Remarks on loan verb integration into Coptic

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1 Introduction

When we meet Coptic in the written sources for the first time (in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} – 4\textsuperscript{th} c.), it already abounds with loan words coming from Greek. On a rough estimate the proportion of words of Greek origin in Coptic is about 20 percent (Kasser 1991: 217), allowing that this ratio may vary considerably depending on the register in which the individual texts were written or on the dialect involved. Foreign lexical influence of a larger scale than ever before can be dated back to the Ptolemaic period in Egypt, but as the Demotic texts are characterized by a strong conservatism and a stiff resistance to such influences, it remained invisible till the Coptic era.\footnote{For a detailed description of the problem with respect to the written registers of Demotic and its relation to linguistic reality, see Ray (1994a: 253-261), Ray (1994b: 59-64), Clarysse (1987).}

Therefore the actual circumstances under which the borrowing of Greek words took place remain mostly unrevealed. How Greek words got integrated into the Egyptian grammatical system may only be inferred from the patterns in which they are used in Coptic. Analyzing the nature of the contact between the two languages and its sociolinguistic aspects in the Ptolemaic and Roman Period does not fall within the scope of this paper, but the reader is referred to \textit{inter alia} Bagnall (1993: 236-237), Thompson (1994: 70-82), Verbeeck (1991: 1166), Fewster (2002), Lewis (1993: 276-280) and Sidarus (2008) for a summary thereof.

This study will address the more concrete yet much debated issue of loan verb integration into Coptic, reflecting on the observations already made in this field as well as making some additional remarks about the mechanism of verbal borrowing from both a syntactic and a morphological point of view.\footnote{The issue has been partly examined in my paper for the 10\textsuperscript{th} International Congress of Egyptologist (22-29 May 2008, Rhodes), thus some of my assumptions were put into shape a few years ago but will be repeated here since the proceedings volume is still expected to appear at the time of the completion of this manuscript. I owe special thanks to Andrea Hasznos whose M.A. thesis first directed my attention to the linguistic aspects of the contact between Greek and Coptic, and to Sebastian Richter for inviting me to contribute in this volume. In addition, I am very grateful to my colleague, Vera Hegedûs for checking my English.} Two aspects of the question will be profoundly treated here: my aim is, firstly, to determine the model form of the borrowed verbal elements, which is a matter of old-standing debate in Coptic studies (the infinitive vs. imperative discussion); and secondly, to investigate the assumption whether the dialectal variation that has long been observed with respect to the borrowing strategies might reflect a diachronic change or a kind of grammaticalization process. The analysis, at several points, will be based on the conviction that it is the grammar of the target language that conditions in what form the loanword is to be integrated into the new linguistic environment. I pursue this principle, even if the evidence for more than one borrowing strategy in one and the same language suggests that the actual result cannot be directly predicted from the structures of the languages in contact, as it has been pointed out by Wichmann and Wohlgemuth (2008: 89).
Borrowing from Greek concerns all the lexical categories as well as, and more remarkably, some functional elements, such as prepositions, discourse particles and conjunction words. Verbal borrowing, however, is of particular interest since the morphological system of the two languages in contact is fundamentally different. As a consequence of the analytic nature of Coptic sentence patterns, Greek loan verbs can occur only in a single and unvarying form.

The verbal part of any Coptic conjugation pattern is traditionally referred to as *infinitive*, but essentially for historical considerations. Admittedly, Coptic patterns originate from various periphrastic constructions that really involved the infinitival form of the verbs, but this diachronic fact is of no relevance by the time of the Coptic stage, when one can no longer detect a true finite vs. non-finite opposition from a morphological point of view (cf. Egedi 2007). Moreover, if the Coptic verbal slot were reserved for infinitives, it would be logical to assume that Greek loan verbs were adopted in their infinitival form as well. What we see instead is that the varieties of Coptic employ one of two main strategies: either they adopt a verb form which is slightly different from the Greek infinitive and resembles the imperative more, or they adopt the Greek infinitive but at the same time use an auxiliary verb to accommodate the foreign element. These strategies may be dubbed Sahidic and Bohairic strategy, respectively, after the two major literary dialects in which they have long been observed.

The difference between the two integration strategies has been generally recognized, but opinions differ concerning the form of the loan verbs in Sahidic. In the Sahidic dialect, the morphological form of the loan verbs seems to be the *imperfectum imperativi activi* both in *verba vocalia* and *contracta* (Lefort 1950:68; see also Stern 1880:§331). Verbs ending in -μι are integrated into the thematic inflectional classes, while deponent and middle verbs are treated as active ones.

(1) **πιστεύει**  
**πιστεύειν**  
‘believe’

**πλανά**  
**πλανάν**  
‘lead astray’

**αἰτεί**  
**αἰτεῖν**  
‘ask’

**σταύρογ**  
**σταυροῦν**  
‘crucify’

**παραδίαιογ**  
**παραδίδοιαί**  
‘deliver’

**ἀσπάζει**  
**ἀσπάζεσθαι**  
‘greet’

The Bohairic dialect adopts the Greek infinitival form (as clearly manifested by the endings *-ιν, -αί, -οιν* and *-εοι*), but always combined with the *status nominalis* of the Coptic verb *ιπτ* ‘to do’ (*επ*—):

(2) **ἐπ-επιστοικία**  
**ἐπιστοικία**  
‘desire’

**ἐπ-κτίτι**  
**κτίτι**  
‘ask’

**ἐπ-ἀσπάζεσοι**  
**ἀσπάζεσθαι**  
‘greet’

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3 In a series of articles (in *BSAC* from 1986 to 2001) W. A. Girgis extensively studies the question according to the different lexical categories and word classes.

4 As far as I know, these appellatives are used for the first time in the paper of Eitan Grossmann’s (2010)

5 The disappearance of the athematic conjugation in Greek is one of the basic characteristics of the Hellenistic period (Papanastassiou 2007: 615). For the remodeling of the verb stem in general see Gignac (1981: 271-319).

6 This is true as long as the New Testament is concerned. In documentary texts they can have middle infinitive forms (Girgis 2001: 69-70 §188; Förster 2002: xviii).

7 For a sample of loan verbs in both dialects, consult first of all Böhlig 1954: 129-140; see also Stern 1880: §331; Hopfner 1918: 20-23; Steindorff 1951: §284, and Girgis 2001.
According to many authors, the loan verbs in Sahidic only have the *appearance* of imperatives but in reality they are infinitives too. Steindorff (1951:§284) proposes that the infinitives were adopted in their late form. In this period the word final -ν was easily dropped, and the ending -ευν could be replaced by -εν. The same view is held by Alexander Böhlig (1954: 46-47). Not only is this explanation problematic from a phonological point of view, but there are also some additional arguments for the forms to be imperative. Irregular (and as such, unmistakable) imperative forms appear in Sahidic (e.g. κρᾶσκαι for the verb κρᾶσκαι ‘use’), which hardly fits into a theory of infinitive-insertion. In addition, there exist a few exceptional texts where word accent is marked in writing. These data confirm that accentuation of the borrowed verbs corresponds to that of the 2nd person imperative form in Greek (Till 1951:18-19). For a summary and general discussion of the problem one may consult the introductory chapter of Hans Förster’s *Wörterbuch* (2002: xv-xxi.). He himself tends to prefer the infinitive theory (in favour of Alexander Böhlig), but the arguments he adds to the discussion do not seem to be strong enough. For instance, he argues against the imperative form by raising the following question: considering that the Coptic derivational affix Φη normally combines with the infinitive of the Coptic verb, why should one assume that in case of a Greek loan verb it is followed by an imperative (Förster 2002: xx)? This line of reasoning leads us back to the issue already mentioned at the beginning of this section. The so called ‘infinitive’ in Coptic is a kind of citation form rather than an infinitive. The native verb form appearing after Φη is the same form that appears in the verbal slot of any conjugation. Once a Greek verb got integrated into the Egyptian lexicon, it behaved the same way as the verbs of Egyptian origin in all the syntactic contexts. When debating the form of a Greek loan verb, it is more about the morphological shape of the *model verb* in the source language than the function it fulfills in the system of the target language. Last but not least, one ought to account for the systematic correlation between Greek inflection classes and the endings that appear in Coptic. Contracted verbs in -ευω show the ending -ει in Coptic, while non-contracted verbs in -ω have the ending -ε, which perfectly correspond to the imperative present active endings in Greek. Simply dropping the final -ν of the infinitive would not have distinguished these classes, and similarly, a hypothetical change of the infinitival ending from -ευν to -ε (ευν > εν > ε) would have confused these inflectional groups.

Recently, an alternative solution has been provided brushing aside the conflict between the infinitive and the imperative. In his review article Ariel Shisha-Halevy (2003:457) stresses that “in Sahidic, unlike many other dialects, we have (...) not the Greek morphological infinitive, but a Greek zero-affix form for the Coptic structural (syntactic) infinitival entity”. A similar view is held by Chris Reintges (2004:39), who claims that Greek verbs are borrowed into Coptic as ‘bare’ (i.e. uninflected) stems. He rejects the imperative approach since “imperatival verb forms have an intrinsic addressee-related reference, and are therefore construed with an implicit or explicit second person subject pronoun.” (Reintges 2005:§5.3) Typological research, however, demonstrated that imperatives as model verbs in borrowing are not unusual (Wichmann – Wohlgemuth 2008: 99 and Wohlgemuth 2009: 79-80). In many languages, imperatives are short and morphologically not complex. The typological studies cited above also point out that the input forms show a great variation across languages, in some special cases they can even be verbs inflected for person or tense/aspect. What seems to be more relevant in the course of form selection is the high frequency and the relative prominence of the possible candidates in the sense that they should be easily identified.

Chris Reintges (2001: 1976-207 and 2005: §5.3) claims that Copto-Greek verbs have the morphological structure of nouns and, as a consequence, bear a nominal syntax. That is why

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8 But see the review of Böhlig’s monography by Lefort in *Muséon* 67 (1954) 400-403.
they must be inserted in the complement position of a light verb meaning ‘to do’. Light verbs have minimal semantics, and it is their nominal complement that imports the lexical meaning. According to Reintges, in Bohairic this light verb is overt, while in Sahidic it is a covert one.\textsuperscript{10}

A weak point of this explanation is that loan verbs were not equally felt as nominal in the two dialects. One should not ignore the difference between the input forms. In Bohairic, loan verbs were always treated syntactically as nouns and an auxiliary was needed to accommodate them in all the possible environments and sentence patterns. This was not the case, however, in Sahidic, which proves to be consistent in not applying a light verb, and this fact is supposedly not independent of the form this dialect borrowed. It should be noted that in some cases Sahidic adopted the Greek aorist (both as imperative and as abstract forms).\textsuperscript{11} Forms deriving from a Greek aorist are far more unusual in Bohairic, which seems to confirm that the Bohairic dialect really treated the loan verbs as nouns.

In the next section, some further dialects will be examined to see the distribution of integration strategies, and I will argue that some kind of correlation may be observed between the input forms and the accommodation strategies. This correlation will, however, be unidirectional, i.e. if loan verbs are perceived as nominal elements (e.g. as infinitives in the donor language), the direct insertion strategy is not available for them to function as Coptic verbs. Nevertheless, it does not mean that a more verb-like element rejects a light verb strategy when borrowing takes place. In some dialects, loan verbs look like the Greek imperative but are inserted with the help of an auxiliary as illustrated in the Bohairic strategy above.

The adoption of an imperative form is not entirely unnatural if we look at the phenomenon from an Egyptian point of view. Assuming that the structure of the borrowing language is more likely to determine how loan verbs are integrated, the Greek imperative as a model verb is not less eligible than, say, the infinitive if we consider the morpho-syntactic properties of Coptic. In this language, one and the same verb form (traditionally referred to as the ‘infinitive’) occurred in all the analytically structured conjugation patterns. In the absence of real finite vs. non-finite opposition, however, a verb in Coptic (and probably also in pre-Coptic) was no longer perceived by the speakers as a genuine infinitive but rather as a sort of basic (lexical) form of the verb which appeared sentence initially in its most neutral occurrence (with no conjugation base or personal pronoun attached) when it functioned as an imperative.\textsuperscript{12} In the period directly preceding the Coptic era, not independently of the prevalence of periphrastic constructions, the imperative as a morphological category had also started to decline, as it is clearly shown by cases in Roman Demotic when the morphologically marked imperative forms (mistakenly) also appear in positions reserved for ‘infinitives’.\textsuperscript{13} In view of these facts, we should not reprobate Coptic speakers for considering the imperative (a morphologically simple and sentence initial form in Greek as well) as an ideal basic form of the verb when borrowing new words from a foreign language.

The possibility of the borrowing of a root-like form or abstract form (cf. Wohlgemuth 2009: 76) rather than an imperative is not to be discarded. Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that since the ‘abstract form’ is claimed to be a stem that actually never occurs in the grammatical system of the donor language, its shape being a mere abstraction, this mechanism

\textsuperscript{10} The term ‘light verb’ is used by Reintges in terms of Grimshaw – Mester (1988), which is not to be confused with the light verb strategy of Wichmann – Wohlgemuth (2008). They declare to employ the term in a more traditional way (2008: 91), which excludes a hidden or covert light verb in their analysis, the latter being a theoretical construct in generative syntax.

\textsuperscript{11} For a good selection of examples, see Girgis 2001: 75-79 §§197-198.

\textsuperscript{12} The ‘infinitive’ was the usual form to express the imperative except for a few irregular verbs, which are marked morphologically as imperatives. These verbs are listed in Layton (2000 §366).

\textsuperscript{13} Cf. Edgerton (1932: 64). The fuzziness of category boundaries can be observed in Greek as well, where the infinitive was used to express an imperative function occasionally (Mandilaras 1973: §756).
of borrowing requires a full understanding of the morphological structure of the source language on the part of the speakers and thus presumes an intensive language contact and a high degree of bilingualism.

3 Diachronic aspects of Coptic verbal borrowing

3.1 Distribution of strategies in the minor dialects

So far we have seen the strategies of loan verb integration in the two major dialects. The divergence has been determined by two main features: i) whether the dialect needs an auxiliary to accommodate the loan verb (light verb strategy vs. direct insertion), and ii) a systematic difference in the form of the borrowed items has also been observed (infinitive vs. imperative). The distinction between what we borrow (the form of the model verb) on the one hand, and how we borrow (integration/accommodation strategy) on the other will prove to be a helpful approach to the problem when turning our attention to the minor dialects.

In Till’s Dialektgrammatik (1961b: §187) the following distribution is offered. (The arrangement in the chart below and the description of the patterns in the third column are mine. Note that the form of the auxiliary verb ἔπ- varies among dialects: in Akhmimic and Lycopolitan (here marked as A2) its shape is ἐ-, in Fayyumic ἐλ-)

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialect</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>πίστευε</td>
<td>Ø imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A, A2</td>
<td>ἱπίστευε</td>
<td>AUX + imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>εἰπίστευε(ἐ)IN</td>
<td>AUX + infinitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>εἴπίστευεIN</td>
<td>AUX + infinitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Walter Till’s list of dialects is far from being complete; neither does he mention the variation that can be observed within a dialect. A more fine-grained classification can be found in the encyclopedia entry by Rodolphe Kasser (1991: 220; again, the table format is my conversion).

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialect</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S, M, W, F56</td>
<td>Copto-Greek verbs are fully felt as verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A, L, B</td>
<td>Copto-Greek verbs are preceded by an auxiliary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V, P</td>
<td>Variation: a majority of cases with auxiliary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Variation: 50% with auxiliary, 50% without</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summarizing the data available so far, logically four possible patterns arise along two parameters. The parameters are the input form on the one hand, and the integration strategy by means of which this form was borrowed on the other. In reality, only three types of combination are attested throughout the textual sources, the infinitival form apparently is not accessible without a light-verb.

### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Light verb strategy</td>
<td>AUX + infinitive</td>
<td>AUX + imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct insertion</td>
<td>* Ø infinitive</td>
<td>Ø imperative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, more than one pattern will turn up in a significant number of dialectal varieties.

The insightful work of Eitan Grossmann on dialectal variation (2009) encouraged me as well to have a closer look at these interesting data. The manuscripts I consulted to check the distribution of patterns both among and within the dialects had been chosen purposely inasmuch as they are dated not later than to the 5th century. Accordingly, I ignored classical Fayyumic (F5) and classical Bohairic (B5). My results were slightly different from those in Grossmann (2009) with respect to the data in two dialects (F4 and V4) and this fact, consequently, modified the overall picture as to which patterns can co-occur in the same language variety (see Table 4 below). I also collected a number of examples myself, but of course in most of the cases I used the comments and indices of the editors in the cited publications if there was any indication how the loan verbs appeared in the given text. My knowledge of the relevant data has grown considerably wider by the accurate statistics and analysis of Mathew Almond (2010), who also provided a nice presentation of parallel Nag Hammadi manuscripts showing the inconsistent variation in the use of the auxiliary that can be observed in them. I rely on his figures when acknowledging the variation (even though there is only a minimal one) in the Akhmimic Proverbs. It must be noted, however, that he only records the presence or absence of the auxiliary without considering the possible combinations of the types listed in Table 3. According to my research, the following language varieties existed in Coptic between the 3rd and 5th century (Table 4). Variety 1 adopts the imperative-like form with a ‘direct insertion’ strategy. This method has been introduced as the so called Sahidic strategy, but Mesokemic (M) and Crypto-Mesokemic (W) share the same properties in borrowing. In variety 2 the input form is clearly an infinitive and a light verb is needed to accommodate the new lexical element. This strategy, named after the Bohairic dialect, is characteristic of the early Fayyumic texts as well as of the corpus of ostraca coming from Narmouthis (N). Variety 3 is similar to variety 2 but allows more than one accommodation strategy at the same time. Variety 4 is remarkable for its consistency in the input form: it mixes the strategies (to various extent in the individual dialects), but always adopts the imperative form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern(s)</th>
<th>Dialect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Ø imperative</td>
<td>S, M, W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 AUX + infinitive</td>
<td>B4, F7, F4, N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 AUX + infinitive var. Ø imperative</td>
<td>V4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 AUX + imperative var. Ø imperative</td>
<td>P, L, A, S&lt;sub&gt;NH&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is very important to recognize that there seem to be no varieties in which ‘AUX + infinitive’ varies with ‘AUX + imperative’. As we mentioned earlier, the hypothetical fourth pattern ‘Ø infinitive’ does not arise at all. In the texts, where more than one strategies can be observed,

14 Eitan Grossmann kindly provided me with his manuscript already before it became public on his website, for which I am very grateful.


16 I follow Grossmann (2009) in using the siglum N for this corpus. The ostraca are written in Demotic script but from a linguistic point of view are very close to Coptic. Unlike other Demotic sources, they contain a relatively large number of Greek words, and Greek verbs in the infinitive are combined with the Egyptian auxiliary ir, the ancestor of the light verb used in Coptic.
no syntactic or semantic factors condition the choice between the light verb strategy and direct insertion, as it is pointed out by Almond (2010: 23).\textsuperscript{17}

### 3.2 Variation or change?

This section has been inspired first of all by the suggestions made by Eitan Grossmann (2009) and Sebastian Richter (forthcoming), which have been expanded and supported by Mathew Almond (2010). What is common in these studies is that they introduce a diachronic perspective in both the interdialectal and the intradialectal variation of integration strategies. Richter treats the question from a typological point of view (based on Wichmann – Wohlgemuth 2008), and is the first to examine how the ‘loan verb accommodation patterns’ apply to the Coptic borrowing strategies. He agrees with Grossmann in viewing the difference between these strategies as a process of development. According to Grossmann (2009) the Bohairic strategy is diachronically earlier and “reflects a lesser degree of influence than the ‘direct insertion’ strategy characteristic of Sahidic”. The dialects that appear to mix the patterns and perform more than one strategy are “in the midst of a diachronic process” representing different stages of grammaticalization.\textsuperscript{18} For this theory to hold, they need to assume that the input form was the Greek infinitive in all the language varieties, and that, in the course of time, this infinitival form dropped the word-final -\textit{n} for economical reasons to avoid the double encoding of the same function – as it is argued for by Grossmann.

Some remarks, however, may be added to this line of reasoning, not aiming to refute the suggestion as a whole, but to invite caution in a few points of the question. The typological study of Wichmann and Wohlgemuth (2008: 109) also suggests that direct insertion tends to be a later development (at least with respect to the light verb strategy) as it means a complete integration where the loan verb is treated as if it were native. Nevertheless, considering the analytic structure of Coptic, once the input form has been established, transition of verbs from the source to the target language may not have raised serious difficulties. Morphologically speaking, Coptic lacks a real conjugational system, thus the grammatical environment specifically favors the ‘direct insertion’ of a chosen input form the same way as native verbs are inserted directly from the lexicon to the various sentence patterns.\textsuperscript{19} It must be admitted that the light verb strategy preceded the direct insertion strategy in the history of the Egyptian language (as it is well attested for instance with Late Egyptian borrowings), but it should be kept in mind that the structural properties of the earlier stages (like the ‘root and pattern morphology’) did not give a chance to any other accommodation method to apply.

I cannot subscribe, however, to the suggestion that the input forms with the appearance of imperatives are secondary in Coptic and were always preceded by a supposed infinitival form with a final -\textit{n}. The phonological facts and some additional factors already advanced in section 2 definitely do not support this view. Unfortunately, there is not much hope to get a better insight into the real language situation in Egypt of the first centuries A.D., but the possible existence of pre-Coptic varieties that directly chose to adopt the imperative form cannot be dismissed theoretically. The frequently cited case of the Narmouthis ostraca, as the earliest evidence for verbal borrowing from Greek into Egyptian, is not suitable to verify the correlation of diachronic change with the strategies. The site, also known as Medinet Madi, is located in the Fayyum, and the dialect is probably subject to an areal convergence with the

\textsuperscript{17} But consider the lexically motivated exception of \textit{xaipse} (Almond 2010: 24).

\textsuperscript{18} Reintges (2005) also speculates about the possibility of a scenario in which Sahidic represents a further development of a grammaticalization process.

\textsuperscript{19} To make a contrast, languages with a rich inflectional morphology (like the mother tongue of the present author) would never allow a ‘direct insertion’ strategy since verbs never appear as bare, stem-like forms in the conjugation paradigms.
neighboring varieties. Dialects of the same region but from later periods are equally satisfied with the infinitival input form and the light verb strategy (cf. Variety 2 in Table 4). On the contrary, the very early dialect of P. Bodmer VI from the Theban area (dialect P) consistently adopts and uses the imperative form.

I cannot deny the thesis that direct insertion of loan verbs may reflect a higher degree of bilingualism. But an actual change in borrowing strategy can be defended only in the group of the dialects in which the ‘AUX + imperative’ varies with the ‘Ø imperative’ pattern (cf. Variety 4 in Table 4). In those dialects where the ‘AUX + infinitive’ varies with the ‘Ø imperative’, it seems more plausible to suspect the influence of the prestige dialect (Sahidic) on the local vernacular. 20 This latter influence cannot be excluded in either of the mixed varieties. Borrowing may have taken place between dialects rather than directly from Greek, and in such cases the target language obviously did not bother with reconstructing the Greek input form to look like the one regularly used in that idiom.

To sum up, co-occurring integration strategies can be taken as evidence for language change only with great caution. The mixed varieties of Coptic may just as well be the result of interdialectal borrowing and even that of borrowing of the borrowing strategy itself, motivated not only by geographical contact but by sociolinguistic factors 21 that easily cause synchronic interferences between standard varieties and local idioms.

References

20 In my Table 4 only the dialect V4 is placed in this variety, but I tentatively suggest that texts of later Fayyumic (F5) will belong to this group. The editors of P. Mich 3520 also ascribe the variation in V4 to the influence of either Mesokemic or Sahidic (Schenke – Kasser 2003: 39).
21 One of these factors could be a conscious standardization (‘Sahidicization’) during the transmission of certain texts, cf. Almond (2010: 28-29) with references.


