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## "Article" and "Determinative Pronoun" in Coptic

Hans Jakob Polotsky, Jerusalem

The term "Determinative Pronoun" had been borrowed from germanophone Romance linguistics in order to distinguish the pronominal antecedent of an Adjective (= *vulgo* "Relative") Clause ("*celui* qui...") from the ordinary pre-nominal article. In Coptic (as in Spanish): *el que canta – el cantador*) both are materially "identical" (m. sg. *p-*, f. sg. *t-*, pl. c. *n-*), though the Adjective Clause differs from the ordinary Noun (Substantive) in being the result of the Conversion and Condensation – Noreen's "adjunctive connexion," Jespersen's "junction" – of an underlying sentence – Noreen's "predicative connexion," Jespersen's "nexus." The *p- t- n-* of the Adjective Clause refers to the 3rd person pronoun which has been selected to become the "pronomen relativum." When the predicate of the underlying sentence was a verb (tense) or an adverb (present), the "pronomen relativum" is either the subject (rectus) or the complement, direct or indirect (obliquus); it must be nominalized by the converter *ent/et* before it can be preceded by *p- t- n-*.

Examples in the Perfect with *p-/n-*:

<i>n-ent-a=u-sōtm</i>	"those who had heard"
<i>p-ent-a=n-sōtm ero=f</i>	"that which we have heard"
<i>p-ent-a=tetn-sōtm ero=f</i>	"that which you (pl.) have heard"
<i>n-ent-a=u-sotm=ou</i>	"the (things) which they have heard"
<i>n-ent-a=n-sōtm ero=ou</i>	"the (things) which we have heard"

The same process of conversion and condensation comes into play with a limited type of the Binary Nominal Sentence. Certain abstract notions like *me* "truth," *com* "power," *špēre / moïhe* "wonder" have the peculiarity of assuming qualifying, i.e., "adjectival," meaning, when used as predicates and preceded by the indefinite article m. f. sg. *ou-*, c. pl. *hen-*: "true," "powerful," "wonderful." In their original status as substantives, all these nouns take invariably the fem. definite article: *t-me, t-com, t-moïhe, te-špēre*. Turned into adjectives, by conversion and condensation, they are preceded by that member of the *p- t-*

*n*- group, which agrees in gender or number with the 3rd person pronominal subject of the underlying sentence:

<i>ou-me pe</i>	"he is true"	<i>hen-me ne</i>	"they are true"
<i>p-me</i>	"the (m.) true one"	<i>m-me</i>	"the true ones"

As these nouns have no need to be nominalized, the result looks superficially like an ordinary substantive with simply another article than the "usual" one. The difference between the two uses of *p- t- n-* goes deep enough to necessitate a special term for the pre-adjectival set. "Determinative Pronoun" is, however, unsatisfactory. One of its defects is that it runs the risk of being pilloried as a glaring case of *lucus a non lucendo*, especially since "determinator pronoun" has recently been used to replace time-honoured "article." Perhaps "Pronominal Antecedent," though somewhat long, will do.

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