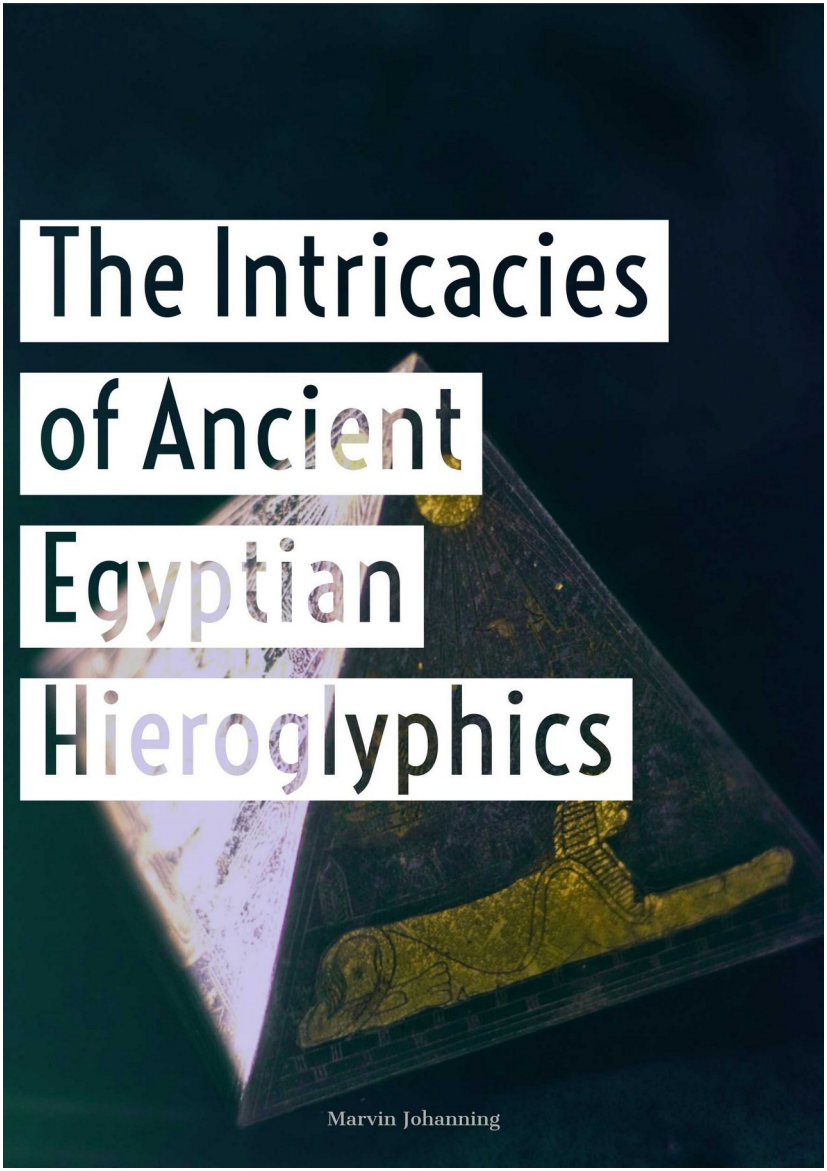
The Intricacies of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphics
Marvin Johanning

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Learning the basics of the Ancient Egyptian writing system; for complete beginners

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“It is a complex system, writing figurative, symbolic, and phonetic all at once, in the same text, the same phrase, I would almost say in the same word.”

JEAN-FRANÇOIS CHAMPOLLION

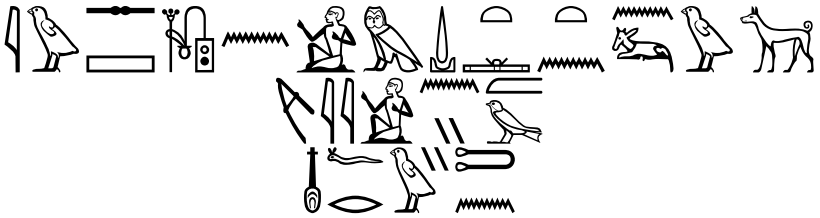

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Ancient Egyptian language is one of the oldest — if not the oldest — language we have written records of. It has thus fascinated scholars and ordinary people for generations and it manages to captivate us even to this day. Yet, many people falsely believe that the Egyptians merely wrote in pictures and that nuanced communication was hence impossible; this is, however, only true on the surface and the opposite is, in fact, the case. The Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic writing system is one of the most flexible writing systems imaginable. We will thus uncover some of the secrets of this ancient and mysterious language in this book.

This book has been written with complete beginners in mind so that it should be easily approachable even to those who have not studied a foreign language previously. In order to make this book as accessible to newcomers as possible, we will be avoiding the use of difficult linguistic terms as much as possible; should the need for using such a term arise, however, said terms will be thoroughly explained.

By the end of the book you should therefore have a basic understanding of the Ancient Egyptian language and its writing system and you will have gained the ability to read simple texts. This introductory knowledge will also enable you to continue your study of the Egyptian language with other, more thorough books.

The receive this knowledge, we will be looking at a large number of original hieroglyphic inscriptions from monuments, stelæ, sarcophagi, et cetera. Many of these inscriptions will be taken from exhibits located in the Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum in the German city of Hildesheim. I will be explaining each part of these inscriptions very thoroughly and provide you with the background information necessary for you to understand why the Egyptians wrote what they did. Additionally, there are plenty of foot- and end-notes for those who wish to learn more details. The main purpose of the endnotes is to provide you with alternative spellings, whereas the footnotes will supply you with supplementary information regarding the main text.

In addition, we will learn more about the people who, in the past, have tried deciphering the Egyptian hieroglyphics.

words, there will be a list of these, including my comments, at the end of this book.

At the end of the book you will find an appendix with a list of all the hieroglyphic symbols we have discussed and an overview of the most important aspects of Egyptian grammar; you will also find the solutions to exercises and plenty of additional photographs and illustrations.

I will also discuss an Egyptian star calendar at the end of the book for those who are interested in learning more about Egyptian date-keeping and astronomy.

Lastly, I have to inform you that I have never officially studied either Egyptology or Linguistics.

WHO DECIPHERED THE HIEROGLYPHS?

Before we commence with the study of the script itself, we will begin by talking about how we are even aware of the meaning of the hieroglyphs. Many people will probably cite Jean-François Champollion as being the first to decipher them; and while this is not wrong per se, it paints a slightly wrong picture, and many people believe that no attempts at deciphering the script had been made before him. In actuality, however, there have been many people that, prior to him, have tried their hands at deciphering this fascinating script — one of which was the Arabic alchemist IBN WAHSHIYYA who was born in the 9th century CE.

He was one of the first people to realise the complexity of Egyptian hieroglyphics; yet there is a surprising lack of information about him and his book (KITAB) SHAUQ AL-MUSTAHAM FI MA'IRFAT RUMUZ AL-AQLAM. Even the translation of the title itself seems to be quite a mystery, since I was unable to find a single, proper translation of it. The official English title of the book, written by Joseph Hammer — an Austrian scholar born in the late 18th century whose full name was Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall — in 1806, has the rather unwieldy name of ANCIENT ALPHABETS AND HIEROGLYPHIC CHARACTERS EXPLAINED; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE EGYPTIAN PRIESTS, THEIR CLASSES, INITIATION AND

SACRIFICES[a]. Upon asking native Arabic speakers however, I have managed to ascertain that the title probably means something along the lines of THE DESIRE TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF WHAT IS WRITTEN, which I believe is a rather fitting title; yet, Purgstall's English version has the original title translated as THE LONG DESIRED KNOWLEDGE OF OCCULT ALPHABETS ATTAINED, which I find to be a rather dramatic-sounding name.

Not only did IBN WAHSHIYYA — who, interestingly, is cited as being called AHMAD BIN ABUBEKR BIN WAHSHIH in Hammer's book — actually realise that the Egyptian hieroglyphs are not merely picture writing — a believe still quite prevalent today —, he also discusses and deciphers a great number — more than eighty — of other scripts in his book by giving their equivalents in the Arabic script. It includes the alphabets used by many a philosopher or king and also a number of other alphabets that were in regular use at the time; it is, therefore, in my opinion, a must-read for anyone who is interested in learning about ancient alphabets and ciphers. Knowledge of the Arabic script is recommended in order to understand what sound-value each of the deciphered letters has, but Purgstall's English translation gives a quick overview of them at the beginning of the book. Therefore, we will now be

a And it also seems to me that simply finding a physical copy of the book is difficult. My local university has a quite a considerable book collection and I am usually able to find all the books I need; however, this particular book is only available on microfilm and not as a hard copy. I thus decided to download a digital copy of the book from the Internet Archive.

taking a quick look at what he had to say about Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Firstly, the name given by him to the Egyptian hieroglyphic script is THE HERMESIAN ALPHABET (WAHSHIYYA 14) which, I believe, is in reference to the Egyptian god THOTH — because the Ancient Greeks generally regarded their god HERMES to be the same as the Egyptian god THOTH — who is, amongst a myriad of other things, known for being the supposed inventor of the Egyptian hieroglyphs and, by extent, writing itself. He continues by mentioning that each one of the kings of the Hermesian dynasty invented their own, unique alphabet, derived from commonplace objects, such as plants, people, et cetera (Wahshiyya 14–15). WAHSHIYYA then lists a rather extensive number of hieroglyphs which he structures into three different series, each one of which relates to a different topic: the first series covers words relating to "Animal Actions and Affections"; the second series covers words relating to "Trees and Plants, and their Produce"; and the third — which, surprisingly, is called the fourth series in this book's translation — covers words relating to minerals (see photo: "The first Series", page 112). (Wahshiyya 19–40)

One intriguing aspect of this particular chapter of the book is him mentioning the following: —

> "… [T]here is a sign which signifies the name of the God Almighty, simply and alone. If they wished to express one of the particular attributes of God, they added something to the

> original sign, and proceded [*sic*] in this manner, as you will perceive by the alphabet in question." (Wahshiyya 16)

This is interesting insofar as he clearly must have had at least some understanding of Egyptian hieroglyphs, since this is a concept nowadays usually referred to as determinatives — something we will be discussing more in-depth later —, which most scholars of this time period, and even in the 19th century, did not know of.

After covering these three series of hieroglyphs we find ourselves in the appendix (Wahshiyya 41–54), in which he continues by examining what he refers to as the SHIMSHIM ALPHABET (see photo: "Shimshim Alphabet", page 113); a number of glyphs discussed and presented therein bare a strong resemblance to Egyptian hieroglyphs, a couple of them being transcribed somewhat accurately. For example, the phonetic value he applies to the hieroglyph "  " is "p"; and this is actually not entirely incorrect, since, in reality, this hieroglyph has the phonetic value "pr" and the meaning of "house". Another hieroglyph he seems to have deciphered semi-accurately is "  " which he applies the phonetic value of "s" to; and even though it is never used on its own to signify the sound "s", it is used to represent the sound-sequence "st"[b] and is most commonly used in the name of the god OSIRIS ()[i].

And while his attempt at deciphering this, even back then, ancient language was just that — an attempt —, he was still one of the first people to at least try deciphering them while also

b It seems that it can also stand for the sound sequence "jst".

realising that the hieroglyphic writing system is not a mere logography[c].

It took a reasonably long time before any real attempts at deciphering the Egyptian hieroglyphic script were made again and it all began with Napoleon. During his Egyptian campaign in the late 18th and early 19th century, his troops discovered what is now referred to as the Rosetta Stone. The stele[d] was originally created in the PTOLEMAIC dynasty[e] near the end of 2nd century BC, in around 190 BC. This find would not have been anything particularly exciting, had there not been two languages on it: Ancient Egyptian written in two scripts (hieroglyphic and Demotic[f]) and Ancient Greek — the most important of the two, as that is a language we could, and can, read and understand.

We will not be covering the contents of this stele in-depth as they are, for the most part, about taxes, tax reforms[g] and praise for the new Pharaoh (E. A.). Instead, we will be dealing with two very important aspects of its contents: cartouches and

c A writing system wherein one glyph represents a concept, word or entire phrase; often referred to as “picture writing”. A modern-day example of a logographic script is the Chinese writing system, i.e. Hanzi.

d A stele is a slab made out of stone or other material (usually wood) intended to be used as a monument.

e This name is not, as you may have thought, related to the Greek mathematician and astronomer PTOLEMY, but rather the dynasty of kings (Pharaohs) that was the last to rule Egypt from the 2nd to the end of the 1st century BC.

f The Demotic script developed from the Hieratic script which was the cursive writing system used for Ancient Egyptian for a long time.

g “… [and of the taxes] some of them he hath cut off, and some of them [he hath lightened], thus causing the soldiers and those who live in the country to be prosperous.“ (E. A. 202)

foreign names. A cartouche is an oval with a line at either one of its ends, into which the names of important figures, such as kings, were inscribed[h].

Thus, when Thomas Young, then foreign secretary of the Royal Society, sent a letter to Jean-Jacques Barthélemy in 1814 — who had previously suggested that cartouches not only contain proper names but also that these names would be written phonetically if they were foreign ones, i.e. from originally non-Egyptian names such as PTOLEMY — he got a reply from Barthélemy suggesting he try and correlate the hieroglyphs enclosed in a cartouche with the names found in the Greek text (Robinson 61). By doing so, he managed to find the name PTOLEMY in the Egyptian text by simply corresponding one hieroglyphic sign to one letter in Greek as such: —

>  consists of the signs , , , , , and . Let us then suppose this name is the name PTOLEMY — which in Greek is PTOLEMAIOS (Πτολεμαῖος) — and we can, after some work, figure out that the signs have the values of *p, t, o, l, m, i* and *s*[j]

This is, however, everything Young managed to figure out on his own. It was not until the early 1820s that Champollion, who

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h Here an example of my name inside a cartouche: 

i Even though this sign looks as if it is in actuality two signs, it is not. The double reed is transliterated as “j”, whereas a single reed would be transliterated as “i”. More information about that later on.

j This is not entirely accurate, as is nowadays usually transliterated as “wꜣ” and can be transliterated as either “r” or “l”.

had taken Young's approach and applied it to the Philæ Obelisk[k], which also contained inscriptions in both Greek and Egyptian, finally managed to decipher the majority of the phonetic symbols used in the Egyptian hieroglyphic script correctly. One important element about the hieroglyphic script that he noticed was that, often-times, a single sound can be represented by a number of different hieroglyphs; he notes, in his famous LETTRE À M. DACIER, (shortened for your convenience): —

> "We saw that the K sound was rendered, in the names Κλεοπατρα [Kleopatra] and Αλεξανδρος [Alexandros], by two symbols which differ in form … [;] but the same pronunciation of these two characters can not be doubted … [and] [b]oth same-sounding characters must be accepted. We will also find other examples of similar homophones, all by the same reasoning." (Champollion 5)

He thus laid the foundation for further study of the language and its writing system; and even though nearly two hundred years have passed since Champollion's decipherment of the script, we are still discovering new things daily.

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k "The obelisk found on the island of Philæ, and recently moved to London, also contains a hieroglyphic name Ptolemy … (written in the same symbols as on the Rosetta Stone), also enclosed in a cartouche …, and it is followed by a second cartouche which must necessarily contain the proper name of a woman [the woman being Cleopatra]…" (Champollion 3)

A DICTIONARY OF HIEROGLYPHS

A dictionary is one of the most important objects to use when studying a language and Egyptian is no exception. The most well-known one is the WÖRTERBUCH DER ALTÄGYPTISCHEN SPRACHE (DICTIONARY OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN LANGUAGE) which was commissioned by the Prussian Academy of Sciences in 1897 and provided with a funding of ℳ120,000[a] by Emperor Wilhelm II. including nearly ℳ40,000 from the Prussian Academy of Sciences itself, thus having a total funding of ℳ160,000 which, at the time, was a very considerable amount of money[b]. In addition, it is also interesting to mention that work on this dictionary continued even through World War I and II and still has not halted completely. The majority of the ground-laying work was done by Adolf Erman — a very well-respected, German Egyptologist born in the mid-1800s — who has also written a number of grammatical works regarding the Egyptian language. The work is astronomical in size, consisting of nearly 16,000 expressions spread out over approximately ten volumes, making it the most comprehensive Egyptian dictionary to have ever been created (Erman and Grapow, chap.Vorwort); I have seen all volumes of

a ℳ stands for (Gold)mark, which was the official currency of the German Empire from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century.

b I was interested in finding out how much money this was exactly. Wikipedia states that, in 1913, US$1 was equal to about ℳ4.20. We can thus, using an inflation calculator, calculate that ℳ160,000 must have been worth over US$1,000,000 in today's money (2019).

this magnificent work myself and merely looking through them is fascinating. I recommend everyone who is interested in learning the Egyptian language to take a look at it. I am, however, unaware of an English version of this dictionary existing and thus, knowledge of German would be beneficial in understanding it.

There also exists an online version of the dictionary which includes all the physical volumes with some additions and that can be searched as easily as a modern, online dictionary called THESAURUS LINGUAE AEGYPTIAE (Dictionary of the Egyptian language).

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF "HIEROGLYPH"?

A simple question with an interesting answer: What is the meaning of the word "hieroglyph"?

The English word is essentially derived from the Ancient Greek word "ἱερογλυφικός" which is a compound word[a] made up of two other words, namely "ἱερός" — meaning "holy" or "sacred" — and "γλύφη" — which could roughly be translated as meaning "script" or "writing" — which in itself is a direct translation of the Ancient Egyptian word for their writing system, namely "  "[ii], translating as "The word of God". As mentioned previously, in Egyptian mythology, the god THOTH ( , *ḏḥwtj*) is credited with inventing not only Egyptian hieroglyphs, but all writing itself. Interestingly, many scholars believe that most of the writing systems originally from Eurasia (such as the Latin alphabet, the Arabic script or the Indian Devanagari script) developed from the Phoenician alphabet which, in return, is thought to have been developed from the Egyptian hieroglyphic script; thus, in a way, the Egyptians really did invent writing.

a A compound word is a word consisting of two or more other words, forming an entirely new word. In English, the individual components of compound words are generally connected with either a hyphen or simply separated by a space. However, some words — such as toothbrush — turn into one, single word.

LEARNING THE EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHS

We have just learnt a great deal about the history of the decipherment of hieroglyphs and it is now time to begin with the study of the script itself.

The Direction of Reading

Hieroglyphs can be read and written in a four different ways: vertically from right to left or from left to right; and horizontally from right to left or from left to right. This turns the Egyptian hieroglyphic script into one of the most flexible writing systems that can easily be adapted to fit a particular situation. You will frequently find murals of, for example, two people looking at each other with hieroglyphic inscriptions above both of them; the hieroglyphs above the person facing the left will be written from left to right and, therefore, the hieroglyphs above the other person will be written from right to left (see photo: page 114, Hieroglyphs facing each other).

Figuring out which direction the hieroglyphs are to be read in can be done by simply finding a hieroglyph — such as that of a man — and working out what direction it is looking towards. If the man is looking to the right, read from left to right; if he, instead, is looking to the left, read the text from right to left[a]. Thus, you should always read *into* the hieroglyphs (i.e. into their faces and not into their backs).

a Beware, however, that not all hieroglyphs can be used for this purpose, as some of them will not change direction.

In addition, hieroglyphs will frequently be stacked on top of one another; by grouping them into these “blocks”, the finished text will have a more appealing look to it — something that the Ancient Egyptians valued very much[b]. In that case, always read the top first.

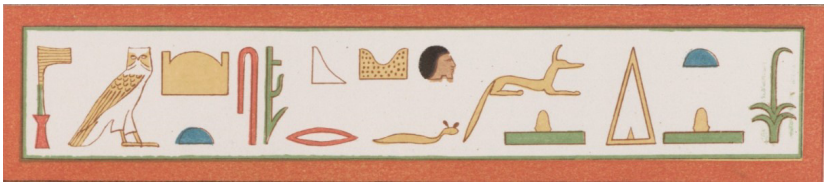
Let us thus take a quick look at a few pieces of writing and determine what direction they should be read in: —

Neues Reich. Dynastie XVIII. Theben [Thebes]. Qurnet Murrâi [Blatt 4], Linke Hinterwand [e].)

b Since hieroglyphs, for the most part, depict real-life objects, they can be integrated into art with ease; in fact, that is something the Ancient Egyptians did frequently.

The hieroglyphs enclosed in the cartouche are obviously written vertically, while the rest is written horizontally. To figure out in what direction these hieroglyphs are read, pay close attention into which direction they are facing. If you look, for example, at the goose, you can clearly see that it is facing to the left; same with the snake. You can therefore make the correct assumption that this text should be read from left to right.

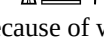
Let us now look at another inscription: —



Altes Reich. Dynastie IV, V. Pyramiden von Giseh [Jîzah]: Grab 54.")

Once again, look closely at the faces and the animals; what direction are they looking towards? Look, for instance, at the jackal hieroglyph "  "[c]; as you can clearly see, it is facing the right and thus you can be certain that — since you should always read *into* the hieroglyphs — this text should be read from right to left. Also remember that you should always read the top hieroglyphs first, thus reading it in the following order:  [d]. You can also easily see that writing the text as

c In this case, this sign is actually referring to the god ANUBIS.

d This is only partly correct, since "  " is actually read as if it were written as "  "; this is because of what is known as honorific transposition which I will be covering more in-depth later.

“  ” rather than “  ” not only saves space, but makes it look a lot more appealing.
We will be referring back to these inscriptions later on.

The Two Varieties

I would like to begin by covering the two different varieties of hieroglyphs, both of which being further divided into sub-groups — something you may have already realised by reading the previous parts. The first and easiest part of learning the Egyptian hieroglyphic script is the phonetic variety of hieroglyphs; these are those types of hieroglyphs that, as the name would already suggest, refer to a particular sound or group of sounds in the language. The phonetic hieroglyphs can be further divided into uni-, bi- and trilateral symbols. Unilateral glyphs are those that refer to only one sound, such as the symbol “” which refers to the sound “s” and that we have already met before.
Bilateral symbols are ones that represent two sounds; this is actually not too strange for those who speak English, since many English letters represent two sounds. An example for this is the letter “i”; if you say the letter “i” on its own, you will, in actuality, be saying “ah-ee” which in reality are two different sounds. The same applies to Egyptian hieroglyphics. There are a great number of hieroglyphics that represent two sounds, such as the hieroglyph “  ” — representing the sound sequence “pr” — which we, too, have met previously.

Trilaterals are, thus, those hieroglyphs that represent three sounds; an example for a trilateral hieroglyph is “  ” — representing the sound sequence “nṯr” — which can also, with a vertical stroke added onto it, have the meaning of “God”.

The second, and frankly more difficult, variety of hieroglyphs is the logographic variety. Logographic hieroglyphs are ones that, unlike the phonetic ones, do not refer to a specific sound and instead refer to a concept or idea. This, too, is not a foreign concept for speakers of the English language; take, for instance, a symbol commonly seen on electronic devices: ⏻ You are surely aware of its meaning and purpose — it will either start or shut-down your device — but it is not a letter as such, unlike “a”. It is a symbol that can be used cross-linguistically and still be understood; if you, instead, labelled the power button with an English word, it would only be understood by those that speak the language. English-speakers might call it “power button”, while German speakers may refer to it as “An-/Aus-Schalter”. Logographic hieroglyphs — which can also be referred to as Ideograms — work the same way. Instead of representing a sound — or a series of them —, they instead represent a concept, such as the previously mentioned symbol for house:  .

However, these ideographic symbols do not frequently stand on their own; instead, they are usually used to further specify the meaning of a word — they are then referred to as determinatives. A determinative may be used to avoid ambiguity or to aid in the reading of an unknown word. Unfortunately, there are no examples of this in the English

language; we can, however, easily create one. Take, for instance, the English word “son”. Since Egyptian does not generally write its vowels, this would be written as “sn” in Egyptian, thus making it difficult to distinguish between “son” and “sun”. Egyptian avoids this problem by placing a determinative behind the word as such: —

son → sn → sn  ; here, the picture of a male human being is added to clarify the meaning of this word as “son”.

sun → sn → sn ⊙; here we added the simplified drawing of the Sun in order to be able to distinguish is from the word “son” and to clarify that we are referring to the Sun instead.

This is done frequently in Egyptian and there exist scores of other such determinatives; the meaning of many of them often being quite difficult to guess. Please note that determinatives do not actually influence the pronunciation of a word. Their sole purpose is to aid in the reading of words and to avoid ambiguity.

Let us take a quick look at THOTH:  . The first symbol[e] is a determinative for THOTH, the following two symbols are phonetic symbols representing the sounds “t” and “y” and the last hieroglyph is yet another determinative. A determinative can also help distinguishing between words such as “  ” (*prt*, one of the three Egyptian seasons) and “  ” (*prt*,

e Remember to read *into* the hieroglyphs and from top to bottom. Thus, the first symbol, in this case, is the symbol on the top left.

procession); these two words have exactly the same pronunciation, so in order to distinguish one from the other, a determinative is added.

You may be wondering how you can differentiate between a determinative and a regular logographic hieroglyph; and the answer is: a vertical stroke. If a hieroglyphic is being used as a logograph, a vertical stroke is — usually[f] — added either underneath or next to the hieroglyphic sign. An example for this is the following: —

Ptolemaeer. Ptol. VII Philometor I. Philae; a. Architrav Aus Tempel P; b. Tempel K. Stele Auf Dem Granitfelsen Unter Dem Östlichen Pylon.)

You can see the "𓌳" hieroglyph has such a stroke underneath. Had it been written without said stroke, it might have been

f With very common expressions it is often left out; it is also often left out if the scribe thought that leaving it would improve the text's artistic value.

confused with the two-consonant sign "*kꜣ*"; in addition, not adding the stroke would have resulted in a less pleasing-looking text — at least to the Egyptians[g]. However, with the added sign there can be no doubt about this hieroglyph referring to the KA. The KA is part of what the Egyptians thought of as the soul[h] and this particular part of the soul is what distinguishes a living being from a non-living being[i].

Beware, however, that strokes like these may have other uses as well, such as denoting the plural[j] of words. Let us again take a look at the inscription discussed on page 17 which shows two of TUTANKHAMUN's names, one of which being "  "[k]. As you will notice, this name features three strokes next to each other; these are not, however, used to mark the usage of a particular sign as logographic. Instead, they are used to indicate the plural of the word "  "[iii], meaning "form".

Another very important thing to mention is another usage of unilateral hieroglyphs: Complementing bi- or trilaterals. This basically means that the Egyptians frequently added a unilateral hieroglyph where it would technically not be needed as the bi-

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g This is what it would have looked like without the stroke  .

h The Egyptian concept of "soul" is a lot different from ours. In Egyptian mythology, the "soul" on its own does not exist; instead, the soul consists of several unique parts.

i A dead person would thus not possess the KA while a living person would.

j The plural of a word is that which refers to more than one: man → men

k The name is transliterated as NEBKHEPERURE and translated as "Lord of the Forms of Ra" — this is TUTANKHAMUN's PRÆNOMEN or Throne Name, preceded by "  " meaning either "Dual King" or "King of Upper and Lower Egypt".

or trilateral hieroglyph is already fulfilling that purpose. To explain this further, we will once again review the inscription on page 17; this time, however, we will be focussing on another of TUTANKHAMUN's names:  [l]. The first part of his name,  , is generally transcribed as "*jmn*" (AMUN). This is, however, not what has been written down, as "" actually consists of the unilateral hieroglyph "*j*", the bilateral "*mn*" and the unilateral "n"; thus, this part of his name is actually written as "*jmn-n*". The reasoning behind doing this is twofold. On one hand, doing this aids reading and even those who were not experts in reading Egyptian hieroglyphs — which, back then, would have been the majority of the population — could easily guess that this name would have to be pronounced as "*jmn*". On the other hand, adding a second hieroglyph can often increase the æsthetics of the word, as merely writing "" looks rather clunky and incomplete — at least to the Egyptians.

As a rule of thumb, the last one or two sounds of a bi- or trilateral are usually written out as a unilateral beneath or next to the bi- or trilateral to complement it. "" is one of most common bilateral symbols to receive a complement.

Unilaterals and Latinisation

We have just learnt about the different varieties of hieroglyphs and it is now time to actually start learning the unilateral variety

l This is TUTANKHAMUN's NOMEN, the name given to him at birth, which, as you can see in the picture, is preceded by "  " meaning "Son of RA"

of them. We will also be looking at how these symbols are transliterated into our alphabet.

Hieroglyph	Transliteration	Pronunciation
	ɜ or A	short “a” as in “hat”
	j	like “ee” or “ea” (heat, eat, beet)
	y	“ or like “y” in “yet”
	ꜥ or a	long “a” as in “bath”
	w	like “oo” as in “boot”
	b	b as in “bed”
	p	p as in “pet”
	f	f as in “foot”
	m	m as in “mouse”
	n	n as in “night”
	r	trilled r (like Spanish or Scottish English)
	h	h as in “house”
	ḥ or H	h but pronounced further down in the throat (like panting)
	ḫ or x	like the “ch” in “Loch Ness”;

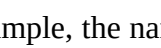
		Spanish “j”; German “ch”.
	ẖ or X	like German “ch” in “ich”; like “h” in B.E. “hue”.
	s	like “s” in “street” or like “z” in “zero”
	š or S	like “sh” in “ship”
	ḳ or q	like “k” but pronounced further down in the throat
	k	like “k” in “kite”
	g	like “g” in “get”
	t	like “t” in “tube”
	ṯ or T	like “tsh” or “tch” (hatch, satchel)
	d	like d in “day”
	ḏ or D	like j in “joke”

You may be wondering why there are occasionally two possible transliterations for the same hieroglyph. The reason behind this is that the second variety is used when special symbols, such as “ẖ”, are unavailable — a very common problem on computers. If you, for instance, wish to type hieroglyphs using the program JSesh, you are required to use the second transliteration (i.e S instead of š). This second type of transliteration is known as

Manuel de Codage, or MdC for short, and it is the standard transliteration used for the Egyptian language when typing with your regular keyboard.
You might, however, also ask yourself why there are different ways of writing the same sound. First of all, this should not surprise you, as English does something rather similar; what is, for example, the difference between the “c” and the “k” in the word “cake”? The answer is: there is no difference. Second of all, let us take a quick look at the three pairs hieroglyphs and find out what the differences between them are: —

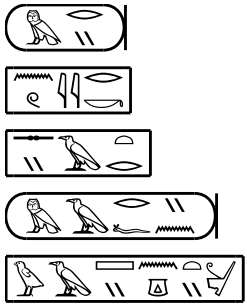
-  . Originally, these two signs would have been pronounced differently, the first being “s” (as in “stop”) and the second being “z” (as in “zero”). Over time, however, these two sounds have merged into one and could be used interchangeably. The word “  ” can therefore be transcribed as either “sꜣ” or “zꜣ”.
-  . The former is generally used inside of regular words and the latter is generally used as a grammatical ending or simply when it fits better.
-  . See above.

The letters “  ” and “  ” could also be written, especially in later times, as “  ” and “  ” respectively. We will, however, not be seeing these version too often.

Another matter we should discuss is vowels[m]. You may have already realised that many of the vowels used in the English language have no equivalent unilateral hieroglyphic symbol. This is due to the fact that Egyptians generally ignored vowels altogether; this means that we are often required to "fill in the gaps", so to speak. Consider, for example, the name "  ". It is written as "jmn", yet Egyptologists pronounce it as if it were written with a vowel between the "m" and the "n": "jm(e)n". The reason for doing this is that saying "mn" is much more difficult than saying "men". Therefore, you always add a vowel — Egyptological convention is to use an "e" — in-between consonants. Another example of this is the trilateral hieroglyph "  "; it is transcribed as "nṯr" but pronounced as "neṯer". I would like to point out, however, that this is not how the Ancient Egyptians spoke and merely there to assist us so that we have an easier time pronouncing Ancient Egyptian words.

You should now be able to read the following, transliterated names of people and cities (to ease reading, names are inside an oval cartouche and cities inside a rectangular one): —

m Such as "a", "e", "o" etc.



§1

Remember that many vowels are not written or are written differently. Also note that there is no “l” in Ancient Egyptian; it will often be replaced by an “r”[iv].
You should also be able to read the following name: —

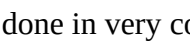
§2

(Note that the circle on-top is, in actuality, a ⛀).
For the solutions to these exercises, please go to page 93.

Bi- and Trilaterals

The list of bi- and trilateral symbols is rather extensive and listing the entirety of them here would not only be rather difficult but also unnecessary; this is because only a couple of dozen of these were actually in common use and we will therefore be learning them as we go along.
We have, however, already met the following dozen common tri- and bilateral hieroglyphic signs: —

Bilateral Hieroglyph	Transliteration
	dj
	kꜣ
	mn
	nb
	pr
	rᶜ
	sw
	zꜣ or sꜣ
Trilateral Hieroglyph	**Transliteration**
	ᶜnḫ
	ḥtp
	nfr
	ḫpr

For a more complete list of bi- and trilateral hieroglyphs, take a look at the appendix on page 90.
Learning these will give you a good basis for understanding the upcoming inscriptions. Please also note that these bi- and trilateral hieroglyphic symbols can often denote not only a sound-sequence but also an entire word or concept; this is generally done in very common formulæ, such as "  " (*ḥtp-ḏj-nswt*). The word "*ḥtp*" would, for example, usually be written as  when standing on its own (i.e. with two unilateral hieroglyphs added onto it). We will be learning more about that in Not writing sounds on page 36.

Determinatives

The amount of determinatives in the Egyptian language is staggering; not only that, they also often have more than one meaning. Hence, it is going to be impossible to list all potential meanings of every single one of the determinatives in this book. We will thus only mention determinatives as soon as we see one in use.

Ideograms

Unlike determinatives, which often have several meanings, ideograms almost always refer to only one concept or idea or variations thereof. In addition, only a handful of (common) expressions are conveyed by ideograms and we will therefore be taking a look at a few of the most commonly used ones, including their meaning and transliteration: —

Ideogram	Transliteration	Meaning
	jb	heart
	j	me, I (usually used after verbs)
	nṯr	God
	nwt	town
	pr	house
v 	rˁ	Sun
	rnpt	year
vi 	st	palace or throne
vii 	tꜣ	land or country
viii 	wꜣt	street
	zꜣ or sꜣ	son

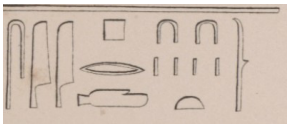
Numbers and Dates

The Egyptians also had their own, unique way of writing dates and numbers — the latter functioning similar to Roman numerals. Different numerical hieroglyphs exist, each one representing one of the different powers of ten: 1, 10, 100, 1 000, 10 000, 100 000 and 1 000 000. These can, when combined, form any other number except for the number 0. Here is a short overview of the Egyptian numerals: —

1	
10	
100	
1,000	
10,000	
100,000	
1,000,000	

ix

Forming numbers such as “13” would therefore require the usage of one of the symbols representing “10” and three symbols representing “1” like this: . In the following photo you can see the number “24”: —



Ptolemaeer. Ptol. VII Philometor I. Philae; a. Architrav Aus Tempel P; b. Tempel K. Stele Auf Dem Granitfelsen Unter Dem Östlichen Pylon.)

Egyptian years work quite differently from ours. Unlike the Gregorian Calendar — the calendar we use —, which is based

on the supposed year of birth of Jesus of Nazareth[n], the 1st year of the Egyptian calendar generally fell on the year of inauguration of the then reigning king. You can imagine it as follows: The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. was in the year 1953; what the Egyptians then did was to use this year as their year 1. Therefore, the Gregorian year 2019 would turn into the Elizabethan year 65. Let us then suppose that Charles Philip Arthur George will be coronated in the year 2020; the year 2020 would then become the new year 1 and thus, the Gregorian year 2025 would be the 5th year under the reign of Charles.

The Egyptians generally worded it thus: “Regnal year X under [the rule of] his majesty, the King X”, which was mostly written in the following manner: —

rnpt-ḥsb ḫr ḥm n

Let us dissect this expression before we continue. The first part of the expression, “  ” (*rnpt-ḥsb*), literally translates as “The year of counting”; nevertheless, it is largely translated as “regnal year”, which is the translation I will be using as well. The second part, “  ” (*ḫr*), is a preposition that, in this case, is translated as “under” which can be understood as a shortening of “under the rule / reign”.

n Hence “BC” (Before Christ) and “AD” (Anno Domini; In the year of the Lord).

The third part, "  " (*ḥm*), is, in this particular instance, generally translated as "(his) Majesty".

The fourth and last part of this expression, "  " (*n*), marks what is known as an "indirect genitive"; this, however, sounds more complicated than it actually is, since this can be easily translated as meaning "of".

Here an example of the full expression from the reign of INTEF (shortened for your convenience): —

 x

rnpt 4 ḫr ḥm n (n)swt-bỉtỉ ỉnỉ-ỉt.ỉ

(Scott-Moncrieff, Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, &c. 116)

The translation of this would be as follows: "The (regnal) year 4 under (the rule of) his Majesty, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt (Dual King), INTEF". Note, however, that the word "counting" (as in "year of counting") has been left out in this particular inscription. The name INTEF also contains the somewhat common trilateral hieroglyphic sign "  " (jnj).

Let us now take a look at a few more inscriptions with years that will also teach you a few more names.

In the following inscription — which, again, has been shortened slightly so that we can focus on what we are learning about — the 24th year under the reign of NIMAATRE is mentioned: —

rnpt-ḥsb 24 ḫr ḥm n(i)-mȝʿt-rʿ

Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, &c. 22)

 is the PRÆNOMEN of the Pharaoh AMENEMHET III. (for more information on the names of the king, please read the chapter "The Pharaoh's Names, his Titles and Honorific Transposition" on page 38).

Not writing sounds

It occurs rather frequently that the Egyptians only partly wrote a word. Let us, for instance, take another look at the first part of the inscription on page 18:  . This is transcribed as "*ḥtp-ḏj-nswt*"; yet, only "*ḥtp-ḏj-swt*" is what is actually written down. There are several reasons for doing this. Adding another phonetic symbol — in this case an "n" — may result in a rather unwieldy-looking word[o] — something to be avoided, since the Egyptians placed a lot of value on structuring a text in a pleasing manner. Therefore, simply leaving out one or two phonetic symbols is not a big deal, especially considering that, with the help of determinatives, understanding a word without all its phonetic components written out is not too difficult; this is especially true for commonly used formulæ such as this. The

o Here is an example of what that would look like 

other parts of this formula — *ḥtp* and *ḏj* — are also not written completely.

The Pharaoh's Names, his Titles and Honorific Transposition

Now that we have covered the fundamentals of hieroglyphic writing, we have gained the ability to read the names of a lot of Pharaohs — just as Champollion did. Unlike him, however, we already have a good basic understanding of hieroglyphic writing and reading a few names should thus be less difficult for us than it was for him. Before we start our attempt at transliterating a few names, however, we should first be aware of a few of the quirks regarding Ancient Egyptian names — especially those of the king.

Let us begin by mentioning that every single one of the Egyptian names — be they royal or civil — have a meaning; I am pointing this out since many people nowadays, especially those living in the West, are unaware of the meanings of their name or are simply oblivious of the fact that their name having a meaning to begin with. The most common practice in Ancient Egypt was to take the name of a god — such as that of the god Amun () — and pre- or append other words or expressions. Naming people after gods is actually not a foreign practice in the modern world either. If you, for instance, look at the names of many Indians, you will find that a large number of them is named after a god; examples for this include names such as "Vishnu" or "Ganesh(a)" — and the Egyptians did likewise.

Let us once more take a brief look at the name of TUTANKHAMUN:  (*jmn-twt-ᶜnḫ ḥqꜣ-jwnw-šmᶜ*). As you may have already realised, his name also includes the name of a deity, namely AMUN; the entirety of his name thus, with all added expressions included, literally translates as "Living image of AMUN[A]". Something you may not have realised, however, is the fact we say his name as TUTANKHAMUN even though it is actually spelt as "Amuntutankh". The reason behind doing this is as follow: if a phrase or expression (or name) features the name of a god or that of a king — or simply the words for "god" () or "king" () themselves —, then said royal or divine name is positioned at the beginning of the phrase or expression, regardless of whether placing it there is actually grammatically correct. Thus, if you were to read TUTANKHAMUN's name the way it was actually written — Amuntutankh — it would have a rather odd-sounding translation. We can therefore assume that it must have been pronounced as TUTANKHAMUN. The practice of placing the name of a divine being or that of a king — or simply the words for "god" and "king" themselves — at the beginning of an expression, regardless of whether this would be grammatically correct, is known as "honorific transposition". This is done in order to show reverence, i.e. to show proper respect towards

a I ignored the last part of his name, "  ", as this is is not important for us at present; the translation of this phrase is "Ruler of the Heliopolis of Upper Egypt"

aforementioned king or divine being. This can make reading inscriptions, especially those that include an unknown royal name, rather challenging.

To further complicate matters, the king had no less than five, completely distinct names and titles; fortunately, however, only two of them were, especially in later times, regularly used. The names we generally know the Egyptian Pharaohs as are known as the NOMEN which is the personal or birth name of the king. Since, at the time of birth, you could not be sure whether the newly born child would eventually become the new Pharaoh, children were given only one, regular name as any other civilian would have gotten at the time as well. Then, once they became king, they received four additional names; only one of these names, the PRÆNOMEN or "Throne Name", will actually be of importance in our study, however. The remaining three names were very restricted in usage and you will not find them as frequently as you find the NOMEN and PRÆNOMEN. These two names were also the only ones to be placed inside of a cartouche. In addition, the cartouche would be preceded by a type of "identifier"; an expression that would clarify which of the royal names is being referred to. The actual term for this is "epithet". The NOMEN, for instance, was generally preceded by the expression "  " (*z3-rˁ*), which literally translates as "Son of Ra". The PRÆNOMEN, on the other hand, was usually preceded by the epithet "  " (*nswt-bjtj*); translating this epithet is not as straightforward as with that of the NOMEN. This is because this epithet can be interpreted in a number of ways; its literal translation is "He of the Sedge and Bee". It is, however,

generally translated as “Dual King” or “King of Upper and Lower Egypt”. The reason for this is that the symbol “  ” (*sw*) can stand for the word for “king” but also represent Upper Egypt and the “  ” (*bjt*) hieroglyph is a symbol representing Lower Egypt.

You will now be attempting to read a few inscriptions that include the names of kings. Your task is it to transliterate these names into our alphabet (Unilaterals and Latinisation, page 24). For further information and the solutions to the exercises, please go to page 93.

Let us begin by looking at a name that can be found in a chapel dedicated to the god THOTH, located in the Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum in Hildesheim: —

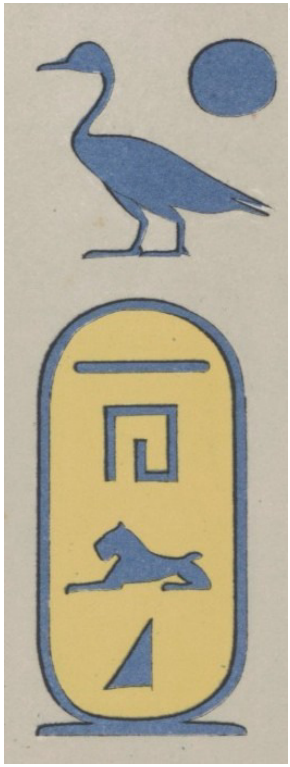
§3

Please note that this specific name uses a rather unusual sign, namely "  ", which is a bilateral hieroglyph used for representing for the sound-sequence "*wr*"; in this particular instance, however, it corresponds to the vowel "o". We have already discussed the lion hieroglyph previously and it refers to the consonant "l" in this case.[b]

Let us look at another name: —

b The "l" was, as it seems, not a consonant native to the Ancient Egyptian language; thus, the biltateral hieroglyph "rw" was frequently used instead when trying to transcribe names of languages that did contain the "l" consonant — such as Ancient Greek.

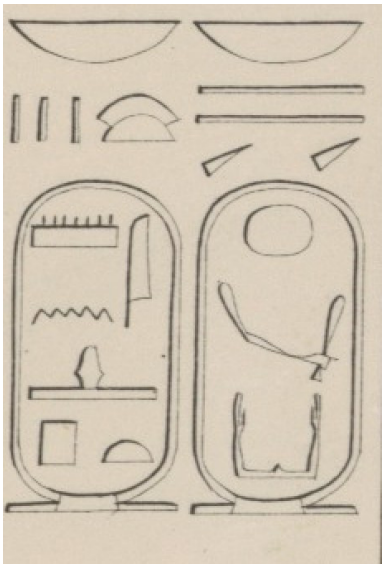
§4



Aethiopen. Dynastie XXV, 3. Barkal [Jebel Barkal]. Grosser Felsentempel, Ostwand Der Vorhalle.)

The first hieroglyph of this name, "═", is actually a bilateral hieroglyph representing the sound-sequence "*tꜣ*". The lion

hieroglyph does not actually represent an "*l*" here; rather, it stands for "*r(w)*".
Let us now look at the following name(s): —

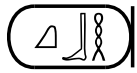
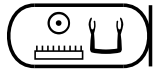


Neues Reich. Dynastie XIX. Theben [Thebes]: A. Karnak, Grosser Tempel, Mauer Zwischen Pylon IV Und V

We will begin by concentrating on the expressions written above the cartouched names, i.e. the epithets. As mentioned earlier, the king's names (The NOMEN and PRÆNOMEN in particular) have the expressions  and  written above them respectively. You may now be wondering why the two names that can be seen in this inscription are preceded by the expressions "  " (*nb-ḫꜥw*) and "  " (*nb-tꜣwj*) instead; the reason for this is that these two epithets are simply variants of the previous ones. "" is translated as "Lord of the crowns" and "" as "Lord of the Two Lands" (said lands being Upper and Lower Egypt). "" can hence act as a substitute for "" and "" can act as a substitute for "". Please note, however, that "" is generally written as either "  " (with dots) or "" (without dots) instead of the variant you see here. This king's PRÆNOMEN also introduces us to yet another trilateral hieroglyphic sign, namely "  " (*ḏsr*).

Another great source for the names of kings are the so-called King Lists; there exist a number of these, such as the Abydos King List or the Karnak King List. Let us thus try deciphering some names found on the Abydos King List (for a full view of this list, please view the image on page 116): —

§6

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 

You should be able to read these names without much trouble. If you are unsure regarding the phonetic values of the bi- and trilateral symbols, I would recommend taking another look at the lists starting on page 90.

COMMON FORMULÆ AND EXPRESSIONS (AND THEIR UNDERLYING GRAMMAR)

We have just finished studying the very basics of hieroglyphic writing and the knowledge you have gained thus far allows you to read the names of many a Pharaoh. The next step will involve us learning some more vocabulary and, most importantly, some grammar which will enable you to read longer inscriptions. One of the most common inscriptions you will find are so-called offering formulæ. These were used extensively, especially on funerary items, and because of these formulæ's extensive use, they were often abbreviated and may look rather bizarre. We will hence be studying a few different varieties of these formulæ so that you can get accustomed to their often rather strange structure and appearance.

Please note that — as offering formulæ are a major part of hieroglyphic inscriptions — we will be looking at a large number of them. The reasoning behind doing this is rather simple: by looking at a large number of these formulæ from a multitude of sources, you will gain a good understanding of their underlying structure. I would also advise against reading this chapter in one sitting, as there are many inscriptions to read and a lot of grammar and vocabulary to learn; instead, I urge you to approach these inscriptions slowly by learning at most two per day, my recommendation being concentrating on only one daily. Spreading your learning over a period several days

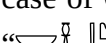
like this will increase the amount of information you will, in the end, retain.

Introduction to the different offering formulæ

Before we start our attempt at reading a few different formulæ, we should first be aware of their most basic structure. The type we will be looking at can all be classified as so-called offering formulæ. This particular type of formula is probably the one that is used the most and it was generally seen of funerary items; its general structure is as follows: —

Most offering formulæ begin with an expression that we have already looked at before, namely  (*ḥtp-ḏj-nswt*, written as *nswt-ḥtp-ḏj* due to honorific transposition). This translates as "An offering which the king gives" or "An offering given by the king".

Immediately following this expression is the name of a deity; the most commonly used gods for such offering formulæ being ANUBIS ( , *jnpw*) or OSIRIS ( , *wsjr*[xii]). Note that ANUBIS is also often written with the determinative "  " instead.

The subsequent expressions, written directly after the names of the god, were some descriptive phrases regarding him. In the case of OSIRIS, these were usually "  " (*nb-ḏdw*) and "  " (*nb-ꜣbḏw*). These translate as "Lord of DJEDU" and

"Lord of ABYDOS", respectively; a list of the contents of the offerings was then added thereafter.

These expressions also introduce us to a number of new hieroglyphic symbols. The first new hieroglyph we encounter is "  " which is a bilateral hieroglyph which stands for the sound-sequence "*ḏd*". The next new hieroglyph is "  "; this particular one does not actually have a phonetic value as it is a determinative usually used for representing the concept of "town" or "city". The last two hieroglyphs, "  " and "", are bilateral and represent the sound-sequences "*ꜣb*" and "*ḏw*", respectively.

One of the offering formulæ on PM 5999

The first offering formula we will be looking at is one dedicated to the god OSIRIS; it can be found on a star calendar located in the Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum in Hildesheim (item number PM 5999; for more information regarding this calendar, please read the excursus on page 68).

In addition, I have separated the inscription into two parts: the first part of the inscription will serve as an easy introduction, as it does not include a great amount of new vocabulary or grammar; the second half of the inscription, however, will be slightly more difficult.

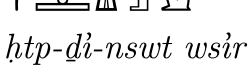
Furthermore, a photo of the entire inscription can be found on page 117.

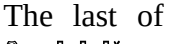
First half

We will begin by looking at the first half of the inscription: —

The transliteration of this inscription is as follows: —

ḥtp-ḏi-nswt wsir nb-ḏdw nṯr ꜥ nb-ȝbḏw m sw.t=f nb…

We are already familiar with the first part of the inscription () which translates as “An offering which the king gives to OSIRIS, Lord of DJEDU”). The part immediately following this, however, is “  ” and thus something we have not seen previously. The hieroglyph “” is a bilateral hieroglyph representing the sound-sequence “ꜥȝ” but it can also be used to mean “great”; the entire expression hence translates as “The great God” which was frequently written before the names of gods. The subsequent, “  ”, is an expression we have already met previously, namely “Lord of ABYDOS”.

The last of the phrases of this half of the inscription, "  ”, is, once more, unknown to us and explaining it

will require us to study a few more aspects of the grammar of the Egyptian language: —

The first hieroglyphic sign of this phrase is a simple, unilateral hieroglyph, namely "  ". It is here used as a so-called "preposition". A preposition is something you place in front of (i.e. "pre") a word to connect it to another; examples for this in English include "for", "of", "in", "into", "from", et cetera. Egyptian, like virtually all languages on Earth, had a number of prepositions and, like English, they were generally rather short. The preposition "" is here used like the English "in" (i.e. being inside of something, such as a house); it has a few other uses as well, but we will not concern ourselves with those at the moment.

We have already seen the hieroglyphs in the subsequent parts of this phrase as well, albeit in a different situation. "  " is a bilateral hieroglyph that, in this case, is a shortened version of the ideogram "  " meaning "palace". It has been written thrice in this particular instance () to mark the plural of this word, i.e. turning "palace" into "palaces". There are quite a few other ways of marking the plural of a word but we will only discuss these in-depth once we see actually them in use.

Let us talk about the pronunciation and transliteration of this word, however; it is not, as you may have believed, transliterated as "*st-st-st*". Rather, its transliteration is "*sw.t*" — why is this? Just like in English, Egyptian words receive a special ending when they are in the plural; every word not ending on a "-*t*" in the singular simply receives an "-*w*". An

example of this is the word for god "*nṯr*" which turns into "*nṯr.w*" in the plural. Words ending on a "*-t*", however, form the plural slightly differently: the "*-w*" is not added after the "*-t*" (like it was with *nṯr*) and it is instead added just before it. You could also say that the "*-t*" is removed and instead an "*-wt*" is added onto the word. The word "*nṯr.t*" (goddess) thus turns into "*nṯr.wt*". You may be asking yourself why the words ending on a "*-t*" have a different plural ending from those ending on all other consonants. The reason behind this is that words ending on a "*-t*" are actually (grammatically) feminine. Feminine words include obviously feminine things, such as beings that are female (such as goddess or lady) but also inanimate objects such as "palace".

The last part of this half of the inscription, a mere "  " is used to show possession. The "  " is a so-called "suffix"; a suffix is something you add onto a word to change its meaning. This particular suffix is usually translated as "his" but, unlike the English word, is written not before but after the word it refers to. This particular set of suffixes is called "suffix pronouns" and they have other uses besides showing possession; we will, however, not cover these until we see them in use. Suffixes are always connected to the previous noun using an equal sign in the transliteration (*st=f*).

The last part of this inscription, "  " does not actually mean "lord"; instead, when "" is placed at the end of a phrase, it has the meaning of "all" or "every"

The entirety of the phrase “  ” can thus be translated as “in all (of) his palaces” or “in every one of his palaces”.
The entirety of this half of the inscription can hence be translated as follows: “An offering given by the king to OSIRIS, Lord of DJEDU, the great God, Lord of ABYDOS, in all his palaces”.

Second half

Now that we have discussed the first part of the offering formula, let us start looking at the second half; this half will be slightly more difficult to understand and we will not actually be covering the entirety of it: —

The transliteration of the parts we will be focussing on is as follows: —

prt-ḫrw t ḥ(n)ḳt kꜣ ꜣpd m wꜣg n kꜣ n ỉmꜣḫy ḫr wsỉr

Let us begin by talking about the very first hieroglyphic sign: “  ”. This sign is transliterated as “*prt-ḫrw*” and it can be translated in a few different ways, the most common translation being “voice offering”. As it is a very common expression used

on a great number of monuments, not all of the phonetic signs are actually present. The first part of this expression, "*prt*", is translated as "emergence (which, on its own, is usually written as ) and the second part is translated as "voice" (the full version of which is generally written as ). The voice offering was a way for a deceased Pharaoh to participate in the offerings given to gods during festivals. Also note that, instead of writing "  ", it was also very common to see it written as "  ", instead. The "" is actually a trilateral hieroglyph representing the sound-sequence "*ḫrw*".

Let us now focus our attention to the actual contents of the voice offering, namely "  " (the hieroglyphics on the left side are, as a matter of fact, the same as the hieroglyphs at the bottom of "  "). These are, once more, heavily shortened versions of actual words. Let us therefore take a quick look at the full versions of these words, their transliteration and translation: —

Shortened version	Full version	Transliteration	Translation
 or		*t*	bread
		*ḥ(n)qt*	beer
		*kꜣ*	ox
		*ꜣpd*	duck

These expressions also introduce us to a few new hieroglyphic signs, so let us take a look at these as well. “  ” and “  ” are determinatives for a loaf of bread, whereas “  ” is a roll of bread; these will often be used when referring to loaves of one form or another. The “  ” hieroglyph is a determinative too, generally used when referring to alcoholic beverages in a type of vessel (most commonly with beer); the offerings hence consist of bread, beer, ox and ducks.

The next part of the inscription, “  ” is actually part of “  ” and is used as a determinative for “offering loaves” here.

This is then followed by the preposition “  ” once more, which is here used like the English “during”. This, in return, is followed by “  ” (*wꜣg)*, which is the name of one of OSIRIS’ festivals, namely the WAG-Festival. Here we encounter yet another new hieroglyph: “”. This is a bilateral sign which stands for the sound-sequence “*wꜣ*”

The next part of the inscription “  ” will, once again, require us to study some more of the language’s grammar. The very first “  ” is yet another preposition which is, in this instance, equivalent to the English “for”. “” hence translates as “For the KA”. The “” below the “” is, however, not a preposition per se; instead, it is here used to mark what is known as the “indirect genitive”. I have mentioned this before (p. 32) but we will now discuss it more in-depth. The genitive is a way of showing possession, just like the previously mentioned suffix pronoun “”; unlike this, however, the genitive can be used to link two words, whereas “” can only

be used to show that a specific person — "he" — possesses a certain object. You cannot use "  " to connect "house" and "Marvin" to form "Marvin's house" or "The house of Marvin"; the indirect genitive marker "  ", however, can be used for exactly this purpose.

There exists, however, another way of marking the genitive, known as the "direct genitive". We have already seen this particular variant of the genitive being used rather frequently. It is formed by simply putting one word next to another; thus, instead of saying "The house of Marvin", you would simply write "The house Marvin". If we look at the phrase "  " once more, we can see that the word "  " directly precedes "" without any connecting word in-between. The literal translation would thus be "Lord ABYDOS"; but as this makes little sense, we can assume the direct genitive here and translate it as "Lord *of* ABYDOS". Writing this phrase using the indirect genitive would yield "  " instead. "" can thus be translated as "For the KA of…"; in this particular instance, it is for the KA of "  " (*jmꜣḫy)*, which translates as "The revered one". The hieroglyphic sign "  " is actually a rare occurrence of a quadrilateral hieroglyph, i.e. one that represents four sounds. This particular one stands for the sound-sequence "*jmꜣḫ*".

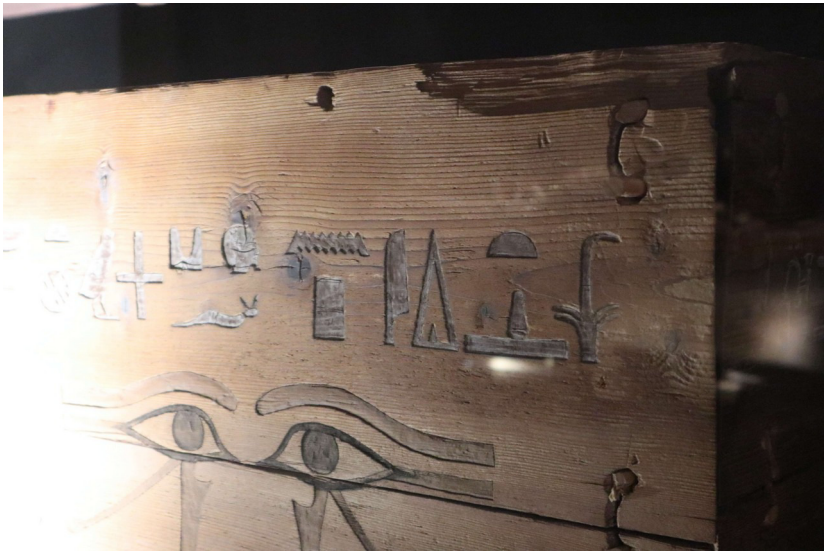
All this is then followed by yet another preposition, namely "  " which translates to "before" in this particular instance.

The inscription then ends with the name of the god OSIRIS once more.

The entirety of this half of the offering formula can thus be translated as follows: “A voice offering (consisting of) bread, beer, ox (and) ducks during the WAG-Festival, for the KA of the revered one before OSIRIS.”

Offering formula on PM 2511

Let us now study part of the offering formula dedicated to ANUBIS. This small excerpt of an offering formula will serve as a basis for other offering formulæ dedicated to ANUBIS that we will be discussing shortly. This particular one can be found on the sarcophagus belonging to IDU II. who was an official of the king; it is currently located in the Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum (item number PM 2511): —



And the transliteration of this is as follows: —

ḥtp-ḏi-nswt ỉnp(w) tp(ỉ) ḏw=f ỉm(ỉ)-wt …

We are already aware of the meaning of the first part of this formula (). Immediately following this is one possible hieroglyphic spelling of ANUBIS, namely "  " (*jnp*); it is here written both without the unilateral "*w*" and without any determinative. What then follows are two very common

epithets of ANUBIS, the first one being "  ", translating as "(he who is) upon his mountain". The first part of this expression, "", is a shortened writing of "  " which is yet another preposition translating as "on top of" or "upon"; the hieroglyph "" located therein is a bilateral one, representing the sound-sequence "*tp*". The hieroglyphic symbol placed thereafter is one we are already familiar with, namely ""; it represents the sound-sequence "*ḏw*", if you recall, but has the meaning of "mountain" in this instance. The word mountain would usually be written with a stroke underneath "" but is here written in its shortened form. The "" is once again a suffix pronoun, translating as "his" in this case.

The last of his epithets on this particular inscription is "" which translates to "(He who is) in(side) the bandages"[a]. Please note that this epithet is generally written differently, namely with the "" determinative instead of the "" one.

The first part of this epithet, "", is a shortened version of the word ""; this is actually based on the preposition "" and has a very similar meaning. It is usually translated as "he who is inside", i.e. a person that is inside of something or some place. The "" therein stands for the sound-sequence "*jmj*".

The last part of this expression, ""[xiii] (*wt*), is generally translated as "bandages"; it is often also translated as simply "*wt*". Thus, the entire inscriptions reads: "An offering which

a He is called this as he was the god associated with mummification.

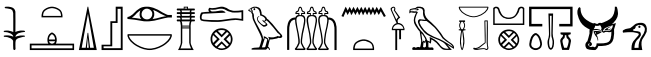
the king gives before ANUBIS, he who is upon his mountain (and) he who is in the bandages".

Offering formulæ on a sarcophagus from Saqqara

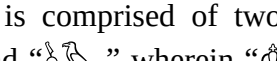
We will now be looking at the offering formulæ that are located on a sarcophagus found in Saqqara. All these photos were sourced from (Weidenbach, *Altes Reich. Dynastie IV. Ff. Pyramiden von Saqara [.Saqqârah]: Sarkophag Aus Grab 10. a. b. c. d. Innenseite; e. f. g. h. Aussenseite.*) and the entirety of this image can be found on page 118. We will begin by looking at an offering formula dedicated to OSIRIS.

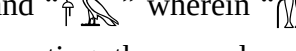
First offering formula to OSIRIS

We will not be focussing on the end of this formula; the transliteration of the parts we will be looking at is as follows: —



ḥtp-ḏi-nswt wsir nb-ḏdw ḫnt(i)-imnt(i)w nb ꜣḏw prt-ḫrw t ḥ(n)ḳt kꜣ

This formula starts similarly to the one we have seen before, namely with “  ”. It then continues by giving us yet another one of OSIRIS’ epithets: “  ”. This expression is comprised of two individual words, namely “  ” and “” wherein “” is a trilateral hieroglyphic sign representing the sound-sequence “*ḫnt*” and “” is a bilateral one representing “*tw*”. The hieroglyph “”[xiv] is yet another one of those rarely used quadrilateral hieroglyphs; this particular one is representing the sound-sequence “*jmnt*". The first part, “”[xv] is an adjective (i.e. a word used for describing another word, such as “fast”, “slow”, “grey”, et cetera) which can be translated as “foremost”. The second part of this epithet, “”, is generally translated as “Westerners”, which is in reference to the dead. The translation of the entirety of the expression “  ” is hence “Foremost of the Westerners” or also “Chief of the Westerners”; this expression was also commonly placed before the names of other gods of the dead, such as ANUBIS.

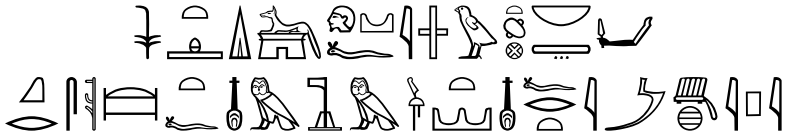
This is then followed by other expressions we have already seen before, namely “  ”. The contents of the voice offering, however, were written slightly differently in this particular instance; instead of placing the hieroglyphs “” and “” next to “” — as they were in the previous offering formula dedicated to OSIRIS — they are placed below it thus: .

§7: Please now attempt translating the entirety of this inscription. The solution can be found on in “Solutions to exercises” on page 93.

First offering formula to Anubis

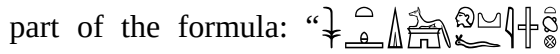
Now that we have discussed an offering formula dedicated to OSIRIS, it is now time to study a more complete version of the offering formula dedicated to ANUBIS. I have separated this formula into two parts. The first part will be rather similar to the offering formula dedicated to ANUBIS that we have seen previously; the second part, however, will differ quite significantly from the previously discussed formula; however, it should be simple enough to grasp once we have thoroughly looked at it and dissected it. So let us begin: —

I have separated the text into two parts as follows: —



nswt-ḥtp-ḏi ỉnpw tp(ỉ) ḏw=f ỉm(ỉ)-wt nb t3-ḏsr

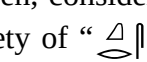
ḳrst=f nfr(t) m ḫrt-nṯr m ỉmn(t) zt nfrt ỉm3ḫw ỉpỉ

As a small exercise (§8), I would like you to translate the following part of the formula: “  ”. If you need some help, please take another look at the offering formula we discussed on page 57. You should, however, have no trouble with this if you have paid attention. I advise you to write down the translation and transliteration (by hand!), especially if you did have trouble; writing down things like this will help you retain more.

If you have finished the exercise, we can continue by looking at the subsequent parts. The next expression is yet another one of ANUBIS’ epithets, namely “  ” (*nb tȝ-ḏsr*). The literal translation of this expression is “Lord of the Sacred Land”; however, “*tȝ-ḏsr*”, while literally translating as “Sacred Land”, usually has the translation of “Necropolis”. This epithet is thus generally translated as “Lord of the Necropolis”. It is also not restricted to ANUBIS; instead, the god WEPWAWET () is also regularly addressed using this expression. His name literally translates to “Opener of the Ways” and he was originally a god associated with war; however, most likely because of the strong connection between war and death, he soon became similar in function to ANUBIS, turning into a god of the afterlife instead. He is also, like ANUBIS, commonly depicted as a jackal (as is also shown in the hieroglyphic writing of his name).

Let us turn our attention back to the inscription, however. We now have everything we need to translate the first half of the inscription and I would like you to do that on your own now

(§9). After finishing this, hopefully fairly easy, task we will continue with our study of this offering formula.

The second half of the formula details the contents of the offering and it starts with “  ” (*qrst=f*)[b] which I would translate as “(one of) his wonderful burials”. This expression also introduces us to two new determinative hieroglyphs, namely “  ” and “  ”; the first one () depicts a sarcophagus and the second one is a harpoon head. Why this particular hieroglyph is used here is unfortunately beyond my understanding. The following word is “  ” (*nfr*) which, in this particular instance, is written without any feminine ending — even though it should have been, considering the fact that *qrst* is a feminine word. The entirety of “  ” thus means “(one of) his wonderful burials”.

This is then followed by the preposition “  ” that we are already familiar with and a new word, namely “  ”. It is here used as logographic glyph representing another word for necropolis, namely “*ḫrt-nṯr*”. This is then succeeded by yet another “”; following this is the expression “  ” (*jmnt zt nfrt*) which is usually translated as “wonderful Western Desert”. Let us dissect this slightly further. The first hieroglyphic symbol is the one generally used when referring to “The West” or just “Western” in general; it is also the emblem associated with the goddess IMENTET, who represented the

b Remember that words ending on a “t” are feminine

western necropoleis. Following this is the word "  " which can either be transliterated as "*zmyt*" or "*zt*" and is here used in an abbreviated form; its translation is "desert" but also "necropolis". The word is usually written using the determinative "" (representing three hills) that should not be confused with the bilateral hieroglyphic symbol "  " (*ḏw*).

The rest offering formula involves expressions we have seen in one form or another before. "  " means "wonderful" (here written with the feminine *t*-ending since "  " is grammatically feminine) followed by "  " (The Revered One, re-read the chapter in which we discussed the offering formula on PM 5999, starting on page 49) and the name "".

§11: I would now like you to translate the entirety of this offering formula (ignoring the "  " following Ipi's name).

The remaining two offering formulæ

Now that we have successfully studied a large number of formulæ, I believe it is time to let you transliterate and translate the last remaining ones — one of them will be from ANUBIS and the other from OSIRIS. Translating and transliterating them should be a fairly easy ordeal, as they are virtually the same as the ones we have already discussed. Try transliterating them using both the regular transliteration and the MdC variant.

Solutions can, as always, be found starting on page 93. Good luck!

§11:

§12:

CONCLUSION

Congratulations, you have now studied enough of the Ancient Egyptian language to be able to read names and understand simple offering formulæ. As that was the main goal of the book, you can now, if you wish, stop reading; if, however, you would like to learn more about the language and the culture it spawned from, I invite you to keep on reading. The following pages will contain two different excursus wherein we will be unveiling the secrets behind the mysterious Egyptian star calendars and reading an excerpt of a story. Within these excursus, you will learn a lot of new vocabulary and grammar points; this time, however, I would like to ask you not to take any notes. The reason for this is that I will not be thoroughly explaining everything — that is something other, more in-depth books will teach you. Instead, these excursus are merely intended to provide you with some examples of what the language has to offer besides just monotonous formulæ and names. Should you instead wish to start using more advanced books right away, I recommend you take a look at the “Further Reading” section on page 119 wherein you will find some of my recommendations for continuing your study.

Excursus #1 — On the Mysterious Egyptian Star Calendars

One half of the star calendar at the Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum

In this excursus I will be discussing the Egyptian star calendars which are also known as star clocks; I will focus primarily on the diagonal star clock that is located in the Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum in the German city of Hildesheim. Please note that all of the photos referred to in this chapter were taken by myself unless otherwise stated.

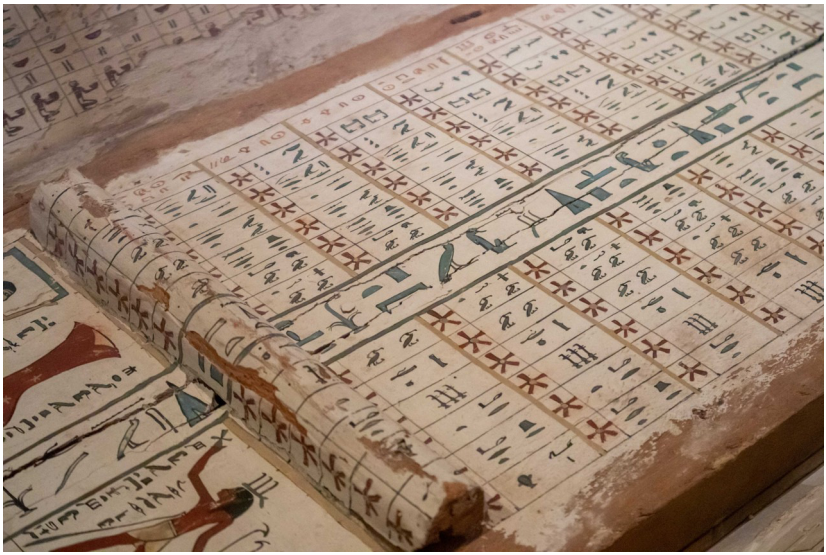
This excursus is intended mainly for those who are interested in Egyptian astronomy and date-keeping; reading this is thus in no way required to learn the basics of Egyptian hieroglyphic writing. I would also like to point out that the information presented herein is, in many cases, mere speculation. It seems that star clocks are not the focus of much research and thus, finding information about them is rather challenging. There do exist a number of books on these calendars, but they are quite difficult to come by (such as Christian Leitz' book "Altägyptische Sternuhren"). I was therefore required to use the information available to me online and at my local library. I am, however, fairly confident about understanding the basics of this star clock now.

I would like to start off by stating that the term "clock" may be slightly misleading since we generally think of clocks are something mechanical or electronic; but since these "clocks" have absolutely nothing mechanical or electronic about them, I prefer to use the term "star calendar", as they more closely resemble a modern-day calendar than they do a clock.

If you look at it for the first time, however, you may be wondering how this could have possibly been used as a calendar; after all, it does not look quite like the calendars we use today. In order to answer this, we will be looking at every single one of the important parts of this calendar and see how they connect in order to form a calendar.

Before we begin, you should firstly know that we will only be focussing on the middle section of the calendar, as the outer parts, for the most part, consist of offering formulæ to Anubis

and Osiris; and secondly, be aware that this calendar is read from right to left (for further information regarding this I would recommend re-reading the chapter “The Direction of Reading” starting on page 16).



Close-up of some of the rows

Let us begin by examining the calendar’s structure. As you can see in the picture, there are several rows (twenty-seven in total) of hieroglyphic writing, each one of which contains twelve columns with the name of a BAKTIU ( , *bꜣk.tj(w)*) inside of it. The name BAKTIU literally translates as “He who works”; the reason for this name will become clear later on. A BAKTIU is the equivalent of what we would call a “constellation”. Unlike our constellations, however, a number

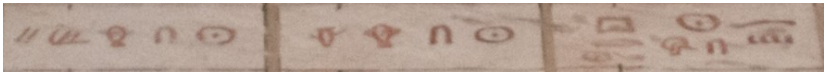
of them actually consisted only of one single star and there existed an entirety of thirty-six of these BAKTIU in total. Please note that these star (constellations) are also often referred to as "decan stars".

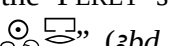
Let us return to the layout of the calendar. All of these aforementioned rows have a heading (written in red ink in the original photograph) which contain the name of the month and the week. One row is equivalent to one week of the Egyptian calendar and three of them are equal to an entire month. As an Egyptian week consisted of ten days, an entire row of twelve stars is actually equivalent to ten days and not twelve, as you may have believed at first. This, in return, means that an Egyptian month consisted of thirty days. However, this particular calendar is unusual in that it is actually incomplete; since there are merely twenty-seven visible rows — i.e. weeks — in this calendar, it only actually depicts about ⅔ of a year (270 days to be precise) and I have unfortunately been unable to find out why this is the case.

Let us now take a closer look at each of this calendar's components, starting with the headings. As mentioned previously, these contain the names of the month and of the week. The months do not actually have their own names and are marked simply with the name of the season as follows: once a new month begins, it is labelled as "The beginning of the first week of the beginning of the X-season" wherein the X is replaced by one of the three Egyptian seasons. The other months of a season are then simply labelled as "Second / Third / Fourth month of the X-season". The Egyptian seasons

are, in order of occurrence: "AKHET" ( , *ꜣḫt*), "PERET" ( , *prt*) and "SHEMU" ( , *šmw*). AKHET literally translates to "flooding" and generally lasted from July to November. The second season, PERET, literally translates as "Emergence" and it was the season during which you would plant your crops; it generally lasted from November to March. The last of the seasons, SHEMU, translates as "harvest" and it lasted from March to July.

The individual weeks of the month are labelled as "the middle week" and "the last week". Let us now look at an example: —



This picture depicts the fourth — and therefore last — month of the PERET season and its three weeks. The first part, "  " (*ꜣbd 4 hrw(.w) 10 tp(j) prt*) translates as "Fourth month, first week of PERET". The following two weeks are simply called "  " (*hrw(.w) 10 ḥr(j)-jb*) and "" (*hrw(.w) 10 ḥr(j)-pḥwj*) and translate as "middle week" and "last week" respectively.

I should point out that even though I use the word "week", this is actually not entirely accurate since the Egyptian week actually consisted not of seven but of ten days. The name for "week" in Egyptian is also simply "The ten days" ( , *hrw(.w)*

10 tp(.j)). That is also the reason for Egyptian weeks being referred to as "decans" in English.[a]

So why, you may wonder once more, does each row consist of twelve columns and not ten? The answer is slightly more complicated. The columns do not actually refer to a particular day; instead, they refer to one of the thirty-six BAKTIU. As mentioned previously, the BAKTIU are the Ancient Egyptian equivalent of what we would refer to as constellations but they do not actually correspond to our constellations; instead, the Ancient Egyptians had their own, unique set of star formations which have, for the most part, nothing in common with ours. These would rise consecutively in the sky at night and every ten days, a new one would appear and an old one would disappear thus marking the beginning of a new Egyptian week; hence, the twelve columns actually refer to the twelve hours of night-time and every hour, one of twelve BAKTIU would rise in the night sky. The first BAKTIU to rise is the one at the bottom of the row.

We will once more look at the fourth month of PERET, this time focussing not on the heading but the row underneath, containing the BAKTIU (see image on page 115 for a more detailed view). As you can see, the BAKTIU at the bottom of the first first week (the row on the very right) is "  " (*knmwt*). This BAKTIU would have been the first to rise in the night sky during that week. If you take a look at the subsequent week, however, you can see that "  " is no longer the first to rise,

a This also explains why Baktiu are frequently referred to ask "decan stars" in English.

instead having been replaced by “  ” (*zꜣwj knmwt*). This is also the reason for this specific calendar being a *diagonal* star calendar, since the BAKTIU move diagonally up the table with each new week. You can see “  ” (*spdt*) moving up diagonally across the calendar in this picture: —

Since these BAKTIU were — and are — actual stars, we should theoretically still be able to see them on the night sky; and we probably do. The problem, however, lies in finding out what these BAKTIU are actually equivalent to in terms of modern star names. We know the equivalent of only a few number of them, such as “  ” (*sꜣḥ*) which is generally regarded as being the equivalent to Orion; or the previously mentioned “” which is believed to be the equivalent to the star we now refer to as Sirius. The modern-day equivalent of the majority of the Ancient Egyptian decan stars are, however, unknown to us. The only attempt I was able to find is a paper by Juan Antonio Belmonte from the Instituto de Astrofisica de Canarias in Tenerife, Spain entitled “The Decans and the Ancient Egyptian Skylore: An Astronomer’s Approach”. This paper also starts with a quote regarding the research behind Ancient Egyptian

decan stars from the Austrian-American mathematician and astronomer Otto E. Neugebauer that I find very fitting and which I will repeat here: —

> "To attempt to go further in the determination of the decans is not only of very little interest but would necessarily imply ascribing to our texts an astronomical accuracy which they never intended to have" (Belmonte 1)

In his paper, Juan tries to predict which stars the decans are associated to by comparing the time at which they rose in the night sky (which can be seen on the star calendars) with those we already know the modern-day equivalent of (such as ); additionally, he rates his predictions on a scale of 1 (Speculative) to 5 (Almost sure). Let us therefore take a look at a couple of his predictions. He proposes for example — as we are quite sure that "  " (*ḫꜣw*, which can be translated as "myriad" or "flock") is equivalent to what we now know as the Pleiades — that "  " (*art*, Juan translates this as "Jaw" or "Rising Stars" in his paper) is the modern-day Hyades star cluster and the constellation α Tauri. Alpha Tauri also contains a star known as "Aldebaran" which is a word of originially Arabic origin (اَلدَّبَرَان, *ad-dabarān*) which translates as "The follower"; it got this name as it seemingly follows the Pleiades in the night-sky. Juan thus assumed, as "" directly follows "" on the Egyptian star calendars, that it must be Aldebaran. He rates this prediction as "almost sure". A prediction he is less

sure of, for example, is equating the decan star "  " (*ḥrj-jb wjꜣ*, which is translated as "In the middle of the boat"*)* to Alpha and Beta Capricorni (Belmonte 10–11). These stars are, as their names would already suggest, part of the Capricornus constellation (which, incidentally, is the constellation associated with the zodiac sign of Capricorn well). They also have their own proper names: α Cap is known as Giedi (from الجدي, *al-jady* meaning "young goat") and β Cap as Dabih (which, once more, is a word of Arabic origin, namely الذابح, *al-dhābiḥ*; it translates as "The butcherer"). As mentioned previously, however, he is less sure regarding the accuracy of this prediction as he rates this one as "probable" (3) instead.

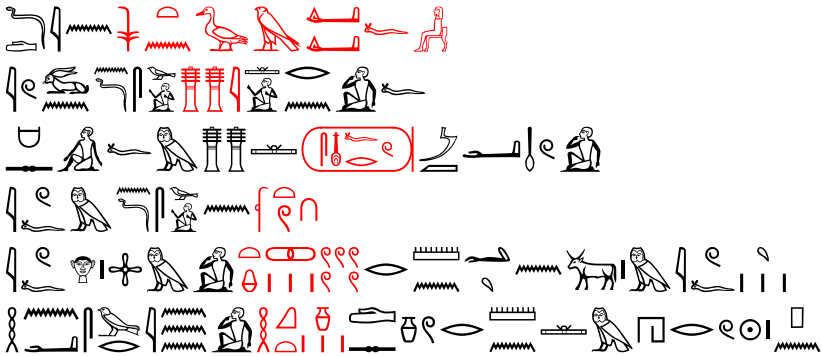
As you can clearly see, even though we have had a lot of time to try and figure out what these Ancient Egyptian constellations actually are, unable to know for certain what stars they actually refer to. This is, I believe, due to the facts that it is both very difficult to do and apparently also not something of interest for the majority of professors, as Neugebauer's quote clearly shows — which I find to be a pity.

EXCURSUS #2 — WESTCAR PAPYRUS

So far, we have mainly focussed on texts we would generally not see in the modern world — especially in the West. However, there do exist quite a large number of papyri that have similarities to what we would now refer to as either a novella or a short story; one of these is the Westcar Papyrus. It contains five stories told by a royal son about miracles performed by priests. As reading the entirety of the papyrus requires an advanced level of knowledge about the language, we will instead be looking at a small excerpt of story number four which was told by the royal son HARDJEDEF.

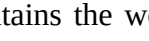
Before we begin reading the story, however, I would once more like to stress that you will almost certainly not be able to understand the majority of the text and that this is completely normal and to be expected. I will be explaining everything as we go along and if you do not understand something, do not worry; once you have read more advanced books on Ancient Egyptian, you will almost certainly find it much easier.

As mentioned before, this is an excerpt from a story told by the royal son HARDJEDEF and the part of the story we will be looking at appears very close to the beginning of the story and goes as follows (please note that the line breaks are not the same as they are in the original text): —

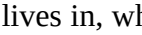


What we already know

As this may look rather daunting, let us start off by looking at the words and names we can already read and understand without much trouble; these are marked in red (light grey in the print version).

“  ” contains the words for king () and son () and the name  (HARDJEDEF). If you remember the concept of the direct genitive (p. 56), you can easily figure out that combining “king” and “son” yields the translation “king’s son”; this can then be re-worded more nicely as “royal son”. The name of the royal son,  contains a determinative hieroglyphic symbol at the end () which is placed there merely to signify the reader that this is indeed the name of a royal male[a].

a Names often ended in a determinative hieroglyphic sign; this was done in order to clearly mark that name as a name. The most common determinatives used for this purpose were “  ” for males and “  ”; however, as this name is that of a royal, it instead ends in “  ” (officially called “noble on chair”).

The next name we can read without much trouble is that of the commoner HARDJEDEF is speaking of, namely “  ” (DJEDI, *ḏdj*). Additionally, we can also read the name of the town he lives in, which is “  ” (DJED-SNEFERU, ḏd-snfrw). Interestingly enough, in both the name of the person and the town, the bilateral hieroglyph “ḏd” has actually been written twice (instead of simply); why this is the case is, unfortunately, not known to me.

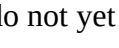
The next part you should be able to understand is “  ” (*rnpt 110*) which actually cites the supposed age of the commoner, namely 110.

The last two words you should have no trouble understanding are “  ” (bread) and “” (beer) as we have seen both of these whilst we were discussing the voice offering (p. 54).

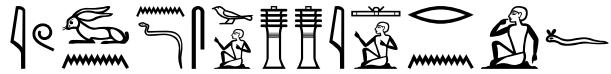
Putting it all together

Now that we have looked at all the words you can already understand, let us continue by looking at the excerpt line by line and figuring out the meaning of those sentences, expressions and words we do not yet know. We will also be encountering quite a lot of new grammatical concepts along the way.

First line

The very first line should be easy to understand as we already know the majority of the words contained within it. The only phrase we do not yet understand is “  ”. It contains a verb[b] (, *ḏd)* and yet another preposition (, *jn*); they translate as “to speak” and “by” respectively. Combining these two yields a very common expression that I will translate as “spoken by” but it can also be translated as “a recitation by…”; this is commonly placed before the beginning of direct speech[c] and its usage is therefore quite similar to that of the quotation marks (“”) in English. The entirety of this first line can thus be translated as follows: “Spoken by the royal son HARDJEDEF” or “A recitation by the royal son HARDJEDEF”.

Second line



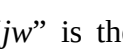
We have just finished examining the rather simple first line of this interesting papyrus and it is now time to delve deeper into both the story and some of the intriguing grammatical concepts the language has to offer.

b Verbs are words that describe something that can be done, such as “to speak”, “to laugh”, “to write” et cetera. In German primary schools, verbs are frequently referred to as “Tuwörter” (lit. “Doing words”) as this describes their function rather adequately.

c Direct speech, as opposed to indirect speech, echoes the exact words of the speaker; it can be seen as being the same as a quote or citation.

Let us begin by taking a look at the first part of this line, namely "  " (*jw wnn nḏs*). The very first word of this is "  "[xviii] which is something known as a "grammatical particle". Grammatical particles are, generally, very tiny words that often cannot directly be translated in English but which change the sentence in subtle ways. There actually exist scores of these particles in the Egyptian language and we shall be meeting another one of them fairly soon.

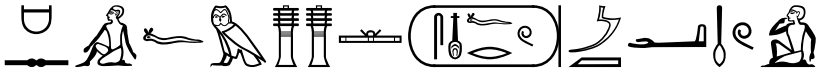
This particular particle has an interesting function, as its main purpose is to mark the sentence that follows it as "true". More specifically, "*jw*" placed at the beginning of a verbal sentence signifies that said sentence is believed to be true. Therefore, this particle works quite similarly to a regular statement in English and is frequently seen at the beginning of Egyptian verbal sentences. Another example of such a particle is "  " (*ḥɜ*) which is generally used to express wishes or a polite request (cf. English "may").

Following the "*jw*" is the verb "  " (*wnn*, here written simply as "*wn*" for reasons we shall not go into in this book) which translates to "to exist"; in this instance, however, I feel the more fitting translation should be "to be", which, in this instance, can be further refined to "There is…".

The word that follows is "  " (*nḏs*) — a noun translating to "commoner" — which itself is followed by this, previously discussed, name: "Djedi" ().

This line ends on “  ” (*rn=f*) wherein “” (*rn*) is a noun meaning “name” and “” is the previously discussed suffix pronoun for “his”.

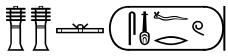
Third line

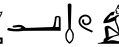


The third line, just as the previous ones, contains quite a number of new vocabulary and grammar points; but not to worry. Everything should, after a quick explanation, be quite easily understandable.

The lines begins with a verb — “  ” (*ḥmsj*), which means “to live (somewhere)” or “to reside” — to which the suffix pronoun “  ” has been appended; this time, however, it is not translated as “his” (“his to reside” or something along the lines of that would make little grammatical sense in this context). Instead, it is here used to denote the subject of the verb “  ”. The “subject” of a verb refers to *who* is doing the action the verb describes, i.e. *who* resides? The commoner (“he”). The correct linguistic terminology for this would be “personal (suffix) pronoun”. The Egyptian language has several groups of these pronouns and the group we have been studying so far is known as “suffix pronouns”; they are called “suffix” pronouns because they are, quite simply, added behind the verb they describe (i.e. “*ḥmsj=f*” = “lives-he” instead of the English

"he lives"). The suffix pronouns can also be used to show possession; they are then added after a nouns and this is how we have seen them used up to this point.

This is then followed by the name of the town he resides in, which has a, perhaps, rather strange structure: "  " (*ḏd-snfrw mɜʿ-ḫrw*) which translates to "DJED-SNEFERU, true of voice"; we will have to dissect this to be able to fully understand it.

The first part, "  " is a verb meaning "to endure" and is commonly seen before the names of people. "  " (Snfrw → Sneferu) is the name of the first Pharaoh of the 4th dynasty[d]; and the last part of this town's name, "  " (*mɜʿ-ḫrw)* was a common epithet for deceased Pharaohs or the general populace. Its literal meaning is "true of voice" and infers that the person is among the dead which have been deemed righteous; another frequent — perhaps more frequent, actually — translation of this epithet is "justified".

The town's name is thus "DJED-SNEFERU, justified" and it used to be a Pyramid Town at Meidum (ميدوم), located in Lower Egypt.

Fourth line

d The 4th dynasty was at around 2700 BC.

As we already know a majority of the words and grammatical concepts of this line, I shall mostly focus on the rather peculiar usage of “  ”.

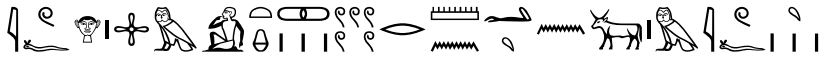
The line begins with the “*jw*” we have discussed a few pages back, to which the suffix pronoun “*=f*” has been appended this time. Even though “*jw*” has no direct English translation, the “*jw* + suffix pronoun” construct can be translated as the verb “to be”; thus, we can translate “*jw=f*” as “he is”.

Following this is an “m” which, in this case, is not the previously discussed preposition “in”, but rather yet another one of these strange grammatical particles. This “m” is frequently seen following the “*jw=f*” construct and is something known as a “temporary identity particle”; the name may sound rather daunting — and it is indeed quite a foreign concept to English speakers —, but it should not be too difficult to grasp once I have explained its usage more in-depth.

In a society very much focussed on death and the dead, it should not be a surprise to anyone that the Egyptian language had ways of differentiating between an “eternal truth” and a “temporary” one. Let us translate the entirety of the fourth line to start with and I shall try to elaborate the usage of “m”; its translation is as follows: “He is a commoner (who is) 110 years of age”. The m’s purpose here is to clarify that only at the moment of the story happening was the person being written about a commoner and 110 years old; it should be quite obvious that both one’s age and occupation are not eternally true. One’s occupation may change and one’s age definitely does. The “m” then is there to tell the reader that what has been written may,

most likely, no longer be true by the time the text is read — Djedi is now, and I am quite certain of that, no longer a commoner; and even if he is, he surely is not a mere 110 years of age anymore. For more information on this interesting particle, please see the “Grammar” section in the Appendix; particularly, page 105.

Fifth Line



The upcoming two lines contain a lot of new vocabulary and grammar concepts; I would thus like to stress once more that, should you not understand something, this is merely an excursus to showcase some more interesting pieces of Ancient Egyptian literature. If you wish to learn the language more thoroughly, please skip ahead to the “Further Reading and References” section on page 119.

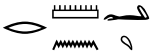
The fifth line begins, once more, with “” and continues with “  ” (*ḥr wnm*) wherein “  ” is the verb “to eat” and “” is yet another one of the language’s wonderful grammatical particles. This particle is often used in combination with a verb to create what is known as the “continuous aspect” which is used to say that a specific action — that which the verb describes — is an incomplete action that was in progress at a specific time; English examples for this are

“I am eating” — as opposed to “I eat” — or “I have been eating”.

The Egyptian “  ” thus means “He has been eating”.

The literal meaning of “  ” is “on” or “upon” and is hence used quite similarly to how the continuous aspect works in, for example, Dutch or German[e] as these languages use the word “on” or “at” for it as well.

Following this is the word for “bread” () and the number 500 (); “500 bread” may sound odd and in English you would usually add a special quantifier word in front of the word for bread as follows: “500 *loaves* of bread”[f]. The entire sentence, so far at least, can therefore be translated as follows: “He has been eating 500 loaves of bread, …”

This is then followed by what else he has been eating, namely “  ” (*rmn n kꜣ m jwf*). The first word () is a noun meaning “shoulder” or “arm” (hence the arm determinative) which is connected to “  ” using an indirect genitive construction; we can therefore translate this as “a shoulder of beef” or “the shoulder of an ox”.

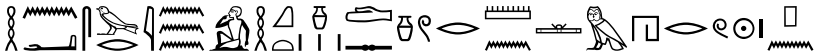
The last two words are “  ” — the preposition “in” — and “  ” (*jwf*) which is a noun meaning “meat”.

e Ik ben *aan* het eten; Ich bin *am* Essen. Both translate to “I am *on* the eating”.

f Once more, this isn’t required in languages such as German either; there, saying “500 Brote” (500 breads) is completely grammatically correct.

Combining everything we have discussed yields the translation “He has been eating 500 loaves of bread, a shoulder of bread for meat…”; the sentence does not end here and will continue on the following line, hence the ellipsis.

Sixth line

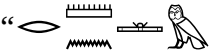


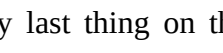
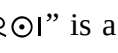
The last line we will be discussing is, I would argue, the most complex one. It is, as mentioned before, a continuation of the previous line — continuing the listing of things eaten or, in this case, drunk by the commoner — and starts with a very common “connection word” ( , ḥnᶜ) which would most easily translate into English as “and”. In other circumstances, “  ” may be used similarly to the English “with”, but this is not the case here.

The word succeeding this is the verb “  ” (*zwr*) meaning “to drink”; it is here written as “*zwrj*”, but we shall not concern ourselves with why that is the case in this book. Also interesting to note is what appears to be three unilateral hieroglyphs representing “n” stacked on-top of one another (); this is, in fact, a determinative commonly used for things relating to liquids.

The noun which follows, “  ”, is one we have already met previous, with yet another noun — “  ” (*ds*), meaning “jar” — and the number 100 () — following it. If you combine

these three you get a literal translation of “beer jug 100” which we can easily translate into proper English as “100 jugs of beer”.

“  ” (*rm-n-m*) is a rather strange word that we shall not focus on too much; thus, for the sake of simplicity, we can simply translate it as “since” or “until”.

The very last thing on this line is “  ” (*hrw pn*) wherein “” is a noun meaning “day” and “  ” is a so-called “demonstrative pronoun” which, in this case, is quite simply the Egyptian variant of the English “this”; the difference between the two, however, is that the Egyptian “” *follows* the noun it refers to, whereas the English “this” precedes it.

We now have everything we need to completely understand this sentence and we will translate it thus: “… and has been drinking 100 jugs of beer since this day”; combining this with the previous sentence yields: “He has been eating 500 loaves of bread, a shoulder of bread for meat and has been drinking 100 jugs of beer since this day”.

SUMMARY

If you have come this far, it is fairly obvious that you are very interested in learning about Ancient Egypt, its culture and its language — and I commend that greatly. I would also like to congratulate you on finishing this book completely, including the excursus.

On the past few pages you learnt a great deal about some of the more interesting texts available in Ancient Egyptian and I hope this has made you realise there is more to Ancient Egyptian literature than just same-ish formulae and inscriptions.

If this book has made you want to continue your study of the Ancient Egyptian language, I highly recommend that you read the “Further Reading and References” section on page 119.

If you wish to learn slighty more in-depth information regarding the grammar points we discussed in this book, I highly recommend you check out the “Grammar” section in the Appendix starting on page 96.

APPENDIX

Here you will find an overview of all of the bi- and trilateral hieroglyphs we have discussed in the order in which they occurred and their transliteration. You will also find a number of grammatical tables, further explaining grammatical concepts we have discussed. These tables can be used as a handy reference when looking at inscriptions.

List of bilateral hieroglyphs

Bilateral Hieroglyph	Transliteration
	dj
	kꜣ
	mn
	nb
	pr
	rᶜ
	sw
	zꜣ or sꜣ
	ḥm
	mꜣ
	wr
	rw

	tꜣ
	ḏd
	ꜣb
	ḏw
	ꜥꜣ
	ḫꜥ
	wꜣ
	tp
	tw

List of trilateral hieroglyphs

Trilateral Hieroglyph	Transliteration
	ꜥnḫ
	ḥtp
	nfr
	ḫpr
	rnp
	jnj
	mꜣꜥ
	ḏsr
	ḫrw
	jmj

ḫnt

Solutions to exercises

Here you will find the solutions to the exercises and also a few more explanations regarding them.

§1. The transliterations of these are: "*mry*" (Mary), "*nw-yrk*" (New York), "*sy-ꜣtr*" (Seattle), "*mꜣrfyn*" (Marvin) and "*wꜣšyngtyn*" (Washington).

§2. This name is transliterated as "*ḫfw*". His English name is KHUFU, but he is also known as CHEOPS to the Greeks. He was the Pharaoh to commission the Great Pyramid of Giza.

§3. The transliteration of this name would be "*pdwrlmys*" which would be "PTOLEMAIOS" or "PTOLEMY" in English. Interestingly, his name is written not with a "t" but instead with a "d".

§4. This name is "*(zꜣ-rᶜ) tꜣhr(w)q"* which is generally written as TAHARQA or TAHARQO in English.

§5. His NOMEN is "*jmn-ḥtp*" (AMENHOTEP I.) and his PRÆNOMEN is "*ḏsr-kꜣ-rᶜ*" (DJESERKARE). His names translate to "AMUN is satisfied" and "Sacred is the KA of RE".

§6. These names are transliterated as follows: —

1. *ttj*, TETI in English
2. *qbḥ*, QEBEH in English
3. *mn-kꜣ-rᶜ*, MENKARE in English

4. *nfr-kꜣ-rᶜ*, NEFERKARE in English

5. *nṯr(.j)-kꜣ-rᶜ*, NEJTERKARE in English

6. *z-nfr-kꜣ*, SNEFERKA in English

§7. “An offering which the king gives to OSIRIS, Lord of DJEDU, foremost of the Westerners, Lord of ABYDOS, a voice offering of bread, beer, ox and ducks”.

§8. “An offering which the king gives and ANUBIS, he who is upon his mountain (and) he who is in the bandages.” Note that ANUBIS is here written with merely a determine and no phonetic hieroglyphs at all.

§9. “An offering which the kings gives and Anubis, he who is upon his mountain (and) he who is in the bandages, Lord of the Necropolis.” I would also accept “Lord of the Sacred Land” as a translation; this is, however, not generally done.

§10. “An offering which the king gives and Anubis, he who is upon his mountain, he who is in the bandages, Lord of the Necropolis; (one of) his wonderful burial(s) in the necropolis of the wonderful Western Desert to the Revered One Ipi”

§11. ANUBIS’ offering formula

1. Transliteration: *ḥtp-ḏj-nswt jnpw tp(j) ḏw=f jmj-wt nb tꜣ-ḏsr qrst=f nfr(t) m ḫrt-nṯr m imn(t) zt nfrt*

2. Transliteration MdC: *Htp-Dj-nswt jnpw tp(j) Dw=f jmj-wt nb tA-Dsr qrst=f nfr(t) m Xrt-nTr m imn(t) zt nfrt*

3. Translation: An offering given by the king and ANUBIS, he who is upon his mountain, he who is in the bandages, Lord of the Necropolis (Sacred Land); (one of) his wonderful burial(s) in the necropolis in the wonderful Western Desert.

§12. OSIRIS' offering formula

1. Transliteration: *ḥtp-ḏj-nswt wsjr nb ḏdw ḫnt(j)-jmn(j)tw nb ꜣbḏw prt-ḫrw ꜣpd kꜣ*

2. Transliteration MdC: *Htp-Dj-nswt wsjr nb Ddw xnt(j)-jmn(j)tw nb AbDw prt-xrw Apd kA*

3. Translation: An offering which the king gives and OSIRIS, Lord of Djedu, Foremost of the Westerners, Lord of Abydos; a voice offering (consisting) of ox and duck.

Grammar

Even though the main focus of this book was not to teach you the language's grammar in-depth — that is something I'd like to leave for more advanced books — I found it important to teach you at least some of the basic grammatical concepts of the language. Therefore, for a quick overview of the grammar points we touched upon in this book — including those from the excursus — please refer to the following pages; you will also find a lot of additional information regarding the grammar here that I found unnecessary to provide in the main text.

1. Nouns

Nouns are words that refer to people, objects, animals et cetera. There are two different categories of nouns, namely proper nouns and common nouns. Proper nouns are those that are generally written capitalised in English (such as the name of a town, i.e. London instead of london); common nouns are all others that refer to a general class of objects (i.e. the word "person" instead of a particular person such as "Amun", which would be written with a capital letter at the start).

1.1 The grammatical gender of nouns

Grammatical gender is quite a foreign concept to English speakers because, even though English used to have three grammatical genders, it no longer does. Therefore it is important for you to grasp that grammatical gender has very little to do with the *actual* gender of things; a chair is neither feminine nor masculine, it is just a *thing*. People tend to be referred to using their correct gender (like in German, "die Frau" and "der Mann") but most objects' genders rarely have anything to do with their actual gender; thus, I believe it is easier to think of grammatical gender as a way of categorising nouns into different groups.

Ancient Egyptian had two of these grammatical genders, "masculine" and "feminine".

1.2 Masculine nouns

Masculine nouns are basically all nouns that do not end in a "-t" and therefore make up the largest part of Ancient Egyptian vocabulary.

1.3 Feminine nouns

All feminine nouns' ending in Ancient Egyptian is the "-t"; this rule is absolutely consistent and *all* nouns ending in a "-t" are feminine. You can also turn masculine nouns into feminine ones by simply adding a "-t" onto the masculine word as follows: "nṯr" () → "nṯrt" () which translates to "god" and "goddess" respectively.

1.4 The plural of nouns

The plural of a noun is the version of a noun that refers to two or more things (house → houses). There actually exists a second type of plural in Ancient Egyptian called a "dual" that is used when speaking about exactly two of a thing; but as we did not discuss it in this book, we will be ignoring it.

Also, please note that, even though the plural can be written in a myriad of ways in Ancient Egyptian, the way it is actually formed grammatically is very consistent and easy to understand and remember.

1.4.1 Masculine nouns

The plural of masculine nouns is indicated by simply adding an "-w" to the end of the word: "nṯr" () → "nṯrw" () ("God" and "gods").

1.4.2 Feminine nouns

The plural of feminine nouns is formed quite similarly; however, instead of simply adding an "-w", you first remove the feminine "-t" ending and replace it with an "-wt" ending instead. An example of this is "nṯrt" () turning into "nṯrwt" ().

2. Pronouns

Pronouns are substitutes for nouns so that a noun does not have to repeated over and over again (such as “it”, “this”, “he” and so forth). There are different varieties of pronouns, but the two types that we discussed in this book are personal pronouns and demonstrative pronouns.

2.1 Personal pronouns

There are three different varieties of personal pronouns in Ancient Egyptian: suffix, enclitic / dependent and independent. As we have only discussed one of these, namely the suffix pronouns, we will ignoring the other two.

2.1.1 Suffix pronouns

Suffix pronouns are, as the name would already suggest, suffixed — that is, added to the end / appended — to a word. They are frequently used for showing possession (his, her, their, my …) or as the subject of a verb (see the section on verbs for more information). They are as follows:

Function	English meaning	Suffix pronoun
1st sg.	I, my, mine	-j (,)
2nd sg. m.	You, your (speaking to a man)	-k ()
2nd sg. f.	You, your (speaking to a woman)	-t ( , )

3rd sg. m.	He, his	-f ()
3rd sg. f.	She, her	-s ()
1st pl.	We, our	-n ()
2nd pl.	You, your (speaking to several people)	-tn (,)
3rd pl.	They, their	-sn ()

2.1.2 Demonstrative pronouns

We only spoke about demonstrative pronouns very briefly in the "Westcar Papyrus" excursus. Demonstrative pronouns, unlike personal pronouns, are used substitutes for objects, whereas personal pronouns generally only substitute beings. They can be divided into "close" (or proximate) and "distant" (or distal) variants, wherein the "close" version describes objects that are closer (this, these) and the "distant" version describes items that are further away (that, those).

2.1.2.1 Proximate demonstrative pronouns

The most commonly used proximate demonstrative pronouns are as follows:

Masculine	Feminine	Plural
pn ()	pn ()	nn ()

2.1.2.2 Distal demonstrative pronouns

The most commonly used distal demonstrative pronouns are as follows:

Masculine	Feminine	Plural
pf ()	tf ()	nf ()

3. Particles

Grammatical particles were only discussed in the "Westcar Papyrus" excursus, yet I believe a somewhat lengthy section detailing more of the minutiæ of these particles is warranted, because they are quite strange for speakers of basically all Western languages.

Particles are very small words that can change the meaning of a sentence in different, and often slight, ways. Egyptian actually has quite a large number of these particles and the ones we have discussed are "jw" (), "ḥꜣ" (), "ḥr" () and "m" ().

3.1 ḥꜣ

"  " was mentioned only briefly as it does not occur in any of the texts we have looked at. It is generally used to express a wish or like the English "may" ("May the day be good!")

3.2 jw

The "  " particle is one of the most common — if not *the* most common — particles of the language. It is, like most others, generally seen at the start of a sentence; its usage, however, is not actually known for absolute certain. There are a myriad of ideas floating around concerning the potential meaning of this particle, but so far, there is no theory agreed upon by every Egyptologist. The majority of people, however,

seem to follow the notion of "  " being particle that marks the following sentence as "true" or that the writer wishes to state that the sentence is a fact.
Loprieno, however, believes that it is a "particle of initiality", he states:

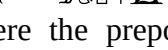
> "[…] [A] particle of initiality (*jw*) […] indicates that the corresponding adverbial sentence (*jw ḫnw m sgr*) opens a new segment of discourse." (Loprieno 162–63)

The extract of the sentence that he provides is "*jw ḫnw m sgr*" () which translates to "The residence is in silence".
Other people, such as James P. Allen, state that it does not mark the sentence as *generally* true but only as *temporarily* true; this means that, using Loprieno's sentence, the residence was in silence only temporarily and that it may no longer be silent at the time the reader is reading the text. This would make the usage of "  " somewhat similar to another particle we will be looking at, namely "  ".
Additionally, "  " can be combined with a suffix pronoun (*jw=f*, ); its translation is then very similar to the English verb "to be". For example, adapting Loprieno's sentence, you could write "" to mean "He is in the residence".
There *does* exist a separate verb for "to be" — namely "*wnn*" () — but it is used slightly differently and its meaning is akin

to the English construction of “there is / are” or the English verb “to exist”.
Generally speaking then, if you wish to express something similar to the English verb “to be”, you would usually use the “jw + suffix pronoun” construct.

3.3 m

The “  ” particle is one of the most peculiar particles of this language and it is frequently referred to as the “m of predication”; it is a rather strange-sounding name and I will thus try to elaborate on its usage.
This “  ” seems to be used to show that a certain characteristic — in the sentence that we looked at in this book, the characteristic would be of being a commoner () — is not inherent but something that was perhaps “acquired” later. Additionally, it could be translated as someone “(acting) in the capacity / position of (something)”; thus, “  ” could also be translated as “He is (acting) in the capacity / position of a commoner”.
Alan H. Gardiner puts it like this: —

> “Egyptian cannot say *ỉw·k sš* for ‘thou art a scribe’, but only  *ỉw·k m sš*, lit. thou art (as) a scribe.
> Here the preposition  *m* has the signification ‘in the position of’, ‘as’; hence it may be termed the ***m* of predication**.“ (Sir Alan Gardiner 40, §38.)

Because of this, I believe it can also be called a “temporary identity particle”, as the identity / qualities the person being written about has changes over time.

3.4 ḥr

The last article we discussed in this book is “  ”. It is used to express that an action was happening at a specific point in time (like the English “I eat” vs. “I am eating”). Its literal translation is “on” or “upon” and is therefore used almost identically to how German or Dutch create the progressive: “Ich bin am Essen” → “I am on the eating”. The linguistic term used for this is “continuous aspect”.

4. Adjectives

Adjectives are words used to describe the properties of an object or a being; the question you need to ask to find out whether or not something is an adjective is “how?”; for example “How is the house? Big.”
Egyptian has its fair share of these, just like English does — there is, however, one major difference: Egyptian adjectives change depending on the gender and number of the noun they are referring to which is something known as “declension”.

4.1 Declension of adjectives

Adjectives can take on three different forms: masculine, feminine and plural; the plural form is always the same, regardless of whether the noun being referred to is masculine plural or feminine plural.

4.1.1 Masculine declension

The masculine form of an adjective is the “basic” one which has no special ending. Examples include “nfr” (), “ꜥ3” () and “nb” ().

4.1.2 Feminine declension

The feminine forms of adjectives all receive the ending “-t”, just like the nouns do as well; using the same adjectives as above, this would yield “nfrt” (), “ꜥ3t” () and “nbt” ()

4.1.3 Plural declension

The plural adjectives all get an “-w” ending as follows: “nfrw” (), “ꜥ3w” () and “nbw” ().

5. Prepositions

Prepositions are generally rather small words that are positioned in front of (pre-) other words or phrases; they are usually used to express “when” or “where” something occurred (such as “before”, “after”, “on”, “under” or “behind”) but they are also frequently used to show different types of so-called “semantic roles” (such as “with”, “for” or “of”).

Egyptian, like English and a myriad of other languages, has quite a large repository of these that often have not just one but several possible translations, depending on what context they are used in.

The prepositions that were discussed in this book are as follows: —

“m” ()	“during”, “in”
“n” ()	“for”
“ḫr” ()	“under”, “before”
“tp(j)” ()	“on(top) (of)”, “upon”
“jn” ()	“by”

6. Possession (Genitive)

Ancient Egyptian had two ways of showing possession, namely the “Indirect Genitive” and the “Direct Genitive”, wherein “Genitive” is the linguistic term used for how languages show possession. An example of possession in English would be “Mum’s house” or “The house of mum”.

6.1 Indirect Genitive

The Indirect Genitive expresses possession very similarly to the way English does, i.e. by adding a preposition; in this case, the preposition being used is “of” in English or “n” () in Egyptian.

You simply add the “n” in-between the object being possessed and the possessor, like you do in English as well: “  ” (*pr n mɜrfjn, (The) house of Marvin*).

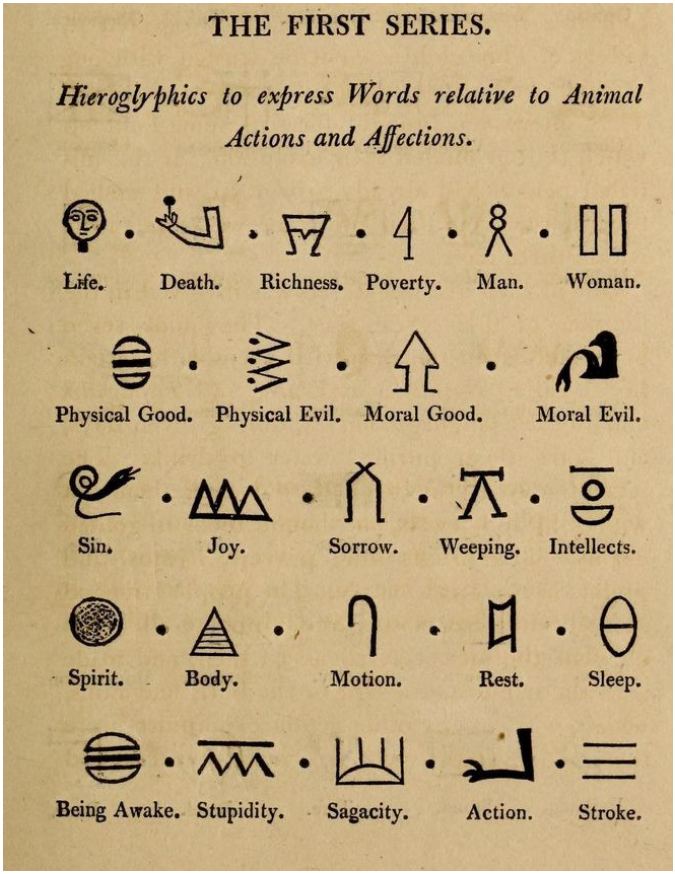
6.2 Direct Genitive

The Direct Genitive may come across as being somewhat strange, especially for English speakers, as you do not need any special preposition like you do in English; instead, you simply write both words next to one another and thus, to say “Mum’s house”, one one simply say “House mum”. The rule is simply that the possessor must follow the object being possessed → Object + Possessor.

Illustrations

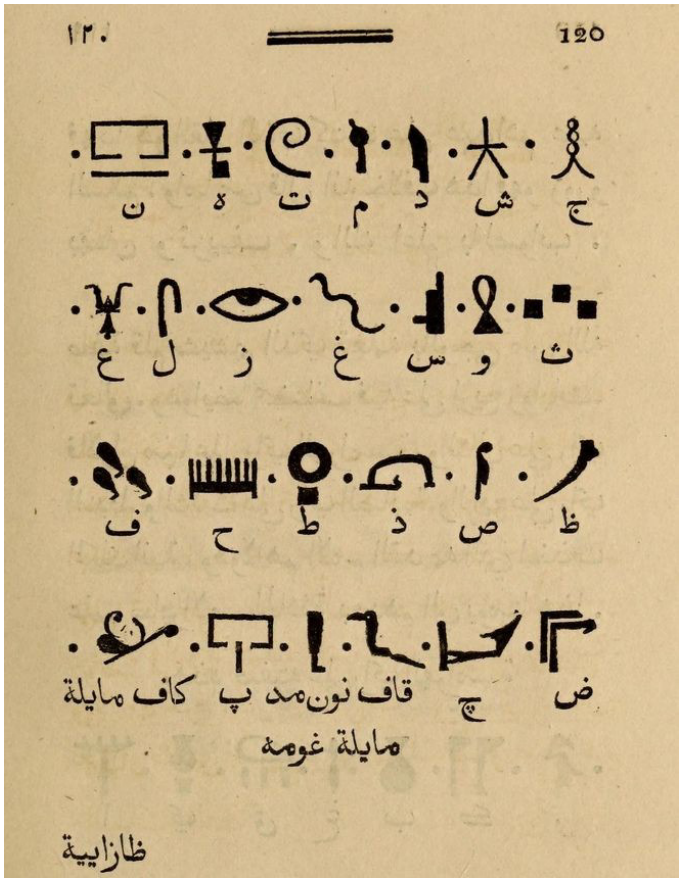
On the following pages you will find a collection of illustrations and photos that were referred to in the book.

“The first Series”



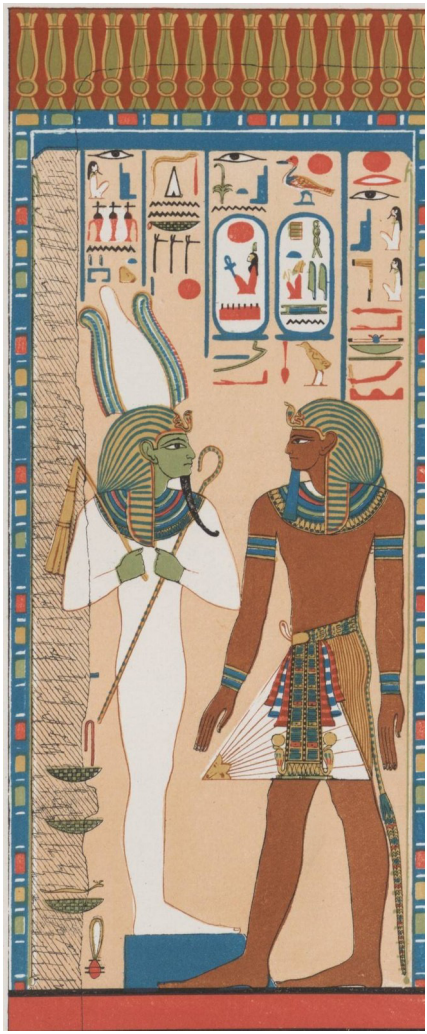
The first series of hieroglyphs. For further information, see [1]

“Shimshim Alphabet”



The Shimshim Alphabet. For further information see [1]

Hieroglyphs facing each other

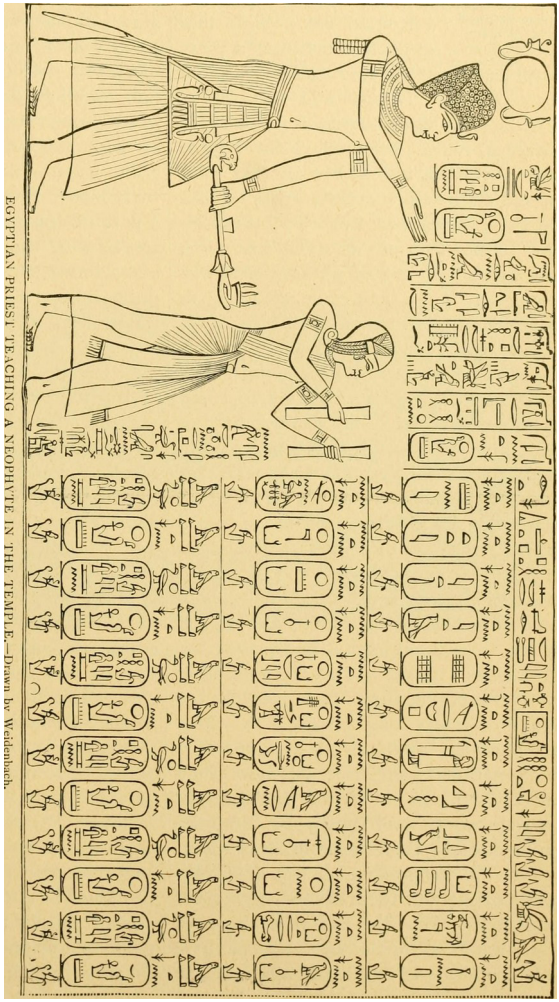


[9]

Fourth month of PERET and its BAKTIU

PM 5999 from the Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum (CC BY-SA 4.0, Marvin Johanning)

Abydos King List

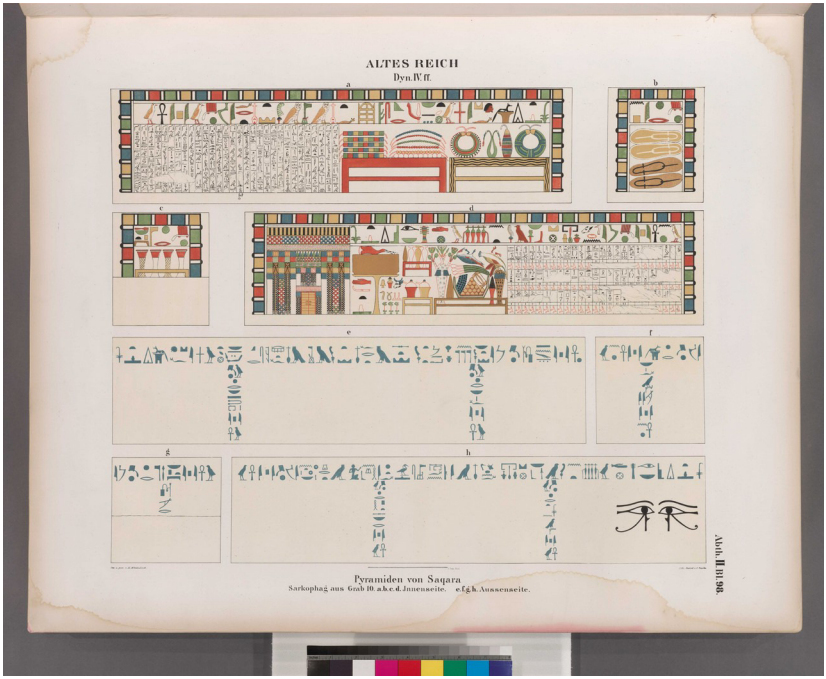


EGYPTIAN PRIEST TEACHING A NEOPHYTE IN THE TEMPLE.—Drawn by Weidenbach.

[15], p. 133

Offering Formula on PM 5999

Sarcophagus from Saqqara



[16]

Further Reading and References

Now that you have finished reading through this introductory book you have gained enough knowledge to start learning Egyptian using more advanced books without feeling too overwhelmed at the start. The most commonly used book for people who would like to learn the Ancient Egyptian language is Mark Collier and Bill Manley's book "How to read Egyptian Hieroglyphs" (ISBN 978-0-7141-1910-6) which is available for around £10. Even though it is aimed at beginners, it will teach you a lot more things than my book is able to; however, you should feel less overwhelmed and, I believe, you will have a higher chance of actually finishing the book if you do not have to struggle your way into it. For a very comprehensive overview of the language's grammar you should consider getting Alan Gardiner's "Egyptian Grammar"; I believe that it is one of the most comprehensive Egyptian grammars written in English. Antonio Loprieno's "Ancient Egyptian. A linguistic introduction" is yet another good book for those who wish to learn more about the history of the language.

For those who speak German, Adolf Erman's "Ägyptische Grammatik" is also a very good resource for learning the grammar.

If you wish to know more about Egyptian star calendars, I can recommend a few documents. The paper "The Decans and the Ancient Egyptian Skylore: An Astronomer's Approach" by Juan Antonio Belmonte provides an interesting and modern approach to these calendars. Other interesting papers include

“Ancient Egyptian astronomy” by R. A. Parker; “Textkritische Bemerkungen zu den Diagonalsternuhren des Mittleren Reiches” by Jochem Kahl; and “A Timeline of the Decans” by Theresa Ainsworth. All of these are worth a read. Another work by R. A. Parker, namely “The Calendars of Ancient Egypt” is yet another very interesting read.

I also highly recommend visiting the following website: https://aea.physics.mcmaster.ca/.

I also recommend checking out my website http://marvinjohanning.de, as you will find a lot of texts, translations, photos and more on there.

I would also very much like to thank Serge Rosmorduc for writing the computer program “JSesh”, without which I would not have been able to write this book. I highly recommend visiting his website (https://jsesh.qenherkhopeshef.org/) and downloading the program yourself if you wish to continue your study.

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---. *Altes Reich. Dynastie IV. Ff. Pyramiden von Saqara [.Saqqârah]: Sarkophag Aus Grab 10. a. b. c. d. Innenseite; e. f. g. h. Aussenseite.* 1856 1849, http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47d9-58d2-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99. General Research Division, The New York Public Library.

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---. *Neues Reich. Dynastie XIX. Theben [Thebes]: A. Karnak, Grosser Tempel, Mauer Zwischen Pylon IV Und VI ; b. Asasif Tempel, Neben Dem Granitthore; c. Medînet Hâbu, Tempel Tuthmosis III, Aussenwand; d - h. Abd El Qurna, Grab 20.* 1856 1849, http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47d9-59da-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99. General Research Division, The New York Public Library.

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i OSIRIS was, especially in later times, written without the throne (Q1) and instead with a chair (Q2) hieroglyph as such:  .

ii Note that  could also refer to the language itself; if you wanted to specify that you were talking about the writing system, you could write "  " instead, i.e. "The writing of the words of God".

iii The word for "form" is generally not written as "  " but instead as "  ". However, since this would not look too appealing in a name, they shortened it to just "". In addition, the three strokes are almost always used in this word, regardless of whether it is plural or singular.

iv As you saw in the earlier parts of this book, the consonant "l" is generally written as "  " which is nowadays mostly transcribed as "rw". However, for the sake of simplicity, especially in these earlier stages, I have refrained from using this as a substitute for "l" and, instead, opted for just a plain "r".

v The god "Ra" is, instead, written as "  ".

vi This is also often written simply as "".

vii You will frequently find this word used in the phrase "Lord of the two lands" wherein it is written simply as "  " (with the dots) or as "" (without the dots).

viii This could also be written with more phonograms added onto as follows:  .

ix This symbol can also simply mean "a lot" or "many".

x I am very uncertain regarding the usage of "  " in his name. I may simply be reading it incorrectly, but I do not know what else it could be. If it, however, is "  " then I cannot be sure why it is used here.

xi In names, it is generally written without the determinative.

xii The transliteration "*ꜣsjr*" also seems to be possible.

xiii  can apparently also be written as  according to the THE WÖRTERBUCH DER ALTÄGYPTISCHEN SPRACHE (Volume I, p. 379)

xiv This may also be written as "", instead.

xv This will often be spelt as "  " instead.

xvi There seem to exist several variants on this. THE WÖRTERBUCH DER ALTÄGYPTISCHEN SPRACHE (Volume I, p. 430) also lists "  " as a spelling variant.

xvii The Shemu season seems to have been written without the determinative in this calendar. Generally, it would have been written as  .

xviii This is also frequently spelt as “  ” instead