

A Study of the Verb in Malory's

The Morte Arthur (I)

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PART ONE

The Relation between the Verb Form and the Time-sphere

One of the important things to be solved in understanding the sentence structures at any stage of the history of the English language, is the intricate problems which are connected with the various uses of the verbs. Especially, since in OE and ME the functions of the past, the perfect and the pluperfect forms were not kept so strictly apart as in the present day English, the function of each verb form in a sentence must be explained in relation to the time-sphere it indicates. And this is the aim of the part one.

The text is chosen from the fifteenth century, an important period in the change of English, from Malory's *The Moste Piteous Tale of the Morte Arthur saunz Guerdon*.¹ And as I have confined my investigation to the rather small material, I have tried to pay attention to the exhaustive treatment of the examples.²

In Object Clause

In the first section will be discussed the various time-spheres of the verbs in those sentences in which two verbs are involved. The two verbs, however, do not have the subject in common, but one of them (mostly the one which comes later) is found in the (object or noun) clause governed by the other. The first verb (governing verb) may influence the form of the verb in the noun clause (governed clause), or the verb in the noun clause may take any form regardless of the verb form in the main clause.

To make a clear distinction between form and function, the following classification

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1. From *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*, 3 vols. (edit. by Eugène Vinaver, Oxford, 1967, second edition)
 2. The page and the lines of the examples of the similar type will be given in square brackets.

into A, B, C, . . . and the subdivisions into I, II, III, . . . are done from the form of the verb.

A. Governing Verb ——— Indicative Present Form

I. Verb in the governed clause ——— Present form

The commonest use of this type is the one in which the content of the noun-clause belongs to the present time-sphere. The verb does not refer to an action in progress at the moment of speaking in,

For we *se* that ye *forbeare* and *spare*, and that doth us much harme. 1193/19-20³

I *mervayle* me much why ye *say* thus, sythyn the quene hath sente for me. 1164/34-5 (indirect question)⁴

'Truly,' sayd syr Launcelot, 'I *trust* * I *do* not *dysplese* God, for. . . 1256/26-7⁵

In the above quotations the time-sphere is roughly speaking 'present' in the direction of the past (first and second examples) and in that of the future (third example).

The following two represent an action as going on at the time of enunciation.

'Ye *mervayle*, fayre ladyes, why I *make* thys fare. 1252/3 (i. q.)

And now *methynkith* * ye *rewarde* me evyll for my good servyse. 1188/26-7

All the following examples express the present state.

for I *mystruste* that the kyng *ys* oute thys nyght frome the quene [bycause per-adventure he hath layne som wacche for you and the quene]. 1164/26-8 [Other examples: 1161/21, 1172/19-21, 1241/28-9]

'whan he *hyryth telle* that sir Gareth *ys* dede, he wyll go nygh oute of hys mynde. 1183/17-8 (reported speech)⁶ [1165/31 conj. omitted]

Yet som men *say* in many p[art]ys of Inglonde that kyng Arthur *ys* nat dede, but h[ad] by the wyll of oure Lorde Jesu into another place; 1242/22-4⁷ (r. s.)

When the clause has the verb in the passive, it slightly implies, though not always, a perfect sense. The present state is seen as the result of the action referred to by the verb.

And also ye *noyse* that my lord Aarthur *ys slayne*, 1228/11-2 (r. s.)

And many men *say* that there *ys wrytten* uppon the tumbre thys: 1242/27-8 (r. s.)

3. 1193/19-20 is meant for 'page 1193/lines 19-20'.

4. The abbreviation (i. q.) is used for the 'indirect question'.

5. * mark is placed where the conjunction introducing the clause (mostly *that*) is not expressed.

6. The abbreviation (r. s.) is used for the 'reported speech'. When the verb in the introductory phrase is in the present, the tense in the reported passage is kept unaltered. See the following examples marked (r. s.) at the end.

7. The square brackets and other marks in the quotation are by E. Vinaver.

and well I *wote* * they *be* surely *armed*, 1165/31-2 [1249/14-7, 1183/28-31]

In our collection of examples, when the verb in the dependent clause takes the form 'aux. (modally non-marked) + inf.', the clause usually belongs to the future time-sphere. As the auxiliary verb, *may* is preferred apparently after *pray* or *beseech* in the governing clause.⁸

And there[fore], fayre unkle, I *pray* you that I *may have* paupir, penne, and inke, that I may wryte unto sir Launcelot a letter wrytten with myne owne honde. 1230/31-31/3 [1213/5-7 governing verb *pray*]

'I *beseche* Almyghty God that I *may* never *have* power to see syr Launcelot wyth my worldly eyen!' 1255/36-7 [1252/13-6 governing verb *trust*]

and I *fele* myself that I *muste* nedis *be* dede by the owre of noone. 1230/23-4 [1215/24-5 conj. omitted]

Simple present form, of course, *may* express the future,⁹ as in,

therefore us *semyth* * hit *ys* more youre worshyp that ye rescow the quene from thys quarell, 1172/19-21

But since sentences with a present form of the verb also refer to the occurrences in the present time-sphere, it is only contexts (especially the adverbs of future time) that give the clue to the correct interpretation.

This type of clause does not express the action or state belonging to the past time-sphere proper. When it covers both the present and the past time-sphere, the present-perfect form is employed beside the simple present form¹⁰ as is seen in the following example.

we *know* all that sir Launcelot *holdith* youre quene, and *hath done* longe, 1163/7-8

II. Verb in the governed clause — Past form

In this type of clausal relation, the time-sphere the noun clause expresses is always past. The content of the clause never belongs to the present nor to the future time-sphere. The act which was done (or not done) at a certain point in the past was seen in,

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8. The use of *may* is one of the constructions which ousted the usage of employing the present form in the following clauses.
 9. 'The OE usage of employing futural presents in object clauses after verbs of wishing, desiring, beseeching, urging, commanding, etc. has remained in existence until today. . . . Since the futural notion in the *that*-clause naturally follows from the nature of such verbs as *desire*, *command*, etc., the use of *shall*-constructions in this case is practically uncalled for,' (F. Visser, *An Historical Syntax of the English Language* §737) Also see G. Fridén, *Studies on the Tenses of the English Verb form Chaucer to Shakespeare* p.22.
 10. The present form can express the same time-sphere, especially when adverbials of time come;

'I mervayle that we all be nat ashamed bothe to se and to know how sir Launcelot *lyeth* dayly and nyghtly by the quene. 1161/19-20

now me [*re*]pentith that ever he **ascaped** [my] hondys, 1249/12-3 [1201/11-2, 1257/29-31]

And thys nyght bycause my lady the quene sente for me to speke with her, I suppose * hit **was made** by treson; 1171/1-3

and the state in the past was seen in,

'I wote nat how hit **was**,' ... 'but ... 1185/32

Lo ye all Englysshemen, *se* ye nat what a myschyff here **was**? 1229/6-7

therefore *mesemyth*, my good lord, * I **had** more cause to rescow her from the fyer ... 1197/17-8

The simple past form may express the notion with the present perfect sense implied, often with the aid of the adverb *ever*, *never*.¹¹

Howbehit I wote well that in me **was** nat all the stbilité of thys realme, but in that I myght I ded my dever. 1204/3-5

ye *know* well that kynge Arthur and kynge Marke **were never** lyke of cond[y]-cions, 1173/22-3

The next is the example in which the governing clause is not the independent clause but an adverbial clause of time. Whether the noun clause is governed by the verb in an independent clause or a temporal clause, however, does not seem to affect the form of the verb in the noun clause. The perfect sense is implied in the following example.

Also when I *remembre* me how by my defaute and myn orgule and my pryde that they **were** both **layed** ful lowe, ... 1256/32-4

III. Verb in the governed clause — Perfect form

When the governing verb is present and the verb in the subordinate clause takes the perfect form, it is always the present perfect form and the time-sphere it indicates is always the one which covers both the present and the past. The perfect form does not seem to be used so frequently in describing a state or an event which takes place at any stage of the past.

For, as I here sey, she hath had grete payne and much disease, and I *here say* that she **ys fledde** into the weste. 1251/16-8 (r.s.)¹²

It is not used to express the present nor future nor future-perfect time-sphere. The functions of the perfect, though it is difficult to draw a clear line among them, are generally the same as in the present day English: to bring a past time activity in connection with the moment of speaking as (1) completed, (2) continued, (3) repeated or experienced.

(1) In the first quotation the contrast of the past and the present is vividly ex-

11. Cf. Visser, *ibid.* §807 and Fridén, *ibid.* pp.31-2.

12. The passage implies, however, that she is probably still in the west.

pressed.

Lo thus was the olde custom and usayges of thys londe, and men *say* that we of thys londe *have* nat yet *loste* that custom. 1229/11-2 (r. s.)

And now I *fele* that ye *have done* youre myghty dedis, 1220/23-4

wherefore I *dred* me sore * oure longe love *ys com* to a myschyvus ends. 1165/29-30 [1217/26]

(2) For now I *se* that he *hath forborne* me. 1216/16-7

'Alas', . . . , 'helpe me hens, for I *drede me* * I *have taryed* over [lo]nge.' 1240/10-1

(3) Most of the examples which are listed here usually have an adverb of frequency in them.

we *say* all that ye *have rescowed* her frome her deth *many tymys* for other mennes quarels; 1172/18-9 (r. s.) [1162/7-8]

For ye *know*, my lorde', seyde sir Gawayne, 'that my lady the quene *hath oftyntymes ben* gretely *beholdyn* unto sir Launcelot, more than to ony othir knyght; 1175/2-4 [1197/14-6]

IV. Verb in the governed clause — Future form (aux. (modally non-marked) + inf.)

The auxiliary verbs are *shall* and *will* which are used in most cases with a modal implication, but do not take modally marked form.

Most of our examples belong to the future time-sphere and express the action rather than the future state.

and men *say* that he *shall com* agayne, and he *shall wynne* the Holy Crosse. 1242/24-5 (r. s.)¹³

I *drede* me sore that youre goynge thys nyght *shall wratth* us all, 1164/32-3 [1203/4-6]

And therefore I *requyre* the, . . . , that thou *wolte se* my tumbe. 1232/8-10
lat se who *woll speke* and he dare speke. 1202/20-1 (i. q.)

In the first of the following quotations, *woll* is used with the pure future notion, but in others the will of the subject (a person) to accomplish some action in the future is strongly implied.

For we all *undirstonde*, * in thys realme [*woll be* no] quyett, but ever debate and stryff, now the felyshyp of the Rounde Table ys brokyn. 1203/30-2

for I *know* well * my fadir *woll be avenged* uppon me. 1235/17

But sythen I fynde you thus desposed, I *ensure* you faythfully, * I *wyl* ever *take* me to penaunce and *praye* whyle my lyf lasteth, yf that . . . 1253/22-4

For I *promyse* unto God,' seyde sir Gawayn, 'for the deth of my brothir, sir

13. prophetic *shall* in r. s.

Gareth, * I *shall seke* sir Launcelot thorowoute seven kynges realmys, 1186/9-11
 In the last two examples the governing clauses 'I ensure you faythfully' and 'I promyse unto God' may be interpreted as parenthetical statement and the governed clauses as independent clauses.

The next *woll* expresses the strong will of the subject (*ye*) at the time of speaking (present) rather than the future action.

'Sir Gawayne, me *repentis* of youre fowle sayinge, that ye *woll* not *cease* your langayge. 1219/5-6

The following example expresses the time-sphere '(future-in-)the-past'. The meaning of aux.(past) + have + p.p. (i.e. that the hope, intention, etc. did not materialize) is also found in the independent clauses and other subordinate clauses.

But the Freynshe booke *seyth* * kyng Arthure *wolde have takyn* hys quene agayne and to have bene accorded with sir Launcelot, but ... 1190/17-9 (r.s.)

V. Verb in the governed clause — Subjunctive form (present / past)

The governing verbs which make the verb-form of the noun clause modally marked subjunctive seem to be somewhat restricted: these are mostly verbs expressing emotions (fear, grief, shame, joy, etc.) and other mental activities (doubt, hope, marveling, etc.).

1. Subjunctive Present

The subordinate clause which has the subjunctive present verb expresses the action in the future time-sphere as supposed. The example in which a future state is supposed is not found. Except in the first example, the subordinate clause, together with the verb of command or wish (*charge*, *require*, *besech*), expresses the same notion as might be expressed by the imperative. In the second example *telle* is the modally marked form.

us *thynkis* beste that ye knyghtly *rescow* the quene. 1172/14

I *charge* you that no man *telle* sir Gawayne of the deth of hys two brethirne, 1183/15-6

I *requyre* you and *beseche* you, syttyn that I am thus requyred and conjoined to ryde into the fylde, that neyther you, my lorde kyng Arthur, nother you, sir Gawayne, *com* nat into the fylde. 1191/8-11¹⁴ [1252/17-20, 1252/20-1]

There is one example which belongs to the present-time state.

I *meruayle* that we all *be* nat *ashamed* both to se and to know how ... 1161/19-20

14. Cf. The use of the future form in the object clause after *requirie*: 1232/8-10, quoted in the third example of A.IV.

2. Subjunctive Past

The time-sphere is present. In the following two examples with the simple subjunctive past form, the condition which makes the verb in the subordinate clause into the modally marked subjunctive form is implied by the infinitive in the clause.

Thus sir Launcelot rewarded hys noble knyghtes, and many mo that *mesemyth* * hit *were* to longe to rehers. 1205/22-3

I woll do as ye advyse me; and yet *mesemyth*, seyde kyng Arthur, 'hys fayre proffers *were* nat good to be reffused. 1213/19-20

Subjunctive-past may also be expressed by the periphrasis, the past form of the auxiliary verb (modally marked form) and a plain infinitive.

me sore *repentith* that ever sir Launcelot *sholde be* ayenste me, 1174/13-4

And therefore, brothir, *methynkis* * such noble dedis and kyndnes *shulde be remembirde*. 1162/17-8

B. Governing Verb ——— Indicative Past Form

I. Verb in the governed clause — Present form

When the verb in the main clause is in the past form, there is no example in which the governed clause takes the present form.

II. Verb in the governed clause — Past form

1. The most common type which belongs to this construction is the one in which the governed clause expresses the state or action occurring simultaneously with the governing verb. In the following examples, especially when the governed clause is the reported speech, the verb is put in the past form because of the sequence of tenses.

But yet the ermyte *knew* nat in sertayne that he *was* veryly the body of [kyn]ge Arthur; 1242/18-20

for well he *undirstood* that myschevous warre *was* at honde. 1228/22-3 [1169/12-3, 1174/2-3, 1199/20-2, 1233/25-6, 1243/1-2, 1259/29-31]

And therwyth al the felyshyp awoke and came to the Bysshop and *asked* hym what he *eyled*. 1258/1-3 (i. q.)

Than wente syr Bors unto syr Ector and *tolde* hym how there *laye* his brother, syr Launcelot, dede. 1259/3-4 (r. s.)

for I *tolde* them * there *was* no boote to stryve with sir Launcelot. 1176/6-7 (r. s.)

And the kynge *thought* * there *was* undir hym, farre from hym, an hydeous depe blak watir, and therein *was* all maner of serpentis and wormes and wylde bestis fowle and orryble. 1233/15-8

And suddeynly the kynge *thought* that the whyle *turned* up-so-downe, and he *felle* amonge the serpentis, and every beste *toke* hym by a lymme. 1233/18-21 [12 15/3-4, 1233/12-3 & 28-9]

In the following quotation *made* represents an action as going on at a given moment in the past (i. e. when Arthur came and asked them), implying the progressive sense 'were making'.

and than kynge Arthure *asked* them what noyse they *made*. 1163/1-2 (i. q.)

The governed clause may have the periphrastic verb phrase (aux. (modally non-marked) + inf.), as in the following examples. Here, too, the past form is the result of the sequence of tenses. In the second the infinitive is not expressed.

And that whyle sir Gawayne gaff hym many sad bruntis [and many sad strokis], that all knyghtes that behylde sir Launcelot *merwayled* how he *myght endure* hym, 1217/17-20

and ever sir Launcelot *ded* what he *myght* to save the people on kynge Arthurs party. 1192/4-5

2. The simple past form is not uncommon when the dependent clause expresses the event occurring anterior to the time of the governing verb. Compare the use of the past perfect form in the same context. (B. III.)

and than they *sayde* that sir Mordred *warred* upon kynge Arthure wyth wronge. 1232/30-1 (r. s.)

So sir Bedyvere cam agayne to the kynge and *tolde* hym what he *saw*. 1240/8-9 (r. s.)

the Bysshop . . . *tolde* hym all how sir Launcelot *answerd* hym; 1196/5-6 (r. s.) [1255/31-3]

sir Launcelot *tolde* hem how he *was* harde *bestad* in the quenys chambir, and how . . . 1171/6-7 (r. s.) [1250/11-4 (r. s.)]

whan hit *was tolde* hym how and in what maner the quene *was taken* away frome the fyre, 1183/1-3 (r. s.)

The next quotation contains three verbs in the reported speech, the first two of which express the actions prior to the time of hearing (type 2) and the third the action of the same past time-sphere as the main verb (type 1).

whan he *harde* in hys contrey that sir Mordred *was crowned* kynge in Inglonde and *made* warre ayenst kyng Arthur, hys owne fadir, and *wolde lette* hym to londe in hys owne londe . . . 1249/4-7 (r. s.)¹⁵

The following example does not properly belong to the type where the simple

15. 'wolde lette' is modally non-marked. (cf. type 4)

past form implies past perfect but is the one in which the dependent clause always has the past form verb irrespective of the verb form of the main clause. This is the case where the main clause does not belong to the story itself but is a kind of asides by the narrator.

Now more of the deth of kynge Arthur *coud* I never *fynde*, but that thes ladyes *brought* hym to hys grave, and such one *was entyred* there whych [the] ermyte bare wytnes that sometyme was Bysshop of Caunturbyry. 1242/15-8

3. More common than the second type is the one in which the simple past form expresses what the present perfect would do at the time-sphere of the main clause.

sir Launcelot *tolde* hem how he was harde bestad in the quenys chambir, and how and in what maner he *ascaped* from them, 1171/6-8 (r.s.)¹⁶

And whan sir Mordred *felte* that he *had* hys dethys wounde he threste hymself with the myght that he had upp to the burre of kyng Arthurs speare, 1237/15-8

So whan the Bysshop was com to Joyous Garde, there he *shewed* sir Launcelot how he *came* frome the Pope with wrytyngge unto kyng Arthur and unto hym, 1195/3-5 and there he *tolde* the kynge all how hit *was*, and how they *were* all *slayne* save hymelff alone. 1174/2-4 (r.s.)

and the lettirs *specifyed* that kynge Arthur *was slayne* in batayle with sir Launcelot. 1227/3-4 [with passive form: 1169/13-4, 1230/6-7, 1243/9-10]

4. No less common are the examples in which the governed clause expresses the 'future-in-the-past' events. The verb in the dependent noun-clause takes the form (modally non-marked) aux. (past) +inf.. The past-form of the auxiliary verb (mostly *will* and *shall* with little modal implication) is due to the sequence of tenses. This seems to be preferred when the noun clause is the indirect reported speech and when the governing verb is *know* or *wite*.

and there he toke quene Gwenyver, and *seyde* playnly that he *wolde wedde* her ... 1227/8-10 (r.s.)

and mucche people drew unto sir Mordred and *seyde* * they *wold abyde* wyth hym for bettir and for wars. 1229/17-8 [1202/34-5]

he called hys felyshyp unto hym and *asked* them what they *wolde do*. 1202/32-3 [1176/2-6, 1164/18-9]

I wyste well, anone as I harde that sir Gareth was dede, I *knew* well that I *shulde* never aftir *have* youre love, ... , but everlastyng warre betwyxt us. And also I *wyste* well that ye *wolde* [*cause*] my noble lorde kynge Arthur for ever to be my mortall foo. 1199/20-5

'For full well *wyst* I', sayde sir Gawayne, 'that sir Launcelot *wolde rescow* her, othir ellis he *wolde dye* in that fylde; 1184/18-9

In the next quotation the second clause has the perfect infinitive where the ordinary plain infinitive would do. The implication of the clause is that the mere news of

16. Cf. the fourth quotation in B. II, 2.

Gareth's death is enough to give Gawayne a great sorrow, and the the sight of the dead body of Gareth will surely double his sorrow (, so we have buried him). *shuld have caused* expresses not the doubt or the unreality but the conviction on the part of the king of the future event.

I well *undirstood* that ye *wolde make* overmuche sorow, and the syght of sir Gareth *shulde have caused* youre double sorrow. 1185/23-5

The 'future-in-the-past' time-sphere may also be expressed by the auxiliary verb *may*, and the governing verb is usually *pray* in our collected examples. This construction is the indirectly narrated speech of the request by the subject in the governing clause. The past form *myght* is required by the sequence of tenses.

and when he awooke he *prayde* the ermyte tha<t> he *myght abyde* with hym styll, there to lyve with fastyng and prayers: 1241/22-4

S<o> whan he was howselyd and enelyd and had al that a Crysten man ought to have, he *prayed* the Bysshop that his felowes *myght bere* his body to Joyous Garde. 1257/24-6 [1254/30-4]

and than he *besought* the Byshop that he *myght be* hys brother. 1254/14-5

III. Verb in the governed clause — Perfect form

All nine examples had the past form and are reported indirect speeches which express the action or state in the perfect sense at the time of speaking. Compare the use of the simple past form in the same context. (B. II. 2.) To *tellen* is the most preferred governing verb.

Than *was* hit *tolde* the kyng that sir Mordred *had pyght* a new fylde uppon Bareon Downe. 1232/21-2 (r. s.)

and whan they were assembeled the kyng *enfourmed* hem how sir Launcelot *had beraffe* hym hys quene. 1186/26-8 (r. s.) [1255/31-3]

Examples of the perfect with *be* as auxiliary verb.

Than sir Launcelot *spyrred* of men of Dover where *was* the kyng *becom*. 1250/9-10 (r. s.) [1237/34 *were com*]

When the noun clause has two verbs the auxiliary is not usually repeated.

And whan they were com the kyng *tolde* hem of hys avision: that sir Gawayne *had tolde* hym and *warned* hym that . . . 1234/23-5 (r. s.)

Whan sir Lucan undirstood thys warke he cam to the kyng as sone as he myght, and *tolde* hym all what he *had harde* and *seyne*. 1238/5-7 (r. s.)

And so effte he hyd the swerde and returned agayne and [*t*] *olde* the kyng that he *had bene* at the watir and *done* hys commaundement. 1239/21-3 (r. s.)

The next example from the same page, though it has almost the same context and construction as the last one above quoted, repeats the auxiliary *had* and omits the conjunction.

and so as sone as he myght he cam agayne unto the kyng and *seyde* * he *had bene*

at the watir and **had throwen** the swerde into the watir. 1239/10-2

The following is a rare example of doubly reported speech. The time of Guinevere's speaking is earlier than that of the ladies' and so the second *tolde* can take the perfect form *had tolde* (as seen in 1234/23-5, quoted above), but it is avoided because of the awkwardness of using two past perfect forms side by side.

And the ladyes *tolde* syr Launcelot that quene Guenever **tolde** hem al or she passyd that syr Launcelot **had ben** preest nere a twelve-monthe: 1255/31-3 (r. s.)

The common example in ME in which *have* (or *be*) (present form) + p. p. is used with the same function as the simple past form is not found.

IV. Verb in the governed clause — (modally marked) Subjunctive form

Only five examples are found, in four of which the time-sphere of the noun clause is the same as the governing verb.

for she *answerd* hym shortly, opynly and pryvayly, that she **had levir sle** herself than to be maryed with hym. 1228/27-9¹⁷

Though the subjunctive usually is not affected by the sequence of tenses, the next two quotations show the apparent shifting of the tense from the subjunctive past *were* to the subjunctive past perfect *had bene*, the time-sphere being the same as that of 'weening'.

he *wende*, whan he felte sir Gawaynes double hys strengthe, that he **had bene** a fyende and none erthely man. 1217/13-5

I *wende* * ye **had bene** dede! 1233/31

The modally marked periphrastic subjunctive *should* + inf. may be used for the past time-sphere:

And sytthyn hyt *pleased* you at many tymys that I **shulde feyght** for her, therefore ... 1197/16-7

and also for the time-sphere 'future-in-the-past'.¹⁸

Than *were* they *condescende* that kynge Arthure and sir Mordred **shulde mete** betwyxte bothe their ostis, and everych of them **shulde brynge** fourtene persons. 1235/3-5

C. Governing Verb — Indicative Perfect Form

I. Verb in the governed clause — Present form

17. Notice the asymmetrical construction in the object clause.

18. No examples are found in which the modally marked non-periphrastic subjunctive is used for this time-sphere, as seen in modern English: I suggested that he *go* at once. / The mother insisted that he *remain* in bed.

Only one example is found. The present form of the dependent clause implies, together with the perfect form of the governing verb, that sir Gawayne 'has been and still is and shall be' a 'full daungerous knyght'.

'Sir, now I *have preved* you twyse that ye *ar* a full daungerous knyght and a wondirfull man of [your] myght! 1220/19-20

II. Verb in the governed clause — Future form

Here, too, only one example is collected. The Pope's order reached the king before the time of this quotation, but it still remained unfulfilled, hence the use of the present perfect and the future form. The use of *shall* is common in commands and instructions.

for he (=the Pope) *hath charged* myne uncle the kynge that he *shall take* agayne his quene and to accorde wyth the, sir Launcelot, as for thys season, 1200/26-8

III. Verb in the governed clause — Subjunctive perfect form

Only one example is found. The subjunctive perfect form is required to express that the future-in-the-past action was not performed. (cf. A. V. & B. IV.)

for oftyntymes, my lorde, ye *have concented* that she *sholde have be brente* and *destroyed* in youre hete, 1188/19-21

D. Governing Verb — Indicative Future Form

I. Verb in the governed clause — Present form

Only one example is collected. The verb of the noun clause covers the wider space than the time of speaking and implies 'has been, is and shall be', though the emphasis is on the present state.

unto that I *shall* ever make a large answey, and *prove* hit uppon any knyght that beryth the lyff, excepte your person and sir Gawayne, that my lady, quene Gwenyver, *ys* as trew a lady unto youre person as ys any lady lyvyng unto her lorde, 1188/11-5¹⁹

II. Verb in the governed clause — Past form

Among three examples collected, the two governing future forms function like present (slightly implying immediate future) and in the remaining one it is the event

19. See the first quotation in J.

to occur in the future. In the second and third quotations the past form implies present perfect.²⁰

now *shall* ye *wyte* all that thys nyght I *was* more harde *bestad* than ever I was dayes of my lyff. 1169/16-8 (=I will let you know)

For now, my neveu, sir Gawayne, I *woll discover* me unto you, tha<t> in youre person and in sir Launcelot I moste *had* my joy and myne affyaunce. 1230/13-5

And there *shall* I *answere* you, as a knyght shulde, that hydir I *cam* to the quene for no maner of male engyne, 1168/7-9

III. Verb in the governed clause — Perfect form

The perfect is in the present form and the time-sphere is the same as is expressed by the usual present perfect. The governing verb, though it is future in form, is not future in the true sense of the word as is seen from the following examples. It becomes nearer a mild command or request, or a phrase used to attract the attention of the hearer as in the first quotation where the conjunction is not used.²¹

'My moste redouted kynge, ye *shall undirstonde*, by the Popis commaundement and youre I *have brought* to you my lady the quene, as ryght requyryth. 1197/4-6

'My lorde,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'so ye be nat displeased, ye *shall undirstonde* that I and myne *have done* you oftyntymes bettir servyse than any othir knyghtes have done, in many dyvers placis: 1198/1-4

IV. Verb in the governed clause — Future form

The time-sphere which the verb in the noun clause indicates is always future.

Yet I *woll* nat *say* that hit *shall be* so, but . . . 1242/25-6 (r. s.)

I shall do my payne, and or hit be seven of the klok I *shall wyte* of such as ye have dou<t> fore, who that *woll holde* with you.' 1170/8-10 (i. q.) [1170/3-6]

But, Gawayne,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'ye *shall* nat *thynke* that I *shall tarry* longe, 1219/16-7

In the last quotation again, the main clause implies request or command 'don't think'.

V. Verb in the governed clause — Subjunctive form

No examples are found.

(to be continued)

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20. As the second quotation is followed immediately by 'And now *have* I *lost* my joy of you bothe, wherefore all myne erthely joy ys gone fro me!', *had* implies present perfect, but at the same time the form *had* (not *have had*) expresses that Arthur regarded what the *that*-clause means as the fact far removed from the time of speaking, 'It can no longer be so.'
21. In the first the object clause may be interpreted as the independent clause taking *ye shall undirstonde* as a parenthetic clause, but as in the second the conjunction is used, the better interpretation is to take *ye shall undirstonde* as the governing clause.