm nwi(.i) h^cw.k m z3 nḥ



ndmwi im3t.k r šnbt.i



smn.i tw m iwnn.i bi(3).i.i n.k



di.i n.k knt nḥt r h3swt nbt



di.i b3w.k sndw.k m t3w nbw



hryt.k r drw zhnwt 4 nt pt



s³y.i [ššft].k m hwt nbt



di.i hmhmt hm.k ht pdt 9



wrw h3swt nbt dmd m h[^f].k



3wy.i ⁵wi.i ds.i nwh.i n.k st



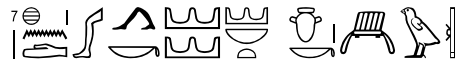
dm3.i iwntiw sti m db^w h3w mhtiw m hfnw m [skr-^{nh}]



di.i hr rkyw.k hr tbt.k titi.k šntyw.k h3kw-ib



mi wd.i n.k t3 m 3w.f wsh.f imntiw i3btiw hr st-hr.k



hnd.k h3swt nbt ib.k 3w



nn wn hsi sw m h3w hm.k ti wi m sšmy.k spr.k r.sn



d3.n.k mw phr wr nhrn m nht m wsr wd.n.i n.k



sdm.sn hmhmwt.k ^k m b3b3w



g3.n.i fndw.sn m t3w n ^{nh} di.i nrw nw hm.k ht ibw.sn

𓆎𓆏𓆑𓆒𓆓𓆔𓆕𓆖𓆗𓆘𓆙𓆚𓆛

3ht.i imt tp.k ssw.n.s st

𓆜𓆝𓆞𓆟𓆠𓆡𓆢𓆣𓆤𓆥𓆦𓆧𓆨𓆩𓆪𓆫

ir.s iz-ḥ3ḳ m nbdw-ḳdw

¹⁰ 𓆬𓆭𓆮𓆯𓆰𓆱𓆲𓆳𓆴𓆵𓆶𓆷𓆸𓆹𓆺𓆻

3m.s imiw nbwt.sn m nswt.s

𓆼𓆽𓆾𓆿𓇀𓇁𓇂𓇃𓇄𓇅𓇆𓇇𓇈𓇉𓇊𓇋

dn.s tpw 3mw nn nhw.sn

𓇌𓇍𓇎𓇏𓇐𓇑𓇒𓇓𓇔𓇕𓇖𓇗𓇘𓇙𓇚

ḥr mss n šmw.s

¹¹ 𓇛𓇜𓇝𓇞𓇟𓇠𓇡𓇢𓇣𓇤𓇥𓇦𓇧𓇨𓇩𓇪𓇫𓇬𓇭𓇮𓇯𓇰𓇱𓇲𓇳𓇴𓇵𓇶𓇷𓇸𓇹𓇺𓇻

di.i phr nḥtw.k m t3w nbw šḥdt tpt.i m ndt(i).k

𓇼𓇽𓇾𓇿𓈀𓈁𓈂𓈃𓈄𓈅𓈆𓈇𓈈𓈉𓈊𓈋𓈌𓈍𓈎𓈏𓈐𓈑𓈒𓈓𓈔𓈕𓈖𓈗𓈘𓈙𓈚𓈛𓈜

nn ḥpr bšt(w).k r šnnt pt iw.sn ḥr inw ḥr psdw.sn

𓈞𓈟𓈠¹²𓈡𓈢𓈣𓈤𓈥𓈦𓈧𓈨𓈩𓈪𓈫𓈬𓈭𓈮

m ksw n ḥm.k mi wd.i















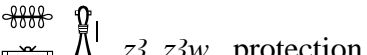



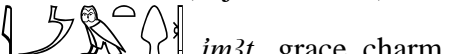








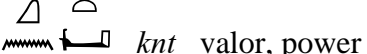











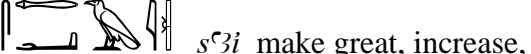

𓈯𓈰𓈱𓈲𓈳𓈴𓈵𓈶𓈷𓈸𓈹𓈺𓈻𓈼𓈽𓈾𓈿























di.i bdš tkkw iww m h3w.k






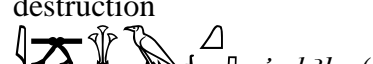
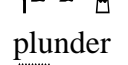






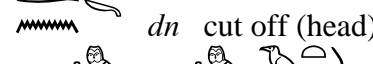
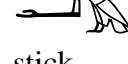




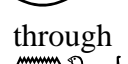

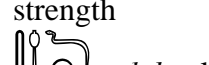
𓉀𓉁𓉂𓉃𓉄𓉅𓉆𓉇𓉈𓉉𓉊𓉋𓉌𓉍𓉎𓉏𓉐𓉑𓉒𓉓

m3ḥ n ibw.sn ḥw.sn sd3.w(i)


Vocabulary


 <i>dd-mdw</i> recitation	 <i>hmhmt</i> roaring, battle cry
 <i>imn(w)</i> Amun	 <i>pd</i> bow
 <i>nst</i> seat, throne	 <i>dmd</i> / <i>dmd</i> unite, gather, total, sum
 <i>h^ci</i> become excited, aroused	 <i>hf^c</i> grasp
 <i>wbn</i> rise, shine	 <i>3wi</i> extend, stretch
 <i>r-pr</i> temple, chapel, shrine	 <i>nwh</i> rope
 <i>hnm</i> (transitive) join, unite; (intransitive) be united, <i>hnm m</i> associated/ endowed with	 <i>nwh</i> bind (enemies)
 <i>z3, z3w</i> protection	 <i>dm3</i> bind together
 <i>ndm</i> (adjective-verb) sweet	 <i>iwnt</i> bow
 <i>im3t</i> grace, charm	 <i>iwnti</i> desert bowman
 <i>šnbt</i> breast	 <i>sti/sti</i> Nubian
 <i>iwnn</i> sanctuary	 <i>skr</i> smite, strike down
 <i>bi3i, bi(3)i</i>	 <i>skr-^cnh</i> prisoner of war
wonder, marvel	 <i>db^c</i> ten-thousand
 <i>knt</i> valor, power	 <i>h3</i> thousand
 <i>nht</i> victory	 <i>rk</i> incline, turn aside, defy
 <i>b3w</i> might, impressiveness	 <i>rkw</i> opponent
 <i>sndw</i> (noun) fear	 <i>tbt</i> sandal
 <i>hryt</i> terror, dread	 <i>titi/titi</i> crush, trample down
 <i>zhnt</i> support, column, pillar	 <i>šnty</i> foe (of the king)
 <i>s^ci</i> make great, increase, magnify	
 <i>ššft</i> respect, awe	

 *h3k* truncate
 *h3k-ib* estranged
 *wd* command, assign, bestow, ordain, decree
 *i3bt* East
 *i3bti* eastern, easterner
 *imnt* West
 *imnti* western, westerner
 *st-hr* supervision, control, command
 *hnd* trod, step on, trample down
 *hsi* turn back; *hsi m* face (aggressively)
 *h3w* vicinity, area
 *sšmw* guide, leader
 *spr* arrive, attain
 *d3i* ferry, cross (water)
 *phr* turn, go around
 *nhrn* Naharin (Mesopotamia)
 *nht* victory
 *wsr* power, might
 *ꜥk* enter
 *b3b3* hole, hiding place
 *g3w*
 (adjective-verb) narrow, constricted, lack; (transitive verb) deprive (*m* of); (noun) absence, lack
 *fnd* nose
 *t3w* air, wind, breath

 *nri* fear
 *nrw* (noun) fear, dread
 *3ht* uraeus-serpent
 *sswn* destroy, (noun) destruction
 *iz-h3k* (noun) plunder
 *nbdw-ḳd*
 (plural noun) evil of character, enemies of Egypt
 *ḳdw* shape, form, manner, character
 *3m* burn up
 *nswt* flame
 *dn* cut off (head)
 *ꜥmꜥt* throw-stick
 *ꜥm* Asiatic
 *mss* totter
 *šmw* power, might
 *phr* go around, course through
 *nhtw* victory, valor, strength
 *shd* gleam, brighten
 *tpt* uraeus
 *bštw* rebellion
 *šni* encircle
 *inw* produce, products
 *psdw* back, spine

 *ksw* bowing

 *bdš* become faint, weak

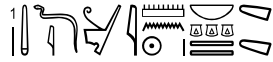
 *tkkw* attackers

 *m3h* burn

 *sd3* tremble

Grammar Points

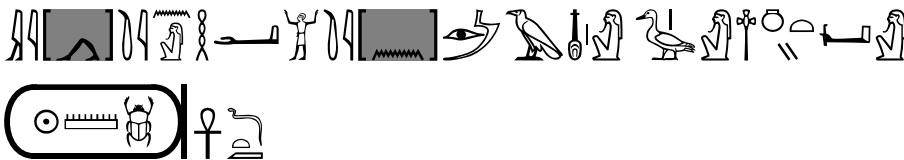
Prologue



dd-mdw in imn-r^c nb nswt t3wi

dd-mdw with the infinitive of *dd* is a very common heading. It introduces the speaker *imn-r^c* “Amun-Re” who asserts his support of Thutmose III in creating the “Empire” with the dominance of Egypt over the world known to them.

This stela was erected at Karnak after Thutmose III achieved this goal. *dd-mdw*, lit. “speaking words” can be translated many ways (or can be left un-translated), including “recitation,” “speech of,” etc. The god’s epithet *nb nswt t3wi* “lord of the thrones of the Two Lands” emphasizes that it is Amun-Re who provides authority to the king to rule over Egypt.



ii.ti n.i h^c.ti [n] m3 nfr(w).i z3.i ndti.i MN-HPR-R^c nh(.w) dt

Amun-Re speaks to the pharaoh using the statives of the verbs *ii* “come” and *h^ci* “become aroused, excited.” The second-person suffix *ti* shows that they both express wish/ command, and therefore can be translated as imperatives: *ii.ti* “welcome!” and *h^c.ti* “be aroused/exulted!”

Alternatively, following Lichtheim, the statives should emphasize the state resulting from these actions; *ii.ti* “you come,” *h^c.ti* “in joy.”

The infinitive of the 2-ae-gem. verb *m33* is the object of the preposition *n*, and it uses here the base stem *m3*.

In the next passage the subject of the statives, the pharaoh, is specified and expanded using the noun *ndti* “savior” (derived from the verb *nd* “save, protect”). Note also that *MN-HPR-R^c* is Thutmose III’s throne name.

The epithet $\epsilon nh(.w) dt$ “alive forever” is formed by the stative of the verb ϵnh “live,” and is typically placed after the king’s (or queen’s) name.



wbn.i n mrwt.k ib.i 3w(.w) m iww.k nfrw r r-pr.i

In the first sentence the theme is *wbn.i* “I shine” and the rheme is the prepositional phrase *n mrwt.k*. The latter can be translated as “for the sake of you,” lit. “for/through love of you.” (Unlike the English possessive adjectives, *mrwt.k* may not only mean “love of yours” but also “love of you/your love.”) The displacement of the emphasis from the (usual) predicate to this prepositional phrase is because the fact that Amun-Re shines is given (and obvious), and the new and important information is that the god shines “through love of you.” Therefore, the verb form of *wbn* is a non-attributive relative form used emphatically, and the emphasis is on this prepositional phrase. In English, a cleft sentence can bring out the emphasis: “It is through love of you that ...”

In the second clause the Egyptian idiom $3wi ib$ “happy, exulted” in a subject-stative construction uses the adjective-verb $3wi$ “long,” lit. “long of heart.”

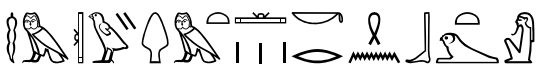
The object of the preposition *m* is the plural of the noun phrase *iw.k nfr* “your good coming” which itself includes the verbal noun *iww* “coming.” (*iww.k* cannot be a non-attributive relative form because it is clearly plural.)

Finally, *r-pr* “temple, chapel, shrine” is one of the many phrases that can be obtained from *r* “mouth, utterance, spell, door.”




hnm epsilon wi(.i) h epsilon w.k m z3 epsilon nh

The verb form of *hnm* “endow/provide/associate” (used transitively) may be a circumstantial/ imperfective *sdm.f* “My arms have endowed your body ...” or a prospective/subjunctive *sdm.f* “My arms will/may endow your body...” (See the discussion below.) The object *h epsilon w* “body” is, as usual, plural and the flesh determinative is incorporated in the plural strokes.



ndmwi im3t.k r snbt.i

The exclamatory adjectival sentence is indicated here by the masculine dual form of the

adjective *ndm* “sweet.”  is the usual spelling of *im3t* “grace, charm.”



smn.i tw m iwnn.i bi(3).i.i n.k




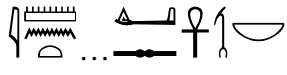
di.i n.k knt nht r h3swt nbt



di.i b3w.k sndw.k m t3w nbw



hryt.k r drw zhnwt 4 nt pt

Here and below we will frequently encounter *s_{dm}.f* verb forms with the same suffixed pronominal subject  .*i*. In all these Amun-Re speaks to the pharaoh and his presence is indicated by this suffix pronoun. In many instances, the verb itself is *rdi* using the base stem *di*. The only *s_{dm}.f* forms that use this stem are the circumstantial/imperfective *s_{dm}.f* and the prospective/subjunctive *s_{dm}.f*. The most obvious choice for the verb form is the first because of the meaning of the imperfect: Amun-Re’s continual support of the pharaoh. It is also a common in captions such as:  *imnt ...di.s nht w3s nb¹* (with Amun-Re replaced by Amanuet, and Thutmose III by Hatshepsut). With this the English translation can be Past Tense “I gave” (Lichtheim), or Present Perfect “I have given...”

On the other hand, some authors² interpret the god’s speech as a prophecy, and consequently translate these *s_{dm}.f* verb forms as future tense. This fits very well with the prospective/subjunctive *s_{dm}.f*. Moreover, in general, the use of the first-person singular suffix pronoun in the prospective/subjunctive also expresses the actor’s intention.

In what follows, without explicit mention, we will interpret these verb forms as circumstantial/imperfective *s_{dm}.f*.

With this note, the current passage poses no grammatical problems. 

¹ Lacau and Chevrier, Une chapelle d’Hatshepsout, 291 and pl. 14 (55).

² See V.A. Tobin’s translation in W. K. Simpson, The Literature of Ancient Egypt, The American University of Cairo Press, 2005.

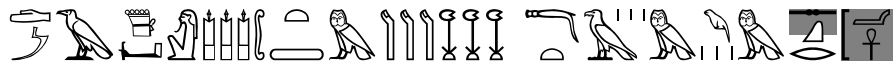
“nobles, princes,” lit. “great ones.” This kind of topicalization is not uncommon for the passive.



3wy.i 3wi.i ds.i nwh.i n.k st

As before 3wy is the circumstantial/imperfective *sdm.f* of the 3ae-inf. adjective-verb 3wi “extend, stretch.”

The 3-lit. verb nwh “bind (enemies)” is derived from the noun nwh “rope.” The pronoun *st* “them” refers to *wrw* in the previous sentence.



dm3.i iwntiw sti m db3w h3w mhtiw m hfnw m [skr-nh]

The noun phrases *iwntiw sti* “Beduins of Asia,” and *skr-nh* “prisoner of war,” lit. “(one) who is smitten alive,” were discussed in Ahmose’s autobiography. The nisbe mhti “northern” used as a noun in plural designates “the men of the north” or “the northerners.”



di.i hr rkyw.k hr tbt.k titi.k sntyw.k h3kw-ib



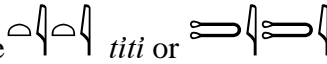

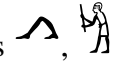

mi wd.i n.k t3 m 3w.f wsh.f imntiw i3btiw hr st-hr.k



In the first sentence the *rđi sdm.f* construction starts with the circumstantial/imperfective *sdm.f* of *rđi* and is followed by the prospective/subjunctive *sdm.f* of *hr* “fall” with causative meaning “I have made your opponents fall...”





The noun of agent rkw “opponent” is derived from the verb rk “incline, turn aside, defy,” and the plural has a peculiar spelling here

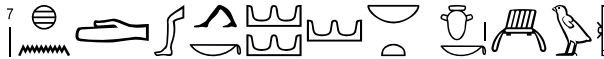
rkyw (instead of *rkw*). The Nine Bows were often depicted on royal sandals and footstools to symbolically express the king’s treading on Egypt’s enemies. (In the text *tbt*

is the feminine dual of tbt “sandal,” and it is better translated as “sole.”)


In the second result clause the verbal predicate  *titi* or  *titi* with either of the determinatives ,  means “crush, trample down.” It is prospective/ subjunctive to express result, and in the English translation “so that” can be inserted” in front of it.


The passive participle of the verb  *h3k* “truncate” is used in the Egyptian idiom  *h3k-ib* “estranged,” lit. “(one) who is truncated of heart.”

In the initial “as” clause of the second sentence the 2-lit. verb *wḏ* “command, assign, bestow” is a non-attributive perfective relative form governed by the preposition *mi*. The meaning of the Egyptian idiom *m 3w.f wsh.f* “in its length and breath” is “whole, entire.” The second and main clause has an adverbial predicate. The subject is the noun phrase composed of the plurals of two nisbes  *imnti* “western” and  *i3bti* “eastern” used as nouns: “easterner” and “westerner.” These nisbes are in turn derived from the nouns  *imnt* “West” and  *i3bt* “East.” Note finally that the Egyptian idiom *st-ḥr* means “supervision, control, command.”




hnd.k h3swt nbt ib.k 3w(.w)



nn wn ḥsi sw m h3w ḥm.k ti wi m sšmy.k spr.k r.sn

In the first sentence the main clause has the verbal predicate  *hnd* “trod, step on, trample down” in circumstantial/imperfective *sḏm.f*. The following unmarked adverb clause contains a subject-stative construction which once more uses the Egyptian idiom *3wi ib* “happy, exulted.”

The second sentence starts with the negated indicative/perfective *sḏm.f* construction *nn wn* using the verb *wnn*, a common way to express general negation of existence “there is not,” “there does not exist.” The usual meaning of the verb  *ḥsi* with the preposition *m* means “face (aggressively).” The verb form is imperfective active par-

ticiples, and it is indicated by the double strokes, lit. “There is none who faces it aggressively in your majesty’s vicinity...”

The third sentence begins with the infrequently used particle *ti* (“while” here) introducing an adverb clause which is always subordinate to the following main clause. The subordinate clause in question is an adverbial sentence of identity (*m* of predication). The more frequent alternative spelling of  *sšmy* is  *sšmw*, a participle/noun of agent, and it identifies Amun-Re as a guide/leader of Thutmose III.

The circumstantial/imperfective *sdm.f* verbal predicate of the main clause  *spr* with the preposition *r* needs to be translated to match the context: “attain, overwhelm” are fitting choices.



d3.n.k mw phr wr nhrn m nht m wsr wd.n.i n.k

The predicate of the main clause is the transitive verb *d3i* “ferry across, cross.” The intestine ideogram is suggestive to the meaning of the verb *phr* “turn, go around.” It is a participle here, and the “great water that goes around/the great turning water” is the winding Euphrates. In a similar vein, *nhrn* “Naharin” is ancient Mesopotamia, the land between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

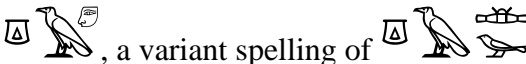

The following adverb clause specifies why the king could cross the Euphrates in victory and might; since Amun-Re decreed (*wd*) it. We have an emphatic construction here. The fact that Thutmose III crossed the Euphrates is the given information, the theme, and the rheme is the adverb clause. Therefore *d3.n.k* is a perfect non-attributive relative form used emphatically: “It is because I decreed it for you that you crossed ...”

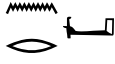


sdm.sn hmhmwt.k k m b3b3w


The predicate of the initial adverb clause is the non-attributive perfective relative form of the verb *sdm*: “When they hear...” The verbal predicate *k* “enter” of the following main clause expresses result so that it is prospective/subjunctive *sdm.f*. It inherits the (suppressed) subject.


g3.n.i fndw.sn m t3w n nḥ di.i nrw nw ḥm.k ḥt ibw.sn

The first clause starts with , a variant spelling of  *g3w* “lack.” Used with the preposition *m* it means “deprive of.” The verb form is circumstantial *sdm.n.f* /perfect, and the strict word order requires the object *fndw.sn* to follow. The indirect genitive *t3w n nḥ* in the adverbial phrase is typical and self-explanatory: “breath of life.”

The next clause once again starts with the circumstantial/imperfective *sdm.f*: *di.i*, and the abstract noun *nrw* “fear” is doubtless derived from the verb  *nri* “fear.” The plural genitival adjective *nw* is fooled by this false plural.


3ht.i imt tp.k ssw.n.s st


ir.s iz-h3k m nbdw-kdw

¹⁰ 
3m.s imiw nbwt.sn m nswt.s


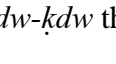

dn.s tpw 3mw nn nhw.sn




hr mss n shmw.s






The first four lines of this passage use the noun + circumstantial *sdm.f*/subject-imperfective construction with a single topicalized subject *3ht.i imt tp.k*. The goddess determinative is suggestive of the meaning of *3ht* “(the) uraeus-serpent,” one of the protective goddesses worn on the pharaoh’s forehead. The subject also involves the feminine form of the prepositional nisbe *imi* lit. “which is on/in.”

By construction, these clauses express the imperfect. The predicates are the causative verb *sswn* “destroy,” and the verbs *iri* “make,” *3m* “burn up, consume,” and *dn* “cut off.” The feminine suffix pronoun refers to the uraeus-serpent.

The literal meaning of the military term *iz-h3k* “go and plunder” as a noun phrase

stands for “plunder, devastation.” The plural noun *nbdw-ḳdw* is a *nfr hr* construction, lit. the plural of “evil of character,” and it generally refers to the enemies of Egypt. Note that from the 11th Dynasty onwards the *nw*-pot determinative in  *ḳdw* “shape, form, manner, character” is often replaced by . In addition, in *nbdw-ḳdw* the plural strokes are replaced by the “foreigner” determinatives.

In the phrase *imiw nbwt* the sign  is a variant of  | *nbt* and so its plural is *nbwt*; it designates marshy areas in the north/east. The phrase itself therefore can be translated as “(those) who are in the marshy areas of the north/east.” Lichtheim translates this as the “lowlanders” as opposed to *imiw iww* “islanders,” lit. “(those) who are in the islands” (cf. the “Poem” in Part II).

The throw-stick    | *ʿmʿt* frequently occurs as a determinative to all foreign peoples. In   *ʿ3m* “Asiatic” it generally designates an inhabitant of Syria-Palestine.

In the clause *nn A* the noun phrase *A* has a suffix pronoun that refers to the enemies of Egypt in general. Therefore the negative particle *nn* can be translated as “without.” The literal meaning of the whole phrase *nn nhw.sn* is “without a loss of them,” and it clearly indicates that none of them were able to escape their fate.

In the last line the introductory particle *hr* is a statement auxiliary and signals inevitable consequence/necessity expressed by the circumstantial/imperfective *sḏm.f* of the verb *mss* “totter” (with the suppressed subject *ʿ3mw*). Written out, it should be *hr.sn mss ʿ3mw n shmw.s*. The preposition *n* here should be translated as “because of.”



di.i phr nhtw.k m t3w nbw shdt tpt.i m ndt(i).k



nn hpr bst(w).k r šnnt pt



iw.sn hr inw hr psdw.sn m ksw n hm.k mi wd.i

The *rdi* + subjunctive *sdm.f* construction with the verb *phr* “go around, course through, encompass” in prospective/subjunctive starts this passage: “I let your might course through every land.” The second adverb clause contains an adverbial sentence of identity. The subject is the direct genitive *shd tpt.i* with the infinitive of the caus. 2-lit. verb *shd* “gleam, brighten” used as a noun: “my gleaming uraeus.” The predicate is the adverbial phrase *m ndt.k* with the verbal noun *ndt(i)* “savior, protection.” (Note that the infinitive of the 2-lit. verb *nd* “save, protect” uses the base stem.)

The independent sentence that follows uses the *nm* + prospective/subjunctive *sdm.f* construction with future meaning: “will not be(come).” The following phrase employs the (feminine) imperfective relative form of the verb *šni* “encircle.”

In the next sentence the verb *iw* is again circumstantial/imperfective *sdm.f* and the following adverbial phrases depict a typical scene of the foreigners carrying tributes on their backs bowing to the pharaoh. Finally, the prepositional phrase *m ksw* “(in) bowing” uses the verbal noun *ksw* (not the infinitive of the 3-ae-inf. verb *ksi* “bow”).

Finally, the preposition *mi* governs the nominal non-attributive relative form *wd.i* as already discussed above.



di.i bdš tkkw iww m h3w.k



m3h.n ibw.sn h'w.sn sd3.w(i)

Once again we see here a *rdi* + subjunctive construction with *rdi* in circumstantial/ imperfective *sdm.f*. The object of the 3-lit. verb *bdš* “become weak, faint” is *tkk* “attacker, foe” (plural), and it is also the antecedent of the (matching plural) perfective active participle of *iw* “come.”

m3h “burn” is circumstantial *sdm.n.f*/ perfect expressing completed action “their courage (lit. hearts) burned away,” and in the following adverb clause the subject + stative construction describes the resulting state: “their limbs trembled.” Note the writing of the 3PL of the stative of the verb *sd3* “tremble” with plural strokes.