A COMPANION TO DEMOTIC STUDIES

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To the Memory of Jan Quaegebeur
Preface

One of the main obstacles for newcomers to the promising field of Demotic studies has been the lack of scientific tools, such as a handbook. In default of a general survey, information about the Demotic language and script, and about the texts written in it, was hard to trace, and as a result the information provided was often neglected by scholars studying the later periods of Egyptian culture and history. The need for an introduction to Demotic, as a counterpart to manuals of Greek papyrology and Egyptology, was therefore expressed several times.

It should be stressed here that this Companion is only a partial fulfilment of this need. It is of a more limited scope than some of its Greek counterparts, the main difference being that the culture of late pharaonic, Ptolemaic, or Roman Egypt is not discussed in extenso. No doubt it would be very instructive to give a survey of these topics including information gained from the Demotic sources. However, since Demotic script and language stretch from the seventh century BC to the fifth century AD, this would be a huge undertaking which is beyond my competence, especially because it would be quite useless to study the history of any period exclusively on the basis of Demotic sources. The precise goal of this Companion is to make Demotic studies more accessible so that Greek papyrologists or Egyptologists interested in the later periods will be better equipped to take full account of Demotic material in their study of the late pharaonic period or the Ptolemaic and Roman societies. As such it does not contain an introduction to script or grammar.

The foundations of this book were laid in 1993, when the late Professor J. Quaegebeur asked me to update and revise the introductory notes of his course ‘Demotic’. The goal was to provide beginning students with a kind of handbook, permitting a faster transition to grammar and the texts themselves. He urged me to elaborate the Dutch version and to consider a translation into English in view of a future publication. It is very sad that because of his untimely death he has not been able to witness the final result. Several people have advised and assisted me in his place, thus trying to fill the gap he left. In the first place I should like to express my thanks to Professor W. Clarysse, who read through two previous versions of the manuscript, enriched them with his comments, and supported me at times when I doubted I would bring the task to a good end. I am also very grateful to Professors P. Frandsen and H. De Meulemaere, who read through the work and provided valuable remarks and suggestions. As president of the Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth, the latter, together with his colleague Professor J. Bingen, was also willing to include this Companion in the series Papyrologica Bruxellensia, for which I wish to thank them both. I am further indebted to Professors W.J. Tait and R. Jasnow, who each at different stages emended the English of this publication; to Professor M. Smith, who kept me from several defects in the section on the Demotic literature; to Professor M. Chauveau, who urged me to add the succinct section on the historical information in Demotic texts, which I had been contemplating; to Professors K.-Th. Zauzich and D. Devauchelle; to Dr. Hoffmann, Dr. E. Cruz-Uribe, Dr. L. Limme, and K. Ryholt, for assistance and advice on various matters. And last but not least I wish to thank the Papyrological Institute of the University of Leiden, where a
fundamental critique caused me to revise and enlarge the present work and alter its title. The shortcomings remain of course entirely my own responsibility.

Finally, I must say that I am well aware of the fact that it may be considered an act of *hybris* to publish a book of this kind with the limited experience I have at this time of my life. To my excuse I can only refer to the circumstances described above: it is my hope that the work will be useful enough to avert any *nemesis*. May I not too strongly disappoint the *bt* of Professor Jan Quaegebeur, without whose encouragement this *Companion* would never have been realized and to whom I dedicate the book in sincere admiration.

Brussels, 17 December 1996
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0. General introduction

Since the seventies a new interest in Demotic studies has emerged. No obvious reasons for this unexpected evolution can be readily demonstrated, but it is a fortunate thing this fascinating discipline is revived, as it was in danger to be pushed even farther into the margins of Egyptology. Nevertheless Demotic is a script and a language that continues the ancient Egyptian tradition. The large quantity of documents written in it form an unalienable part of Egyptian culture, and deserve to be studied by Egyptologists, not only for linguistic reasons, but because of their socio-economical and sometimes political-historical importance as well.

As a stage in the history of the Ancient Egyptian language, Demotic is important for the linguistic evolution. Its position in between Late Egyptian and Coptic is intensively discussed, as well as its alleged artificial character. The origin of Demotic script from hieratic is clear, but about the exact circumstances in which the transition took place the details are still unclear. Much work also needs to be done in the field of palaeography, where reliable signlists for each period are still lacking. As concerns orthography Demotic continues the etymological system of Ancient Egyptian, but the occasional phonetic spellings are an important source for the study of pronunciation and dialects, which still is in its beginning stages.

Demotic deeds are essential for the study of the administration and the law in the last millennium of ancient Egyptian history. Evidently, the main focus in this field is the Ptolemaic period, where one is confronted with a vast body of information which has been neglected for a long time by historians of the Hellenistic societies. The study of Graeco-Roman Egypt has often too heavily been based on Greek documents, whereas there is so much to be gained from a confrontation between the various sources. Bilingual archives, if they are investigated in their entirety, are a striking illustration of this. One can but hope that Demotic studies will soon catch up with Greek papyrology, which connects with Classical Studies and thus has a much larger base of recruitment. The number of Demotic scholars is smaller due to the relative difficulty of the Demotic script and to the lack of reliable scientific tools, although the latter is gradually changing.

When it comes to literature, the situation is different: because of the large quantity of literary texts written in the temple libraries in the Fayyum, it is the Roman period that is the centre of attention. The study and publication of the material from Tebtunis, in Copenhagen, Florence, and various other places all over the world, which is currently undertaken, will mark a completely new stage in the study of Egyptian literature: the extensive Demotic material is not only interesting in itself, but also valuable for the reconstruction of the older models now lost.

1. Demotic: script and language

1.1. First use and etymology of the term Demotic

1.1.1. Script

The term ‘Demotic’ was introduced into modern literature by Champollion and has become customary, although in the nineteenth century sometimes ‘enchorial’ was used to denote the script. In antiquity the situation varies according to the type of source.

A. GREEK LITERARY SOURCES

Most Greek literary sources distinguish between two types of script:


Diodorus (1, 81 & 3, 1; first century BC): (γράμματα) ιερά – κοινότερα ἔχοντα τὴν μάθησιν; ‘sacred – of a more common knowledge’; δημοσίη διασωζόμενα – ιερά κοινόμενα; ‘referred to as ‘popular’ – called ‘sacred’.

Heliodorus (Ethiop. 4, 8; third and fourth century AD): (γράμματα) δημοτικά – βασιλικοῖς δὲ τοῖς ἰερατικοῖς καλυμένοις ὁμοίωτα; ‘popular – royal, similar to those of the Egyptians called ‘priestly’’. The passage concerns Meroitic script, for which equally two different types can be distinguished (see below, p. 46): the parallelism between both situations is explicitly pointed to.

In these texts no distinction seems to be made between hieroglyphs and hieratic. Both are forms of the same ‘sacred’ or ‘priestly’ script, to which Demotic is opposed.

In antiquity, only Clement of Alexandria (Stromateis 5, 4, 20–21; second and third century AD) distinguishes between three types of Egyptian script: ιερογλυφική – ιερατική – ἐπιστολογραφική; ‘of holy carving – priestly – epistolary’, evidently referring to hieroglyphic, hieratic, and Demotic. Compare with Porphyry (Vit. Pythag. 12; third century AD) γράμματα ἐπιστολογραφικά – ιερογλυφικά / συμβολικά; ‘epistolary – of holy carving / symbolic characters’. The term ‘letter script’ is also found in the Egyptian sources (see below).


B. GREEK DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

In the Greek documentary sources Demotic script is considered to be specifically Egyptian, indigenous, and national.

Decree of Canopus (238 BC): γράμματα ιερά – αἰγύπτια; ‘sacred – Egyptian characters’.
1. Demotic: script and language


In the first two sources, which are decrees and have both a hieroglyphic and a Demotic version, Greek is called ss n htw-nbwt (in Classical Egyptian) or sh n Wn (in Demotic), both to be translated as ‘script of the Greeks’. The designation ‘indigenous’ for the most commonly used Egyptian system of writing (i.e. Demotic) can be explained as forming a deliberate contrast to the terms employed for the script of the immigrant Greeks.

C. EGYPTIAN SOURCES

In Egyptian, parallel to the situation in some Greek literary sources, Demotic is called ss/sh (n) s:\t ‘letter script’, both in Classical Egyptian and in Demotic. This in opposition to the hieroglyphic and hieratic scripts, which, both in Classical Egyptian and in Demotic, are called ss/sh (n) pr-\nh ‘script of the House of Life’ (Decree of Canopus) or ss/sh (n) mdw-ntr ‘script of the word of God’ (Rosetta Stone).

Thus it is clear that the term Demotic is taken from the Greek literary sources and from Herodotus in particular. For an explanation why he called the script ‘popular’, see below, p. 22.
### 1.1. First use and etymology of the term Demotic

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<td>'Ελληνικά</td>
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<td>Rosetta: Greek</td>
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<td>P. gr. Tebt. 2</td>
<td>ieratikà</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canopus: Hieroglyphs</td>
<td>sś (n) pr-ενή</td>
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<td>sś n ḫw- nbwt</td>
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<td>Rosetta: Hieroglyphs</td>
<td>sś (n) mdw-nfr</td>
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<td>Canopus: Demotic</td>
<td>šḤ (n) pr-ενή</td>
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<td>šḤ n Wynn</td>
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<td>Rosetta: Demotic</td>
<td>šḤ (n) mdw-nfr</td>
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<td>šḤ (n) ساطاط</td>
<td>šḤ n Wynn</td>
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</tbody>
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### 1.1.2. Language

In modern literature the term ‘Demotic’ can also refer to the stage of the Egyptian language following Late Egyptian and preceding Coptic. This is only by analogy with the script: there is no evidence that Greek δημοτικὸς was ever used in this way. But there are indications that the Egyptians themselves made the distinction between the classical ‘sacred’ language and the contemporary spoken idiom. Thus there is a passage of Manetho (third century BC) quoted by Flavius Josephus (Contra Apionem 1, 14, 82; first century AD), dealing with the etymology of the name of the rulers of the Second Intermediate Period, the ‘Hyksos’. He states that the word Ὡκχωξ is best divided into two elements: the first part Ὡκ, meaning ‘king’ καθ’ ἰεράν γλώσσαν ‘in the sacred language’; the second part χωξ, meaning ‘shepherds’ κατὰ τὸν κοινὸν διαλέκτον ‘in the common discourse’. Another striking illustration of this distinction are the synodal decrees, in which the language of the hieroglyphic version is strongly differentiated from that in Demotic.

See also below, p. 37.
1. Demotic: script and language

1.2. Demotic script and orthography

1.2.1. The ‘Rise and Fall’ of Demotic script

Since Demotic was used over a period of more than a thousand years, it is only reasonable that various stages of the script need to be distinguished. The division is chiefly based on changes in the documentation and certainly not exclusively on the political situation.


A. EARLY DEMOTIC

From the Later Ramesside period onwards (from twentieth dynasty; around 1196 BC) regional differences appear in hieratic administrative script (also called chancellery or official script). During the Third Intermediate Period (twenty-first until twenty-fifth dynasty; around 1070 – late eighth century BC) Lower and Upper Egyptian variants arise.

In Upper Egypt numerous finds allow us to follow the evolution whereby the script becomes more and more cursive and develops into the so-called ‘abnormal hieratic’. In view of its origins ‘late hieratic’ or ‘late cursive hieratic’ would actually be better names. The oldest texts written in this script, dating from the twenty-first and twenty-second dynasties, are mostly administrative documents. Those from the later period (twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth dynasties) are generally private legal deeds. The contracts drafted in abnormal hieratic differ from their Demotic counterparts not only by the script, but also in wording and form.


A list of published texts is given in G. Vittmann, Papyri, kursivhieratische, in: LA IV (1982), cols. 748–750.

For the Lower Egyptian variants, it is unfortunate that hardly any sources are available permitting us to follow what was probably a very similar transition to Demotic. Possibly the recent discoveries of inscriptions at the Serapeum will shed new light on the matter. The oldest known texts (P. Rylands 1 & 2, Stela Louvre C101) date from the reign of Psammeticus I (664–610 BC), the first pharaoh of the twenty-sixth dynasty, based in Sais in the Delta. As this monarch gradually established his power over all Egypt, Lower Egyptian Demotic started to oust Upper Egyptian abnormal hieratic. At first Theban clerks copied some elements such as style, orthography, and juridical terms. Later on, interest in the Upper Egyptian variants lessened under influence of the increasing prestige of the new Lower Egyptian system of writing. Under Amasis (570–526 BC) Demotic finally became the official administrative and legal script, which eventually resulted in the complete disappearance of abnormal hieratic.
1.2. Demotic script and orthography

For the evolution of Demotic, see M. Malinine. *Choix de textes juridiques en hiératique "anormal" et en démotique (XXVIIe–XXVIIe dynasties)* (Bibliothèque de l’École des Hautes Études, 300), vol. 1, Paris 1953, pp. VII–XXI.


This *early Demotic* is generally placed between about 650 and about 400 BC (Saitt and Persian periods; twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh dynasties). It can be described as a rather bold script with signs usually formed separately, or with ligatures of which the hieroglyphic origin is generally clear. As can be expected it is closely related to hieratic. Furthermore it is reasonable in view of its origin that the orthography of Demotic is not basically different from the traditional historical-etymological orthography of the hieroglyphic script. As a consequence, however, the way a word is written could probably differ markedly from its actual phonetic pronunciation.

Demotic was in this period only used for administrative, legal, and commercial documents, while hieroglyphs and hieratic were reserved for other texts. This means that in Herodotus’ time (fifth century BC) it was not in use yet for all purposes, but confined to daily life: a ‘popular, demotic script’, hence probably the name δημοτικός.


**B. Middle or Ptolemaic Demotic**

From about the fourth century BC onwards, Demotic seems to have enjoyed a higher status, since we find also literary texts written in the script previously limited to more
1. Demotic: script and language

everyday matters. This does not imply, however, that there were less legal documents
drawn up in Demotic. The early Ptolemaic period especially is very rich in Demotic
documentary texts of all kind. Still, the conquest by the Greeks constitutes a turning-
point because the new language and script appearing in the daily life of the Egyptians
gradually gained the upper hand. From the end of the third century BC the immigrants’
idiom became the most important one in public life. The crucial factor probably was the
prestige it enjoyed as the language of the administration and of the higher classes.
Demotic education was confined to the temple and offered progressively fewer career
opportunities. A good example of this development is the fact that from 146 BC
onwards contracts written in Demotic lost most of their legal force, unless they showed
a Greek note of registration. The traditional theory that Greek ousted Demotic because
as an alphabet it was much easier to learn and intrinsically superior to the logographical
system based on hieroglyphs, is now increasingly criticized. Probably this view is
strongly biased and all this was not experienced as such by the Egyptians.

For literary papyri from the fourth century BC, see H.S. Smith / W.J. Tait, Saqqara Demotic
Papyri, I (P. dem. Saa I). (Texts from Excavations, 7 // Excavations at North Saqqara

H. Maehler, Die griechische Schule im ptolemäischen Ägypten, in: E. Van ’t Dack et al. (eds.),

On the prestige of Greek and its influence on the disappearance of Demotic, see D.J. Thompson,

Middle Demotic script, third century BC. Part of the ‘Cambyses-decree’, handcopied by W. Spiegelberg.
Die sogenannte Demotische Chronik des Pap. 215 der Bibliothèque Nationale zu Paris nebst den auf der
Rückseite des Papyrus stehenden Texten (Demotische Studien, 7), Leipzig 1914, pl. 8a (1–5).

This Middle or Ptolemaic Demotic, from about 400 until about 30 BC, is a smaller script
with very considerable stylization of both separate signs and ligatures. The hieroglyphic
or hieratic origin of the signs is in most cases barely recognizable, and it is not sure the
scribes themselves were still aware of it. The orthography changes only slightly, the main difference being that sometimes phonetic elements such as $tj$ ($hrd.tj$) creep in.

C. LATE OR ROMAN DEMOTIC

From the beginning of Roman rule onwards, Demotic is progressively less used in public life. In the first and second centuries AD quite a few texts have been found in a large variety of genres, documentary as well as literary. Especially the latter are very numerous and often of a high quality: this period can rightly be called the culmination of Demotic literary production, the centre of which seems to have been in small towns such as Tebtunis and Soknopaiu Nesos in the Faiyum. These are also the places where the Demotic documentary papyri from this period have been found. Although their number remains considerable, there are far less different types in comparison with the Ptolemaic period. When it comes to ostraca, mainly receipts, the geographical situation is remarkably enough the opposite: they are almost exclusively found in Upper Egypt. All over the country the quantity of material decreases as the third century approaches. From that time onwards, apart from a few ostraca, some subscriptions to Greek texts, some magical papyri, and perhaps an occasional literary text, only mummy labels and graffiti have been found. Currently the last precisely dated ostraca dates 232/233 AD, whereas the last papyrus was written during the reign of Philippus Arabs (244–249). In the final stage Demotic was only used in graffiti on the walls of the Isis temple in Philae. During the fourth century the script still appears to have been reasonably well known, but this was no longer the case in the fifth century, when all extant inscriptions come from a small number of priestly families. The last example of Demotic script is dated 11 December 452 AD (Graff. Philae 365 [Griffith]).

There is a clear pattern in the decline of Demotic. First the administratively and juridically most important texts disappear, only later on followed by the literary and semi-literary manuscripts, which were much less relevant to public life. It is no coincidence that the last testimonies are graffiti, texts with a very personal message from the faithful to the deity. At least partially this evolution may well be the result of a Roman policy.


For the papyrus from the reign of Philippus Arabs, see J.-C. Grenier, *Les titulatures des empeureurs romains dans les documents en langue égyptienne* (Papyrologica Bruxellensia, 22), Bruxelles 1989, p. 80 (P. dem. Leconte 7).


For the hypothesis that this evolution was influenced by a Roman policy, see N. Lewis, *The Demise of the Demotic Document: When and Why*, in: JEA 79 (1993), pp. 276–281.

Late Demotic script, second century AD. An extract from the ‘Myth of the Sun’s Eye’, as handcopied by W. Spiegelberg, Der ägyptische Mythos vom Sonnenaugen (Der Papyrus der Tierfabeln – ‘Kaji’) nach dem leidener demotischen Papyrus 1 384, Strassburg 1917, pl. 8 (1–7).

Late or Roman Demotic stretches from about 30 BC until 452 AD, well into the Byzantine period. It is a rather spidery script, often without distinction between thick or thin strokes, a change which can be explained by the scribes abandoning the writing brush and adopting the Greek reed pen, which is hard and pointed (see below, p. 83). Signs tend to take a standard form and size. Only existing ligatures are used, no new ones are created.

It is also in this period that the orthography of Demotic began to change significantly in some cases. Etymological writings are more and more complemented and sometimes even replaced by a non-historical orthography which stresses the vocabulary’s phonetic value. But on the other hand sometimes hieratic or even hieroglyphic signs are adopted (for instance in the writing of Nw.t ‘(city of) Thebes’). See below, pp. 28 and 31.

A typical example of the evolution towards pure phonetic writing is the so-called ‘alphabetical Demotic script’ used in certain magical papyri from the Roman period: words whose exact pronunciation was essential were written with single letter signs, both for consonants and vowels. Often they are accompanied by Old Coptic glosses (see below, p. 32).


1.2.2. Other factors influencing Demotic script and orthography

Apart from the historical evolution, several other factors play a role in the varying appearance of the script.

A. GEOGRAPHY

Different scribal schools, each with their own palaeographical style, seem to have existed. In Lower Egypt, including Memphis and the Faiyum, there appears to have been a more ‘uncial’ tendency, reminiscent of early Demotic. Conclusions regarding the Demotic of the Delta must be considered merely provisional, as it is practically an
unknown field. For *Upper Egypt* we have a very extensive documentation for the city of Thebes, providing ample information. Still, the study of the geographical influences on palaeography has hardly begun and many problems remain. Thus for instance one of the enigmas is the great variety of hands in literary texts from the Roman period that all apparently come from Tebtunis.

In several cases the regional differences emerge clearly in orthography. Some expressions, such as *ta* ‘daughter of’, are written differently in Lower and Upper Egypt. Similar regional influences as well as idiosyncrasies can for example also be traced in the writing of the date at the beginning of contracts. Naturally, we must keep in mind that the orthographic rules were perhaps less stringent in antiquity than nowadays.


For dialects, see below p. 36.

**B. INDIVIDUAL HANDS**

Some scribes seem to have a more cursive handwriting, although this could in some cases be attributed to the genre of the text (see below). A certain clumsiness in signatures can sometimes be explained by the limited literacy of people for whom it was enough to be able to write their own name. The differences between various hands are particularly clear in witness-copy contracts in which the notary’s text is copied out four or six times. Another example of individual variation can be found in the archive of Hor of Sebennytos (beginning second century BC; Saqqara). The keeper apparently realized that his handwriting was atrocious and regularly dictated to his secretary, who had an elegant and well balanced hand. On purely palaeographical grounds a common origin would perhaps barely have been considered.

For Hor of Sebennytos and his secretary, see J.D. Ray, *The Archive of Hor (Texts from Excavations, 2)*, London 1976, pp. 121–122.


Although Demotic script can be baffling at the level of the actual handwriting, it must be admitted that nearly all Demotic texts are well written. Before the Roman period it is difficult to find examples of ‘inept scribes’, except perhaps in school exercises. From that time onwards, in certain places, the decline of Demotic may have been partially caused by the incompetence of individual scribes.

1. Demotic: script and language

Sometimes a scribe may be pardoned for his mistakes because he had before him only an imperfect copy. This is probably the case in G.R. Hughes, The Blunders of an Inexpert Scribe (Demotic Papyrus Louvre 2414), in: G.E. Kadish / G.E. Freeman (eds.), Studies in Philology in Honour of Ronald James Williams. A Festschrift (SSEA, 3), Toronto 1982, pp. 51–67.


For a scribe who makes several mistakes, see S.P. Vleeming, Ostraka Varia. Tax Receipts and Legal Documents on Demotic, Greek, and Greek-Demotic Ostraka, chiefly of the Early Ptolemaic Period, from Various Collections (P.J.Bat., 26), Leiden (...) 1994, no. 53. See also the Medinet Madi texts, below, p. 43.

C. WRITING MATERIALS

The kind of writing tool employed (Egyptian versus Greek pen) can change the general impression of the script. An even more profound influence can be exerted by the writing surface. It is thus evident that carving an inscription on a difficult surface such as stone or metal leads to a more ‘angular’ type of script than inking a text on papyrus. In the former case the orthography is sometimes curtailed as well.

For the writing tools, see below, p. 83.
The relationship between epigraphic Demotic and ‘papyrological’ Demotic remains as yet almost unexplored.

D. TYPES OF TEXT

Of course the genre to which the text belongs also plays a role: the writing of ‘private’ documents such as letters is more cursive than that of contracts. During the Roman period ‘literary’ and documentary scripts are quite different, an evolution which is paralleled in Greek texts.

For an example of a Roman-period letter written in a literary hand, see W.J. Tait, Papyri from Tebtunis in Egyptian and in Greek (P. Tebt. Taiti) (Texts from Excavations, 3), London 1977, no. 22 and P. Cairo 31220.
For a discussion of the variation of hieratic handwriting according to the type of document that is written, see J.J. Janssen, On Style in Egyptian Handwriting, in: JEA 73 (1987), pp. 161–167.

1.2.3. Demotic and the other stages of Egyptian script

During its long history, the Egyptian language was written with a number of scripts. The traditional ones were hieroglyphs and hieratic, but as already described above, in the first millennium BC the latter generated two new types: abnormal hieratic and Demotic. Later, in the first centuries AD, the Coptic alphabet was created to write Egyptian language. Demotic existed together with all these scripts, and its relationship with each of them varied with the lapse of time.

For the relationship between abnormal hieratic and Demotic, see above, p. 22.

A. HIEROGLYPHICS

The hieroglyphic script has its place alongside Demotic throughout almost the entire development of the latter, from the seventh century BC until the fourth century AD. Each has its specific sphere of use.

Hieroglyphics are primarily found in inscriptions, but even in the Roman period this more prestigious script is used for papyri, especially when writing sacred or religious texts. Demotic is normally written on papyri or ostraca, but there are also quite a few
epigraphic texts on various other materials. This leads to a simplification of the script, since it is not suited for engraving or carving.


In quite a few cases, however, Demotic script is found in *combination* with hieroglyphs. This can happen in various ways, some where one script remains prominent, others leading to ‘biscrpts’ or texts alternating between both writing systems.


A text can be written in hieroglyphs with Demotic annotations: this procedure is mainly applied in literary texts, where the Demotic notes or glosses refer to the content of the hieroglyphic text or even add a more elaborate commentary. Other short notes concern the design of the vignettes or are just indications of the page number.


Demotic texts with a annotation in hieroglyphs: since hieroglyphs were in this period generally reserved for literary manuscripts, it is rare to find them used for a note. An exceptional example is the signature of one of the witnesses in the two oldest papyri in Demotic. Occasionally hieroglyphs are also used for the legend of certain representations.


For hieroglyphs as legends, see the mummy board (below, p. 120).

Real ‘biscrpts’ where the text is repeated in both scripts: here the Demotic text repeats the hieroglyphic inscription partially or in full. This procedure is followed in the decrees, on some funerary stelae, or in a self-laudatory text on a statue (see below, pp. 125, 120, 82).


For a small text on stone where hieroglyphs, hieratic, and Demotic are all used in one text and partially overlap, see T. Handoussa, *A Late Egyptian Text Written in Different Scripts*, in: *MDAIK* 44 (1988), pp. 111–115.

For an example of an interesting funerary stela where the Demotic inscription is basically equal to the hieroglyphic one, see I. Mathieson et al., *A Stela of the Persian Period from Soqqara*, in: *JEA* 81 (1995), pp. 23–41.

Texts where hieroglyphs and Demotic alternate: occasionally within funerary stelae the hieroglyphs precede with the pious formulae, while the Demotic part with the more personal information follows. Sometimes, especially in religiously
inspired texts from the Roman period, hieroglyphs are freely intertwined with the Demotic signs.


There are also some cases where hieroglyphs are adopted to write down a text in the Demotic language. Thus reading the texts of some stelae of the Saite period, written in hieroglyphs or hieratic, proves very difficult, mainly because they are a transcription of a Demotic original. This practice was probably not uncommon, but only shows through when it was performed inadequately. A similar procedure seems to have been used for a certain number of temple inscriptions at for instance Edfu or Dendera, although more often these show some features of both “Classical Egyptian” and Demotic.

Two examples of the stelae have been studied by M. Malinine, *Vente de tombes à l’époque saite*, in: *RdE* 27 (1975), pp. 164–174.


Demotic orthography is, as already stated, fundamentally identical with its hieroglyphic counterpart. However, some orthographic processes are new or more frequently adopted.

One of these is the so-called *non-etymological writing*, replacing a word by an equivalent which is written differently but has an identical or similar pronunciation. If the Demotic non-etymological orthography of a personal name or title is preserved in hieroglyphs, this can sometimes cause serious difficulties of interpretation when one does not know the Demotic parallel.


Another procedure is to differentiate the writing of one and the same word to make a semantic distinction. This procedure was sometimes used by the scribes to make things clearer.


The number of determinatives in Demotic is more limited than that in hieroglyphs or hieratic, but they still have a wide range of applications.

1.2. Demotic script and orthography

Often the confrontation of hieroglyphic and Demotic sources is very rewarding. Not only can it lead to a better understanding of some expressions, but prosopographical identifications can result in new historical insights.


B. HIERATIC

Hieratic no more disappeared than did hieroglyphs with the rise of Demotic. It remained common up to the Roman period, each writing system having its own specific domain.

In later periods *hieratic* was mainly used for literary and especially religious texts. The last hieratic papyrus dates to the third century AD. Just like Demotic, it is rarely found in inscriptions. *Demotic* was not at first used for literary and religious texts, but eventually even funerary and mortuary texts were written in it.

Again in several cases hieratic and Demotic are used *simultaneously*.

Hieratic with Demotic annotations: in the astronomic-mythological handbook P. Carlsberg 1 the basic text is in hieratic with additional comments in Demotic. The hieratic Tebtunis onomasticon from about 100 AD has an interlinear ‘translation’ in Demotic, made somewhere in the second century AD. Some examples of the Book of Breathing provide guidelines, sometimes written in Demotic, where to place the document.


See below, pp. 105, 115.

Demotic documents with hieratic annotations: like hieroglyphs, hieratic is not normally used for short notes. Perhaps some examples of legends to representations, such as the one above the mummy board with a Demotic text, can be classified here.

See below, p. 120.

Real ‘biscriss’ where the text is written in both scripts: on the ‘bilingual’ funerary Rhind papyri the hieratic text is followed by a Demotic version.

See below, p. 117.

Texts where hieratic and Demotic alternate: the treatise on the mummification of the Apis bull generally uses Demotic, but on the recto for more ritual passages the hieratic of the twenty-sixth dynasty model is preserved. On the verso hieratic is also used in other cases, probably because this version links up more closely to the source text. A similar procedure is applied in P. Rylands 9, where the text of two
stelae is given in hieratic. In the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden hieratic is sometimes even used for single words.

See below, pp. 112, 102, 109.

Sometimes hieratic signs can be used to write down a text in Demotic language: P. Vandier (probably sixth or fifth century BC, see below, p. 92) contains on the recto side a story about the scribe Merire, written in hieratic, but in a language close to early Demotic papyri such as P. Rylands 9. Other narratives in hieratic adopt a similar orthography or grammar as well. See also the stelae mentioned above.


For other texts, see G. Burkard / H.-W. Fischer-Elfert, Ägyptische Handschriften, Teil 4 (Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland), 19, Stuttgart 1994, p. 10 n. 11.

The palaeography and orthography of hieratic and Demotic are, especially in the earlier stages of the latter, quite parallel, which is no surprise considering the genetic link between the two. Demotic also regularly uses hieratic signs (with strong regional restrictions), which underscores this connection even more.

A large number of hieratic signs is used in the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden, see the list of B.H. Stricker, Het graphisch systeem van de magische papyrus London & Leiden. II: Inventaris der hieratische tekens, in: OMRO 36 (1955), pp. 92–132.

C. COPTIC

Coptic script is the final result of the development towards a more phonetic orthography that starts in the Roman period. In fact three phases can be discerned.


After Alexander the Great subdued the country, Greek became a major language in Egypt. In the Ptolemaic period Greek characters were used to write Egyptian names or Egyptian words. Occasionally, in individual experiments, rather long Demotic texts are transcribed in Greek alphabet (see below, p. 44). This can be considered the ‘prehistory’ of Coptic script.

J. Quaegebeur, Greek Transcriptions, in the above mentioned encyclopedia, pp. 141–142, and Pre-Old Coptic, pp. 190–191.

The next stage, from the first century AD onwards, is the so-called ‘Old Coptic’, texts written in the Egyptian language with Greek characters, now with a more or less coherent system of signs derived from the Demotic script. Each phoneme unknown in Greek is represented by a single sign. This fits into the tendency towards non-etymological spelling already evident in late Demotic.

1.3. The Demotic language


For a list of Old Coptic documents and comparative material, see H. Satzinger, *Old Coptic*, in the above mentioned encyclopedia, pp. 169–175.

On the alphabets, see R. Kasser, *Alphabets, Old Coptic*, in the same volume, pp. 41–45.

The last phase is called *Coptic*, the largely standardized script from the third century AD onwards. It consists of the Greek alphabet complemented with a limited number of signs derived from Demotic and adapted to the ductus of Greek uncial.


Since the Coptic script *stricto sensu* is in its early stages confined to Christian faith, while use of Demotic always remained limited to the ancient Egyptian culture and religion, there was no real contact between the two scripts. There are manuscripts, however, that combine Demotic with Old Coptic, which had not yet developed this religious aspect. Old Coptic is generally used for glosses elucidating the main text. Naturally this permits the scribe to indicate the vowels, essential, but probably not readily known by every user of a Demotic magical handbook. A further form of contact between Demotic and Old Coptic is P. BM 10808 (Oxyrhynchus; second century AD), a magical text which is written in a form of Old Coptic script, but in a language that is a mixture of Middle Egyptian, Late Egyptian, and Demotic.


For examples of Demotic combined with Old Coptic glosses, see the magical texts or the hieratic onomasticon from Tebtunis (below, pp. 108, 115), which apart from the Demotic ‘translation’ has some Old Coptic glosses for those unable even to read Demotic.

1.3. The Demotic language

It falls beyond the scope of the present *Companion* to give an extensive summary of the developments in a much discussed and complex topic such as the evolution of the Egyptian language. Attention will be focused upon the place of Demotic in a diachronic (1.3.1.) and a synchronic (1.3.3.) approach, both of which are naturally closely connected with one another.

An introduction to Egyptian linguistic studies is W. Schenkel, *Einführung in die altägyptische Sprachwissenschaft (Orientalistische Einführungen)*, Darmstadt 1990.

1.3.1. The ‘Rise and Fall’ of Demotic language

A. ‘THE RISE’

The place of Demotic in the evolution of the Egyptian language is much discussed. The traditional opinion was formulated by Sethe in his so-called ‘cataclysm’ theory, which considered the popular language, evolving linearly, as primary. At some particular points a literary language arises, closely linked with the contemporary spoken idiom. This last one keeps developing and thus moves further and further away from the fixed ‘standard’ language. With the end of a political era this artificial construction breaks down and at the beginning of a new ‘Golden Age’ a new one arises, again adopting the spoken language of the time. Demotic, as a continuation of Late Egyptian, was considered an exception to this rule.
Stricker reacted against this too rigid model. In his theory, the link between phases of the language and political events is loosened: thus Middle Egyptian is no more than a slightly developed ‘Old Egyptian’. Furthermore its use is not limited to the ‘classical’ period of Egyptian history, but it continues to be adopted for certain texts even in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods. Clearly dissociated from all this is the spoken idiom. It never coincides with the artificial literary languages, although naturally at times the distance is smaller than at others. For Demotic, the situation is about the same as in Sethe’s model. In his review Vergote accepted this reconstruction, although he did not agree with the concept of a spoken language that is at all times differentiated from its literary counterpart. According to him both sometimes coincide (such as Old Egyptian [I I], Late Egyptian [II 4] or Coptic [III]). Demotic links up to Late Egyptian, not to the spoken language, and is by consequence from the beginning an artificial idiom.
1.3. The Demotic language

The idea of Demotic as a notary language from which all Greek influence present in the spoken discourse is filtered out was taken up and stressed by Ray. In his opinion this artificial character may already be present in early Demotic. Others, such as Lüdeckens or Johnson, do believe that, at least in its early stages, Demotic stands close to the everyday language. The latter also reacts against giving Demotic only a secondary position as a continuation of Late Egyptian: the differences between Demotic and earlier stages of the Egyptian language are in her view not smaller than those between Demotic and Coptic.

1. Demotic: script and language

Whereas Stricker’s theory does not really take into account the various texts written in hybrid forms of Middle and Late Egyptian, precisely these lie at the heart of the model developed by Junge. In his opinion innovations in the spoken language only gradually penetrate the different levels of written discourse: everyday matters, literature, state affairs, and ultimately theology. The appearance of ‘neo-Middle Egyptian’ in the twentieth dynasty can be explained by the fact that only from that period onwards the Egyptians became aware of the two stages and consciously differentiated them. For Demotic a similar evolution can be recognized.

![Diagram]


B. ‘THE FALL’

As an artificial, ‘classical’ language the development of Demotic, especially on the level of the vocabulary, is often concealed by reactions towards linguistic purism. Nevertheless some innovations from the spoken idiom did make their way into the written language. But only with the appearance of Coptic does the spoken language and the influence of Greek really become tangible. An important exception are the ostraca of Medinet Madi (see below).

Examples of innovations from the spoken language are the finalis and other verbal forms, see J.H. Johnson, The Demotic Verbal System (SAOC, 38), Chicago 1976, p. 301 n. 209.

1.3.2. Other factors influencing Demotic language

A. GEOGRAPHY (‘DIALECTS’)

The geographical influences on Egyptian language are well known for Coptic, where the regional differences in grammar, vocabulary, and especially in phonetics eventually
result in the two standard dialects: Sahidic and (later) Bohairic. It is of course tempting to find the embryonal stages of this variation already in Demotic. This poses some problems, however. First of all it is a major handicap that Demotic writes no vowels: it is precisely by phonetic variation on this level that the Coptic dialects are most clearly distinguished. Furthermore we must bear in mind that Demotic was also an official language, falling back on older stages and possibly ‘filtering out’ the possible dialectal influences. This does not mean, of course, that there was no such regional differentiation in Egypt during the period Demotic was written. It can be observed, for instance, in the Greek transcription of Egyptian names. No doubt a thorough study of the phonetics of Demotic consonants in the various regions and a comparison with Coptic could yield interesting new insights.


For Greek transcriptions indicating various vocalizations in spoken language, see J. Quaegebeur, *Le dieu égyptien Shai dans la religion et l’onomastique* (OLA, 2), Leuven 1975, pp. 278–313.


B. OTHER

Other factors must have influenced the language as well. Individual character and the genre to which the manuscript belongs can play a role in matters of vocabulary or grammar: texts where a more solemn attitude was appropriate often contain archaisms; literature is generally more conservative in grammar in comparison with documents—in either example older sources may lie at the basis of these phenomena. Even the textual grammar may be influenced: inscriptions strive for brevity, letters leave out common knowledge—both sometimes resulting in texts which can prove very enigmatic for the modern reader.


For archaisms, see below; for letters, see below, p. 151.

1.3.3. Demotic and the other stages of the Egyptian language

A. CLASSICAL OR MIDDLE EGYPTIAN

In spite of some changes, the basic structure of the Egyptian language stays the same during its long history. In later stages of the language many of the basic rules already present in Middle Egyptian remain in force.

1. Demotic: script and language

When Demotic and Classical Egyptian occur simultaneously, for instance in synodal decrees, the language is often consciously differentiated. For the hieroglyphic text rare words or words no longer used at all in Demotic are chosen. But sometimes the scribe makes minor mistakes, and ‘demoticisms’ penetrate his classical language. Literary texts often go back to an earlier stage of the language and have been adapted or even translated from older models. In some cases this leads to archaisms, but not necessarily.

For the ‘mistakes’ in synodal decrees, see F. Daumas, Les moyens d’expression du grec et de l’égyptien comparés dans les décrets de Canope et de Memphis (SASAÉ, 16), Le Caire 1952, p. 300 (index).
For a comparison of the various stages of the language and their use, see above (1.3.1.) the theory of Junge and its critique by Jansen-Winkeln.

Apart from smaller passages such as fixed formulae in religious and legal manuscripts, there are also larger texts in which Demotic is used for Middle Egyptian language. On a late Ptolemaic or early Roman ostracon a hymn to Amon-Re of which the oldest version dates back to the twenty-fifth dynasty is written in the Demotic script. The same procedure is found in funerary texts, such as a stela written in both hieroglyphs and Demotic, where the latter version is a mere transliteration of the Middle Egyptian text into Demotic signs.

For the stela, see S.P. Vleeming, Transliterating Old Egyptian in Demotic, in: GM 117/118 (1990), pp. 219–223.


B. LATE EGYPTIAN

The close relationship between both stages of the language is obvious as Demotic originated from Late Egyptian. Examples of this connection are the article and the possessive pronoun. Furthermore common to both language phases is the evolution from synthetic (sdfm=f) to analytic (f=sdfm) verbal forms. The other grammatical and lexical differences still require further investigation.

For a recent investigation into Late Egyptian idiom, see for instance J. Winand, Études de néo-égyptien. I. La morphologie verbale (Egyptiaca Leodiensia, 2), Liège 1992.
1.4. Demotic and non-Egyptian scripts and languages

C. Coptic

The relationship between Demotic and Coptic is apparent in phonetic and grammatical features. A major problem in assessing the exact differences and similarities between the two languages is their divergent writing system. Some phonetic distinctions are still made in Demotic script, but disappear in the Coptic alphabet. Probably this is the result of a real evolution, but it could also be a question of orthography. As far as vocabulary is concerned, the continuity seems to be stronger than has been traditionally supposed. Despite the about twenty per cent Greek words, the bulk of the Coptic lexicon has its roots in Ancient Egyptian.


The question if changes in the orthography are the result of a real phonetic differentiation is also discussed (for the Coptic dialects) by R.S. Kasser, *Alphabets, Coptic*, in the above mentioned encyclopedia, pp. 32–41.

For an example of the grammatical differences between Demotic and Coptic, with implications for the study of Coptic dialectal forms, see J.F. Quack, *Bemerkungen zum demotisch-koptischen Temporals*, in: *EVO* 17 (1994), pp. 231–237.

1.4. Demotic and non-Egyptian scripts and languages

1.4.1. Aramaic

From about the eighth century BC, Aramaic was the ‘lingua franca’ for the entire Near East. Aramaic texts have been found in Egypt especially from the Persian twenty-seventh dynasty (525–404 BC) onwards, when it became the official language of administration. Particularly interesting is the documentation from the military settlement in Elephantine, which housed the Jewish mercenaries at this Egyptian border of the Persian empire. In the fourth century BC the number of documents decreases and in the middle of the third century BC Aramaic definitively gives way to Greek as written language for the Jews in Egypt.


As a result of the prolonged contact between Aramaic and Egyptian, each language to some degree exerted an influence on the other. The most intriguing case is certainly the large papyrus with Demotic script and Aramaic language discussed below, but there are further examples.

In the *Aramaic* texts relatively few traces can be found. Besides Egyptian names (of persons, gods, places, and months) only a few loan-words occur, most of them funerary in character. Bilingual texts are scarce as well: occasionally Aramaic letters contain an address, the name of the scribe, or a registration note in Demotic. Indirect evidence are
the literary compositions that were translated into Aramaic and the legal formulae, some of which may have been borrowed from Demotic.


There are equally few loan-words in Demotic. Billilingual texts in which the Egyptian language plays the prominent role are very rare: an example is a Demotic contract signed by an Aramaic witness. Notwithstanding some indications of reverse influences, it is generally believed that Egyptian legal formulae are derived from their Aramaic counterparts. A literal translation of an Aramaic letter into Demotic has been preserved as well.


Apart from some isolated Aramaic names or loan-words for which the Demotic script was used, there is an exceptional example where this procedure is applied for a longer composition. P. Amherst 63 is a papyrus (3.5 m long; 23 columns) with literary-poetical texts, written in pure Aramaic without Egyptian loan-words. Although some Demotic bi- or tri-consonantal signs are included to render Aramaic sounds, the script mainly consists of single letter characters. Alongside these a limited set of determinatives is used, mainly to separate the words.

The manuscript probably dates from the fourth century BC, and may come from Edfu. The transcription system helps to shed some light on the question of who was the author, since the person who wrote the text did this the way an Egyptian would hear it: he did not distinguish between some phonemes relevant to Aramaic. Still, he understood what he was writing, as appears, for example, from his correct use of the divine determinative.

The reason for this strange procedure remains unknown. What religious, cultural, or even aesthetic interest the writer had in the text is still a mystery. Perhaps he did not
1.4. Demotic and non-Egyptian scripts and languages

know enough Aramaic to learn the texts by heart, and so he had to note them on papyrus in Demotic.

Many aspects are also treated in C.F. Nims / R.C. Steiner, A Paganized Version of Psalm 20:2–6 from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script, in: JAOS 103 (1983), pp. 261–274. This is the first of a series of articles in which P. Amherst 63 will be published.


For one of the most recent studies, on which the above exposé is based, see L. Kotsieper, Papyrus Amherst 63 – Einführung. Text und Übersetzung 12, 11–19, in: O. Lorez, Die Königpsalmten. Die altorientalisch-kanaamische Königstradition in jüdischer Sicht, Teil 1: Ps. 50, 21, 72, 101 und 144 (Ugaritisch-Biblische Literatur, 6), Münster 1988, pp. 55–75.

1.4.2. Greek

A. THE SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND

After the conquest by Alexander in 332 BC and the subsequent immigration of the Greeks, who became the upper class, Egypt gradually grew bilingual.

At first Greek was only in use among the immigrants and in the administration, where it replaced Aramaic as the official language. Because the Greeks also formed the social elite, their language strongly attracted the indigenous population, and ethnic Egyptians progressively started to employ it. As they often did so rather well, it is not always easy to distinguish an Egyptian from a Greek.


Demotic on the contrary, probably also because of the difficulty of the script, was hardly ever learned by Greeks. If they did, it was mostly out of an interest in Egyptian culture, especially religion, but also medical knowledge. Thus we have a letter congratulating a Greek on having learned to read Demotic, because this will permit him to earn a living as an intermediary between Greek slaves who had to learn the tricks of the medical trade and an Egyptian specialist.


B. BILINGUAL TEXTS AND BILINGUALISM

Quite a few bilingual texts are known. They belong to various types, ranging from manuscripts where both languages are more or less on the same level, to documents in which either of them is clearly prominent.

A concise survey is also given by W. Peremans, Notes sur les traductions de textes non littéraires sous les Lagides, in: Cde6 60 (1985), pp. 248–262.
1. Demotic: script and language

Demotic documents with Greek annotation: a typical example of this are the Demotic contracts on which a Greek tax receipt is written. Similar are the Greek registration notes, found below the main text in Demotic agreements from 145 BC onwards. Surety contracts written in Demotic often display a Greek abstract on the verso.


Greek documents with a Demotic annotation: occasionally a Greek contract bears a Demotic tax receipt. Quite a few tax receipts on ostraca written in Greek have subscriptions in Demotic with an identification of the tax, the payer, and the amount. Sometimes all information is double, in which case they actually belong in the following category.

For a Demotic tax receipt on a Greek papyrus, see P. gr. Lond. III 881 (pp. 11–12).


For some examples of the Demotic subscriptions on Greek tax receipt, see S.P. Vleeming, *Ostraka Varia: Tax Receipts and Legal Documents on Demotic, Greek, and Greek-Demotic Ostraka, chiefly of the Early Ptolemaic Period, from Various Collections (P.L.Bat., 26)*, Leiden (…) 1994, for instance nos. 24–25.


Real bilingual texts where the information is repeated in both languages: typical examples of this procedure are the synodal decrees, with their hieroglyphic, Demotic, and Greek versions. In the so-called ‘double documents’ the *scriptura exterior* is sometimes written in both Greek and Demotic. Many mummy labels from the Roman period give a short identification of the deceased: often one side is Demotic, the other Greek.


For the decrees, see below, p. 125; for the mummy labels, see below, p. 121; see also the ostraca of the preceding category.

Texts where Greek and Demotic parts alternate: the rare examples include a Greek letter from the Ptolemaic period, where the content of a dream is given in Demotic, ‘so as to know its precise implications’. A very special case are the ostraca from
1.4. Demotic and non-Egyptian scripts and languages

Medinet Madi, where Greek and Demotic are used together, even within one sentence. These sherds probably derive from the priestly schools and illustrate the Graeco-Egyptian mixed culture in a Faiyum village from the second century AD.


Finally, there is much indirect evidence of bilingualism: bilingual archives show us that it was not unusual for a family to possess documents in both languages. Another source of information about the relationship between Greek and Demotic are Greek translations of Egyptian literature or Demotic contracts.


For bilingual archives, see below, p.153; for the literature, see below, pp. 152, 86.

The question is how to interpretate this ‘bilingualism’. It is commonly recognized that in the Ptolemaic period Greek and Egyptian cultures practically existed side by side with mutual influence but without actual fusion. A fine example of this are double names: according to the occasion alternatively a Greek or an Egyptian name was used. In civil administrative life a Greek name was fitting; in a religious environment an Egyptian name was more appropriate. Not only does this teach us to be careful in using names as a basis for defining a person’s ethnicity, but it also shows the dichotomy between the cultures in this period. Still, many people were probably bilingual. For Egyptians working in army or administration and wanting to climb the social ladder, it was indispensable to have at least a working knowledge of Greek. Greek families, for example through marriages, also came into contact with the local population. Thus they became familiar with the Egyptian language and, as the two populations mingled, the number of people who spoke both Greek and Egyptian no doubt increased. It was precisely during this period (from the late second century BC onwards) that the decline of the Demotic script accelerated, from a certain moment (around 50 AD) leaving the local population without a properly functioning script to write their own language in everyday life.


1. Demotic: script and language


C. LINGUISTIC AND ORTHOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES

It goes without saying that two languages in mutual contact influence one another. Indications of this are not only found in Egyptian, the idiom of the local people, but also in Greek, the language of the conqueror and the administration.

Egyptian influence on Greek is rather small, lexically as well as grammatically. The names of the months and some symbols belong to the most frequent Egyptian features in Greek texts from Egypt.

On the possible influence of Egyptian language on Septuagint Greek, see L.-Th. Lefort, Pour une grammaire des LXX, in: Le Muséon 41 (1928), pp. 152–160.

On the contrary Greek has left many more traces in Egyptian. Especially in Coptic, where even grammatical elements such as conjunctions are adopted, this is obvious.
About one fifth of Coptic vocabulary derives from Greek. In Demotic this influence is much smaller, which can be explained by the fact that as an official and literary language it modelled itself on an older, ‘purer’ phase of the language, deriving from a period before the arrival of the Greeks. The Demotic scribes give proof of their language purism through translation loan-words, for instance σήμι for Greek τράπεζα "(financial) bank". Most cult titles of the Ptolemaic monarchs are also translated. Loan-words proper chiefly include honorary titles, official titles, derivations from Greek proper names, and technical terms from administration, army, and finance.
When transcribing Greek into Demotic, apart from an occasional ‘sportive writing’, twenty single-character signs were used. The transcriptions mostly render the nominative, although in some cases the Greek genitive ending is rendered as well. Apart from royal names, omission of the (foreigner) determinative is exceptional. Very exceptionally a somewhat longer text is transcribed from Greek into Demotic: an example of this is a mummy label, where the usual Demotic text is replaced by a Demotic ‘transcription’ of the Greek. The vowels are rendered by adapted signs: Greek η is noted with the Demotic sign for ḫt “heart”, 𧐆 in Coptic; for Greek ω and
the group η "back" is used: compare Coptic >w in the status pronominalis of the preposition ền.

For the mummy label with the Demotic transcription of Greek, see W. Spiegelberg, *Aegyptische und griechische Eigennamen aus Mumienetikten der römischen Kaiserzeit auf Grund von grossenteils unveröffnlichtem Material* (Demotische Studien, 1), Leipzig 1901, pp. 18–19 (§§).


For a list of Greek loan-words in Demotic, see W. Clarysse, *Greek Loan-Words in Demotic*, in: S.P. Vleeming (ed.), *Aspects of Demotic Lexicography. Acts of the Second International Conference for Demotic Studies. Leiden, 19–21 September 1984* (Studia Demotica, 1), Leuven 1987, pp. 9–33. Demotic scientific medical texts use many Greek loan-words, but these are not included in this list.

For Demotic as an official and literary language, see above, p. 33.

A third example of mutual influence is of course the evolution towards the Coptic script (see above, p. 32), which started with the transcription of Demotic names into Greek. This often offers interesting information, for example about vocalization and dialectal pronunciation. Occasionally an Egyptian name transcribed in Greek is not recognized anymore as being Egyptian and thus rendered in Demotic by means of 'single-character signs': ꞉ ꦒ ꦔ ꦠ = Θωγορχης = Thwtrkh.


For the 'translations' of Egyptian names or nicknames in Greek, see T. Derda, *Σπουδάς – ῾Ρδο, an Example of a Bilingual Nickname (Reconsideration of SB 1 5441)*, in: *ZPE* 65 (1986), pp. 187–190.


A further stage in this evolution is the use of Greek characters to write down Egyptian formulae or longer passages. These predecessors of Old Coptic are of course interesting for the pronunciation of Demotic during the Ptolemaic period: a nice example is a graffito from Abydos (second century BC).

For the graffito, see P.W. Pestman / J. Quaegebeur / R.L. Vos, *Recueil de textes démotiques et bilingues*, Leiden 1977, no. 11. See also no. 12 where this procedure is limited to some words.

D. CO-OPERATION BETWEEN DEMOTISTS AND GREEK PAPYROLOGISTS

It is important to study Greek and Demotic together. However, as a rule texts are published separately, not only if they belong to the same archive but occasionally even if they are written on the same papyrus or ostraka. Co-operation can prevent the loss of valuable information about dates, names, etc., both for Greek papyrologists and for Demotists. Thus, for instance, the Greek translation of Demotic terms or titles (or the reverse) can help to understand them, although in some cases the relationship between both remains enigmatic.

For a comparison of Greek and Demotic idioms and expressions, see F. Daumas, *Les moyens d'expression du grec et de l'égyptien comparés dans les décrets de Canope et de Memphis (SASAE, 16)*, Le Caire 1952.


1.4.3. Meroitic

From loanwords it can be deduced that at least part of the population in Nubia spoke Meroitic already since the New Kingdom; inscriptions in the Meroitic alphabet range from the second century BC until the third century AD. Two types of writing occur, both of which are derived from Egyptian: the rare hieroglyphic script (an alphabet using Egyptian hieroglyphs) and the more common cursive one (an alphabet based on Demotic signs). Owing to the decipherment by Griffith, the texts can be transliterated, but they remain as yet mostly incomprehensible since the affinities of Meroitic with other languages are obscure. It is clear, however, that it does not belong to the Afro-Asiatic language family.


The graffiti on the Philae temple walls are mainly written by Egyptians. The Demotic visitors’ inscriptions left by Meroites are generally less formular and contain personal prayers. There are indications that the last priestly family of which epigraphic testimonies exist engraved pious inscriptions in three languages: Greek, Demotic, and Meroitic. Sometimes a Meroitic and Demotic inscription are found side by side, but it remains unclear if they have the same content.

For a short Demotic inscription on a gourd alongside a Meroitic one, see S.V. Wangstedt / N.B. Millet, in: T. Säve-Söderbergh (ed.), *Late Nubian Cemeteries (The Scandinavian Joint Expedition to Sudanese Nubia, 6)*, Solna 1982, p. 51 (M2).

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About the Demotic graffiti written by Meroites, see A. Burkhardt, Ägypter und Meroiten im Dodekaschosinos: Untersuchungen zur Typologie und Bedeutung der demotischen Graffiti (Merottieca, 8), Berlin 1985.

1.4.4. Latin

Under Roman rule Greek continued to be the language most frequently used by the elite in Egypt. Latin was only employed for matters relating to the Roman army, the highest Roman magistrates, or Roman citizens. In the governmental communications with the subjects and even in the chancellery, Greek held a dominant position, just like in the other eastern provinces of the Roman empire, with the possible exception of Syria. Only from the fourth century AD onwards, under Diocletian, does Latin seem to have been more widely used in Egypt. Still, besides the enormous amount of Greek-Demotic ostraca, a number of Latin-Demotic ones have been found as well.

For the position of Latin, see J. Kaimio, Latin in Roman Egypt, in: J. Bingen / G. Nachtergaele (eds.), Actes du XV° congrés international de papyrologie (Papyrologica Bruxellensia, 18), Bruxelles 1979, vol. 3, pp. 27–33, also referring to the classical treatise of A. Stein, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Verwaltung Aegyptens unter römischer Herrschaft, Stuttgart 1915, pp. 132–186 (Der Sprachengebrauch in der Verwaltung Aegypten).


1.4.5. Other languages

The contact of Demotic with other languages is considerably less tangible. It is mainly limited to titles and names of foreign origin that have been transcribed into Demotic. Thus the Demotisches Namenbuch (see below, p. 62) mentions anthroponyms that are (at least originally) Hebrew, Ancient Arabic, Phoenician-Punic, Akkadian, Assyrian, or Iranian. In turn, sometimes Egyptian and more specifically Demotic names occur in other languages.


A number of Egyptian-Demotic names in Phoenician are listed in G. Vittmann, Zu den in den phönizischen Inschriften enthaltenen ägyptischen Personenamen, in: GM 113 (1989), pp. 91–96.


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2. Demotic Studies: origin and evolution

2.1. History of Demotic Studies

2.1.1. The decipherment: first half of the nineteenth century

Demotic played an important role in the decipherment of hieroglyphs. Thus J.D. Åkerblad, a Swedish diplomat and orientalist (1763–1819), particularly studied the Demotic section of the Rosetta Stone (discovered in 1799). Comparing the Greek and Demotic version, he managed within two months to identify a number of words, especially proper names. He also discovered the pronominal suffix of the third person (=f). His findings were published in the Lettre à M. de Sacy in 1802. Further progress however failed to come, most probably because he thought Demotic was an exclusively alphabetic script: a plausible hypothesis considering the fact that every word identified until then was indeed written by means of single-character signs.

T. Young, an English physician, physicist, and amateur Egyptologist (1773–1829), abandoned the Demotic alphabet of Åkerblad, which proved to be another important step in the decipherment. He was the first to suggest that hieroglyphs could be alphabetical as well as non-alphabetical and that Demotic signs were derived from them. One of his other achievements was the correct division of the text of the Rosetta Stone into eighty-six word groups. In 1827 he focused his study exclusively on Demotic, but was hindered in his activities by other obligations and ill health.


J.F. Champollion (1790–1832) identified fifteen Demotic signs (including Åkerblad’s =f) with Coptic alphabetical signs as early as 1808. His success in deciphering the hieroglyphic script from 1818 onwards, with its culmination in 1822, naturally also brought about substantial progress in the field of Demotic studies.


2.1.2. The pioneer era: second half of the nineteenth century

In the years following the decipherment, Demotic was gradually pushed into the background because of the enigmatic aura still surrounding hieroglyphs and exerting a natural fascination: the texts were thought to contain secret esoteric wisdom meant only for the initiated. In addition, the relationship between hieroglyphs and Demotic was far from clear at that time.

Already in 1833 E. Hincks, an Irish Egyptologist and Assyriologist (1792–1866), pointed out the importance of Demotic studies, but his message remained unheeded (The Enchorial Language of Egypt, in: Dublin University Review 1,3; 14 p.).

For his bibliography, see Orientalia 52 (1983), pp. 325–356.
The German Egyptologist H. Brugsch (1827–1894) started studying Demotic in his early youth, finishing the draft of his grammar at the age of sixteen. His *Scriptura aegyptiorum demotica ex papyris et inscriptionibus explanata* (1848) was epoch-making and can be called the real starting point of Demotic studies. Amongst his numerous further publications are the first Demotic grammar (*Grammaire démotique (...)* in 1855; early in comparison with the first Late Egyptian one by A. Erman and the first modern Coptic one by L. Stern, both in 1880) and a *Hieroglyphisch-Demotisches Wörterbuch (...)* in seven volumes (1867–1882).

Another important figure in this period was E. Revillout, a French Egyptologist (1843–1913). Initially he was especially interested in Coptic and Old Egyptian: he did not specialize in Demotic until 1876. He produced an enormous quantity of books and articles, but they are often unsystematic and imprecise. His main merit was to publish a great deal of the available Demotic material. Particularly interesting for the ‘petite histoire’ are his attacks on Brugsch in the *Revue Égyptologique*, a journal almost entirely written by Revillout himself.

For his bibliography, see C. Wessely (ed.), *Studien zur Palaeographie und Papyrutschen* 13 (1913), pp. 10–18.

### 2.1.3. A broader scientific basis: the beginning of the twentieth century

In his very first Demotic publication (1900: *Stories of the High Priests of Memphis*) the English Egyptologist F.Ll. Griffith (1862–1934) set a new and very high standard. He can therefore be called the founder of modern Demotic philology and palaeography. In his extensive bibliography, important studies such as the publication of the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden (together with H. Thompson; 1904–1909) and the *Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester* in three volumes (1909) are landmarks.


Through a large number of detailed articles, his numerous publications of Demotic papyri, and of course, his grammar, the German Egyptologist W. Spiegelberg (1870–1930) is one of the main figures in the history of Demotic studies. He founded a series *Demotische Studien*, laid the foundations of a dictionary, and edited many papyri and inscriptions. In illustration of this, the three volumes of Demotic texts in the *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire* (1904–1932, the last part posthumous) may be mentioned.

For his bibliography, see *Anchora* 4 (1974), pp. 95–139.


One of the great Egyptologists of this period was K.H. Sethe (1869–1934). His many works include the very elaborate study of sureties (*Demotische Urkunden zum ägyptischen Bürgschaftsrecht*, 1920), which contains so much detailed information that it could be used as an introduction to Demotic. He was also a key figure in the study of the Egyptian language.
2.2. Spread and organization of Demoticists

For his bibliography, see *Enchoria* 5 (1975), pp. 135–150.

Apart from these protagonists a number of other scholars who played a not negligible role in this period should be listed. The above mentioned H. Thompson (1875–1960) studied law and pharmacy before immersing himself in Egyptian Studies at the age of forty, with an emphasis on Coptic and Demotic. He published Theban ostraca and a family archive of Siut, but eventually preferred to return to Classical Studies.

The Czech scholar F. Lexa (1875–1960), originally a teacher of mathematics and philosophy, discovered Egyptology through the hieroglyphs. He published a very elaborate Demotic grammar and provided editions of P. Pammonthes and P. Insinger. His influence was rather limited as he worked too much in isolation.


2.1.4. The growth of various schools: after World War I

During the interbellum period Demotic studies became more widely spread, leading to the rise of different schools with different transliteration systems, a problem still existent nowadays (see below, p. 70). For the German school Berlin was an important centre for a long time, but scholars of Demotic were also trained in England, in the United States (especially in Chicago), in France, as well as in various other places around the world.

2.2. Spread and organization of Demoticists

2.2.1. Centres

Demotic studies are well represented throughout the world: Europe, Egypt, and the United States all have universities where Demotic is taught and museums that possess Demotic collections.

The addresses and other co-ordinates of the various institutions and their staff members can be found in J.S. Karig, *International Directory of Egyptology*, Berlin, with regular additions and corrections. See also the lists of institutions and individual Egyptologists on the Internet (appendix C).

2.2.2. Gatherings

Though Demotic studies have become a science of their own, the number of Demoticists does not equal that of Coptologists or Greek papyrologists. Discussions between scholars are often held during Egyptology or papyrology congresses. Since 1977 a tradition of Demotic congresses has grown: West-Berlin '77, Leiden '84, Cambridge '87, Chicago '90, Pisa '93, and Cairo '96. The next meeting will take place in Copenhagen in '99.

2. Demotic Studies: origin and evolution


In August '95 the first ‘Demotische Sommerschule’ took place in Würzburg. This summer school is meant for the collective reading and discussion of unpublished texts. The second summer school is planned for '97 in Cologne.
3. Scientific tools

3.1. General tools

3.1.1. Handbooks and introductions

A genuine handbook for Demotic is not yet available. Some basic information is provided in E. Hornung, Einführung in die Ägyptologie. Stand – Methoden – Aufgaben (Die Archäologie. Einführungen), 4th rev. ed., Darmstadt 1993, p. 28 (§10); p. 36 (§15c).

Useful discussions about some aspects can also be found in Textes et langages de l’Égypte pharaonique. Cent cinquante années de recherches 1822–1972. Hommage à Jean-François Champollion (BdÉ, 64), 3 vol., Le Caire 1972.


A first status quaestionis was given by W. Spiegelberg, Der gegenwärtige Stand und die nächsten Aufgaben der demotischen Forschung, in: ZAS 59 (1924), pp. 131–140. More than fifty years later a new account of the state of the art was published by E. Lüddekeins, Stand und Aufgaben der Demotistik, in Enchoria 8, Sonderband (1978), pp. 15–23.


For Egyptology the basic works are those mentioned in the above: E. Hornung, Einführung, the volumes of Textes et langages, and the colloquium held in Grenoble.

For Greek papyrology quite a few introductions are available. The most recent one is H.-A. Rupprecht, Kleine Einführung in die Papyruskunde (Die Altertumswissenschaft), Darmstadt 1994. Other important works are O. Montvecchi, La papirologia, Torino 1973 (reprint with addenda: Milano 1980); E.G. Turner, Greek Papyri. An Introduction, Oxford 1968 (paperback edition with supplementary notes in 1980); W. Peremans / J. Vergote, Papyrologisch handboek, Leuven 1942. In this last book Demotic and Coptic also receive some attention.


3.1.2. Bibliographies

A Demotic bibliography for the period prior to the seventies does not exist for the time being. More recent literature is listed in a critical-analytic bibliographical chronicle of the utmost importance: the annual Demotistische Literaturübersicht (DL) by H.-J. Thissen.
(until 1993) and H. Felber (from 1994 onwards) in the journal *Enchoria*. The first volume appeared in 1971 and covered the years 1968–1969. Arrears of only one or two years have to be taken into account.

The *Egyptological* bibliographies are also essential tools. The *Annual Egyptological Bibliography (AEB)* has appeared since 1948 (covering the publications of 1947) and gives references by the alphabetical order of the authors’ names, followed by a short summary. Since the instalment dealing with 1979, a systematic classification has been introduced, in which Demotic appears under ‘*III. Texts and Philology* e.’. Until the issue covering the year 1987 (published 1993) the annual rhythm was maintained. The new annual instalments (published since 1995) cover the years from 1992 onwards and are also available on the Internet (see appendix C). Currently an attempt is being made to shorten the leeway for the years 1988–1991.


For the earlier periods there are the annual bibliographies appearing from 1914 onwards in the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology (JEA)*: *Ancient Egypt* (by F.Ll. Griffith; from 1928 for two years only by J. Capart) and *Graeco-Roman Egypt, Papyrological Section* (by H.I. Bell; from 1928 onwards by various scholars).


In the field of Greek papyrology the essential tool is the bibliography on index cards published by the *Fondation Égyptologique Reine Elisabeth* and the *Université Libre de Bruxelles* (M. Hombert / G. Nachtergaele / A. Martin) in Brussels. It started in 1941 (covering the years from 1938 onwards) and is still running. Since 1995 the trimestral instalments are published on computer and on paper, instead of cards. Gradually the earlier years are also being computerized. Furthermore there is an annual bibliography in the journal *Aegyptus*, from 1920 onwards.

Compare also the surveys of Demotic texts, see below, p. 65.

### 3.1.3. Contributions in general reference works

The most important work here is of course the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 7 volumes, 1975–1992, an encyclopedia of Egyptology with contributions by various specialists. Most of the articles are in German, some in English, few in French. There is more to be found here than would be expected for Demotic studies. The following articles have been mentioned in the ‘Demotistische Literaturübersicht’ in *Enchoria: Akten II; Asytrecht; Bilingue, Trilingue, Chaemwase-Erzählungen; Demotisch; Demotische Chronik; Eheurkunden; Eid, demot.: Erbe, E. Erbrecht nach demotischen Urkunden; Gebelein, demot. Urkunden; Graeco-
3.1. General tools

ägyptische Literatur; Harmachis; Hauskaufurkunden (demotisch); Hierogrammat; Kanopusdekret; Kaufkunden; Kultgenossenschaft; Lamm des Bokchoris; Lehre des Anchscheschonki; Lehren, verschiedene; Lesonis; Lexikon; Mächer motive; Maße und Gewichte (in demotischen Texten); Mathematik; Mitgift; Mumienetikette; Nachleben; Orakel; Papyri, kursive hieratische; Papyri, demotische; P. Ininger; Petrie; Petubastis-Erzählung; Philensis-Dekrete; Prophetie; Priester(tum) (griech.-röm.); Psammeticus; Pterophoren; Rakotis; Ritterlichkeit; Rosette, Stein von; Satirisches demotisches Gedicht; Schreibtafel; Sonnauge, demotischer Mythus vom; Sprache; Stolist; Tachos; Taricheut; Tebynis; Teephibis; Tempeldekrete; Tierkult; Töpferorakel; Übersetzung; Urukundenarchive; Verfluchung; Verpachtung; Volkserzählungen; Weisheit, demotische; Xerxes; Zahlungsmittel und Münzen. See further the general index (vol. VII), s.v. Demotisch and Demotische Texte.

The seventh volume of the Lexikon is an excellent tool for various purposes: apart from a general index there are indices covering names (of places, gods, kings and queens, foreign rulers, private persons, foreign names, animals, and plants), titles, words, texts cited (from Egyptian literature to Classical authors), and even calendar days. The volume is rounded off by English and French indices and maps. Demotic words are included in the Egyptian language sections.

3.1.4. Periodicals

Enchoria (since 1971; Würzburg; annual): the basic periodical for Demotic. Apart from more substantial articles (‘Aufsätze’), it also contains brief communications (‘Miszellen’), and the very important ‘Demotistische Literaturübersicht’ (see above, p. 53). Reviews (‘Rezensionen’) are included as well.

Other periodicals which are important to Demotic studies are included in the list with the abbreviations in appendix B (p. 173).

3.1.5. Series

Demotische Studien (since 1901; Leipzig–Sommerhausen; 11 vol.): this series was established by W. Spiegelberg. He wrote most of the first eight volumes himself, and after his decease for a long time nothing more was published. K.-Th. Zauzich started the series again in 1988.

Studia Demotica (since 1987; Leiden; 4 vol.): with editions of papyri and more general works.

Other series, which are not confined to Demotic but regularly publish on the subject, are also included in the list of appendix B.

3.1.6. Check-lists

There is for the time being no uniform system of referring to texts in Demotic. Some prefer to cite the inventory numbers which the documents have in museums or other collections, while others refer to the numbers in the publications where the texts are edited or re-edited.

The advantage of the former system using inventory numbers is that documents in general do not change their names and numbers. The main disadvantage is that the reader is in
many cases obliged to consult a list of the collection with the inventory numbers of the pieces and the place where they have been published. When papyri from different collections can be put together, this may also lead to lengthy references such as P. Berlin P. 13381 + P. BM 69008.

The latter system refers directly to the publications, making the detour by the list unnecessary, but has the disadvantage that the continual changing of the names and numbers forces the reader to check certain publications to know which papyrus or ostraca is meant. And because of the lack of a Sammelbuch for Demotic (see below, p. 65), this also leads to references such as EVO 17 (1994), pp. 128–129.


If publication numbers are used, a handy tool is the list of proposed abbreviations by S.P. Vleeming / A.A. Den Brinker, *Check-List of Demotic Text Editions and Re-Editions presented on the Occasion of the Fifth International Conference for Demotic Studies in Pisa, 4th–8th September 1993* (Uitgaven vanwege de Stichting "Het Leids Papyrologisch Instituut", 14), Leiden 1993.

A system of references in which inventory numbers play the most important part is given by J.H. Johnson, *Text Abbreviations used by the Chicago Demotic Dictionary including all References cited as of June 20, 1988*, in: *Enchoria* 21 (1994), pp. 128–141 (and also pp. III–IV). The list of papyri by Lüdekkens in *LA* (see below, p. 68) remains an indispensable tool.

In Greek papyrology exclusively publication numbers are used. For the most recent edition of the checklist, see J.F. Oates et al., *Checklist of Editions of Greek and Latin Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets* (*BASP Suppl.*, 7), 4th ed., Atlanta 1992.

In Egyptology generally a hybrid system with publication and inventory numbers is employed. There is no general checklist, but the list of papyri by W. Helck, *Papyri hieraticae*, in: *LA* IV (1982), cols. 672–747, and M. Bellion, *Égypte ancienne. Catalogue des manuscrits hiéroglyphiques et hiératiques et des dessins, sur papyrus, cuir ou tissu, publiés ou signalés*, Paris 1987, can prove useful.


3.1.7. ‘Berichtigungsliste’

When a text has been published, it starts to live a life of its own. It is referred to; certain passages are interpreted in a way divergent from that of the editor; different readings or a new dating are proposed; or the text can even be re-edited completely. Because all these emendations are spread over various publications, it is sometimes difficult to keep track of the situation.

Precisely to cope with this problem in Greek papyrology, the *Berichtigungsliste der Griechischen Papyrusurkunden aus Agypten* (BL) was created. Here all the published
emendations are collected and presented in a critical way. The first volume was published in 1922 and in 1989 an index to the first 7 volumes was compiled.

Because of the great difficulty of the Demotic script, readings by different scholars can diverge widely, sometimes implying a completely new interpretation of a text. The absence of a Demotic counterpart to the Greek BL has therefore long been a problem for anyone working with this documentation. A project with loose index cards, also including unpublished corrections, has been proposed by K.-Th. Zauzich, *Vorschlag für eine demotische Berichtigungsliste*, in: R.S. Bagnall et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the Sixteenth International Congress of Papyrology, New York, 24–31 July 1980* (ASP, 23), Chico 1981, pp. 553–556, but has not been realized yet, due to publication difficulties.

Another project has been set up in Leiden by S.P. Vleeming / A.A. Den Brinker, see S.P. Vleeming, *Demotic Texts Revised. A Demotic Berichtigungsliste*, in: *EVO* 17 (1994), p. 317. Unlike the proposal of K.-Th. Zauzich, it is not intended to include unpublished corrections.

On the Egyptological side there is nothing for the time being.

### 3.2. Palaeographical and linguistic tools

#### 3.2.1. Palaeographies and sign lists

**A. PALAEOGRAPHY**

In the field of palaeography no standard study is available such as Möller’s *Hieratische Paläographie* for hieratic. Spiegelberg wanted a Demotic palaeography to be connected with this work, with more attention paid to group-writing in view of the large number of ligatures in Demotic. He even deemed it necessary to make a palaeographical dictionary with the most frequent words. For all these reasons one has to wonder if, especially for the later stages of the script, it would be the most appropriate procedure to set out from an ‘etymological’ point of view, listing the signs according to what their hieroglyphic origin represents, as is done for hieratic.


Glanville, Erichsen and Stricker each contemplated a Demotic palaeography but did not proceed beyond the stage of preliminary work. The work has not become easier since: especially the more recent publications do not always provide indices. It is therefore doubtful that a Demotic palaeography will appear in the near future.


For the articles of Stricker, see the next page.
B. SIGN LISTS

In default of a palaeography, scholars have to do with other tools. Amongst them a number of sign lists, which are useful but often too limited for advanced study.

A sign list for early Demotic texts is found in W. Erichsen, Auswahlfriihdemotischer Texte zum Gebrauch im akademischen Unterricht sowie zum Selbststudium zusammengestellt, 3 vol., Kopenhagen 1950. Part 3 consists of the Schriftliste, divided into section A. Das Alphabet, containing the single-character signs (at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of a word), and section B. Ubrihe Zeichen, classified according to the hieroglyph which they represent (see A.H. Gardiner, Egyptian Grammar).


As far as Ptolemaic and Roman Demotic are concerned, the main work of reference is W. Erichsen, Demotische Lesestucke I. Literarische Texte. 3. Schrifttafel, Leipzig 1937. After a short list of the ‘alphabet’, the different signs are grouped according to their shape (from A.1 to MM.10). For each a hieroglyphic transcription is proposed and some examples are given of words in which the sign occurs. This is followed by a useful chart, of which a revised version is given in S.P. Vleeming (ed.), Het demotische schrift (Uitgaven vanwege de Stichting "Het Leids Papyrologisch Instituut", 7), Leiden 1988, pp. 61–66.

This booklet (pp. 59–60) also provides an index to the comprehensive but incomplete list of signs by Stricker, which was published in a series of articles. This list is primarily based on the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden. In addition to a survey of hieratic and Demotic signs, it contains numerous scholarly comments on phonetics: B.H. Stricker, Het graphisch systeem van de magische papyrus Londen & Leiden, in: OMRO 31 (1950), pp. 64–71 (introduction); 36 (1955), pp. 92–132 (hieratic signs); 39 (1958), pp. 80–103 (Demotic signs); 42 (1961), pp. 25–52; 45 (1964), pp. 25–55.

Furthermore interesting are the lists of determinatives, each followed by the domain to which they apply and some examples, in W. Spiegelberg, Der Sagenkreis des Konigs Petubastis nach dem strassburger demotschen Papyrus, sowie den wiener und pariser Bruchstucken (Demotische Studien, 3), Leipzig 1910, pp. 89*-102*, and id., Der egyptische Mythus vom Sonnenaug (Der Papyrus der Tierfabeln – “Kufi”) nach dem leidener demotschen Papyrus I 384, Strassburg 1917, pp. 338–365.

One of the best palaeographical tools available are the volumes of the Demotisches Namenbuch. A selection of the various writings of each name is listed chronologically. The left column is preserved for handcopies of Upper Egyptian, the right for Lower Egyptian examples.
3.2. Palaeographical and linguistic tools

See for instance the name Pa-Is-τ in vol. 5, p. 354 (for the DNB, see below, p. 62).

3.2.2. Grammars

The first Demotic grammar was H. Brugsch, Grammaire démotique, contenant les principes généraux de la langue et de l'écriture populaires des anciens Égyptiens, Berlin 1855. It is an important pioneering work, but nowadays it is obsolete.

Seventy years later a new grammar was published, mainly based on the Setne novel: W. Spiegelberg, Demotische Grammatik, Heidelberg 1925. It is modelled on the Late Egyptian grammar by A. Erman (1880) and has been criticized especially because of its lack of arrangement, but even now it remains the chief work of reference. Although the parts about the verb have been superseded since the explanation of the second tenses by H.J. Polotsky, Études de syntaxe copte, Le Caire 1944, the facsimile lists of verbal prefixes in various texts are still useful. Articles by R.J. Williams, On Certain Verbal Forms in Demotic, in: JNES 7 (1948), pp. 223–235, and R.A. Parker, The Durative Tenses in P. Rylands IX, in: JNES 20 (1961), pp. 180–187, applied the new insights from Polotsky to Demotic and to some extent reordered the section on verbal forms in Spiegelberg’s grammar.

Some ten years later than Spiegelberg’s work, G. Ort-Geuthner published a grammar based on the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden (Grammaire démotique du papyrus magique de Londres et Leyde, Paris 1936). Being founded on a single text, it did not receive much attention, and the study of Spiegelberg remained fundamental.

The monumental opus by F. Lexa, Grammaire démotique, 7 vol., Praha 1949–1951, appeared after World War II: part 1 contains an introduction, orthography, and phonetics; parts 2 to 5 deal with morphology; part 6 treats syntax; part 7 concludes with ‘addenda et corrigenda’ and the indices. Although this grammar was published after Polotsky’s explanation of the second tenses, the part about the verb, written before the war, does not take these findings into account. The main criticism of the grammar has concerned the strange classification of the verbs, primarily based on the translation. Nowadays it is almost solely used for matters of orthography and for its wealth of examples. It is also the only grammar to provide serviceable indices.

Meanwhile a ‘compact’ grammar, which could also be used for teaching, was still lacking. E. Bresciani, Nozioni elementari di grammatica demotica, Milano–Varese 1969, tried to fill this gap. The main merit of the book is that it allows fast progress because of its succinctness. The list of bi- and triconsonantal signs is particularly useful to become familiar with the script.

A grammar with instruction as the main purpose was published by a Coptologist: P. du Bourget, Grammaire fonctionelle et progressive de l’égyptien démotique, Louvain 1976. This idiosyncratic work, mainly based on the Setne novel and the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden, pays little attention to palaeography and contains a panoply of inaccuracies and errors. Consequently it was received with severe criticism.


J.H. Johnson’s The Demotic Verbal System (SAOC, 38) Chicago 1976, treats the Demotic verb forms according to the standard theory of Polotsky. It cannot completely replace the earlier grammars, however, as it is based mainly on four literary texts (Setne I, Onchsheshony, the Myth of the Sun’s Eye, and the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden).


A second study by the same author is a beginners’ course for the study of Demotic based on Onchsheshony: J.H. Johnson, Thus wrote ‘Onchsheshony (SAOC, 45), 2nd rev. ed., Chicago 1991. Although not primarily designed for self-instruction, it is the probably the best introduction to Demotic grammar available at the moment.


A recent publication discusses various grammatical features of the Demotic used in the relevant sections of the sacerdotal decrees: R.S. Simpson, Demotic Grammar in the Ptolemaic Sacerdotal Decrees (Griffith Institute Monographs), Oxford 1996.

3.2.3. Dictionaries

The very first study on the Demotic lexicon was published by T. Young, Rudiments of an Egyptian Dictionary in the Ancient Enchorial Character containing all the Words of which the Sense has been Ascertained, London 1830. It was published as an appendix to H. Tattam, A Compendious Grammar of the Egyptian Language. A striking accomplishment considering the time it was edited, it now has only historical value.

Again the real pioneering work was done by H. Brugsch, Hieroglyphisch-demotisches Wörterbuch (...), 7 vol., Leipzig 1867–1882. Although the number of texts on which it is based is rather small, it is an admirable individual effort and still worth consulting.

From the same pioneer era dates the attempt at composing a lexicon by two pupils of Revillout: D. Chardon / L. Denisse, Dictionnaire démotique, Paris 1893. It was never finished (they reached only f), neither did it reach a high level of quality.

During the subsequent period the knowledge of Demotic vocabulary steadily increased through the study and publication of new texts. In his status quaeestionis Spiegelberg therefore made an ardent but unfortunately vain plea for the inclusion of the Demotic lexical material in the Wörterbuch. He himself had some notes for a Demotic dictionary ready, but because of his untimely death in 1930 the manuscript could not be finished.
Together with the rest of Spiegelberg’s legacy, it was transferred to Chicago, where it still lies.

A provisional solution came with W. Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar*, Kopenhagen 1954. Not meant to be an exhaustive dictionary, it is still an indispensable tool in spite of some disadvantages. Thus the *Glossar* offers a limited choice of sometimes defective handcopies, in most cases without precise reference to the source.


On the 29th Orientalists’ Congress (Paris 1973), C.W. Nims from Chicago announced a new start was made to compose a Demotic lexicon, based on Spiegelberg’s manuscript. This project is currently directed by J.H. Johnson. It is not meant to replace the *Glossar*, but to complete it with new lexemes and lexicographical insights. The latest state of affairs of this *CDDDP* (Chicago Demotic Dictionary Project) was presented at the Demotic Congress of ’96 in Cairo. The examples of every lemma are scanned and have precise references. Newly published material will not be included anymore.


For non-Egyptian words in Demotic, see the sections on Demotic and other languages above, p. 39.

When unknown words are encountered, besides specific Demotic lexica, other dictionaries should be consulted as well: the meaning of new Demotic lexemes can often be assessed through earlier Egyptian or later Coptic parallels. The Egyptian vocabulary is extensively listed in A. Erman / H. Grapow, *Wörterbuch der aegyptischen Sprache*, 5 vol., Leipzig 1925–1931, with a sixth volume *Deutsch-Aegyptisches Wörterverzeichnis* (1950) and a seventh *Rückläufiges Wörterverzeichnis* (1963). The Belegstellen with the precise references for the meanings given were published between 1935 and 1953. As already mentioned, the Demotic vocabulary was not taken into account, whereas the Coptic equivalents of Egyptian lexemes were at least mentioned. A project is running to update the *Wb.* with the aid of the computer: see the preliminary reports in W.F. Reineke (ed.), *Mitteilungen aus der Arbeit am Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, from 1993 onwards. Demotic will again not be included.


The Coptic dictionaries can prove very useful as well. The most elaborate one is W.E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, Oxford 1939, with the supplement by R. Kasser, *Complément au dictionnaire copte de Crum* (*Bibliothèque d’Études Coptes*, 7), Le Caire 1964. It pays no attention to etymology, which is largely compensated for by three other Coptic
3. Scientific tools


3.2.4. Onomastic repertories


A general bibliography for onomastics, with a section on Egyptian names, is featured in the journal *Onoma* since volume 3 (1951).

A. PERSONAL NAMES

For the field of Demotic the essential work is E. Lüddeckens et al., *Demotisches Namenbuch*, Wiesbaden from 1980 onwards. The most recent volume is *Lieferung 13* (1995; up to kras), bringing the total to 1008 pages. All names attested in Demotic script, including those of foreign origin, are covered. Only royal names are not included. Within each entry hieroglyphic, Greek, or Coptic equivalents of the name, when known, are given. Very useful for palaeography are the numerous handcopies of examples of the name, listed in a chronological order, and distinguishing Upper and Lower Egyptian provenance. The uncertain attestations of names follow at the end of each letter. Name indices and regular ‘addenda et corrigenda’ complete the whole.

3.2. Palaeographical and linguistic tools


A list of Egyptian personal names, including also Demotic examples, was composed by H. Ranke, Die ägyptischen Personennamen, 2 vol.: I. Verzeichnis der Namen; II. Einleitung. Form und Inhalt der Namen. Geschichte der Namen. Vergleiche mit anderen Namen. Nachträge und Zusätze zu Band I. Umschreibungslisten, Glückstadt–Hamburg 1935–1952. As is clear from the subtitle, part 2 contains much more than a mere enumeration of names, and like the first volume it can be interesting for Demotic onomastics as well. In 1977 several German scholars published III. Verzeichnis der Bestandteile, a list of the components of the names which is a particularly useful tool for the restoration of damaged names and the study of name-formation. Some corrections and additions to Ranke have been published in a series of articles by M. Thirion, Notes d’onomastique. Contribution à une révision du Ranke PN, of which the most recent one is published in RdÉ 46 (1995), pp. 171–186, with references to the preceding instalments, as well as corrections by other scholars. See also appendix C (The Internet).

Two publications deal with the anthroponyms occurring in Greek papyri: F. Preisigke, Namensbuch, Heidelberg 1922, which gives a list of the names found in documents, with a reference to the texts involved, and D. Foraboschi, Onomasticon Alterum Papyrologicum. Supplemento al Namensbuch di F. Preisigke (Testi e Documenti per lo Studio dell'Antichità, 16), Milano–Varese 1971, with additional references and new names (the latter are marked with *). The Duke Data Bank of Documentary Papyri on CD-ROM can also be consulted.

Furthermore a ‘rückläufiges Wörterbuch’ exists for all proper names in Greek. The most recent edition including useful bibliographical references is F. Dornseiff / B. Hansen, Reverse-Lexicon of Greek Proper-Names. Rückläufiges Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigenamen, Chicago 1978: the names listed by Preisigke are marked with P.


Compare the prosopographies, below, p. 168.

B. PLACE- NAMES


Also interesting are the onomastica (word-lists), quite a few of which list place-names in a geographical order (see below, p. 115).

For hieroglyphic place-names H. Gauthier, *Dictionnaire des noms géographiques contenus dans les textes hiéroglyphiques*, 7 vol., Le Caire 1925–1931, is comprehensive but has become very dated. The Demotic terms are adopted uncritically and artificially converted into hieroglyphs.

Useful is A.H. Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*, 3 vol., London 1947. In this publication Gardiner studies many Egyptian place-names in detail and also includes Greek, Demotic, and Arabic names. Especially the survey in volume 3, plate 24 to 27, with lists for Upper Egypt ordered from south to north is interesting (discussed in vol. 1, pp. 40–63; vol. 2, pp. 1*–204*).


Some books are limited to certain nomes or regions: amongst the more recent examples are M. Drew-Bear, *Le nome hermopolite. Toponymes et sites (ASP, 21)*, Ann Arbor
3.3. Surveys of Demotic texts


C. Divine Names

For the Egyptian side there is no specific work and general reference works like *LÄ* (especially vol. VII (1992), pp. 308–330) or H. Bonnet, *Realexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*, Berlin 1952, have to be consulted. Again the *Demotisches Namenbuch* can provide good service because of the many theophoric personal names. A project to compose a lexicon of ‘minor Egyptian gods’ has been announced in Cologne.

For Greek (and Latin) there is G. Ronchi, *Lexicon theonymon rerumque sacrarum et divinarum ad Aegyptum pertinientium quae in papyris ostracis titulis graecis latinisque in Aegypto repertis laudantur (Testi e Documenti per lo Studio dell’Antichità, 45)*, 5 vol., Milano 1974–1977, which lists the names of gods and deified persons, as well as their epithets. Many other religious-onomastic themes are included: cult epithets of monarchs and their spouses, religious buildings and cult places, religious holidays, names of phylae and demes, and finally the calendar months named after emperors.

3.3. Surveys of Demotic texts

Under this heading we have grouped together a number of tools that provide surveys of Demotic texts. These can either be non-systematic, as in the case of chrestomathies, or follow a fixed pattern, such as the lists of texts according to date, provenance, type of text, or location.

3.3.1. Chrestomathies

Chrestomathies are books in which a selection of Demotic texts is presented. Generally the aim is to give an idea of the variety of Demotic literature and documentation, sometimes with the specific purpose of teaching language and script. Other works only give a translation of literary texts.

Very useful as introductions to reading Demotic are for instance the chrestomathies published by W. Erichsen. For early Demotic there is the *Auswahl frühdemotischer Texte zum Gebrauch im akademischen Unterricht sowie zum Selbststudium zusammengestellt*, 3 vol.: *I. Texte; II. Umschrift und Glossar; III. Schrifttabelle*, Kopenhagen 1950: three volumes of documents in facsimile or in a clarifying ‘Normalschrift’, sometimes including interlinear transliterations. A few texts are also transcribed into hieroglyphs. Ptolemaic and Roman Demotic are covered by the *Demotische Lesestücke*. The first part covers the literary texts: *I. Literarische Texte, 3 vol.: I. Texte; II. Glossar; III. Schrifttabelle*, Leipzig
3. Scientific tools


Another important study for the Ptolemaic and Roman periods is P.W. Pestman / I. Quaegebeur / R.L. Vos, *Recueil de textes démotiques et bilingues*, 3 vol.: I. Transcriptions; II. Traductions; III. Index et planches, Leiden 1977. The original purpose was to offer new editions of poorly edited texts or of those in less accessible publications (in fact a counterpart to the Greek *Sammelbuch* by Preisigke et al.). However, it proved necessary to re-edit totally the texts included: a simple transliteration is hardly sufficient for Demotic. The whole enterprise was therefore limited to a number of texts for which this procedure seemed justified. The resulting volumes offer a useful introduction to Demotic.

Not a chrestomathy, but equally usable as companion to reading Demotic is K. Sethe / J. Parths, *Demotische Urkunden zum ägyptischen Bürgschaftsrecht vorzüglich der Ptolemäerzeit* (Abhandlungen der Philologisch-Historischen Klasse der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 32), Leipzig 1920.


3.3.2. According to date

Although a considerable quantity of documentary papyri survive from the Saite and Persian periods, most Demotic documents come from the Ptolemaic period, especially the third and second century BC. In the last century of Ptolemaic rule and in the early Roman period there are relatively many ostraca, and naturally the extensive literary production in the second and beginning of the third century AD in the Faiyum should be mentioned here (see below, p. 85).


3.3. Surveys of Demotic texts

3.3.3. According to provenance

Demotic texts are found all over Egypt. A list with their various provenances would be very instructive, but is lacking for the time being. One of the most important centres is Thebes, but for Upper Egypt also Gebelein and Elephantine should be mentioned. In Lower Egypt the Faiyum and Memphis have yielded much material. Due to the humidity of the Delta generally only Demotic inscriptions are found there, although the carbonized papyri discovered in Tanis are an important exception.


For the inscriptions, see the index in A. Farid, *Fünf demotische Stelen (...) mit zwei demotischen Turinschriften (...) und einer Bibliographie der demotischen Inschriften*, Berlin 1995, pp. 32–76.

On the Egyptological side there is the so-called Porter-Moss (PM): B. Porter / R.L.B. Moss / E.W. Burney, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings*, 7 vol., Oxford 1927–1951, with a second edition in progress (vol. 1–3 ready: 1960–1981). In some volumes Demotic material is sporadically listed, but the references given in the indices s.v. *Demotic* are generally incomplete, so this otherwise practical tool is barely usable for our purpose. For more recent finds during excavations a preliminary report is provided in J. Leclant, *Fouilles et travaux en Égypte et au Soudan*, featured in the journal *Orientalia* since 1950.

For Greek papyri there is the elaborate but very dated work of K. Preisendanz, *Papyrfunde und Papyrysorschung*, Leipzig 1933, which occasionally refers to Demotic material (see index s.v. *demotische P*).

3.3.4. According to type of text

In view of the vast number of literary texts discovered in recent years, in various collections as well as during excavations, a systematic survey of these documents would be very useful. There is a project to create an IDL (Index der demotischen Literatur) with a short survey of the various texts. Another undertaking aiming to provide a more elaborate literature repertory has been announced by J. Mertens and M. Tassier. According to the latest report (Pisa ’93) it is to appear periodically in *Enchoria*.


Surveys concentrating on legal aspects have been provided by E. Seidl, *Demotische Urkundenlehre nach den frühptolemaischen Texten (Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und Antiken Rechtsgeschichte, 27)*, München 1937; id., *Ägyptische
3. Scientific tools


See also below, the sections on literature and documentary texts, pp. 85 and 123.

3.3.5. According to location (and limited to a specific writing ground)

Among the richest collections of Demotic documents belong (in alphabetical order) those in Berlin, Brussels, Cairo, Copenhagen, Florence, Heidelberg, London, Manchester, Munich, Oxford, Paris, Strasbourg, Turin, Vienna, ... As already indicated in the title of this section, there are no general surveys of the Demotic material preserved in these museums, libraries, or institutes, except those limited to a specific writing ground.

A list of papyri grouped according to place of storage is E. Lüdeke, Papyri, demotische, in: LÄ IV (1982), cols. 750–898. It also provides extensive bibliographical information, and is indispensable when working with inventory numbers.

For abnormal hieratic there is a similar list of G. Vittmann, Papyri, kursivhieratische, in: LÄ IV (1982), cols. 748–750.

For the inscriptions there is the index in the work of A. Farid, Fünf demotische Stelen (...) mit zwei demotischen Türinschriften (...) und einer Bibliographie der demotischen Inschriften, Berlin 1995, pp. 347–353. For ostraca and other small writing grounds nothing is available for the moment.

A survey of Demotic (and other) short texts including ostraca is currently undertaken by U. Kaplony-Heckel and will probably appear in Enchoria.
4. Methodology

4.1. Collection of the source material

The collecting of texts in Demotic studies runs parallel with that in Greek papyrology and epigraphy. Papyri, ostraca, and other writing grounds are discovered in excavations or acquired from the antiquities market, whereas graffiti can be collected by the exploration of quarries or temples. Moreover many Demotic texts still lie unpublished in various collections all over the world and await study, while in most cases their Greek counterparts have been examined for a long time. ‘Museum archaeology’ can thus be very rewarding indeed.

For an extensive discussion about the collecting of source material, see K. Preisendanz, *Papyrusfunde und Papyrforschung*, Leipzig 1933, or the other references in H.-A. Ruprecht, *Kleine Einführung in die Papyruskunde (Die Altertumswissenschaft)*, Darmstadt 1994, p. 16.

The authenticity of the documents is no real issue in Demotic studies. Real forgeries intended to deceive the expert are rare, although the sense of humour of the Demotists should perhaps not be underestimated. In earlier days the ‘creative imagination’ of a scholar could lead him to ‘reconstruct’ quite large portions of a fragmentary text. A well-meant ‘Spielerie’ can also have far reaching consequences if it is not recognized as such.

If the interpretation of a text is difficult, it is generally preferable to re-examine its reading before considering it a forgery. See K.-Th. Zauzich, *Verteidigung eines Mumienschildes*, in: *ZAS 114* (1987), pp. 95–100.

4.2. Publication of a Demotic text

4.2.1. Description

Each item is identified by indicating the collection where the text is kept and, if appropriate, the inventory number(s). The excavation number (if there is one) can also be mentioned. If they are known, the circumstances of the find or acquisition are explained succinctly, as well as the previous references to the text.

Furthermore all material aspects are discussed: the size, the completeness or otherwise, the condition of the writing surface, etc. In the case of papyri it is important to mention what is written on the reverse. Older publications often neglect this, only giving the text on the front side. It can also prove useful to know how the script runs with respect to the fibres, if the papyrus has been rolled up or folded, whether it is a palimpsest, whether the text starts on the papyrological recto or verso side, how long the individual papyrus sheets (*selides*) are, etc. (see below, p. 75).
Sometimes mathematics can help to calculate how much of a papyrus is lost, see F. Hoffmann, *Die Länge des P. Spiegelberg*, in: *EVO* 17 (1994), pp. 145–155.

### 4.2.2. Dating and provenance

Most short documents in Demotic do not mention the name of the ruling pharaoh. It is therefore sometimes difficult to situate them chronologically. Useful indications are provided by prosopographical evidence, the mention of institutions, or the level of prices. Other clues, such as archaeological context, the general layout, or palaeographical style, are usually less precise. To determine the provenance of texts acquired on the antiquities market, apart from the above criteria, the mentioning of certain localities or the onomastic evidence can also provide useful clues.


### 4.2.3. Reading and translation

Normally a transliteration, i.e. a transposition of Demotic into Latin characters, with supplementary diacritical signs, is of the essence. Some scholars use the term ‘transcription’, which is normally employed for the conversion into hieroglyphs (see below).

Nowadays a transliteration is included in the majority of publications. It has the huge practical advantage that text and comments can be combined very easily, and that the ‘brackets’ of the Leiden transliteration system, created for Greek papyri, can be used. The dots under the characters indicating doubtful readings are, because of the diacritical signs in Demotic, obviously omitted and replaced by a question mark after the word or by half square brackets.


For a survey of the symbols used in Demotic, see P.J. Frandsen (ed.), *The Carlsberg Papyri I. Demotic Texts from the Collection (CNI Publications, 15)*, Copenhagen 1991, p. vi.

See below, appendix D.

The gap between phonetic pronunciation and historical-etymological writing has for a long time led to different transliteration systems. The English system (Griffith – Thompson – Glanville) is based on a reconstruction of the actual pronunciation and is thus closely connected with Coptic. The German system (Spiegelberg – Sethe – Erichsen) is historically oriented towards the etymological orthography and refers to classical Middle Egyptian. Because of the influence of Erichsen’s *Glossar* the German system eventually prevailed, rightly so because it is only through external sources (a later language phase [Coptic] and other languages [mainly Greek]) that we have a clue to the actual pronunciation of the vocabulary. It is more logical to transcribe what is written down, of which we have more reliable data. At the Second International Congress of Egyptology in 1979 in Grenoble,
agreement was reached to facilitate a further standardization of the transliteration system, but in spite of this, discrepancies continue to exist. Probably the publication of the Chicago Demotic Dictionary will be a new landmark in the evolution towards a uniform method.


Occasionally early Demotic and sometimes even later texts are transcribed into hieroglyphs. This process has the advantage that it gives very precise information about each sign in the Demotic text. It is also useful for teaching Demotic because it helps the students to see the original hieroglyphic origin, and it can help to bridge the gap with classical Egyptology. However, it is time-consuming, requires an extensive palaeographical knowledge, and is sometimes very artificial because of the continuous choice between diachronic and synchronic transcription.


4.2.4. Commentary
In the line-by-line commentary often a distinction is made between remarks on transliteration or transcription on the one hand, and notes on the translation on the other. Both discuss the various problems of detail analytically.

The general commentary, either as an introduction or in a concluding synthesis, puts the document or composition into a wider context. Placing it firmly in a certain genre or period can result in new insights.

For an example, see J.D. Ray, The Archive of Hor (Texts from Excavations, 2), London 1976.

4.2.5. Photograph and facsimile
The photograph represents the text, preferably at its actual size. If necessary, infra-red or ultra-violet exposure can be used to contrast the inked text more with the writing ground. It is always advisable to photograph a papyrus against a light background: if not, small holes can misleadingly appear as if they were black ink.

Most of the photographs of papyri in W. Spiegelberg, Die demotischen Denkmäler (30601–31270; 50001–50022), II. Die demotischen Papyri (Catalogue Général des Antiquités Egyptiennes du Musée du Caire), 2 vol., Strasbourg 1906–1908, were taken with a dark background.

Because the quality of a photograph often deteriorates when it is printed, a drawing of the text, the so-called handcopy or facsimile, is recommended. It is preferably made from the original: if this is not possible, a good photograph has to be used instead, but the result should always be collated with the original. When for some reason a text is only published through a (defective) handcopy, this can of course conceal how dubious a forced reading really is.
4. Methodology

For examples of accurate handcopies, see for instance S.P. Vleeming, *Ostraka Varia. Tax Receipts and Legal Documents on Demotic, Greek, and Greek-Demotic Ostraka, chiefly of the Early Ptolemaic Period, from Various Collections* (P.L Bat., 26), Leiden (…) 1994.

Another procedure is to reconstruct lost passages of the text in the handcopy, by means of parallels in documents of almost identical content, provenance, and date. This can be useful to create a tool to become familiar with a difficult palaeography and orthography.


4.3. Criteria for the classification of texts

There are two ideals for the grouping of texts in a publication. The first one is the edition of documents according to the archive to which they belonged in antiquity. This gives a good idea of the ‘Sitz im Leben’ of the texts and often illuminates the motives lying behind the manuscripts. The second one is the publication according to type of document, a procedure especially interesting for the understanding of the implications of certain formulae.

In most text publications, however, purely practical criteria for grouping prevail: location of the text, writing surface, provenance, date, and others are often combined.

4.3.1. Archives

The analytic character of the papyrological sources can partly be neutralized by studying them within the framework of the archive to which they belong. Recent publications often try to reconstruct these archives and to publish them in their entirety. This may be very time consuming, but it can be very rewarding indeed. Sometimes an archive can be so extensive that to publish or republish it completely would be an enormous undertaking. A possible solution is a preliminary survey of the texts it contains.


For a survey of the various archives, see below, p. 152.

4.3.2. Type of text

This second useful grouping criterion for publishing texts is applied more often than for Greek papyri, mainly because of the difficulty of the Demotic script. Parallel texts with similar wording facilitate the reading and interpretation. Furthermore the precise implications of certain formulae can be ascertained as well. For literary texts it is of course also interesting to discover parallels and include them in the study. If a complete re-edition of all the texts is too large an undertaking, a survey may be given instead.

For an example of documentary texts, see U. Kaplony-Heckel, *Die demotischen Tempelurkunden (ÄA, 6)*, 2 vol., Wiesbaden 1963.

Because many papyri were already more or less accurately published, the core of K.-Th. Zauzich, *Die ägyptische Schreibertradition in Aufbau, Sprache und Schrift der demotischen Kaufverträge aus*
4.3. Criteria for the classification of texts

*ptolemaïscher Zeit (AA, 19), 2 vol., Wiesbaden 1968, is a list with the most important information from each contract. For a literary example, see M. Smith, *The Liturgy of Opening the Mouth for Breathing*, Oxford 1993.

The various genres of text, see below, p. 84.

### 4.3.3. Other grouping criteria

#### A. Location

This is one of the most frequently used criteria, especially for practical reasons. It is not only employed for public institutions such as museums and libraries (P. Brussels, P. Berlin, ...), but for some private collections as well (P. Loeb, O. Corteggi, ...).

W. Spiegelberg†, *Die demotischen Papyri Loeb (Papyri der Universität München, 1)*, München 1931.

#### B. Dating

As a rule this is also only used as a secondary criterion, often combined with location or provenance.


#### C. Provenance

Again only a secondary criterion for publication in combination with the location of the text. A special case are the editions of documents found during an excavation. They frequently belong together and thus come close to the ideal of archive publication, which of course also has a chronological and geographical component.

For a publication of papyri with the same provenance acquired on the antiquities market, see U. Kaplon-Heckel, *Die demotischen Gebel-Urkunden der Heidelberger Papyrus-Sammlung (Veröffentlichungen aus der Heidelberger Papyrus-Sammlung, NS 4)*, Heidelberg 1964.
For ostraca, see E. Bresciani / S. Pernigotti / M.C. Betrò, *Ostraka demotici da Narmut, 1 (nn. 1–33) (Quaderni di Medinet Madi, 1)*, Pisa 1983.

#### D. Writing ground

Because different genres are written on a different kind of writing ground, often the papyri, ostraca, and inscriptions of a collection are published separately.


For a survey of writing materials, see below, p. 74.
E. CONTENT

Here documents are edited together because they treat a common subject, for example a collection of various kinds of manuscripts dealing with bail. This often comes very close to a publication of texts because they belong to the same genre, but in other cases it can be quite divergent (for instance the publication in Greek papyrology of a corpus of documents concerning slaves).


The corpus of (Greek) Ptolemaic slave texts is R. Scholl, Corpus der ptolemäischen Sklaventexte (Forschungen zur Antiken Sklaverei. Beil., 1), 3 vol., Stuttgart 1990.
5. Writing Demotic

5.1. Writing grounds

The following survey lists the various materials that were used to write upon. Some of these are employed regularly for all kinds of text, such as papyri or ostraca. Others are used only in specific circumstances, for inscriptions related to the writing surface, such as sarcophagi or funerary linen.

Of course an alternative would be to consider also the form of the material on which the text is written. This arrangement would be interesting for certain types of objects for which different materials can be used, such as ostraca (either limestone fragments or potsherds) or writing tablets (on wood, limestone, or even parallels on metal). The other side of the coin is that in that case a single kind of writing material would be dispersed between various categories. That is why the former solution has been adopted.

For a survey of the materials and a bibliography, see S.P. Vleeming, *Inleiding tot het demotische schrift*, in: S.P. Vleeming (ed.), *Het demotische schrift (Uitgaven vanwege de Stichting "Het Leids Papyrologisch Instituut"*, 7), Leiden 1988, pp. 1–22, esp. pp. 1–6. It also deals with other technical aspects such as writing tools, writing posture, and the layout of documents.

For a list of documents on papyrus or ostraca, see also the surveys of texts according to location, above p. 68; the inscriptions are listed according to their writing ground in the second part of the dissertation of A. Farid, *Fünf demotische Stellen aus Berlin, Chicago, Durham, London und Oxford mit zwei demotischen Turinschriften aus Paris und einer Bibliographie der demotischen Inschriften*, Berlin 1995, abbreviated as Farid, *Bibliographie*, in the following.

5.1.1. Papyrus

Papyrus was the most typical writing ground of ancient Egypt. Almost all genres could be written on it, but for important manuscripts it was probably out of the question to use anything else. Therefore a number of texts that have been written on ostraca, but for which this hardly seems appropriate, are in all probability only drafts. Although papyrus was far from being the cheapest writing support, its price must not be exaggerated either.

A recent popular, but well-documented work is R. Parkinson / S. Quirke, *Papyrus (Egyptian Bookshelf)*, London 1995.

A. Production and Reuse

Papyrus is made out of strips cut from the pith of the triangular stalks of the papyrus plant. These strips are put together to form sheets, which are then glued to one another to make a roll. The side on which the fibres of the papyrus are perpendicular to the joins between the various sheets is called the papyrological recto. This is sometimes better smoothed than the so-called verso. In the first sheet of a scroll or πρωτόκολλον ‘protocol’, however, the fibres run parallel to the joins. This is probably to prevent the outer end of the papyrus, most liable to damage because exposed when rolled up, from crumbling away.
5. Writing Demotic


A piece of papyrus that had already been written upon could be recycled by rubbing out the previous text and writing the new one on top of it. Such a document is then called a palimpsest. Old papyri could also be coated with plaster and used to make cartonnage for mummies. Today these sheets can be recovered and often yield new documents with interesting information.


B. The Format of Manuscripts

The format of Demotic documents on papyrus runs from tiny scraps to complete rolls. The latter is found in some literary and funerary texts. In documentary texts only very rarely a complete roll is used because the texts are in general much shorter. Perhaps this is the case for some Ptolemaic contracts of the larger type (see below).

For most documents a strip of papyrus was cut from the scroll: this could preserve the entire original height or not. Its shape was often related to the text it was intended to carry. Thus for instance letters from the Ptolemaic period are generally not very wide, causing the message to be written in many short lines.


C. The Layout of the Text

The larger literary manuscripts commonly adopt columns in the arrangement of the text over the available surface on the recto. For convenience sometimes guidelines or borders are used. If necessary the text could be continued on the reverse, although this is but rarely the case. In later periods Demotic literature was often written on the verso of papyrus sheets whose recto had already been used. The Tebtunis literary papyri, for instance, generally bear Greek texts on the obverse.


Many Demotic contracts belong to the highly aesthetic ‘larger type’, in which the four margins are quite extensive. Often the scribe started to write at about one fourth of the height of the papyrus and tried to end the text before he reached the lower half of the sheet. This caused the documents to be written in a few long lines, and as more and more clauses were added, this led to very wide papyri indeed. The witnesses are listed on the verso, under a small stroke that indicates where the *jd* introducing the parties of the agreement is written on the recto. Other manuscripts belong to the ‘narrow type’, which generally seems to be used for less important documents. In this model there are little or no margins and often the entire surface of the sheet is filled. This could lead the writing to be somewhat cramped towards the end of the contract, because the scribe feared that he would not manage to make the complete text fit within the available
5.1. Writing grounds

room. The witnesses could be listed below the contract or on the verso. In this model the reverse could also contain abstracts or other remarks, such as the address in letters. In this last genre the message is also regularly not confined to the obverse, but continued on the back.


D. FURTHER HANDLING AFTER WRITING

When a document was finished, it was folded or rolled up for preservation. As a rule the papyri were not sealed, an exception made for letters and some Demotic contracts adopting the Greek form of ‘double document’ (see below, p. 121). The seal in this last type of document hides only part of the papyrus.


Some texts were placed in the coffin of the deceased (funerary and sometimes literary texts). Others were just thrown away when they had lost their value or used to make cartonnage. Important documents, however, were kept and stored in a safe place, often a jar or a chest. If we are lucky, these archives can be found during excavations (see below, p. 152).

5.1.2. Pottery

A. OSTRACA

The most important writing material for which pottery is employed are the ‘ostraca’. Generally this term is reserved for potsherds on which a text has been written after the vessel was broken. Normally the convex side of the sherd is used first, and only rarely the writing continues on the concave side, the latter procedure leading to a so-called opisthograph. Sometimes they were also reused after rubbing off the previous texts (‘palimpsest’). The potsherds are usually of rather small dimensions, although occasionally larger pieces can serve also. Limestone fragments (see below, p. 80) are a possible alternative, but are less common for Demotic than for hieratic.


Ostraca are mostly used for receipts or small notes. Literary ostraca, with extracts from larger literary works, well known from earlier periods, are rare for Demotic. Most ostraca date in the Ptolemaic and early Roman period, while not many examples from the late pharaonic period are extant.


For an ostracon of the pre-Ptolemaic period, see D. Devauchelle, *Cinq ostraca démotiques de Karnak*, in: *Karnak* 8 (1987), pp. 137–142, no. 6 (plate II, where it is depicted as no. 7). There are also a number of early Demotic ostraca in the finds from Manawir in the oasis of Kharga, which will be edited by M. Chauveau.
5. Writing Demotic

For a recent publication with special attention to the palaeographical aspects, see S.P. Vleeming, Ostraka Varia. Tax Receipts and Legal Documents on Demotic, Greek, and Greek-Demotic Ostraka, chiefly of the Early Ptolemaic Period, from Various Collections (P.L.Bat., 26), Leiden (…) 1994.

B. ENTIRE VESSELS

Slightly different from the ostraca are the vessels which have been used to write upon while still intact. Some of these receptacles carry literary texts, apparently without any connection with the original function of the writing ground. This connection is also absent in a vessel which has an early Demotic deed (presumably a draft) written on the inside. Occasionally a whole jar could be employed like the potsherds and is covered with similar texts of less importance. Others bear an inscription connected with their (former) contents, such as dedications on container-jars with mummies of sacred animals.

For examples of literary texts on pots, see W. Spiegelberg, Demotische Texte auf Krügen (Demotische Studien, 5), Leipzig 1912. Compare a text on a pot from the beginning of the third century AD: R.A. Parker, A Late Demotic Gardening Agreement. Medinet Habu Ostracon 4938, in: JEA 26 (1940), pp. 84–113.
For the vessel bearing a deed, see M. Malinine / J. Pirenne, Documents juridiques égyptiens (Deuxième série), in: AHDO 5 (1950–1951), pp. 11–91, esp. pp. 73–74 (no. 39).
In funerary inscriptions on vases (probably letters to the deceased), the text is only marginally related to the jar or its contents, for instance E. Lüddecken, Frühdemotische Inschriften eines Tongefaßes in Berlin, in: Enchoria 1 (1971), pp. 1–8.
For an example of an account, presumably not related with the jar on which it was written, see J. Quaegebeur, Die Streufunde aus dem Oberbau, in: E. Graef et al., Das Grab des Ibi, Obervermögenverwalters der Gottesgemahlin des Amun (Thebanisches Grab nr. 36), Bruxelles 1990, pp. 55–67, esp. p. 65 (no. 53).
Some more examples in Farid, Bibliographie, p. 224.

5.1.3. Wood

A. WRITING TABLETS

Wood is one of the materials that can be used to make writing tablets. These are boards of a regular shape, specially prepared to serve as writing ground. To this end they usually received a coating of plaster. Demotic examples are not very numerous and like the earlier ones they also seem frequently to have been employed for school exercises. Nevertheless also other texts were written on these boards, such as the planetary tables on the so-called Stobart tablets.

A survey of writing tablets throughout Egyptian history, made out of various materials but excluding the mummy labels and the smaller examples, is given by P. Vernus, Schreibtafeln, in: Ld V (1984), cols. 703–709; nos. 49–55 and 57 are written in Demotic; nos. 49 and 53–54 are in wood. Add for instance the Stobart Tablets (see below, p. 106).

Boards of smaller dimensions can be attached to the mummy to identify the deceased. They commonly imitate the shape of a stela. Like their larger counterparts they are generally made of wood, although other materials can be used as well. Because of their
specific characteristics the boards are often considered a separate category, the so-called mummy labels. In some cases, however, messages, receipts, or even commercial transactions are noted on them. It is striking that this last use seems to occur almost exclusively in Gebelein (and nearby Crocodilopolis).

There is even a curse which was written on a ‘mummy label’, see W. Spiegelberg, Demotica I (Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse, 1925 / 6), München 1925, pp. 39–41 (no. 16).


For the mummy labels, see below, p. 121; for the examples in stone, see below, p. 81.

B. FUNERARY FURNITURE

Various items of funerary furniture are made of wood and are covered with generally short texts related to the deceased and his well-being. Thus we have examples of Demotic inscriptions on coffins, small votive statues, a mummy board, a mummy portrait, or a shrine.

There is an example of a wooden shrine from the Ptolemaic period with a Demotic inscription, see W. Spiegelberg, Eine ägyptische Schreinur der römischen Kaiserzeit, in: Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst 5 (1928), pp. 30–35.


Some small votive statues with a Demotic inscription have been published by G. Botti, Statuette per standardi funerari del Museo Egizio di Torino, in: L. Banti et al. (eds.), Studi in onore di Ugo Enrico Paoli, Firenze 1955, pp. 145–148.


For a more elaborate survey of various kinds of objects in wood inscribed with Demotic, see Farid, Bibliographie, pp. 189–193.

For the mummy board, see below, p. 120.

C. OTHER

A wooden scribal palette is covered with faded Demotic and Greek texts, which can be dated to the second century BC.


5.1.4. Stone

A. STELAE

Many Demotic inscriptions have been written on stelae: erect stones, freestanding as well as integrated into the architecture or in the natural surroundings. They are often arched at the top, whether or not combined with a representation of the solar disk, all symbolically referring to the vault of heaven. According to the type of stela different scenes are depicted underneath. Two important aspects of the engraving of texts are their public character and their durability.

For general information, see K. Martin, Stele, in: Ld VI (1986), cols. 1–6.
5. Writing Demotic

For a survey of Demotic examples, see Farid, *Bibliographie*, pp. 216–223.

Apart from funerary stelae (see below, p. 120), there are those which commemorate an important event. This can be the promulgation of a decree (see below, p. 125), the erection of some building by an important official, or the installation or death of sacred animals such as the Apis bull. These last two types of votive stelae (see below, p. 148) were normally put in sacred places and dedicated to the god(s). In return they asked for benevolence on behalf of the donor. Still another category is constituted by the stelae on which a Demotic contract is written in either hieroglyphs or hieratic.


B. ARCHITECTURE OR QUARRIES

Quite a few buildings, such as temples or tombs, were written upon. For the official inscriptions Demotic was seldom used as generally the more prestigious hieroglyphs were preferred. Exceptions are for example the synodal decrees on the walls of the temple in Philae (see below, p. 126) and perhaps the inscription relating the destruction and reconstruction of a temple in Elephantine.


Much more common are graffiti. These are inscriptions of varying size, inked or incised by local employees or visitors on surfaces where no writing was intended, generally as an expression of personal piety. They can be found in quarries (Gebel Silsila, Wadi Hammamat), tombs (Theban necropolis), and very often temple roofs and walls (Edfu, Medinet Habu, Philae). The distinction between engraved and inked graffiti (‘dipinti’) of classical archaeology is not made in Egyptology.

For the above definition, see H.-J. Thissen, *Die demotischen Graffiti von Medinet Habu. Zeugnisse zu Tempel und Kult im ptolemaischen Ägypten* (Demotische Studien, 10), Sommerhausen 1989, with a survey and bibliography on pp. 3–5.


For a survey, see Farid, *Bibliographie*, pp. 199–200; 201–205.

C. SCULPTURE AND SMALLER ITEMS

Likewise, although it is generally preferred to use hieroglyphs for inscriptions on statues, sarcophagi, offering tables, or other monumental sculptures, Demotic is employed for these purposes as well. Less common are inscriptions on a stone bowl, a measuring rod, and an anvil (?).

For the anvil (?) and the rod, see W. Spiegelberg, *Die demotischen Denkmäler. III. Demotische Inschriften und Papyri* (50023–50165) (Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire), Berlin 1932, pp. 18–19; 27–28 (nos. 50046; 50050).


5.1. Writing grounds


D. OTHER

Limestone served as a writing ground in other ways as well: as already mentioned above, flakes of small dimensions were an alternative for potsherds, both resulting in what we call ‘ostraca’. Larger slabs were made into writing boards: a typical example has on one side a mathematical exercise, on the other excerpts from a literary text. Mummy labels in stone only seem to be known from Dendera.


5.1.5. Metal

A. PRECIOUS OBJECTS

Most of the Demotic texts which are found on metal are directly connected with the item, such as dedicatory inscriptions or more prosaically the weight or the (former) contents of receptacles. These precious things can be vessels belonging to a hoard and made out of gold or silver, or various objects such as small statues, mirrors, censers, musical instruments, or other curiosities. The relative scarcity of examples can perhaps be partially explained by the lack of study of this type of documents.

For the treasure of Tuch el-Qaramus where a number of recipients also have Demotic inscriptions, see K.-Th. Zauzich, *Philologische Bemerkungen zum Schatz von Tuch el-Qaramus*, in: *Enchoria* 21 (1994), pp. 101–106.
For this category, as well as other metal objects with Demotic inscriptions, see Farid, *Bibliographie*, pp. 194–198.

B. COINS

Since coinage is only frequently attested in Egypt during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, when Greek was the official language, Demotic is very rare on coins. Two samples of a silver tetradrachm in ‘Athenian’ style, issued by Artaxerxes III and inscribed with his name in Demotic, are extant. One of them was found as part of a hoard somewhere in Iraq.

5. Writing Demotic

C. OTHER

Quite rare are also plaques that are made of bronze and slightly resemble writing tablets. One of these is an inventory of temple valuables, the other two are probably copies of a self-praising text typical of statues or some stelae. At least one of them repeats the whole on the back in hieroglyphs.


The tablets with laudatory texts have been published by A.F. Shore, in the above mentioned article in the *Studies Fairman*, Warminster 1979, esp. pp. 141–158.

5.1.6. Linen

A. FUNERARY LINEN

This writing ground is only exceptionally used, almost solely in a funerary context. The texts provide an identification of the deceased, sometimes adding a blessing. A distinction may be made between writing on mummy shrouds, mummy bands, and smaller linen strips. Slightly different is a letter to the god Thoth written on linen, perhaps to be buried with or wrapped around a mummified ibis.


A recent publication is El-Hussein O.M. Zaghloul, *Inscribed Mummy Linen from Egyptian Museums* (BCPS, 7), Cairo 1990.

B. WRAPPING

Linen can also be used to wrap certain valuable legal documents, and occasionally a short text referring to the papyri is written on these strips. The link is however not always clearly discernible.


5.1.7. Other materials

Other writing grounds are even more exceptional. Thus there are examples of camel bones employed for writing. A narrow strip could be cut out of a palm leaf and used for a small letter. Only very rarely objects in faience bear inscriptions in Demotic. Some sarcophagi are made of hard mud, sometimes strengthened with straw. They are covered with a layer of plaster on which inscriptions can be written. A stopper to close a jar was made out of some kind of cement and covered with a Demotic inscription. On sandals made of papyrus cartonnage a Demotic text can be inked. Leather could serve as a writing ground in Egypt as well, probably especially for more important books. In Demotic there is only one such example: a piece of treated animal skin with various formulae from a marriage settlement, perhaps used for educational purposes.
5.2. Writing equipment

Wax tablets are common in the Graeco-Roman world but do not seem to have ever been used by Demotic scribes. Parchment was only invented around 200 BC and for the time being there are no Demotic texts known. Paper was introduced around the eighth century AD, when Demotic had long disappeared.


For parchment and leather in Pharaonic Egypt, see M. Weber, *Pergament*, in: *LA IV* (1982), cols. 936–937; I owe the information on the leather manuscript to K.-Th. Zauzich, whom I wish to thank here cordially.


5.2. Writing equipment

Besides the materials on which Demotic was written, the implements used to write Demotic should be taken into consideration as well. The distinction between epigraphy and papyrology as it is known from Greek studies is not applied to Demotic. Texts on metal are almost always incised with a sharp tool, which exceptionally can also be used to write something on wood. For inscriptions on stone the chisel can be employed as well as a pen and ink. For all other writing grounds the latter implements are adopted. It is interesting to take a closer look at them, especially since they were subject to change and development.

5.2.1. Pen

The Egyptians usually wrote with a pen made of rush, which was handled as a brush and may automatically cause an alternation of thin and broad lines. The Greek reed pen (or *calamus*), which probably was held the same way as modern writing material, does not necessarily produce this effect, resulting in a more even outlook.

Normally the Egyptian pen is used for Demotic texts, the Greek pen for Greek documents. However, sometimes, especially during the period between around 270 to 230 BC, Greek appears to be written with a rush pen: this almost certainly points to an Egyptian scribe writing in Greek. The reverse phenomenon of writing Demotic with a Greek *calamus* only appears from the late Ptolemaic period onwards. Eventually this last procedure was to replace the use of the Egyptian rush pen definitively, implying a further assimilation to Greek customs.


5. Writing Demotic

5.2.2. Ink

In the type of ink adopted by the scribes a parallel difference might be noted. The one normally used for Demotic was based on carbon, while for Greek possibly on occasion a metallic type was employed. Red ink, still frequent in hieratic and hieroglyphic manuscripts of the later periods, seems to have largely disappeared for Demotic in the Ptolemaic period. Later on, when Demotic takes the place of hieratic for religious texts also, it is again employed more frequently.


6. Demotic literature

It is difficult to arrive at a satisfactory definition for the terms ‘literary’ and ‘documentary’. Under the heading ‘Demotic literature’ I have gathered together texts that have been transmitted through several generations because of their intrinsic value. The ‘literary texts’ have been distinguished from the ‘scientific texts’ or ‘reference works’, and from the ‘funerary and mortuary texts’. Again, the boundary between these is often blurred. Thus instructions could be labeled as reference works addressing moral issues, while funerary and mortuary texts are, at least partially, practical guides for the deceased in the hereafter or for the officiating priests. Moreover some documentary texts have contents leaning towards literature. If these clearly have literary ambitions, they have been included in a special category.

Many of these literary texts are probably based upon older models, although this is often problematic to ascertain with certainty. Arguments for a date of composition which precedes that of the preserved copy are archaisms in vocabulary or grammar; the general state of the text, whereby corrupt passages can be the result of intensive copying and interpolation; and the content, sometimes indicating a particular date of composition.


This survey of the Demotic literature is naturally of a far more limited scope than the one that will be offered by the announced ‘repertory of Demotic literature’ (see above, p. 67). Moreover it has to be stressed here as well that the knowledge of Demotic literature will be enhanced considerably by the study and publication of the literary texts from Tebtunis, mainly preserved in Copenhagen (but also in other places around the world), and from other new editions and finds.


6.1. Literary texts

The literary texts in a narrow sense are a large group including narratives; mythological texts; ritual texts, hymns, or invocations; invective, satire and parody; pseudo-prophecies; instructions; documentary texts with literary ambitions; and some others which do not fit clearly in one of these categories. The arrangement of these genres and their definitions are purely pragmatic. More thorough investigations will no doubt result in a better understanding of the literature of the later periods and of ancient Egypt in general.

6. Demotic literature


It is not always easy to tell which literary texts are written in verse and could be labeled poetry. The Harper’s song, the stela of Moschion and P. Carlsberg 69 have been identified as such. However, to define Ancient Egyptian or Demotic poetry is anything but easy. An important principle is the recognition of ‘parallelismus membrorum’. Furthermore the rhythm based on the pronounced stress seems essential. External features, such as punctuation in red ink or layout in separate metrical lines, are clear indications as well.

A study of the metre of Demotic poetry was written by a pupil of Revillout: E. Boudier, *Vers égyptiens. Métrique demotique. Etude prosodique et phonétique du Poème Satirique, du Poème de Moschion et des papyri à transcriptions grecques de Leyde & de Londres*, Paris 1897. It can be considered premature, to say the best.


For the rhythm, see H.-J. Thissen, *Der verkommenen Harfenspieler. Eine altägyptische Invektive (P. Wien KM 3877)* (Demotische Studien, 11), Sommerhausen 1992, pp. 78--79.

Most documents, as already stated, combine Demotic script with Demotic language, and the great majority of texts discussed in this chapter are no exception to this rule. Still, occasionally a story such as that of P. Vandier, written in hieratic but with Demotic language features, is taken in. For certain genres, Greek texts that can with great probability be identified as translations from an Egyptian source have been included as well. Their Demotic originals are unfortunately seldom preserved, so it is difficult to assess to what extent these narratives have been adapted to Greek taste.


See also below, pp. 98, 113.

The possible influence of Greek literature on Demotic is much discussed. Thissen is convinced of the influence of iambic poetry in the Harper’s Song, whereas Homer as a possible source of inspiration for the Inaros texts is admitted by some, but questioned by others. If a connection with Greek literature is accepted, the origin of the stories of this ‘cycle’ is usually situated in a Greek-Egyptian environment under Ptolemy II.


6.1.1. Narratives

These texts are sometimes classified under the label ‘novel’, indicating a narrative of fictional events. This is surely one of the most popular genres in Egyptian literature. Its
oldest examples can be traced to the Middle Kingdom and it is still well attested in Demotic.

A general survey is given in J. Quaegebeur, Le roman démotique et gréco-égyptien (Les Civilisations Orientales: Grandes Oeuvres, G 22), Liège 1987.

A. SETNE KHAEMWASET TEXTS

This is a series of stories in which Khaemwaset, a son of Ramses II, plays a leading role. He is also called Setne because of his title (Demotic st[m; hieroglyphs and hieratic sm / stm), related to his position as high priest of Ptah in Memphis. The historical Khaemwaset can be considered an archaeologist ‘avant la lettre’: he was a diligent restorer of ancient monuments. Especially in the first story these antiquarian interests play a prominent role.


In Setne I (written on P. Cairo 30646; Thebes; early Ptolemaic period; 6 columns) Khaemwaset breaks into the tomb of Naneferkaptah, a prince who took into his grave a sacred book written by the god Thoth himself. Khaemwaset wants to get hold of this precious manuscript and when the ghost of the deceased will not give permission, he forces things by using witchcraft. Later on Setne has a nightmare in which a malevolent woman has him in her sway, taking all his belongings and causing him to have his children killed. Setne realizes this dream is caused by Naneferkaptah and decides to give him back the book.

Both this and the following text were published by F.L.L. Griffith, Stories of the High Priests of Memphis. The Sethont of Herodotus and the Demotic Tales of Khamusas, Oxford 1900.


In Setne II (written on the verso of P. BM 604; Dime ?; Roman period; 7 columns) Khaemwaset and his wife, after divine intervention, have a son, Siosiris, who is endowed with magical power. One of his exploits is to take his father with him to the underworld and show him that only good behaviour on earth leads to happiness in the hereafter. Siosiris becomes so famous that the Nubian king challenges the pharaoh to let him compete with one of his own magicians. After the contest, which ends in a victory for Setne’s son, this last reveals himself as the reincarnation of a sorcerer who defeated another Nubian contestant 1500 years before. After granting Setne another son, Siosiris disappears.

For the publication by F.L.L. Griffith, see above, Setne I.


A possible reference to the historical context in which Setne II came into being is pointed to in N. Grimal, Le roi et la sorcière, in: C. Berger et al. (eds.), Hommages à Jean Leclant. Volume 4: Varia (BDÉ, 106), Le Caire 1994, pp. 97–108.

P. Carlsberg 207 (Tebtunis; second century AD; 2 fragmentary columns) is another Setne text, narrating how the leading character is charged by a rmt ‘3 with the punishment and execution of a criminal. It is not clear yet how this story is related to the two preceding ones.
6. Demotic literature


The birth and education of Siosiris are possibly also recounted in the narrative texts on terracotta vessels mentioned below (see below, p. 90). Numerous other, still unpublished texts from Tebtunis contain other Setne stories.

B. INAROS PETUBASTIS TEXTS

This is an ‘epic’, or perhaps more correctly a cycle consisting of several stories that are loosely linked with one another. The historical background of the characters, mostly warriors, is the Third Intermediate Period, when Egypt was divided into several small rival kingdoms. The narratives themselves, however, do not refer to actual historical facts and are timeless.


In the Battle for the Prebend of Amon (written on P. Spiegelberg and P. de Ricci, as well as some fragments in Philadelphia; Akhmim; first century BC; 18 columns), according to a recent new interpretation, it is narrated how a priestly endowment is successively in the possession of Anch-Hor, the son of king Petubastis, and the first prophet of Amon in Thebes. Apparently the aim of this alternation is to link the royal family and the high clergy of Amon. Later the king travels to Thebes, probably for religious-political reasons, to be recognized as the legitimate leader of the whole of Egypt. The high priest of Horus in Buto, possibly the son of the first prophet of Amon, refuses to accept this state of affairs. He gathers thirteen Asians and threatens to recover the priestly endowment by force if the king does not grant it to him. His claims are probably justified because he is in favour of a new theology of Amon. The Horus priest defeats prince Anch-Hor in a duel, and afterwards he boards the sacred barque of Amon. Another duel leads to the Asians’ victory. Totally at a loss, king Petubastis makes an appeal to his former adversaries, who did not recognize his claims to the throne, and sends them a letter. A new actor appears on the stage in the person of the prince of Elephantine, who fights an inconclusive duel against one of the Asians. This is where the papyrus breaks off. Presumably Petubastis attains a political victory, whereas on the theological level the high priest of Buto prevails and gains possession of the prebend.


Probably the Battle for the Armour of Inaros (written on P. Krall; Faiyum; 137/138 AD; 26 columns) chronologically precedes the above mentioned novel. Inaros, one of the princes of the small kingdoms into which Egypt was divided, was the owner of a
magnificent piece of armour. After his death, this was appropriated by his adversary. A series of battles over the armour is the result, but in the end Pami, Inaros’ son, prevails.

E. Bresciani, *Der Kampf um den Panzer des Inaros (Papyrus Krall)* (MPER, NS 8), Wien 1964.

Another story in the cycle, ‘Egyptians and Amazons’ (written on P. Vienna D. 6165 and D. 6165 A; Faiyum; about 200 AD; 12 columns), relates an Egyptian campaign to Asia led by Petechons, a son of Inaros. With their allies, the Assyrians, Egyptian troops advance against the Amazons and their queen Serpot, who inflict severe losses upon them. Petechons decides to challenge Serpot in a duel, but this ends without winner. Afterwards both contestants fall in love with one another. The Amazons and the Egyptians form an alliance and successfully repel an attack of the prince of India. This is where the papyrus breaks off. The mention of India is a nice illustration of the widening of horizon in Egypt after Alexander.


Furthermore there are the story of Inaros and the Griffin, about the battle between the hero and a Red Sea griffin, and the *Love-story of Bes* (both with fragments in Copenhagen and Florence; Tebtunis; Roman period).


A number of other unpublished texts from the collections in Copenhagen, Cairo, and Vienna might also belong to this story-cycle since the same names occur. Other new fragments appear in publications from time to time.

For the story of Nancferkasokar and the Babylonians, see below, p. 90.

C. PHARAOH AMASIS AS A POPULAR DRUNKARD

One of the columns preserved on the back of the Demotic Chronicle (P. BN 215; Lower Egypt (?) third century BC; see below, p. 97), tells us the story of pharaoh Amasis, who feels like having some wine and in spite of repeated warnings drinks too much of it. The day after, a hangover prevents him from handling state affairs properly. As a distraction he wants to hear a story and is told about a young sailor who is sent away by the pharaoh, much to his and his wife’s distress. At this point the text breaks off.
irreverent interpretation of a Königsnovelle is in fact only the frame-story of a novel. Probably the lost continuation recounts how the pharaoh takes advantage of the absence of the sailor and harasses his wife.

Pharaoh Amasis’ dipsomania is also recorded by Herodotus (2, 173–174) and Diodorus (1, 70, 11), of which the latter points out that this behaviour ran counter to Egyptian custom. Amasis is often depicted as a king who does not know how to behave, tales which probably circulated because, as a usurper, he did not have royal blood running through his veins.


**D. AHIQAR NOVEL**

Ahiqar is the name of a wise man, who was the Keeper of the Seal of Sanherib and Asarhaddon, two Assyrian kings of the eighth and the seventh century BC. Although he had appointed his stepson as his successor and was educating him for this purpose, his pupil is ungrateful and slanders him in front of the king. Ahiqar is sentenced to death, but manages to escape and goes underground. When the Egyptian pharaoh presents some difficult problems to the Assyrian king, the latter realizes that he needs the help of his most talented magician. For that reason he decides to restore Ahiqar to his favour and sends him away to Egypt. There he defeats all challenges and returns to Nineveh showered with gifts. In the concluding wisdom text Ahiqar employs proverbs to castigate his stepson for his misbehaviour.

Fragments of this Ahiqar-novel and the accompanying wisdom texts have been found in many languages. The oldest one known is in Aramaic, but Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopican, Armenian, and even Slavic versions are preserved as well. Parallels can also be found in the Bible and in the classical Greek world. In Demotic only fragments of the frame-story survive (P. Cairo s. no. & P. Berlin P. 23729; Faïyum; probably first century AD). Since there are no proverbs that can be connected to the narrative with certainty, it seems better to classify the text here for the time being.


**E. OTHER NARRATIVES**

Narratives of various types are also found on terracotta vessels from the first or the second century AD, possibly from Memphis. These texts are all drafted as letters and tell the short stories of sorcerers (such as Siosiris’ youth), along with animal fables (similar to those in the Myth of the Sun’s Eye). Probably they are scribal exercises, written on readily available material.
W. Spiegelberg, Demotische Texte auf Krügen (Demotische Studien, 5), Leipzig 1912.

New finds in Saqqara have also yielded a number of literary texts, the oldest known in Demotic (possibly fourth century BC). P. dem. Saq. 1 and 1a (fragments of 4 columns) tell the story of Nanefersachme and the prophet of Horus, Lord of Letopolis. Probably it is set in twenty-sixth dynasty Memphis. As a narrative in typical Demotic tradition it includes adventure, crime, and romance. The exact story-line is difficult to reconstruct, since only half of four columns out of originally at least sixteen are still extant. At present it is impossible to link these texts with the known cycles.

Both the front and back of P. dem. Saq. 2 (fragments of 1 column) contain interesting narratives which seem to belong to the same genre as the Setne stories, though probably they are no part of this cycle. The recto relates an argument between Horus and his mother Isis. Possibly Horus intervenes for mere mortals who got involved in a divine conflict. The verso contains a text about the abduction of pharaoh Badja (?). Merib, a high court-official, is suspected of the kidnapping. In a dream he sees how the goddess Hathor puts the king to the test. She advises Merib to warn the court-guard and to go and fetch pharaoh Badja. After his departure he is followed by the steward and together they find the abducted monarch. The steward is immediately accused by the king of the kidnapping, after which the papyrus breaks off.

Other papyri found in Saqqara are narrative texts as well, but they are too fragmentary to be dealt with here. They do not seem to fit into the known cycles and thus attest to the variety of Demotic literature.


Another example are the fragments of narratives in which the protagonists are the priests of Re in Heliopolis, in particular one Hr-pšt-wnš. They are probably parallel with the stories of the high priests in Memphis (Setne).

K.-Th. Zauzich, Neue literarische Texte in demotischer Schrift, in: Enchoria 8,2 (1978), pp. 33–38, esp. p. 36. There even is a Aramaic version of this story. A publication of both versions is prepared by B. Porten / K.-Th. Zauzich.

Because it also seems to relate the preparations for a duel, the story of Nanefkerkasokar and the Babylonians (written on P. Berlin P. 13640; provenance unknown; third or second century BC; 1 column) was once considered as part of the Inaros cycle, but this is definitely not the case. New, but still unpublished fragments from the Carlsberg collection mention a column nineteen, clearly indicating that this must have been a long story. A small excerpt, exceptionally written on an ostracon, has been found as well.


6. Demotic literature

P. Berlin P. 13588 (from cartonnage; Abusir el-Meleq; late Ptolemaic; 4 columns) contains a conversation between a priest and the pharaoh about a complaint of the former that he has been unjustly treated. Although he claims to be priest of both Herishef and Amon-Re, and feels entitled to the income from both functions, he was apparently sent from pillar to post by the clergy of both temples, and receives neither. An important factor in the decision of the pharaoh seems to have been the devotion of the priest, who inscribed mortuary texts for the mummy of Psammetichus.


Fragments from other stories, such as the campaign of pharaoh Djoser against the Assyrians or other king’s novels, will be published amongst the Tebtunis texts in Copenhagen.


A special case is P. Vandier (provenance unknown; sixth or fifth century BC; 10 columns), a text written in hieratic with strong grammatical influence of Demotic. The recto tells us two stories playing during the rule of the otherwise unknown pharaoh Sisobek. The protagonist is Merire, a ‘magician’ and general, also mentioned in other narrative texts of this period. This papyrus tells his struggle with the king and with his magicians.


For other narrative texts, see the mythological texts, and the frame-stories of both the pseudo-prophecies and the instructions (below, pp. 97 and 99).

6.1.2. Mythological texts

A myth relates the ‘true and sacred’ deeds of supernatural creatures, which give an explanation for the origin of mysteries of the cosmos or human existence. By their narrative character the mythological texts are in a way related to the stories mentioned above.

A. MYTH OF THE SUN’S EYE / KUFI-TEXTS

The ‘Myth of the Sun’s Eye’ relates how the sun-god Re quarrels with his daughter Tefnut, who therefore decides to go into exile to Nubia. Eventually, however, Thoth convinces her to return. This myth, an explanation of the solstice, has been reconstructed through hieroglyphic inscriptions on temple walls, mainly from the late pharaonic era. The most extensive Demotic version, P. Leiden I 384 (on palaeographical grounds dated to the second century AD; 22 columns) originates from Thebes and tells how a ‘jackal-monkey’, symbol of Thoth, tries to persuade the goddess to return to Egypt. To that aim, and to protect himself against the wrath of the fierce goddess, he uses, among other things, animal fables of moralistic strain, the so-called Kufi-texts. This discussion between the ‘jackal-monkey’ and Tefnut is in fact the core of the
composition: the account of the myth itself, with the eventual return of the goddess to Egypt and her arrival in Memphis, is in fact reduced to a frame-story. Besides the Leiden text, fragments from some other manuscripts are also preserved.

W. Spiegelberg, Der ägyptische Mythus von Sonnenauge (Der Papyrus der Tierfabeln – "Kuī") nach dem leidener demotischen Papyrus I 384, Strassburg 1917.


A Greek version of this myth is preserved on P. BM 278 (third century AD). The text is damaged but even then it is interesting to observe to what extent the translation diverges from the Demotic original. Some parts have clearly been adapted to Greek taste.


B. COSMOGONY OF MEMPHIS

This mythological text, probably only part of a narrative, is written on P. Berlin P. 13603 (4 columns), a fragment from mummy cartonnage, found in the Faiyum and to be dated under the reign of Augustus. The text gives a description of the origins of the world, the gods, the creation of the moon, the Nile, and grain. It continues with an enumeration of cult-places and festivals of Ptah, the Memphite god who plays an important role in the myth. The famous hieroglyphic stela with the ‘Denkmal memphitischer Theologie’ and some hieratic papyri contain similar texts.


New fragments have been discovered in Berlin by K.-Th. Zauzich.

C. BATTLE OF HORUS AND SETH

The origins of this mythological text can be traced back to P. Chester Beatty 1 from the time of Ramesses V. It describes the battle between Horus and Seth for the supremacy in Egypt. Of the Demotic version of this story we have some extracts from the magical spells spoken by the followers of each party in P. Berlin 8278 (Faiyum; early Ptolemaic) and P. Berlin P. 23536. Fragments were also discovered in Saqqara and in the collection of the Museum in Berlin (from mummy cartonnage; P. Berlin P. 15549, 15551 and 23727; Hermopolis; about first century BC).


6. Demotic literature


D. OTHERS

P. Vienna D. 10102, possibly written by the same scribe who wrote the ‘Prophecy of the Lamb’ (see below, p. 98), is a fragment of a cosmogony (?). In a small fragment from the Michaelis collection we see Osiris act as the judge of the gods. A legend about Isis and her son Horus is narrated in fragments from the Viennese collections. A cosmological text about Nun is preserved in the Tebtunis texts in Copenhagen. Like the astronomic-mythological tract P. Carlsberg 1 and 1a (see below, p. 105), it may have a mainly didactic function.


6.1.3. Ritual texts, hymns, and invocations

A hymn is a text in which a god is worshipped and praised. The genre is known from older periods, but in the late pharaonic period many were carved on the temple walls. In Demotic there are no epigraphic examples, but only more extensive ‘ritual books’ on papyri, as well as short texts, mostly on ostraca. Whereas the former often worship several gods, the latter are dedicated to a single god or goddess, such as Bastet, Isis, Amon, Re-Horus, or Buchis. Of course it is also customary to include hymns in mythological or other texts.

A. P. BERLIN 6750 AND 8765

Both P. Berlin 6750 and 8765 are fragments from a kind of ‘Ritual book of the Faïyum’ (Roman period; respectively 10 and 2 columns). The main figure seems to be Osiris, although Horus and a number of goddesses also play an important role.


B. P. BERLIN 8043

Passages in which a reciting priest seems to identify himself with some gods indicate that a similar ritual book is preserved in P. Berlin 8043 (Faïyum; Roman period; 8 columns).
6.1. Literary texts


C. P. CARLSBERG 69

P. Carlsberg 69 is a text with a song for Bastet and a praise of drunkenness. The content runs parallel to some ostraca in Leuven.


D. SMALLER INDEPENDANT TEXTS

There seem to be only few other examples on papyrus. An invocation of the god Sobek of Dime, with various sections listing his epithets, is preserved in P. Strasbour 31. P. Heidelberg 736 verso contains a fragmentary metric hymn to Isis, which was, according to the editor, to be recited during a procession. P. Tebt. Tait 14 worships the same goddess. O. Naville is a late Ptolemaic or early Roman hymn addressed to Amon, written in a language that is practically Middle Egyptian. In the Archive of Hor two other hymns are preserved, of which one is dedicated to Isis, the other to Re-Horus. Another one directed to Buchis was found in the Bucheum in Hermonthis. A further example praises a ‘Great Goddess’.


For the hymns to Isis and Re-Horus, see J.D. Ray, *The Archive of Hor (Texts from Excavations, 2)*, London 1976, nos. 10 and 18.


O. Naville was studied by M. Smith, *A New Version of a Well-Known Egyptian Hymn*, in: *Enchoria* 7 (1977), pp. 115–149; a new edition of the ostraca (now discovered in the British Museum bearing number 50601) has been announced.


E. HYMNS INTEGRATED IN LARGER COMPOSITIONS

In the (pseudo-)documentary text P. Rylands 9 (see below, p. 102), columns twenty-four to twenty-five contain three hymns directed to Amon. The end of the Myth of the Sun’s Eye (see below, p. 92) also includes a praise of Mut.


intellectual level than the other instructions, transmitted from father to son. They would be ethical rules for priests, parallel to the ones found in inscriptions on temple walls. All this remains highly hypothetical. See E.A.E. Reymond, *Demotic Literary Works of Graeco-Roman Date in the Rainer Collection of Papyri in Vienna*, in: *Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer (P. Rainer Cent.)*. Festschrift zum 100-jährigen Bestehen der Papyrussammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Wien 1983, pp. 42–60, esp. pp. 50–52.

6.1.7. Miscellaneous

We have to wonder if, in the mind of the ancient Egyptians, there were strict textual categories such as religious or profane, literary or documentary: many texts fall out of our schemes or find themselves on the border between two sections. This is the case for some literature which defies the usual classification, but also for documentary texts with literary ambitions.

A. P. Rylands 9

An excellent example of this blurred border between documentary and literary texts is P. Rylands 9 (El Hibeh; end of sixth century BC; 25 columns). It can best be described as a very elaborate petition, or at least a copy of it, directed to the ‘governor’ by a certain Petesis. His plea provides an extensive survey of the history of his family and the injustice inflicted on them, and demands retribution. It is hard to tell whether the dramatic literary qualities (for instance the two hymns or ‘songs inspired by Amon himself’) are intentional or whether the scribe just got carried away by enthusiasm for his just cause.


A new edition by S.P. Vieleming and M. Chauveau is forthcoming.

B. The Moschion Stela

Another example is a piece of poetry on an alabaster stela of which two fragments are preserved (Berlin 2135 & Cairo JE 63160; Xois; second or third century AD). Someone called Moschion recounts, both in Greek and in Demotic, the healing of his sore feet by Osiris. The stela contains a playing board for each language and a manual to understand the board. In both languages the text can be read in various ways (194.480 in Demotic; 141.381.055.200 in Greek). Considering this complexity it is not surprising that two almost simultaneous editions have resulted in divergent interpretations.


C. P. Doddson

This is a papyrus (Elephantine; Ptolemaic) of an unusual content, which makes it difficult to interpret. It is drafted as a letter in the appropriate format, and contains three
6.1.5. Pseudo-prophecies

It is difficult to find an appropriate term for these texts. They can hardly be labelled historiography, because this originated in the Greek world and there is no definite proof that it existed as such in Egypt. In fact these compositions are related to the pseudo-prophetic literature, which is known since the First Intermediate Period. In this genre, future events are announced, but paradoxically these forecasts are made post eventum. In other words, these texts claim to be written in a time preceding (part of) the predicted events, whereas the actual composition took place afterwards. In spite of the propagandistic, anti-Greek strain, there is also a deeper meaning: an attempt to reconcile the divine world order (i.e. the supremacy of Egypt) with the historical reality. Hence the German term ‘Tendenzschriften’. A similar kind of text is the legend of Nectanebo, preserved in the Alexander romance. There the last Egyptian pharaoh is made the father of Alexander the Great, thus legitimizing the foreign rule.


The so-called propagandistic content of the various texts is discussed in extenso in W. Huß, Der makedonische König und die ägyptischen Priester. Studien zur Geschichte des ptolemäischen Ägypten (Historia Einzelschriften, 85), Stuttgart 1994, pp. 129–137 (Nectanebo’s Legend & Dream), pp. 143–179 (Demotic Chronicle; Prophecy of the Lamb; The Potter’s Oracle).


A. DEMOTIC CHRONICLE

The Demotic Chronicle (P. BN 215; Lower Egypt (?); 7 columns), was given its name in the editio princeps by Revillout. It is a rather hermetic text, of which the beginning and the end are missing, making it even more difficult to fathom the whole. The core of the text is a series of proverbs, said to be written on a board. Interpretations are offered for each of them, so that they can be applied to Egyptian history. Although the so-called interpretation is often as enigmatic as the proverb itself, a nationalist element is obvious: a typical example is the announcement of a man from Herakleopolis who will bring justice back to Egypt after the Persian and Greek dominations. The manuscript claims to date to Djedher (Teos) in the thirtieth dynasty, but several features show that it was written later, in the Ptolemaic period: the rubbed out Greek text that is visible under the Demotic and the grammar confirm the impression given by the mention of the Greeks. A date after 217 BC has been suggested because then, on the occasion of the battle of Raphia, the Greek conqueror for the first time also integrated native Egyptians in the Macedonian phalanx, which led to a nationalist revival. This text could be meant to
support a rebellion by indigenous Egyptians against the foreign oppressor. In another interpretation the text is a description of the ideal Egyptian king.

W. Spiegelberg, Die sogenannte Demotische Chronik des Pap. 215 der Bibliothèque Nationale zu Paris nebst den auf der Rückseite des Papyrus stehenden Texten (Demotische Studien, 7), Leipzig 1914.


B. PROPHECY OF THE LAMB

This text (P. Vienna D. 10000; Faiyum; 4 separate fragments of 3 columns) narrates how a certain Psinyris comes across a book describing the future of Egypt. He also discovers his children’s destiny, a destiny so frightening that he wants to throw them into the water after their birth. However, he does not have the heart to do this, so he prepares his offspring by revealing the prophecy to them. In the second column a lamb appears describing the period of disaster: a blessed era will not dawn in Egypt until after nine hundred years. After this prediction it dies, and Psinyris decides to consult pharaoh Bocchoris concerning the book and its interpretation. After the curse is read to the king, the story ends with the burial of the lamb as a deity.

The composition dates itself under pharaoh Bocchoris (twenty-fourth dynasty, about 715 BC), but through the colophon we know the papyrus was actually written in the thirty-fourth year of Augustus (4–5 AD). It might be a copy of a Ptolemaic original, though an origin in the Roman period cannot be excluded.


C. THE POTTER’S ORACLE (GREEK)

Of this composition three fragments belonging to two versions are extant (P. gr. Graf: second century AD; P. gr. Rainer: third century AD // P. gr. Oxy. 2332: late third century AD). They are all in Greek, although the text is certainly a translation from a Demotic original. The frame-story, for instance, is typically Egyptian. It tells how, when king Amenophis lands on an island and visits a sanctuary, an envoy, incarnating the creator-god Khnum, starts making pots in a kiln. Because this is considered a sacrilege, the pots are taken out of the oven and smashed. The potter is dragged in front of the king, makes a prophecy and dies. His words are written down and he is buried in Heliopolis. A period of disaster for Egypt is predicted: Seth and his followers (i.e. the Greeks) will damage the country and the sun god will not send a new king to earth until after the destruction of Alexandria.
Since the story is directed against the Ptolemies, the original version must be situated in that time. A probable date is around 130 BC when the struggle between Ptolemy VIII and Cleopatra II raised hopes among the Egyptians that the Greeks would destroy themselves. As time went by it became clear that this would not happen and a reference to the Prophecy of the Lamb (possibly originally a gloss) was interpolated. Thus the prophecy’s fulfilment was placed in a distant future and the concrete historical meaning was replaced by an eschatological one, making the text relevant enough to be copied until the third century AD.


D. NECTANEBO’S DREAM (GREEK)

This Greek papyrus from the second century BC was written by Apollonios, katochos of the Serapeum in Memphis. It contains the beginning of a Königsnovelle, and tells how king Nectanebo is sent a dream. He is reminded of the fact that the temple of Ares, built by him in the capital Sebennytos, still has no hieroglyphic inscriptions. Roused from his dream, the pharaoh wants this omission to be remedied quickly by a certain Petesis, and he pays him his fee. This last one however decides to drink some wine first and to enjoy life. He happens to see a beautiful girl and … This is where the papyrus breaks off. Some elements of this story and parallels with the texts mentioned above indicate that the rest of the text probably contained a prediction by Petesis of a time of disaster for Egypt, eventually followed by a salvation.

For the most recent publication and discussion, see L. Koenen, The Dream of Nektanebos, in: BASP 22 (1985), pp. 171–194. His theory that the Greek text is written in verse has not been widely accepted.

6.1.6. Instructions

Demic instructions consist of a combination of injunctions and precepts. These are given as aphorisms: brief, mostly single sentences in a loose order, apparently skipping from one subject to another. Sometimes, however, they are focused on a central theme, especially in P. Insinger. The narrative frame of these teachings generally presents them as advice from father to son. Their practical aim is to teach living in harmony with the divine world-order. The wise man knows his place in society, the fool does not. A prominent role is played by the gods, and even when they are not mentioned everything bathes in a religious
atmosphere. However, the teachings are no esoteric texts of secret wisdom: essentially they are meant for everyone.

Demotic instructions are closely connected with their older Egyptian predecessors, although there are some different preoccupations in the themes. The main change is the frequent use of single-line maxims, constituting a logical and grammatical unit. There are interesting similarities with wisdom literature in other languages from the Near East, possibly pointing to mutual influence.


For a general introduction, a survey of preserved texts and their bibliography, see M. Smith, Weisheit, demotische, in: LA VI (1986), cols. 1192–1204.


A. P. INSINGER

This long papyrus (Akhmin; first century AD; 35 columns) was originally offered for sale to the Louvre, but the authorities refused on account of the price. Later on it was bought by Insinger for the Leiden museum, but by then it was no longer complete. Fragments of the missing part have been discovered in Philadelphia. Fragments of other versions are preserved in Copenhagen, Florence, Paris, Cairo, and Berlin.

The instruction is divided into twenty-five thematic chapters, each with a title. The traditional basic theme is the opposition of the foolish and the wise. Compared with other Demotic wisdom literature the text of P. Insinger is more structured and of a higher spiritual level. This has led many scholars to consider it as an original composition by a single author, whereas the other ones would rather be compendia with selections from earlier texts.


A. Volten, Das demotische Weisheitsbuch (Analecta Aegyptiaca, 2), Kopenhagen 1941.

New fragments from other collections have been published by K.-Th. Zauzich, Neue literarische Texte in demotischer Schrift, in: Enchoria 8.2 (1978), pp. 33–38; also possibly F. de Cenival, Fragment de sagesse apparenté au papyrus Insinger (P. Université de Lille III Inv. P. dém. Lille 34), in: CRIPEL 12 (1990), pp. 93–96.


B. ONCHISHESNONQY

The frame-story of this instruction (P. BM 10508; Akhmin; first century BC; 28 columns) runs as follows: Onchisheshonqy, priest of Re in Heliopolis, is innocently
involved in a conspiracy against the king. He is thrown into prison and writes a spiritual testament for his son on potsherds.


Translation, translation, and commentary of the frame story in H.S. Smith, *The Story of Oncheshqony*, in: *Serapio* 6 (1980), pp. 133–156. Another version of this story is to be found on a papyrus from the Roman period in the Carlsberg collections in Copenhagen.


**C. Others**

P. Louvre N 2414 (Memphis; second century BC; 3 columns) is a fragment with proverbs of Pt-wr-gf for his son, possibly extracts from a larger instruction or the draft of a wisdom text. The parallels with Oncheshqony are striking.


Recently also P. Ashmolean 1984.77 was published (Thebes (?); second or third century AD; lower part of 4 columns). Besides more traditional parts, in a few cases parallel with Oncheshqony, some other, more unusual subjects are treated, such as the prohibition of cutting down trees or harming sacred animals.


There are other smaller wisdom texts, of which it is not always easy to determine if they are independent ‘compositions’ or extracts from a larger instruction.


An important wisdom text, written in late hieratic but with linguistic features of early Demotic, is *P. Brooklyn 47.218.135* (provenance unknown; about fourth century BC; 6 columns). This papyrus takes an intermediate position, not only chronologically (between the New Kingdom and the Ptolemaic period), but also stylistically. Thus the stichic structure with single-line maxims is not yet as strict as in later texts.


According to Reymond a number of texts from the Viennese collections first treat an ethical theme and then give some proverbs and practical applications of these doctrines. These texts would be on a higher
6. Demotic literature

intellectual level than the other instructions, transmitted from father to son. They would be ethical rules for priests, parallel to the ones found in inscriptions on temple walls. All this remains highly hypothetical. See E.A.E. Reymond, Demotic Literary Works of Graeco-Roman Date in the Rainer Collection of Papyri in Vienna, in: Papyri Erzherzog Rainer (P. Rainer Cent.). Festschrift zum 100-jährigen Bestehen der Papyrussammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Wien 1983, pp. 42-60, esp. pp. 50-52.

6.1.7. Miscellaneous

We have to wonder if, in the mind of the ancient Egyptians, there were strict textual categories such as religious or profane, literary or documentary: many texts fall out of our schemes or find themselves on the border between two sections. This is the case for some literature which defies the usual classification, but also for documentary texts with literary ambitions.

A. P. Rylands 9

An excellent example of this blurred border between documentary and literary texts is P. Rylands 9 (El Hibeh; end of sixth century BC; 25 columns). It can best be described as a very elaborate petition, or at least a copy of it, directed to the ‘governor’ by a certain Petesis. His plea provides an extensive survey of the history of his family and the injustice inflicted on them, and demands retribution. It is hard to tell whether the dramatic literary qualities (for instance the two hymns or ‘songs inspired by Amon himself’) are intentional or whether the scribe just got carried away by enthusiasm for his just cause.

A new edition by S.P. Vleeming and M. Chauveau is forthcoming.

B. THE MOSCHION STELA

Another example is a piece of poetry on an alabaster stela of which two fragments are preserved (Berlin 2135 & Cairo JdÉ 63160; Xois; second or third century AD). Someone called Moschion recounts, both in Greek and in Demotic, the healing of his sore feet by Osiris. The stela contains a playing board for each language and a manual to understand the board. In both languages the text can be read in various ways (194.480 in Demotic; 141.381.095.200 in Greek). Considering this complexity it is not surprising that two almost simultaneous editions have resulted in divergent interpretations.


C. P. DODGSON

This is a papyrus (Elephantine; Ptolemaic) of an unusual content, which makes it difficult to interpret. It is drafted as a letter in the appropriate format, and contains three
6.2. Scientific texts / Reference works

separate sections spoken by a divine child to an unnamed questioner, possibly as an exceptional oracle consultation. Two criminals are mentioned and the deletion of the divine aspect of their theophoric names seems to be essential.


D. BOOK ON THE BUILDING OF TEMPLES

It is unclear to which genre the Demotic fragments of a Book on the Building of Temples (P. Vienna D. 6319; Dime ?; second century AD [?]) belongs. They contain a *Königsnovelle*, but are in all probability part of a more comprehensive work. Interesting are the mentioning of names of pharaohs of the Old Kingdom. Other fragments from Tebtunis in hieratic and Demotic will surely shed new light on the content of this composition.


E. AN AGRICULTURAL DREAM

A very unclear text which also seems to withstand all classification is found on O. BM 5671 (Thebes ?; third century BC). Because of the strange logic it could refer to a dream, although in view of the lack of parallels nothing decisive can be said.


F. OTHERS

According to the interpretation of the editor Spiegelberg, the verso of the Demotic Chronicle contains the already mentioned story of Amasis and the sailor, some documentary texts, but also a number of animal fables, somewhat similar to those found in the Myth of the Sun’s Eye. The interpretation of these texts remains highly unsure.

For the edition, see above, p. 97; for the documentary texts, see below, p. 127.


6.2. Scientific texts / Reference works

Under this heading I have brought together the papyri that can be considered reference works or manuals for priests or other specialists in certain professions. In most cases it is impossible to know whether they were preserved in the ‘House of Life’, as a part of the temple library, or if they were in private possession and accompanied the deceased to his grave.
6.2.1. Mathematical texts

Several Demotic mathematical texts have been preserved. These contain real algebraic and geometric problems with a task and a solution. It is not certain whether this is purely ‘Egyptian’ science, as there is probably Babylonian or Greek influence. Especially under Persian rule (twenty-seventh dynasty) much ‘mathematical wisdom’ from Babylonia might have entered Egypt. On the other hand some problems are already mentioned in Egyptian texts from the Middle Kingdom (P. Rhind and the Moscow papyrus).


A. The Verso of the ‘Code of Hermopolis’

This collection of problems (Hermopolis; third century BC; 19 columns), written on the back of the so-called ‘Code of Hermopolis’ (see below, p. 113), is the longest and most interesting mathematical text preserved in Demotic. It shows an organized presentation, developing from relatively simple arithmetic to plane geometry. The last, most complicated problem deals with calculating the volume of a pyramid.


B. P. BM 10520

The thirteen problems presented in P. BM 10520 (Memphis (?); early (?) Roman; 7 columns) are especially interesting because they involve progressions and the approximation of irrational square roots. In opposition to some other mathematical papyri there is little or no duplication.

Parker, *Mathematical Papyri*, problem 53–65 (pp. 64–72).

C. P. BM 10399

The recto of P. BM 10399 (provenance unknown; Ptolemaic period; 7 columns) repeats the problem of determining the volume of a mast in terms of *hins* of water for various lengths. The verso contains additions and subtractions of fractions, of which some have a numerator greater than one.

Parker, *Mathematical Papyri*, problem 41–52 (pp. 53–63).


D. Others

Other mathematical texts are P. BM 10794 and P. Carlsberg 30 (Tebtunis; probably second century AD; 2 and 5 columns). Both are very fragmentary and the content is often uncertain, but the former has some multiplication tables for fractions. P. Heidelberg 663 (Ptolemaic) contains fragments of four geometric problems concerning a field. P. Griffith Inst. I E.7 (Dime; late Ptolemaic [?]) is a fragment of one column with five similar algebraic equations.
6.2. Scientific texts / Reference works


6.2.2. Astronomical texts

Egypt played an important role in astronomy and geography. Later landmarks such as Ptolemy (second century AD) and Theon (fourth century AD) lived and worked in the land of the Nile. In the Greek papyri from the Ptolemaic and Roman periods precursors of this culmination can be found. All astronomical texts in Demotic were written under Roman rule. In contrast with what is often supposed, however, the Egyptian native achievements seem to be insignificant, and strongly indebted to both Babylonians and Greeks.


A. AN ASTRONOMICAL-MYTHOLOGICAL TRACT: P. CARLSBERG I AND 1A

On the ceiling of the tombs of both Seti I and Ramses IV the so-called cosmology is depicted: a representation of the course of the sun, the moon, and the stars through the body of the celestial goddess Nut and in the underworld. P. Carlsberg I and 1a (Tebtunis; 4 columns recto; 3 columns verso) are line comments to the hieroglyphs that accompany this scene. The texts are quoted in hieratic sentence by sentence, translated into Demotic, and commented on by the scribe. The first part is strongly astronomical, the second more mythological. Both papyri date from the second century AD and are a striking illustration of the fidelity to native Egyptian traditions and the ‘revival’ of Demotic literary and scientific texts in this late period.


B. P. CARLSBERG 9

A very important text for our knowledge of the calendars of ancient Egypt is P. Carlsberg 9 (Tebtunis; 144/145 AD; 3 columns). It enables the user to determine the beginning of certain lunar months, based on a cycle of twenty-five Egyptian civil years, which equates 309 lunar months (sixteen ‘normal’ years of twelve months; nine ‘leap’ years with thirteen months). This cycle was introduced in the fourth century BC, and was also used by the Greeks for the Macedonian calendar.


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C. PLANETARY TABLES

The planetary tables give lists of the dates when planets enter certain zodiacal signs, information especially useful for casting horoscopes. P. Berlin P. 8279 (Faiyum; after 42 AD; 40 columns) treats the years 17 BC until 12 AD; the so-called Stobard tablets (Thebes (?); after 140 AD; 4 out of originally at least 11 wooden writing tablets hinged together) concern the years 63 to 140 AD.


D. OTHER TEXTS

Other texts list data resulting from the planetary or lunar observations, such as the day-by-day motion of Mercury as morning star, the dates of lunar eclipses or, more didactical and comparable to the mathematical texts, calculations of the seasons’ beginning.


6.2.3. Divinatory texts

Under this heading are gathered manuals to forecast the future by various means, through interpretations of either astrological observations, spontaneous strange events, or dreams. Certainly if only fragments have been preserved, the choice between these subgenres is often difficult. These books were possibly kept in the library of the ‘House of Life’, just like the magical texts and the other scientific texts mentioned here. Magic and divinatory texts are both weapons in the battle against the evil powers in the universe.

The ‘Archive of Hor’ is an archive of someone specialized in precisely these matters, namely the interpretation of oracles and dreams. But since these ostraca concern specific cases and are no general reference works, they have been discussed amongst the documentary texts (see below, p.130).

A. ASTROLOGICAL HANDBOOKS (FOR INDIVIDUALS)

In these astrological texts predictions are given according to the position, at the time of birth of an individual, of the planets in zodiacal signs and their subdivisions. Both P. Berlin P. 8345 (Faiyum; about second century AD; 4 columns) and P. Vienna D. 6614 (Faiyum; end first century AD) belong to this most common type, forecasting good or evil fortune in health, esteem, women, children, and death.


New texts will certainly come from the Tebtunis papyri in Copenhagen and Florence. A papyrus preserved in Lille has already been connected with to a Carlsberg fragment. The manual (P. Carlsberg 66; second century AD; 4 fragmentary columns) lists the twelve zodiacal signs in the Greek order, but develops this by dividing them in three decaans.
each. Strictly individual predictions, good and bad, are given for the persons born in those periods.


Other astrological texts are no handbooks for the astrologer but merely tools, such a table of terms, or practical calculations for the actual horoscopes. Since the latter are limited in use to one individual, they will be discussed amongst the documentary texts (see below, p. 150).


**B. ASTROLOGICAL HANDBOOKS (FOR COUNTRIES)**

These astrological texts provide forecasts for the general future of Egypt and other countries of the Near East, which reminds of the pseudo-prophecies. The astronomical observations on which they are relying can be either exceptional or regular. In the former case these manuals could also be labelled omen texts, as in the famous ‘Vienna Omen papyrus’ (P. Vienna D. 6286; Faiyum (?); a copy written end second century AD; fragments of 16 columns). This is a compilation of two independent books, of which the first deals with solar and lunar eclipses. The predictions based on these phenomena are very precise and even indicate the exact month on which they will come true. The original must go back to the sixth century BC, probably soon after the Persian conquest, and the essentially Babylonian treatise will probably have had a very significant influence on Greek ‘science’. The second book written on this papyrus records predictions based on the different moon-phases, and is thus more astrological.


P. Cairo 31222 (Faiyum (?); Roman period) is a very fragmentary handbook with predictions based on the rising of Sothis and its position relative to the seven planets. Recently P. BM 10661 was found to be of very similar content.


**C. MANUALS FOR DREAM INTERPRETATION**

The best known examples are P. Carlsberg 13 and 14 verso (Tebtunis; second century AD; 4 & 9 fragments), the fragmentary remains of two reference books explaining the meaning of dreams. These manuals for the oniocritic are arranged thematically, with sections for visions of numbers, women, etc. The personality of the dreamers does not
seem to be of importance: in the hieratic counterparts, they are divided into followers of Horus or Seth, categories which are crucial to the interpretation. This ‘handy excuse’ for the dream interpreter can be found in Greek and Arabic oneiroscopy as well.

These manuals are lexicographically interesting because they are like thematic dictionaries teaching us many new words in their eagerness to describe any possible dream. It is not clear if they are authentically Egyptian or to what extent they are products of foreign influence.

A. Volten, *Demitische Traumdeutung (Pap. Carlsberg XIII und XIV verso) (Analecta Aegyptiaca, 3)*, Kopenhagen 1942, with examples of similar books on p. 5.

Other examples of handbooks for dream interpreters are possibly found in the Vienna collections:


For the actual descriptions of dreams, see below, p. 150.

D. Omen Texts

Herodotus (2, 82) already states that the Egyptians, more than all other nations, considered spontaneous strange events the basis of their fortune-telling. This seems to be confirmed in the handbooks for the interpretation of omen in the Vienna collections.

Information can especially be gained from the movements of sacred (?) animals.

For a small fragment of a possible omen-text, see W. Spiegelberg, *Demotica I* (Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Philologische und Historische Klasse, 1925 / 6), München 1925, pp. 9–11.


E. Other Divinatory Texts

It is not always clear if divinatory texts that have only partially been preserved belong to the dream descriptions or the omen texts, or even constitute a category of their own. One such example is P. Berlin 8769 (Faiyum; Roman period; 4 columns), where the various columns list names of minerals and herbs, which are followed by a prediction, generally, but not always, favourable. Similar is P. Berlin P. 23521 (late Ptolemaic or early Roman), in which the body parts of a woman are mentioned: those on the left and the heart lead to favourable predictions, those on the right to negative ones.


6.2.4. Magical texts

Magical texts are collections of spells and recipes which try to obtain their goal outside the natural laws of cause and effect. In a broader application of this term funerary compositions such as the Book of the Dead could also be included, but here only texts for use during life are meant. Again the discussion is limited to more general ‘reference works’ (for practical applications, see below, p. 151), which are essential for a good understanding of religion in Hellenistic Egypt.

For the above ‘working definition’ and a study of Egyptian magic in general, including much Demotic material, see R.K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* (SAOC, 54), Chicago 1993.


The four papyri mentioned here all come from the Anastasi collection, and were found in Thebes. They are dated to the end of the third century AD or somewhat later. There are indications that several of them were written by the same scribe. Typical is the mixture of Demotic, Greek, and Old Coptic.


A. THE MAGICAL PAPYRUS OF LONDON AND LEIDEN

This is the longest text preserved in Demotic, consisting of P. Leiden J 383 (Anastasi 65) and P. BM 10070 (Anastasi 1072). The two parts originally belonged together but were cut apart for the antiquities market. In total the papyrus numbers twenty-nine large columns on the recto and thirty-three smaller ones on the verso side. Both beginning and end are lost. Three columns are composed in Greek. Some passages or words whose exact pronunciation is important are written in a special Demotic ‘alphabetical’ script often accompanied by Old Coptic glosses. Hieratic, especially where a solemn attitude is appropriate, and a kind of cipher seem to have been employed as well.

The papyrus gives spells for various purposes, for instance to communicate with the gods in a vision or to make a woman love a man. Other, more ‘medical’ recipes are allegedly effective against the bite of a dog or a bone stuck in the throat. There is also ‘black magic’, such as prescriptions to cause ‘evil sleep’ in a man or to make someone mad.

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B. P. LEIDEN I 384 VERSO

The verso of the papyrus containing the Myth of the Sun's Eye has nineteen columns of a bilingual magical text (Anastasi 75; successively 2 columns Demotic; 13 Greek; 2 Demotic; 2 mainly Demotic). Again Demotic is interspersed with passages or words in hieratic, 'alphabetical Demotic', Old Coptic, and a single word in cipher. It was most probably written by the scribe of the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden.

The Demotic part of the papyrus contains an invocation to the gods to reveal the prescription fitting to a certain illness, but also spells to separate people from each other or to cause a woman to hate a man.


See the translation by J.H. Johnson / R.F. Hock / E.N. O'Neil (these last two for the Greek sections) in: Betz, PDM xii. (lines 1–49; 50–164 on pp. 152–153; pp. 169–172 are Demotic).

C. P. LOUVRE E. 3229

This papyrus (originally Anastasi 1061) is damaged at both ends, but the text still amounts to seven columns on the recto and one column on the verso. The Demotic is interspersed with hieratic, Old Coptic, and 'alphabetical Demotic'. Amongst the contents are various spells for sending a dream, as well as invocations to the gods to see them in a vision.


See the translation by J.H. Johnson in: Betz, PDM Suppl. 1–208 (pp. 323–330).

D. P. BM 10588

This is a papyrus with eight columns in Demotic on the recto side. On the verso side there are two columns Demotic and four columns Greek. In the Demotic parts Old Coptic is used for magical names and Greek for ingredients. The various spells include a method of finding a thief and a prescription to make a woman fall in love.


For a new translation, see J.H. Johnson / R. Kotansky / E.N. O'Neil (the latter two for the Greek sections) in: Betz, PDM lxi. (lines 1–57; 63–158 on pp. 286–290 are Demotic).

E. OTHERS (?)

The existence of a separate genre of 'Hermetic Writings' has been postulated by their editor Reymond. Supposedly these would be scholarly tracts giving interpretations of theoretical books or 'secret writings'. The written depositions of scholarly discussions between Egyptian priests would deal with cosmological issues. As 'philosophical' literature from the 'House of Life' it would have been adopted by the Greeks in their 'Corpus Hermeticum'.

As was demonstrated in the reviews, the bulk of these very fragmentary papyri have been incorrectly read and interpreted by Reymond. One should thus be very wary of accepting her conclusions. Most texts are probably astrological, medical, or magical.


A so-called Thoth Book is due to be edited by K.-Th. Zauzich and R. Jasnow. Some plates of papyri with extracts from this text have already been published: see W. Spiegelberg, Demotische Papyrus aus den Königlichen Museen zu Berlin, Leipzig–Berlin 1902, pp. 26 (P. Berlin 8027); E. Revillout, Papyrus démotiques du Louvre. Fascicule IV (Corpus Papyrorum Aegypti, 1), Paris 1902, pp. 5–8 (no. 30), pl. 30–33.

6.2.5. Medical and paramedical texts

The classical authors mention the high esteem that ancient Egyptian medical science enjoyed. After a gap of nearly a thousand years the Demotic texts link up again with the important papyri from the Middle and New Kingdom.

For an introduction, see J.F. Nunn, Ancient Egyptian Medicine, London 1996.

A. A MEDICAL PAPYRUS

P. Vienna D. 6257 (22 fragments of one papyrus scroll; only recto; 14 columns) was, according to its editor, part of a temple library of Sobek in Crocodilopolis (Faiyum), but her argumentation is not entirely convincing. The text can be dated to the second half of the second century AD and is particularly informative for medical practice during the Hellenistic period. Because of the inaccurate publication, however, new insights in the medical and scientific literature of this period must wait until after a more thorough study of this document. Thus it is not clear whether the innovations, such as new remedies for well-known diseases, are to be attributed to contact with the Greek world, or if they are autonomous Egyptian evolutions. The many Greek loan-words point out to a foreign origin.

The works seems to be a compilation of six older books: ‘On skin diseases’; ‘On internal diseases’; ‘On skin inflammations and swellings’; ‘On sores and disturbances’; ‘On the treatment of various internal diseases’; ‘From a physician’s compendium’. Sometimes the original wording is maintained, which leads to archaisms. The grammar of the text might indicate a date for the original around the third or the second century BC.


B. A DENTIST’S HANDBOOK

P. Vienna D. 12287 (Faiyum [?]) consists of two small fragments from around the second or third centuries AD dealing with the extraction of teeth.

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C. A HERBAL

P. Carlsberg 230 (Tebtunis; second century AD; 11 fragments) and P. Tebt. Tait 20 (2 fragments) are part of a systematic handbook for the identification of herbs. For each plant involved, one or two medical recipes are also provided. Because they all bear a number, we know that at least ninety herbs are listed.


D. A GYNAECOLOGICAL TRACT

The fragmentary papyrus Berlin 13602 (Abusir el-Meleq; late first century BC; 1 column) gives various recipes concerning the gynaecological subjects, especially focusing on contraceptives. Magic and witchcraft also play a role in this text, just as in other and older medical papyri.


6.2.6. The embalming ritual of the Apis-bull

P. Vienna KM. 3873 (Memphis (?); 7 columns recto, 4 columns verso) deals with the embalming of the dead Apis bull. Although both sides of the papyrus share the same subject, two different hands can be discerned. The text, written in a mixture of hieratic and Demotic scripts (see above, p. 31), is Ptolemaic: the recto side dates from around the end of the second century BC, the verso being somewhat later.

The manuscript deals with the different activities involved in the embalming and the burial of the sacred Apis bull. When it dies, its body is brought to the House of Purification to be ritually cleaned. After four (?) days it is transferred to the House of Embalming, where the mumification takes place. Some surgical operations are carried out: the entrails are removed and the cavities filled up. The corpse then probably remains for a long time (forty days ?) covered with solid natron. On the fifty-third day other personnel with specific tasks start to wrap up the body in bandages. After the mummy is placed into a coffin, it is carried out of the House of Embalming on a shrine on the sixty-ninth day. A procession then brings the bull to the Lake of Kings for a number of ritual operations intended for its resurrection. After a short stay in the Tent of Purification the now risen Apis awaits its burial. This takes place on day seventy, when it is carried to the underground tomb in the Serapeum. Then this is closed until the next interment.

The text does not pay much attention to the ritual acts and the contents of the spells or glorifications that would have to be recited. This is conspicuous, certainly if compared with other manuscripts concerning embalming such as the ‘Rituel de l’Embaumement’. It is essentially a practical, almost medical handbook for the mumification of the dead Apis bull. Probably the papyrus belonged to one of the embalmers who took his professional
tools with him into his tomb. It might also be a copy belonging to the ‘House of Life’, the repository of priestly wisdom.


6.2.7. Juridical texts

During the Ptolemaic period Egyptian law survived and was practised next to its Greek counterpart. Under Ptolemy VIII regulations were made to determine to whom which kind of law applied, depending on the language in which the contract was drawn up. All surviving juridical ‘scientific’ texts concern the ‘sacred law’ developed by the Egyptian priests.


A. THE ‘LEGAL CODE OF HERMOPOLIS’

The most important Demotic juridical manual is without any doubt the so-called Code of Hermopolis (Cairo JdÈ 89127–89130 & 89137–89143; first half of the third century BC; 10 columns), found in Tuna el-Gebel in 1938–1939 and published by Mattha and Hughes in 1975. The text is written on the recto: the verso contains mathematical problems (see above, p. 104).

Four large sections can be discerned, treating consecutively: some problems which can occur between the permanent owner and the tenant (for instance lawsuits between lessor and lessee); some special cases of alimentation within marriage; problems with property such as the unclear consequences of new constructions; and finally some specific cases of inheritance.

The main question remains who wrote this text and to what purpose. It has been suggested that it is a collection of juridical practices in casuistic form or a codification of priestly common law under Ptolemy II Philadelphos, but for these the composition does not seem general enough. The manuscript is rather a private commentary on a more fundamental and comprehensive work by a specialist, or a juridical handbook with procedures to be applied to various complex cases, perhaps as guidelines for the judges in native courts. At least part of the book might even be traced back to an original of the eighth century BC under pharaoh Bocchoris. It is also worth considering if the recto and verso of the papyrus should not be considered together as a mathematical and juridical reference book.


For a survey and references to all earlier literature, see S. Allam, *Réflexions sur le “Code légal” d’Hermopolis dans l’Égypte ancienne*, in: *Cad* 61 (1986), pp. 50–75.

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Some passages of this text were apparently translated into Greek. Very remarkable is the fact the only copy as yet discovered of this Greek translation comes from Oxyrhynchus and dates to the second half of the second century AD. Internal grammatical criteria, however, point to the early Ptolemaic period as the date of the original redaction. It is probably based on another, lost copy of the Demotic manual.


B. OTHER MANUALS

Besides the above mentioned text from Hermopolis, there are juridical reference books from Tebtunis as well. Since also new additions are made, P. Carlsberg 301 (almost a hundred, often tiny fragments; end of the Ptolemaic period) is no mere reproduction of an already known ‘law handbook’.


Furthermore a fragment (P. Carlsberg 236; Tebtunis; second century AD) from the forty-fourth (!) column of a law handbook is extant. Its original must date from around the same time as the Code of Hermopolis.


About sixty fragments in Berlin come from cartonnage. Some are quite large, up to even a whole column. Amongst the topics discussed are marriage and divorce law. On the verso of the fragments literary texts are written. Both recto and verso probably date from the third century BC.


C. THE SO-CALLED ‘ZIVILPROZESSORDNUNG’

A slightly different juridical text is the so-called ‘Zivilprozessordnung’ (P. Berlin P. 13621 & Cairo 50108 recto; Thebes; Ptolemaic; fragments of 4 columns). It sets forth in which cases a document that has been drawn up is sufficient evidence in a lawsuit, and with whom the onus of proof rests when the authenticity of various types of documents is controversial. The verso gives a list of priestly offices with an indication of the sum required to hold them. Both sides may form a ‘handbook’ for Theban priests, in a similar way to the ‘Code of Hermopolis’.

6.2. Scientific texts / Reference works

For the verso, see below, p. 131.

6.2.8. Onomastica, word-lists

Onomastica are lists of names or words that provide an inventory of a certain field of study. They could be used as reference works or in the education of scribes. Many examples preserved today are as a matter of fact probably no more than students’ exercises. These texts follow a long Egyptian (and Near Eastern) tradition of cataloguing and listing, a typical ‘aspective’ way to get a grip on reality.

For examples from older periods, see A.H. Gardiner, Ancient Egyptian Onomastica, 3 vol., London 1947.

In Demotic studies a terminological distinction between onomastica and word-lists is but rarely made. The former term is then reserved for lists of proper names (personal, divine, and geographical), the latter for enumerations of common names. Sometimes even whole sentences or grammatical conjugations are listed.

A. SEMANTIC ORDER

In these onomastica the entries are listed in a systematical way according to their meaning or what they refer to. Thus we have a list of toponyms in geographical order from south to north (O. Ashmolean 956; first century BC). The most comprehensive texts belonging to this type are P. Cairo 31168 and 31169 (Saqqara; early Ptolemaic; 10 columns recto; 4 columns verso). What is extant of the latter starts with a list of toponyms. The sections concerning the Delta have been preserved, and there seems to be a ‘clockwise’ order, whereby possibly the four borders of each nome are listed. It continues with a list of gods and their epithets, which is paralleled in 31168. In fragments from columns thirty to thirty-three of a papyrus from Tebtunis (P. Carlsberg 23; Ptolemaic) we find an enumeration of priestly titles and court designations, probably classified according to their rank.

6. Demotic literature

B. ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Very striking is the fact that some lists show an alphabetical order, which may be traced back to that of the South Arabic alphabet. The Egyptian scribes probably preferred it to that of the north-western Semitic languages, because for some Egyptian phonemes these did not have a matching character.


This alphabetical order can be found in several documents. The best preserved fragments of P. Carlsberg 41a (Tebtunis; second century AD; 3 columns) deal with metal vessels and tools, many of them designated with foreign loan-words. A fragment of the Michaelides collection (Faiyum; fourth century BC) lists personal names beginning with ḥ. Another interesting example again comes from Tebtunis (P. Carlsberg 12; second century AD) and not only enumerates various nouns, but also some often used sentences. But perhaps the most intriguing text (P. dem. Saq. 27; fourth century BC) is one in which birds are connected with trees (‘the ibis [ḥḫ] was upon the ebony-tree [ḥḥyḥ]’) and with toponyms (‘the Benu-bird [ḥḥw] went away to Babylon [Ḫḫḫ]’).


6.2.9. School exercises

Ostraca or papyri can contain exercises on various subjects. The majority of these are grammatical, but there are others dealing with lexicography (see above, p. 115), administrative terminology, or arithmetic. Ostraca containing exercises with extracts from literary texts in Demotic are less commonly used in scribal training.


6.3. Funerary and mortuary texts

The last category of the Demotic literature are the funerary and mortuary texts. Theoretically these two can distinguished: the former term is then reserved for all texts that are part of the funerary equipment, the latter for compositions originally meant for the use of the living, in *casu* the mortuary priest. In practice, however, it is often difficult to separate the two functions strictly. Therefore they have been treated here together.
6.3. Funerary and mortuary texts


Concerning the double function of several texts, see M. Smith, *The Liturgy of Opening the Mouth for Breathing*, Oxford 1993, pp. 6–7; 12–18.

Perhaps more than the other literary genres these compositions have a documentary aspect as well. Especially in the case of the shorter examples, such as the funerary stelae or the mummy labels, the identification of the deceased is more important than literary aspirations.

The long tradition of funerary texts starts with the Pyramid Texts of the Old Kingdom, continues with the Coffin Texts of the First Intermediate period and the Middle Kingdom, and leads to the Book of the Dead from the New Kingdom onwards. During this last period a continuously growing variety of compositions is created. For the mortuary texts there are also predecessors in earlier periods. All these compositions of both genres are generally written in hieratic, even under Roman rule. The oldest example written in Demotic dates from the middle of the first century BC. Many of them must be labelled compilations.

As they were useful for the decipherment of Demotic because of their hieroglyphic and hieratic counterparts, these manuscripts were intensively studied in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century little attention was paid to them. Nevertheless their importance is manifold: they are interesting for the text tradition; linguistically for the grammatical archaisms; lexicographically for the ‘technical terms’; they show the sacerdotal and scribal creativity in composition; and finally they offer new information about religious practices.

The survey given here is mainly based on an unpublished lecture of M. Smith on Demotic mortuary and funerary literature given in Heidelberg.

6.3.1. Larger compositions

A. P. RHIND 1 & 2

These are the two best known funerary manuscripts, found together in Thebes in 1856/1857 lying next to the deceased in the sarcophagus. They are now preserved in Edinburgh. The same scribe wrote them for husband and wife, who died shortly after one another in the same year 9 BC. The texts of each papyrus are written in both hieratic and Demotic, and topped by large vignettes, especially in the case of P. Rhind 1.

This last, intended for the husband, numbers eleven columns and contains a ‘biography’ of the deceased and a series of passages dealing with different aspects of the voyage to the hereafter: the announcement of death, the escort to the underworld, the purification, the judgement before Osiris, etc. Especially interesting is the detailed description of the mumification.

P. Rhind 2 (9 columns) is an abridged version of the same text for his wife.

G. Möller, *Die beiden Totenpapyrus Rhind des Museums zu Edinburg (Demotische Studien, 6)*, Leipzig 1913.

B. P. PAMONTHES

P. BN 149 (3 columns) is usually named P. Pamonthes after its owner, a man who died in Thebes in 63 AD. It contains a translation of chapter 125 of the ‘Book of the Dead’ and an extract from the ‘Book of Traversing Eternity’.

The correct inventory number (149 instead of 140) is given in F.R. Herbin, *Le livre de Parcourir l’Éternité (OLA, 58)*, Leuven 1994, p. 31.

C. THE BOOK OF TRANSFORMATIONS

The oldest funerary-mortuary text known in Demotic, P. Louvre E. 3452, was written for a Theban priest in 57–56 BC. Apart from the resurrection to life by Isis, the text mainly consists of spells for transformations into various sacred animals.


D. LITURGY OF OPENING THE MOUTH FOR BREATHING (P. BERLIN P. 8351 ET AL.)

This original composition consists of different parts: the awakening of the deceased (compare the ancient ‘Ritual of Opening the Mouth’); the description of the sacrifices; and the integration of the dead into the cosmos by participating in various feasts and rites (compare the ancient ‘Book of the Crossing of Eternity’). These texts were probably read when the mummy was brought into the tomb; the papyrus was placed beside it afterwards. Four manuscripts of this composition are preserved, all of them from the first century AD, possibly from Akhmim. The most important one is P. Berlin P. 8351 (5 columns); other copies are P. Strasbourg 3 verso (fragments of 4 columns); P. Louvre E. 10607 (1 column); P. Louvre E. 10605 & Bodl. MS. Egypt. C.9 (P) (3 columns).


E. P. BM 10507

This papyrus (late first century BC; 12 columns) was purchased together with the teachings of Onchsheshonqy, and probably comes from Akhmim. It is a compilation consisting of three books: ‘The book which Isis made for Osiris, foremost in the west’; ‘The book which was made in exact accordance with his desire for Hor son of Petemin to cause it to be recited as an opening of the mouth document in his presence on the night of his burial feast’; and ‘The chapters of awakening the ba which are recited on the night of mummification for a god’s-servant, a wab-priest, a magistrate, a scribe, and the rest of the men who are great and before whom it is fitting to recite them’. The last part (columns 4–12) has a parallel in P. Harkness columns two to three.

For the correct reading of the name of the deceased, see for example the review of G. Vittmann, in: *WZKM* 79 (1989), pp. 258–262.

**F. P. HARKNESS**

This text is not a single continuous composition, but consists of eight discrete sections (6 columns), some of which are spoken by the deceased, while others are to be recited by the family members. The contents are very diverse, from glorifications to libation formulae. Like in P. BM 10507 there are also ‘Stundenwachen’, but in this case not only the hours of the night, but also those of the day are enumerated. The papyrus was written for a woman in Qaw el-Kebir in 60 AD.


**G. BODL. MS. EGYPT. A.3 (P)**

Apart from a hieratic text this manuscript (provenance unknown; second half of the first century BC; 4 columns) also contains a series of offering liturgies in Demotic script but Middle Egyptian language. One of these is a composite of spells 25 and 32 of the Pyramid Texts; another, to be recited in conjunction with a ritual involving a torch, has a parallel in the final column of the above mentioned P. Strasbourg 3 verso, also written in Middle Egyptian.


### 6.3.2. Shorter texts

#### A. P. TURIN N. 766

P. Turin N. 766 (Memphis; first century AD) is inspired by the ‘Book which Makes the Name Flourish’, a litany that clearly demonstrates the importance that the Egyptians attached to their names. The papyrus is a Demotic counterpart to what is traditionally called the Second Book of Breathing and aims to assure the entry of the deceased in the underworld.


#### B. DIVINE DECREES

Of similar purpose is a single text, seven lines in length, preserved in O. Strasbourg 132–134. It is a short Demotic counterpart of the ‘Götterdekrete’, ‘divine decrees’ in favour of the deceased, which are mostly written in hieroglyphs on a stela placed in the grave.

A publication is being prepared by M. Smith.

For the hieroglyphic counterparts and references to this genre, see J. Quaegebeur, *Lettres de Thot et décrets pour Osiris*, in: J.H. Kamstra et al. (eds.), *Funerary Symbols and Religion. Essays dedicated to Professor M.S.H.G. Heerma van Voss (...)*, Kampen 1988, pp. 105–126; H. De
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C. LETTERS OF BREATHING

Other short texts come from the Theban area and can be dated to the first or second century AD. Like the preceding categories, they have been interpreted as a sort of passport or a letter of recommendation for the underworld. Some bear the label ‘Book of Protection’, others are titled ‘Letter of Breathing’. There are also examples of these texts written on coffins.


D. SIMILAR SHORT TEXTS

Demotic inscriptions have been preserved on various items of funerary equipment. Some of these are in fact no more than labels, whose main purpose is to identify the dead person. Others incorporate brief religious formula, and finally some are more elaborate and seem to be of a purpose similar to the preceding categories.


Quite exceptional is a mummy board (BM 35464; provenance unknown; Ptolemaic or Roman). The representation, similar to those found on funerary stelae, is accompanied by a short hieroglyphic and hieratic legend, and a much longer Demotic text. This last one identifies the deceased and describes her journey to and reception in the underworld. Judging by the dimensions (1.44 m high; 12 cm wide) the board probably was meant for a child.

Published by G. Vittmann, Ein neuer religiöser demotischer Text (Mumienbrett BM 35464), in: ZAS 117 (1990), pp. 79–88.


E. FUNERARY STELAE

In the temple or in the grave itself a stela could be placed to commemorate the deceased. These fairly common funerary stelae sometimes represent the dead person standing before Osiris, whether or not accompanied by various other deities. Alternatively he is shown lying stretched out on a beer. An inscription gives the appropriate religious formulae and his name and titles.

The stelae of this type found in Abydos or in the Serapeum in Memphis presumably stood in the temple asking for a blessing on behalf of the dead person. Those discovered
in other localities were in all probability placed in the tomb itself and simultaneously identified the deceased.

For a typology of the formulae of the funerary stelae, see B. Menu, Une stèle démotique inédite, in: 
For some examples of funerary stelae, see A. Abdalla, Graeco-Roman Funerary Stelae from Upper
121–123.
also a list by the same author in Fünf demotische Stelen (…) mit zwei demotischen Türinschriften

F. MUMMY LABELS

A cheap replacement for the more elaborate stelae were the so-called mummy labels. These are wooden tablets (see above, p. 78), frequently in the shape of a stela, with a little hole to tie the label to the mummy. Occasionally materials other than wood can be used. They did not only identify the deceased by name, but also gave a short religious formula for his well-being in the hereafter. Many of these labels are bilingual: they have Greek on one side, Demotic on the other. Similar funerary texts are written on various materials related to mummification and burial, from linen to small statues.

For some more recent publications, see the publications and remarks by M. Chauveau in: BIFAO
7. Demotic documentary texts

Not merely documents of legal relevance, but all non-literary Demotic material is included in the class of documentary texts. They provide information on public and private administration; economic and social life; legal and, occasionally, political topics.

Literary compositions may defy categorization, but documentary texts do so even more. Various criteria can be taken into account for their classification. Thus there is the type of document: through both external and internal features, such as format and formulae, a manuscript can for instance be assigned to the notary- or $sh$-deeds, and more in particular to the cessions ($sh$ n wy). One can also consider the legal implications of the document as of most importance and adopt modern legal classifications: a text is either a sale or contains testamentary dispositions, even if both can be accomplished by means of a single type of document, the $sh$ n $gbt$ $hd$. A third possibility is to take into account the official or private character: documents can be issued by various institutions or their representatives, but also by a private person.

It would of course be ideal if these criteria resulted in identical classifications, but, as might be expected, they in fact lead to divergent arrangements. A typical example is a letter: formally this is a type of document with specific formulae (first criterion); sometimes, however, contracts are made up in epistolary style (conflict between the first and second criterion); and a distinction can be made between private letters and official ones (possible conflict between first and third criterion). Another example are receipts: if the third criterion is given priority, official tax receipts and private receipts must be separated; if they are drafted in epistolary form they may be included amongst the letters (first criterion).

An arrangement of documentary texts will therefore be a compromise between the various factors playing. The following classification starts from the third possibility, making a distinction between dealings with the various institutions (7.1.); legal documents or arrangements between private individuals (7.2.); and unofficial documents (7.3.).

For similar surveys of documentary texts, see above, p. 67. The list of K.-Th. Zauzich, Die demotischen Dokumente, in: Textes et langages de l’Egypte pharaonique. Cent cinquante années de recherches 1822–1972. Hommage à Jean-François Champollion (BdE, 64), Le Caire 1972, vol. 3, pp. 93–110, is alphabetical, and for that reason the German counterparts of the English terms are given in each section.

Not all secondary literature cited in his article is reproduced here.

Before we continue with the survey, it is necessary to pay some attention to the legal form of the documents. The different types of contract in Demotic each have their specific structure, formulae, and format. A distinction is made between the notary-contracts, the agreements in epistolary form, and less formal documents.

Notary-contracts (or $sh$-contracts) are papyri in which a notary (Dem. $sh$), representing the priests of the temple, warrants a statement made in his presence. These documents are often quite long, but there are also examples where it was preferred to use less space (see above, p. 76). Since this is the traditional way to write a contract, we find it from the beginning (a sale from the year 644 BC), until well in the Roman period (last example: 45 AD).
7. Demotic documentary texts

The structure of these declarations, written by the notary, is the following:

- The document starts with the date, containing the ruling year of the pharaoh and, during part of the Ptolemaic period and in the most important documents, the names of the eponymous priests.
  For the dating formula, see below, p. 163.
- This is followed by an identification of the two parties in the third person, as a statement of the notary: "gd A n B 'Says A to B'.
- The actual body of the declaration with the various formulae changes according to the type, but the clauses are always in the first person, as statements by the first party.
- At the end, often at the beginning of a new line, the notary writes down sḥ 'written' and his name.
- Only in the early Demotic period is it customary for the declaring party to sign the contract in his own handwriting.
- Sometimes an interested third party also signs the contract.
- A number of witnesses (at least four and at most, in the Ptolemaic period, sixteen) write down their names on either the recto or, for the larger type, the verso of the papyrus.
- For important contracts in the early Demotic and the early Ptolemaic period some witnesses also copy the whole contract, even if they have already signed on the verso.
- Sometimes a preliminary draft of the agreement or some notes are still preserved at the right-hand side of the papyrus.
- From 264 BC onwards all Demotic documents regarding sale had to bear a Greek note stating payment of the relevant taxes.
- From 145 BC onwards a law stipulated that all agreements written in Demotic had to be registered.
- The papyrus was rolled up for preservation, but never sealed.
  For the preservation, see above, p. 77.

Agreements in epistolary style (ṣḥ ḫ) are a less official style for a contract. This type makes use of an introductory formula also frequently found at the beginning of letters. It also has the same format: rather narrow strips of papyrus. Royal oaths, surety documents, and loans often take this form, generally as double documents (see below).

- As in the notary contract, the document starts with a date, which in this case only mentions the year of the ruling pharaoh, never the eponymous priests.
- The identification of the parties is given by A ṭḥ nty gd n B 'A is the one who says to B'.
- Again the stipulations of the declaration follow in the first person.
- At the end the writer of the contract writes down sḥ, 'written', followed by his name. In this case he is not necessarily a notary, but generally just a private scribe.
- The witnesses sign with their names, but are generally less numerous than in the notary-contracts. Four is a number frequently found.
- As an extra security this type can also be a double document, a procedure borrowed from Greek contracts. The most important part of the text, or later only a short summary of the essence, is written again above the contract. Afterwards this part of the papyrus with the duplicate version (the so-called scriptura interior) is folded and sealed. The other one (the scriptura exterior) remains visible for consultation. The purpose of this procedure was of course to prevent any alterations.

7.1. Dealings with institutions (state and temple)

For a double document in which the *scriptura interior* is possibly a tender, whereas the *scriptura exterior*, stipulating different conditions, is the actual contract, see M.C. Betrò, *Il P. dem. Lille 119: Un'offerta d'affitto con relativo contratto*, in: S.F. Bondi et al. (eds.), *Studi in onore di Edda Bresciani*, Pisa 1985, pp. 67-84.

The Demotic documents are thus almost always subjectively formulated, as statements in the first person, from one party to the other. This implies that it was very important who was in possession of the deed. If a really bilateral contract containing mutual commitments was needed, this could be accomplished by simultaneously drawing up deeds acknowledging each other’s rights, or by mentioning certain obligations in the unilateral agreement. But a third way to remedy this was for the two parties to agree before a trustee about their conflicting interests. This is done in the so-called *hzw* ‘agreements’ (‘Übereinkunft’), existing both as *sh*-contract and in epistolary form.


See also below, p. 128.

7.1. Dealings with institutions (state and temple)

In the early Demotic period the evidence for the administration is fairly limited, and largely confined to the temple. Only well after the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great, from about the middle of the third century BC, do we find a substantial amount of documents illustrating an elaborate bureaucracy. This Ptolemaic administration was essentially Greek, but still our Demotic documentation is very extensive, and shows a great variety of documents. In the Roman period Demotic is only used for tax receipts and for matters concerning the temple: it progressively disappears from public life from the first century AD onwards (see above, p. 25).

Of course many administrative documents have been lost, because after a while they had become outdated and irrelevant. Many were reused, for instance in palimpsests and cartonnage, or just thrown away. Sometimes a decision was made public by an inscription on stone: in most cases only these monuments have been preserved whereas the originals are lost.

Most of the following documents were issued by the institutions or by one of their representatives: they were decrees (7.1.1.) or other official decisions (7.1.2.). We also have quite a number of lists, inventories, accounts, etc. (7.1.3.), which were used for everyday administration, such as the management of taxes. In these activities many small documents were issued for the benefit of private individuals (7.1.4.). Much less frequent are the documents drawn up by private individuals for the institutions (7.1.5.).

7.1.1. Decrees

After the authorities had taken a decision, a decree could be issued to make it public. This could be accomplished through a piece of papyrus, but important proclamations were sometimes engraved on a temple wall or on a large stela. During the Ptolemaic period the famous synodal decrees are generally drawn up in three versions: hieroglyphs, Demotic, and Greek. Other decrees are bilingual (for instance Demotic and Greek) or only employ
one language. It is not always certain if these epigraphic versions are the official promulgations, or mere copies made by private initiative.


### A. SYNODAL DECREES

Under the Ptolemies there is very interesting evidence for the relationship between the Egyptian clergy and the state ruled by the Greek pharaohs: after their general assembly the priests issued the so-called synodal decrees, mentioning the merits of the king and the royal administration, and promulgating measures taken or privileges granted. The text was generally prepared in three versions (hieroglyphic, Demotic, and Greek) and several copies of the stela were afterwards published in various localities in Egypt. In secondary literature the decrees are either referred to by the name of the place where and the year when the assembly took place (Memphis decree; 196 BC), by the name of the occasion that was celebrated (Raphia decree), or by the provenance of the most important copy (decree of the Rosetta stone). The first procedure is to be preferred.


For two of these decrees almost complete copies have been preserved, both of which have played a crucial role in the decipherment of the Egyptian script: the Memphis decree (196 BC; preserved on the famous Rosetta stone found in 1799) and the Canopus decree (238 BC; found in 1866).

For the publication of the Demotic parts of the decrees of Canopus and Memphis, compared with the Greek and hieroglyphic versions, see W. Spiegelberg, *Der demotische Text der Priesterdekrete von Kanopus und Memphis (Rosettana) mit den hieroglyphischen und griechischen Fassungen und deutscher Übersetzung nebst demotischem Glossar*, Heidelberg 1922.

For the more recent duplicate versions, see the references of the above article by W. Huß or the book of Simpson.

Amongst the other decrees where the Demotic version is preserved are the so-called Raphia decree (217 BC); the decrees of the assemblies held in Alexandria and Memphis, written in hieroglyphs and Demotic on the wall of the pronao of the mammisi in Philae (186 & 185 BC); and fragments of a trilingual decree dating to 112 BC.


For the unpublished Demotic fragments of the decree dated to 112 BC and other ones, see the above article of Huß or the book of Simpson.
7.1. Dealings with institutions (state and temple)

B. LOCAL PRIESTLY DECREES

These are very similar to the synodal decrees mentioned above: only were they not issued by the Egyptian clergy in general, but by a specific group of priests. An example is the so-called stela of Kallimachos, in which the clergy of the Thebaid pays homage to the leading official of this region during the reign of Cleopatra VII and Cesarian. There is no hieroglyphic version, but only Demotic and Greek ones.

For this decree, see F. Daumas, Les moyens d’expression du grec et de l’égypetien comparés dans les décrets de Canope et de Memphis (SASAÉ, 16), Le Caire 1952, p. 264.

Compare with a similar decree of which only the Greek version is preserved, see the above article of W. Huß, esp. p. 200 n. 71.

C. ROYAL DECREES

Another trilingual stela (Benha; 96 BC) recounts how, by royal order, the temple of Athribis is granted the right of asylum, which other old and important Egyptian sanctuaries already possessed. During the Ptolemaic period other decrees concerning governmental policy, issued by the pharaoh or high officials representing him, explicitly state that a Greek and a Demotic version of the decision should be made public. In many cases only the Greek version has been preserved, however.

The hieroglyphic text of the decree of Athribis was re-edited by P. Vernus, Athribis. Textes et documents relatifs à la géographie, aux cultes, et à l’histoire d’une ville du Delta égyptien à l’époque pharaonique (BdE, 74), Le Caire 1978, pp. 196–198 (no. 165), with references to literature on the Demotic and Greek versions.


Two of the texts written on the verso of the Demotic Chronicle were identified by Spiegelberg as a report on the codification of Egyptian laws during the reign of Darius and an extract from the directives of Cambyses concerning the financial measures taken against temples. Later investigations seem to point out that these and other sections of the reverse are closely connected with one another, since they pertain to sacerdotal law and privileges such as fiscal immunity. They apparently stem from the same environment as the literary composition on the obverse.

For the edition, see above, p. 97.


A very exceptional ostracoon, found in the French excavations in Karnak (third century BC), contains an order from the royal administration for a general inventory of the resources of all Egypt. The text is in all probability a translation from a Greek original.


7.1.2. Other official decisions

Like the preceding category, these are texts resulting from the deliberations of an institutional group. Generally, however, they were not made public in the same elaborate way and most examples are only found on papyrus.

A. RULES OF CULT-GUILDS

The cult-guilds were associations of priests and temple personnel. Our most important source of information for these organizations are documents in Demotic in which the relevant regulations were laid down after they had been ratified at a general meeting for the duration of one year (‘Kultvereinssatzungen’). The members promise to pay their monthly dues and to perform certain payments in kind. Furthermore they are expected to be present at the meetings, to bury the sacred animals, and to participate regularly in celebrations where the consumption of wine and beer seems to have been essential. One of the main purposes of the guilds was that of mutual assistance. Thus the members had to participate in the rituals and the costs when someone came to die, and they were obliged to help colleagues who were held in custody. This system aimed to improve the coherence within the group and also helped to avoid internal conflicts. In case of disagreement the matter should first be brought before the council of the guild itself, probably to keep the government out of temple matters. Fines were provided for, in case the rules were violated. It is clear that the purposes were both religious and social.

Although there is evidence for cult-guilds even in the Saite period, the documents with the articles of association are only attested from the fourth century until 107 BC: later examples are written in Greek. Six out of the twelve Demotic examples are explicitly identified as copies. Most originate from the Faiyum, and four concern one and the same cult-guild. A single example (the oldest document known) perhaps has to be situated in Memphis. The only one from Thebes (P. Berlin P. 3115) is a slightly different document: it contains some passages, such as the list with the ‘drinking days’, similar to the articles of association of a cult-guild, but the main part concerns the procedures for practising the occupation of choachytes or embalmers.


B. REGULATIONS FOR THE PRACTISING OF CERTAIN PROFESSIONS

A number of documents from the Roman period record regulations between various professional groups concerning the conditions for the practising of their function. Thus we have for example documents mentioning the rights and obligations of priests and craftsmen, or regulations concerning the entry in service of a phyle of priests.
7.1. Dealings with institutions (state and temple)


There is also an epigraphic example of these regulations: a Demotic stela from Koptos contains the agreements between a professional association of weavers or tailors and various other fellowships, more precisely concerning the mummification of sacred animals and the manufacture of clothes.


C. ACCOUNTS OF TRIALS

The most extensive report of the proceedings of a lawsuit (‘Prozessprotokoll’) is P. BM 10591 (Siat; 170 BC; 10 columns). The litigation concerns an inheritance of land, claimed by two half-brothers, Tefhape and Tuot. Both are children of the deceased Petetum, but from different marriages. In the trial Tuot is represented by his wife Chrianiach. The document that is preserved is an official copy containing a short introduction; the first plea of the plaintiff Chrianiach; the reply of the defendant Tefhape; the second plea and the second reply; the procedure of the court up to judgement, including the questioning of both parties; and finally the actual verdict in favour of Tefhape. The document is signed by the scribe and the three judges.

H. Thompson, *A Family Archive from Siat from Papyri in the British Museum including an Account of a Trial before the Laocrites in the Year B.C.170*, Oxford 1934; for the archive, see below, p. 157.

Much shorter is P. Mallawi 602/10 (Sharunah; 117/116 BC; 1 column). In this case the property of a tomb in the necropolis of Sharunah is at stake. Judgement was entered for the plaintiff, the embalmer Petanupis. The structure of the document is almost identical to that of the copy of the proceedings of the Siut trial. Here a representative of the Greek official, the eisagogeus, also signs the contract.


Another example, in which two quotations of laws are especially interesting, is P. Cologne 7676 (Thebes; 115/114 BC; 2 columns): it concerns an inheritance of land and income from tombs in the Theban necropolis. P. Berlin P. 23508 (227 BC (?)) deals with revenue from priestly offices of an Anubis sanctuary.


D. PROCEEDINGS IN A SACREDOTAL CONCLAVE

Because of the very fragmentary condition of the only example of a report on the proceedings in a sacredotal conclave (P. Rylands 25; Gebelein; 118–115 BC), much remains unclear. The two columns seem to describe the topics discussed, such as the length of the priestly offices (?). A list of the officiating priests of the five phyles follows.
7. Demotic documentary texts


7.1.3. Administrative tools: lists, registers, accounts, …

For a smooth working of the administration of the institutions, a number of tools were necessary. Thus for taxes it was essential to have a precise idea of the composition of the population or the arrangement of the land. Other lists concern payments in money or in grain, drawn up for reference by the officials. And available goods or valuable equipment had to be inventoried from time to time as well.

A. CENSUS LISTS

Census lists are extensive surveys of the inhabitants of certain topographical units: profession, ethnicity, and sex of the subjects were specified. This tool for the collection of taxes provides interesting information about the various types of taxation and the privileges that were granted to certain groups of the population. About twenty examples are extant, mainly preserved through mummy cartonnage. Some have sections in both Greek and Demotic.

An example of a census list is P. Lille III 99, published by F. de Cenival, Papyrus démotiques de Lille (II) (MIFAO, 110), Le Caire 1984.

For a project on a corpus of Ptolemaic census lists in Demotic and in Greek, see W. Clarysse, Greeks and Persians in a Bilingual Census List, in: EVO 17 (1994), pp. 69—77.

B. AGRICULTURAL ACCOUNTS

Perhaps the most important text to be mentioned here is P. Berlin P. 13608 (Gebelein; 94—91 BC). In several columns on both the recto and the verso side of the papyrus, entries are made concerning the management of lands in the region: as such it contains a list of farmers; a description of the measuring and the inspection of land; registration of work; notes on delivery of wheat or money; and remarks on special events. Other, similar texts from Gebelein are very fragmentary.


C. DIARY FROM A NOTARY OFFICE

P. Lille 120 (Ghoran; early Ptolemaic) registers the various contracts drawn up day by day in a notarial office. Possibly a text from Saqqara can also be related to these proceedings, although other interpretations are equally possible.


D. DIARY FROM A POLICE STATION

The so-called diary of a police station in Karanis is a further example of these daily entries, this time written on ostraca. It was recently argued that the texts rather come from Philadelphia.
7.1. Dealings with institutions (state and temple)


**E. DIARY FROM A BANK**

P. Rylands 40 (late Ptolemaic) lists money in such quantities that it has been suggested it is a diary of a leading banker or even of the temple-treasury. For each day the deposits, the withdrawals, and the balance are given.


**F. ACCOUNTS OF CULT-GUILDS**

Only one example (P. Louvre E. 7840; Thebes; 542–538 BC) is known so far, with several columns listing the members of the association, their contributions and the days on which they gathered for festivities. But several of the rules for cult-guilds (see above, p. 128) also have one or more pages attached with similar accounts.


**G. LIST OF PRIESTLY OFFICES WITH THEIR PRICE**

The reverse of the papyrus fragments with the so-called ‘Zivilprozessordnung’ lists priestly offices in the various temples in Egypt, such as Thebes or Buto. The amounts that follow each position probably indicate the fee that has to be paid for holding the office.

For the publication, see above, p. 114.

**H. TEMPLE INVENTORIES**

In an inventory of the temple of Medinet Habu, precious and sacred tools are listed on a bronze plaque. Similar lists on papyrus from the Faiyum (Roman period) and Elephantine (early Demotic) are also preserved in the collection of Berlin.

For the list from the Faiyum, see W. Spiegelberg, *Demotische Papyrus aus den Königlichen Museen zu Berlin*, Leipzig–Berlin 1902, p. 24.

For the inventory of Medinet Habu, see W. Spiegelberg, *Die demotischen Denkmäler (30601–31166)*. *I. Die demotischen Inschriften* (Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire), Leipzig 1904, pp. 80–82 (no. 30691).


**I. OTHER LISTS**

Of many or perhaps even most lists or accounts (‘Listen und Abrechnungen’) the exact purpose is far from clear. Although these texts can be very informative for matters of prosopography and administration, they are rarely studied *in extenso* and much work remains to be done.

7. Demotic documentary texts


7.1.4. Documents issued by institutions to individuals

The numerous documents that were issued by the representatives of institutions for private individuals are in most cases meant as a proof for the person to whom the document is handed over that he has fulfilled an obligation due to the state or the temple. Often the accomplished fact is the payment of a tax or an equivalent in work. Not as common are the texts in which the institutions grant certain rights or give an individual a warrant for the performance of tasks.

No distinction is made here between the world of the state and that of the temple: these were so narrowly intertwined, and the information given by the receipts is sometimes so vague, that the choice is often impossible.

A. LAND ALLOTMENTS

The exact meaning of the *r-rh*=w ostraca is still under discussion. They have been believed to refer to rectifications of boundaries of land disturbed by the inundation, but now the interpretation as land allottments proposed by Lichtheim is widely accepted. This means that the authorities obliged someone to till a piece of land and to pay rent for it, with the purpose of restoring waste land to cultivation.


B. TAX RECEIPTS

The various taxes which had to be paid to the state or to the temple are mainly known through thousands of ostraca ("Quittungen") on ostraca. These give the date, the names of payer and scribe, the amount paid, and the type of tax. Sometimes this last information is not specified: probably in these cases the profession of the payer will have made things clear enough. Occasionally it is mentioned that more than one tax has been paid at the same time. Only in the Roman period the Demotic receipts explicitly mention if the money has been handed over to the bank or to another party. As in the census lists, here again Greek and Demotic are frequently used in alternation, at least in the Theban region. During the first century AD Greek gradually replaces Demotic, although the latter is still employed in a temple environment.

7.1. Dealings with institutions (state and temple)


The rare receipts from the early Demotic period are written on papyrus sheets (see below). This material is still used for similar purposes during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, but the most customary writing ground for confirmation of payment of state and temple taxes are ostraca or wooden tablets (this last only in Pathyris). In some cases, such as the *enokuklion* tax, the payment was confirmed below the contract itself. In the later stages of the Roman period it seems more common again to use papyrus to issue receipts for taxes.


In the following a small survey is given of the great variety of tax receipts, distinguishing the early Demotic, Ptolemaic, and Roman examples.

The most important publications of tax receipts are (in chronological order and preceded by the abbreviation used in the survey):


OMH = M. Lichtheim, *Demotic Ostraca from Medinet Habu* (OIP, 80), Chicago 1957.


• Early Demotic

We have a number of early Demotic receipts (Thebes, middle sixth century BC; Hou, beginning fifth century BC) for payment in kind of the harvest tax (*šmnw*) to the Domain of Amon. These were in all probability paid by the owner-lessee of the Domain’s farm land. During the early Demotic period it is in many cases difficult, however, to distinguish whether *šmnw*, in a context of the letting out of land, means ‘tax’ or ‘rent’.


• Ptolemaic

Demotic ostraca with tax receipts are numerous during two periods. The first one, when the bulk of the documentation comes from Thebes and Elephantine, is the second half of the third century during the reigns of Ptolemy II Philadelphos and III Euergetes (285–222 BC, mainly after about 260). Very common are the salt, oil, yoke (?), and overseer
of the necropolis taxes. The second period, when many texts come from Pathyris, is situated between the reigns of Ptolemy VI Philometor and Ptolemy X Alexander I (181–88 BC).


Salt tax (ḫmty): a capititation tax attested from 263 until 219 BC; different rates for men on the one hand, women and slaves on the other; there also is a chronological fluctuation of the rate.


Oil tax (nhḫb): the state oil monopoly was farmed out to various people who had to pay for the privilege.

O. Var. p. 25.

Beer tax (ḫmft): like for oil, there was a strict monopoly on the brewing of beer; the tax related with it is only rarely attested in Demotic.

ODL p. 153.

Cloth tax (ḥbš / šnt-duwy): a tax on the manufacture of linen, as part of the state monopoly.


Yoke (?) tax (nhḫb): probably a tax on transport animals, attested in the third century BC only.

O. Var. pp. 14 & 98.

Nḫty (?) tax: previously identified as the ivory tax, but this is now generally rejected; closely related with the yoke (?) tax, but its precise nature is still unclear.

O. Var. pp. 19 & 98.

Sheep tax (ṣsw): attested until the early Roman receipts; probably payable for the pasture of the animals and maybe identical, but certainly related to the pasture (?) tax (ḥšm).

O. Var. p. 6.

Overseer of the necropolis tax (mrḥ-bšt): a fixed amount probably paid by the chaiochtes to the temple when they brought a mummy to the necropolis; attested in the early Ptolemaic period, already before 260 BC.


Necropolis tax (ḥbš.f): probably levied by the temple on the funerary personnel of the necropolis; only attested in Edfu; possibly identical to the preceding tax.

O. El-Aguy, Une nouvelle "taxe de la nécropole" à Edfou, in: OLP 21 (1990), pp. 135–139.

Burial tax (ḥbš.f) and other funeral taxes: often their precise nature is unclear.


Incomer of a Server Tax (ḥr ṭm-ṣw=f-ṣmt): possibly a tax paid by religious personnel, but the exact nature is still unclear.

O. Var. p. 29.

Compulsory services (rtĮ): probably in some cases compulsory labor could be avoided by paying a certain amount, but again the precise purpose of the tax or the services is unknown.

O. Var. p. 10.

House tax (ḥwty): possibly a tax which had to be paid by owners of a house; quite rare, like the preceding one.

ODL p. 155.

Fruit tax (ḥkē): this tax, which is attested until the Roman period but of which only relatively few examples have been preserved, was probably paid by the owners of fruit-trees; almost all come from Edfu.

ODL p. 238.

Enkuklōn tax (ḥgṛ̞γyr): tax 'of the scribes (and) representatives', levied when landed and other property was sold; attested from the seventh until the second century BC; its rate is specified as
either 1/10 or 1/20 (possibly 1/20 for the state; 1/20 for the temple); the receipt is generally written on the papyrus which contains the contract.


Aporoma tax (pt 1/10): the tithe on wine and garden land.

OMH p. 14; see the article of W. Claryse / K. Vandorpe in the acts of a colloquium on the dynastic cult in the third century B.C. forthcoming in the series *Papyrologica Bruxellensia*.

Harvest tax (*drew*): a tax levied on the harvest, to be paid in kind to the state.

O. Var. p. 83.

Syntaxis (*sininos*: a tax paid in money or in kind; probably the money was raised by the government on leased land, and afterwards transferred to the Egyptian priesthood.

ODL p. 161.

Tax (τ) for the lease of land (*hwp ‘hwn*): the ‘farmer’s profit’ on leased land, which probably belonged to the temple.

OMH p. 34.

Tax (τ) for the lease of land (*hwp htr*): parallel to the preceding, but here possibly rent on state land was meant.

ODL pp. 130–131.

Receipts for delivery of straw (*th*): of unclear purpose; not frequently attested.

ODL p. 172

Compare other deliveries to the state or the temple (for example of wine): at least some of these may also be taxes.


- Roman period

In the early Roman period, especially during the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, we again find many ostraca recording payment of taxes. Because of changes in the administration, their names and nature have of course often changed. Another difference is that now frequently the royal bank is explictly mentioned.

The fundamental work on taxation in Roman Egypt is S.L. Wallace, *Taxation in Egypt from Augustus to Diocletian* (Princeton University Studies in Papyrology, 2), Princeton 1938.


Poll tax (*pt l*): the capital tax which is attested until the reign of Titus (79–81 AD); payable by the local male population between 14 and 60 years of age, although some people were exempted; the rate varied chronologically and geographically, but was quite high in comparison with that of the salt tax during the Ptolemaic period.

O. Var. p. 137.

Dike tax (*nhly*): the contribution for the construction and maintenance of dikes could be paid by either actual physical labour (5 days) or by a fixed sum.

O. Var. p. 141.

Bath tax (*st tw*tw): a fixed amount paid for the public works on baths; often paid together with two preceding personal taxes.

O. Var. p. 139; ODL p. 229.

Palm tree tax (*bary*): paid on land planted with palm trees.

ODL p. 246.

Chest tax (*rft l*): only attested during the Roman period in Dendera; perhaps meant for the upkeep of temples?


Logeia tax (*zey*): a tax levied by priests of Isis or a male god, originally a free contribution, but later evolved into an imposed tax; all Demotic examples date from the reigns of Claudius and Nero and come from Hermothis.
7. Demotic documentary texts


Tax of the business of Pharaoh (md pr-š): probably paid by a lessee of state land to the state bank; compare the above hw šbwj and hw htr.

ODL p. 247.

A few other, rarely attested taxes: Donkey tax (šm): ODL p. 239; Onion and herb tax (mdl / smj): ODL p. 245; House-builders’ tax (šd pr): OMH p. 31; Weaver’s tax (šmj): OMH p. 30; Hay-sellers’ tax (s-a-smj): OMH p. 31; Priesthood taxes: OMH p. 32; Pigeon house tax (s-t-maj): OMH p. 50; śbwj tax: OMH p. 50

See also above: the sheep tax, fruit tax, overseer of the necropolis tax, the hw šbwj.

C. CERTIFICATES OF PURITY FOR CATTLE TO BE SLAUGHTERED

In two small texts (Dime; 148 and 149 AD) a priest of Sakhmet certifies that he has given a seal approving the killing of a cow for an offering. The more elaborate Greek text is followed by a short Demotic counterpart.


D. CONTRACTS BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

It is not always easy to determine if a contract is drawn up by someone on his own behalf or as a representative of an institution. Sometimes this is clear through the formulation of the agreement, the fact that one of the parties is explicitly designated as a representative, or by the writing ground. A typical example is the sale of land in the necropolis to the choachytes. These buy the plot from the temple administration to build a tomb on it and sell it to one of their clients. Whereas the former agreement is written down on an ostraca, the latter is a more elaborate contract on papyrus.

For an example of a receipt for the price of a building plot, see S.P. Vleeming, Ostraka Varia. Tax Receipts and Legal Documents on Demotic, Greek, and Greek-Demotic Ostraka, chiefly of the Early Ptolemaic Period, from Various Collections (P.L. Bat. 26), Leiden (...) 1994, no. 53.

7.1.5. Documents written by individuals for institutions

Although not as common as the reverse category, we have a number of documents written by individuals for institutions. Generally they have been preserved in temple or official archives.

A. SELF-DEDICATIONS

In the self-dedications (‘Hierodulie-Urkunden’) a person declares himself the ‘slave’ (šḥk) of a god, enters his service and engages to pay annually a fixed sum, either forever or for a period of ninety-nine years. In return the ‘slave’ expects protection from the patron deity against demons, phantoms, and ghosts. Women as well as men make such declarations. Of a substantial number the father is called ‘anonymous’, which has been interpreted within the framework of temple prostitution, but also as a sign that the ‘slaves’ belonged to the lower strata of the Egyptian society. That this can probably not be generalized is shown by the presence of some people with Greek names amongst them. The exact practical implications and purpose of these documents (magical, financial, or social) are still uncertain.
7.1. Dealings with institutions (state and temple)

At least fifty examples are known: all of them are notary contracts, which is a clear indication of their official character. They come from the Faiyum, mainly Tebtunis but also Philadelphia and Dima. Most can be dated to the second century BC (between 209/208 (?) and 118 BC). It is most likely that the documents were preserved in temple archives.


B. TENDERS

Several offers for the farming of monopolies have been preserved in the papyri from Soknopaiu Nesos. In this case they pertain to temple matters, but examples referring to government taxes are also possible. Thus for instance the tenders for the leasing of land confiscated by the authorities in Edfu.

For the texts from Edfu, see W. Spiegelberg, Demotische Papyrus von der Insel Elephantine, I (Nr. 1–13) (Demotische Studien, 2), Leipzig 1908, nos. 1–10.

C. MEMORANDA / PETITIONS

A memorandum (mkmk, ‘Eingabe’) is a missive through which a case is brought before an official, in the hope that he will solve the matter without the plaintiff being obliged to take further steps, such as going to court. Quite a few of these documents are preserved.


Similar requests to higher authorities do not identify themselves as memoranda. It is therefore not always clear if they are really petitions or just reports.

Whereas during the Ptolemaic period Greek petitions to the king (entœxeis) are fairly common, the only Demotic example is doubtful, see W. Spiegelberg, Die demotischen Denkmäler (30601–31270; 50001–50022). II Die demotischen Papyrus (Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire), Strassburg 1908, vol. 1, pp. 244–247 (no. 31057).
See also P. Rylands 9 (above, p. 102).

D. SURETY DOCUMENTS

To make sure that obligations were fulfilled and promises kept, a guarantee by a third party was a valuable tool. This could be a subscription to or an explicit clause in the
7. Demotic documentary texts

contract, but also a separate document. In this last case relatively small papyri (‘Bürgschaften’) were used, in which someone stands surety for a colleague before the local authorities (often the oikonomos and basilicogrammateus). The guarantors are soldiers or priests of a lower level, but also farmers or brewers; most debtors are artisans of various professions, although brewers are especially numerous.

There are two main types of surety documents: either the security concerns a debt, generally small amounts in connection with state monopolies or the farming of taxes; or it deals with the continued presence of individuals. In the latter case, someone stands security for a prisoner released on bail, which sometimes seems to include a kind of house arrest; or he guarantees that a worker will be present. There are even examples of a security for another security, similar to a reinsurance.

The surety documents are only attested in the early Ptolemaic period, between 262 and 209 BC. All are double documents in epistolary style, often with a Greek abstract on the verso.

For the study of a number of documents mentioning the idea of security, see K. Sethe / J. Parthes, Demotische Urkunden zum ägyptischen Bürgschaftsrecht vorzüglich der Ptolemaerzeit (Abhandlungen der Philologisch-Historischen Klasse der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 32), Leipzig 1920.


Concerning the Greek abstract on the back, see above, p. 41.

E. OATHS

Two types of oaths (‘Eide’) exist, each with their own range of distribution and their specific spheres of use: temple oaths and royal oaths.


Temple oaths are known only in Upper Egypt from about 200 BC until the early Roman period. Greek examples are exceptional. Mostly these are decisory oaths used to solve a conflict, whereby the procedure goes as follows: a written statement is drawn up, in all but a few cases on an ostracon, declaring that the incriminated party will take an oath before the local god. He usually has to swear that he is innocent of an alleged crime, that he has already settled a debt, or that his claims to an item are justified. If the defendant will take the oath, the accuser will withdraw his charges; if the incriminated party fails to do so, he will be considered as being in the wrong and will have to remunerate the accuser for the damage or pay the amount discussed, to which in that case a fine can be added. The ostraca frequently mention that the oath is afterwards given into the hands of a third, neutral party.

This procedure may seem odd to us, but it it can be partially explained by the fact that the onus of proof rests with the plaintiff. If he wants to be proved right without real
evidence he has no other choice than to demand an oath from the defendant. If the latter is guilty the prospect of perjury may deter him from taking the oath.


Royal oaths are known from the third century BC until the Roman period. In opposition to the temple oaths, Greek examples are common, even to such an extent that the Demotic examples can be considered exceptions. Also the royal oaths are exclusively written on papyrus and occur all over Egypt. The man who takes the oath swears by the ruling pharaoh, the dynasty of the Ptolemies as well as (often) Isis, Serapis, and all the gods of Egypt that he will fulfill certain obligations, mostly in matters of state. If he holds his promise, he will be blessed by the king; if it turns out that his intentions were false, he will be subject to the curse of the pharaoh.

For the royal oaths there is no corpus. See the list of E. Seidl, *Der Eid im ptolemäischen Recht*, München 1929, pp. 12–18, supplemented by U. Kaplony-Heckel, *Eid, demot.*, in: *LA 1* (1975), col. 1202 n. 3.

### 7.2. Legal documents (private individuals)

Legal documents concerning agreements between private individuals constitute the largest and perhaps best studied group of Demotic documentary texts. They were kept in family archives as proof of ownership, and precisely for this reason large numbers have been preserved. They provide much information on legal proceedings, but equally on social and economic life: personal status (marriage / divorce; free man / slave), property (sales, gifts, inheritance, ...), and obligations (work, services, ...).

#### a. Marriage settlements

Marriage in ancient Egypt was as a rule monogamous and, with the exception of royalty, not between close relatives. It was a purely social matter and there is no evidence for a religious ceremony. A valid marriage probably did not even require a written contract, and the documents concerned with it (‘Eheurkunden’) pertain to property and inheritance. They deal with the provisions concerning the woman’s allowance, specify the claims of the wife on what she brought into the marriage, and give her security by stating that, in case of failure by the husband to fulfil his obligations, part of his possessions or even all of it belongs to her. Frequently a separate clause explicitly mentions the right of inheritance of the children arising from the marriage. Two different types of these documents have been distinguished.
7. Demotic documentary texts

The first one (A; between about 536 and 60 BC; also abnormal hieratic) only requires a single ‘woman’s document’ (ṣḥ n ḫm.t). It provides for a gift from husband to wife (Ṣp n s-hm.t) and stipulates the annual maintenance in kind that she will receive. Often the contract lists the woman’s personal possessions. They will be administered by the husband, but remain lawful property of the woman and have to be returned to her in the case of divorce, except perhaps when adultery is involved.

The second type (B) mentions an endowment from wife to husband, which, although it remains her property, can be used by him to provide maintenance in kind at specified annual rates. This procedure is written down in a single document (B1; about 10 examples; from 517 (?) BC until 12 BC), mentioning this ‘money to become a wife’ (ḥḥ n ṣ ḫm.t). An alternative was to use two deeds (B2; between 365 BC and 21 AD): the principal document, the so-called ‘document of maintenance’ (ṣḥ n s-nḥ), in this case concerns the obligations of the husband and is doubled by a ‘document concerning money’ (ṣḥ n ḥb ḫḥ) which acts a security for the wife should he fail to fulfil his obligations.

E. Lüdeckens, Ägyptische Eheverträge (AA, 1), Wiesbaden 1960.

B. DOCUMENTS OF DIVORCE

In ancient Egyptian law there probably was always the possibility of a divorce, not only in the case of adultery, but also when one or both parties wanted to separate. This is attested in literary texts from earlier periods and certain types of marriage contracts, in casu the above A, mention it in a clause. Other marriage settlements (B) were arranged in such a way that the wife could always ask her endowment back or demand maintenance from her husband or his heirs. Still, there are ten examples of documents of divorce (‘Scheidungsurkunden’; from 542 until about 100 BC). In these the husband acknowledges that the woman in question is no longer his wife, that he has no more claims on her in this respect, and that she is free to marry again. These documents are no true counterparts of the marriage contracts because they are not concerned with property. They are probably meant as a protection against illegal claims from the former husband.

For divorce documents, see the literature cited above, esp. H.S. Smith, pp. 54–56; and P.W. Pestman, pp. 58–79, with references to older literature.

C. DOCUMENTS CONCERNING MONEY (‘SALE’)

When something changed owner in ancient Egypt during the period in which Demotic was written, this could be recorded in various ways. For the sale of smaller items the document was usually phrased in epistolary style, sometimes even on ostraca. But for more important transactions a notary contract was generally called upon. Often two
deeds are used for this purpose, each with its own implications. The first one is the document concerning money (‘Geldbezahlungsschrift’; *sh n gb₃ h₃d*). In this the vendor (A) acknowledges that he has received an unspecified sum from the buyer (B); that the sold property is now in his (B) possession; that he himself (A) has no further rights to the property; that he (A) will assist the buyer in removing anyone who claims to have rights on it; that all documents related to the property belong to him (B); and that, if necessary, he (A) will swear an oath on his (B) behalf. To all this, especially in the early Demotic documents concerning cattle, a penalty clause can be added. Another optional element is the clause of agreement by a third party, especially used in cases where the deed refers to another document. The order of the clauses can vary, and some of them can be omitted for brevity’s sake, especially in contracts of a later date. In the various ‘forms’ that thus originate, a scribal tradition with both a geographical and chronological component may be recognized: Theban deeds are distinguished from later examples drawn up in Edfu or in Lower Egypt.

Various goods change owner by means of a *sh n gb₃ h₃d*: houses (in good shape or in ruins, in their entirety or partially), land (arable land or building land), tombs (or the revenues resulting from them), liturgical revenues (from priestly offices), slaves (only in the early Demotic period), or even the entire possessions of someone (houses, land, cattle, clothes, personnel, etc.). In the early Demotic period it is also used to sell cattle (mostly cows).

The documents concerning money always give the impression of being sales, but do in fact function in many different ways. In many cases it is even difficult to ascertain what the real transaction is behind the formulae of the document. Only when we have supplementary information, such as other documents within a family archive, can the exact purpose be traced. Thus ‘sales’ can be fictitious in the sense that they are actually testamentary dispositions, transferring property between relatives to facilitate inheritance. They also regularly act as securities for other agreements such as marriage settlements (see above, p. 139). Often additional clauses specifying obligations for either the vendor or the buyer or for both, with a penalty clause on top, are an indication that the contract is probably more than a simple sale. A typical example are the sales of entire estates with a clause at the end of the contract that guarantees the vendor subsistence during life as well as a proper burial.


Sometimes it is explicitly stated in the ‘sale’ itself that it serves another purpose. In the so-called ‘loan on mortgage’ (‘Kaufpfandverträge’) the formulae are identical with a normal *sh n gb₃ h₃d*, but they are preceded by a text which states that an amount of money has to be returned before a certain date. Only if the loaned sum is not redeemed
in time does the sale, of which the formulae follow, become a fact. The object of the 'document concerning money', always real estate, thus acts as a pledge for the loan. This type of document is only attested in Upper Egypt during the Ptolemaic period. A similar procedure in Greek does not explicitly mention the loan itself.


A special case, only attested in early Demotic, are the documents in which the vendor sells himself as a slave or as a son of the buyer. Their exact interpretation is still unclear.

For the sale of oneself as a son, see K. Donker Van Heel, *Abnormal Hieratic and Early Demotic Texts Collected by the Theban Chauchytes in the Reign of Amasis. Papyri from the Louvre Eisenloth Lot*, Leiden 1995, no. 13 (P. Louvre E. 7832).

The document concerning money is one of the most frequently attested types of contract. Examples have been found all over Egypt and from all periods. The oldest one is a sale of priestly offices (644 BC), the most recent one concerns a house (45 AD). As in the case of most Demotic documents, the bulk is Ptolemaic. More than one hundred examples are known from that period.

The Ptolemaic sales and mortgages were studied together with the cessions by K.-Th. Zauzich, *Die ägyptische Schreibertradition in Aufbau, Sprache und Schrift der demotischen Kaufverträge aus ptolemäischer Zeit (AA. 19)*, 2 vol., Wiesbaden 1968.


As already stated, to sell smaller items generally other types of documents, mostly in epistolary style, were used, for example the ostraca for receipts of the price of a building plot. One of the last exclusively Demotic papyrus documents extant, dated 175/176 AD, concerns a sale of resin.


For a receipt of the price of a building plot, see S.P. Vleeming, *Ostraka Varia. Tax Receipts and Legal Documents on Demotic, Greek and Greek-Demotic Ostraka, chiefly of the Early Ptolemaic Period, from Various Collections (P. L. Bat., 26)*, Leiden (…) 1994, no. 53.
D. Cessions

During the Ptolemaic period it is customary to add a so-called cession (‘Abstandsschrift’; šḥ n wy) to most documents concerning money that are used for a sale. It is sometimes even written on the same papyrus. The formulae are largely identical, but in the first clause the vendor declares that he will cede all rights to a certain property, instead of confirming the payment. The secondary nature of this document is often clear from the fact that, in a clause at the end of the contract, it refers to the šḥ n gbty ḫḏ with which it is connected.

Nevertheless, the cession can also be used in other circumstances. After a verdict in a trial, the losing party can be forced to make a document in which he refrains from further actions on the object of litigation. These so-called withdrawals after judgement (‘Streitverzichterklärung’) are rare. Since they generally contain other formulae referring to the judgement and sometimes even leave out the formula typical for cessions, they are often considered a special type of cession or even a separate category. However, in Demotic accounts of trials, a withdrawal is referred to as a šḥ n wy.


A cession can also be drawn up when a debt was paid earlier than stipulated in the contract or when an inheritance was divided: the heirs thereby renounce all rights to the goods of the other parties. It is not always clear which factors led to the creation of a cession. Even in the early Demotic period, when this type of document is not yet really standardized and the typical cession formula is but rarely found as the introduction, the reason for the cession remains often enigmatic. What is clear is that this document tries to prevent any future claims from the ceding party to recover the property. Its main purpose is to reassure the other party.


Cessions are common, though not as common as the documents concerning money. The earliest example can be dated to 485 BC, although the typical formula is attested in the middle of a contract as early as 543 BC. Again the bulk of the cessions, more than sixty examples, are Ptolemaic.

For the examples before the Ptolemaic period, see P. W. Pestman, _Les papyri démotiques de Tsenhor (P. Tsenhor). Les archives privées d’une femme égyptienne du temps de Darius Ier_ (Studia Demotica, 4), Leuven 1994, vol. 1, p. 87 n. IV; and S. P. Vleeming, cited above.

Ptolemaic cessions have been studied by K.-Th. Zauzich together with the documents concerning money, see above, p. 140.

E. Exchanges

In the exchange documents (‘Tauschurkunden’) two items are swapped between their owners. The formulae are almost identical with those of the documents concerning money, because the purpose of each is very similar. Still, although the exchange of goods, such as cows or building plots, must have been a frequent practice before the
appearance of money and coinage, only very few examples have been found. Probably this kind of agreement was usually settled orally, or by means of other types of documents, such as mutual sales or cessions.

For some Ptolemaic examples, see P.W. Pestman, L’archivio di Amenotois figlio di Horos (P. Tor. Amenotois). Testi demotici e greci relativi ad una famiglia di imbalsamatori del secondo sec. a. C. (Catalogo del Museo Egizio di Torino. Serie Prima — Monumenti e Testi, 5), Milano 1981, no. 14, with further references in p. 122 n. m.


F. DONATIONS / PROPERTY TRANSFERS

Under this heading documents are grouped in which someone acknowledges certain rights of the other party concerning a property, using a formula such as dy=ny n=k ‘I have given you’ or mmtw=nt ‘Yours is ...’. If an agreement of this kind occurs between two unrelated parties, it is generally a transfer of property in return for some kind of service. Also similar is the allotment (sām) of a piece of land for ninety-nine years, without any mention whatsoever of a service in return.

For the allotment for 99 years, see P.W. Pestman / J. Quaegebeur / R.L. Vos, Recueil de textes démotiques et bilingues, Leiden 1977, no. 10.

For an example of a transfer of tombs, see C.A.R. Andrews, Ptolemaic Legal Texts from the Theban Area (Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the British Museum, 4), London 1990, no. 11.


Often only part of something (dni.t) is mentioned, implying a division of common property. In this case the parties are often relatives, and the proceedings concern goods as a share of an inheritance, without any actual division between the parties. Generally the person making the declaration remains in possession. The donor acknowledges a relative as an heir (or a fellow heir) by granting him or her part of the property of something. The beneficiant of the grant is identified by a kinship term that follows his or her name, either subjective (for instance pty=sn ‘my brother’) or objective (for instance bty=sn ‘his daughter’). Testamentary dispositions concerning goods that go from father to children are also a regular feature of marriage settlements. If they are not included in the original agreement between the parents, they can be added afterwards in a contract between father and heir, either on the same papyrus or on a separate sheet.

E. Seidl, Die Teilungsschriften, in: MDAIK 8 (1939), pp. 198–200, treats this type type of document together with the following, as does K.-Th. Zauzich in his survey of the Demotic documents (see above, p. 67).


G. DIVISIONS / WILLS

For ‘testamentary’ dispositions a real division (‘Teilungsurkunden’; sā dni.t pḥ), in which the heirs declare to one another that they have shared the inheritance, can also be
7.2. Legal documents (private individuals)

used. This is generally accomplished through a unilateral declaration, as in the other agreements.

For a Ptolemaic example, see C.A.R. Andrews, Ptolemaic Legal Texts from the Theban Area (Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the British Museum, 4), London 1990, no. 15. Compare also no. 21, in which the benificiary states he is satisfied with his share.


Wills (‘Testamente’) as a specific type of document are virtually non-existent in Demotic. The only example (P. Moscow 123) is probably the result of Greek influence. As a rule it was preferred to employ clauses in marriage settlements, (fictitious) sales, or the above recognition as heirs for testamentary dispositions of that kind.


H. PARTNERSHIPS

Closely connected with the preceding categories are the deeds of partnership (‘Genossenurkunden’), in which two (or more?) persons recognize each other as partners (\(\ddot{\text{pbr}}\)). This means that they will share profit or loss in a common project, either professional, such as in a chauchytes’ office, or private, such as in a property, for example a cow. The same could also be accomplished by other types of documents, such as sales of half of the property.

This type of contract, of which the oldest example dates from 536 BC, is restricted to the early Demotic period.


I. LEASES

Contracts of lease (‘Pachturkunden’) generally concern the rent of land. The examples of the early Demotic period are often enigmatic to us because they leave out a substantial amount of information on the arrangements. In the Ptolemaic period most agreements become more explicit. Differences between early Demotic and Ptolemaic examples concern the time of payment of the rent (always after the lease in the early Demotic examples) and the beneficiary of the tax (the temple in early Demotic examples, the royal administration in the Ptolemaic period).


In the Ptolemaic period contracts are either drawn up by the lessee (\(shn = k \ n\ y\); you have leased to me’; almost all Upper Egyptian examples), or by the lessor (\(shn = y \ n\ k\), ‘I have leased to you’; all from Lower Egypt). The formulae of the documents diverge widely and sometimes seem very complicated to us. The key features, however, are the above mentioned statement of lease; the duration of the contract (mostly one year); a description of the leased land; the guarantee actually to farm it; the provision of farming implements; and arrangements concerning the payment of rental and tax (\(smw\) in Upper Egypt; \(m\ d\ Pr\ 't\) in Lower Egypt; see above, p. 132). A penalty clause determines what happens if the lessee fails to fulfill these. There is also an unusual clause in bilateral style.


Lease acts that deal with the renting of houses and living accommodation, income from liturgical days or mortuary endowments, which sometimes contain unusual formulae, are less numerous.


These documents are generally notary contracts, but there are also examples of double documents. Some are even written on ostraca. Leases are quite numerous from the early Demotic period onwards, but again most examples are Ptolemaic.


**J. Loans**

Amongst the most common Demotic documents are the loans (‘Darlehensurkunden’; \(sh\ n\ r^\ e\ w\ h\ y\)), for which various forms can be used, from extensive notary contracts through double documents in epistolary form. A distinction must be made between loans of money and loans in kind.
7.2. Legal documents (private individuals)

Loans of money in Demotic are formulated as acknowledgements of a debt, generally only mentioning the total amount owed, without specifying the interest rate. It is very likely, however, that the creditor would have expected a financial remuneration. So, instead of presuming that most loans are without interest, it seems more plausible to suppose that the surplus will have been included in the sum owed. From the rare cases where the interest is listed separately, it appears that in the early Demotic period this could amount to fifty or even one hundred per cent. It remains unclear whether the length of the loan is taken into account. In the early Ptolemaic period an interest of thirty per cent a year can be deduced. This was subsequently reduced by a decision of Ptolemy II to a maximum of two per cent a month or twenty-four per cent per annum. If the loan was paid back before the agreed date of reimbursement, only part of the interest had to be paid. If, on the other hand, the debtor was unable to fulfil his obligations, a new document could be drawn up, confirming the debt and fixing a new date for the return of the amount owed.


The loans in kind, payable in for instance wheat or wine, do not mention the duration of the loan when determining the interest. The debtor invariably pays a compensation of fifty per cent of the goods borrowed, both in the early Demotic and the Ptolemaic period. A special case are the contracts in which an amount is lent out in money, but the debt will be settled in kind. It has also been suggested that these loans in kind are in fact sales with postponed delivery.

For the loans of money which will be paid back in kind, see D. Devauchelle, Pap. dém. Amiens n° 1 and 2, in: Enchoria 14 (1986), pp. 57–65, esp. pp. 61–65 (no. 2).

For the loans on mortgage, see above, p. 140.

K. DEPOSITS

The main difference between a deposit and a loan is that a deposit implies that the money or the goods can be claimed back at any time. One of the rare examples of this type of document is a list of women’s possessions which is normally integrated in a marriage settlement. In this case a separate sheet was opted for.

7. Demotic documentary texts

I. Public Protests

A public protest (ἕβαμα; ‘Streitschatzung’), is a formal statement, written by a professional scribe and certified by sixteen witnesses, in which rights of ownership are disputed. If over the course of three consecutive years, yearly a protest is made, and if these are not answered by the opponent, the claims of the protestant are considered to be just. The evidence from the few extant examples of this document can even be supplemented by a section of the so-called Legal Code of Hermopolis.


II. Deeds of Obligation

To the deeds of obligation (‘Verpflichtungsurkunden’) belong various declarations in which someone commits himself to another party to perform certain tasks or to refrain from certain acts. This is, of course, a very heterogeneous group, with for example a wet-nurse’s contract, embalming agreements, commitments concerning building plans, or ‘deeds-of-not-hindering’. Many of the above contracts contain clauses in which the same or similar obligations are mentioned.

A survey of similar texts is given by E. Seidl, Ptolemaïsche Rechtsgeschichte (AF, 22), 2nd rev. ed., Glückstadt (…) 1962, p. 53.


III. Private Receipts

For private confirmation of payment in money or in kind commonly the epistolary form was used. Here also it is often not clear whether the parties act on their own behalf or are representatives of institutions (see above, p. 136).

For some examples, see E. Bresciani, L’archivio demotico del tempio di Soknopaiu Nesos nel Griffith Institute di Oxford, Volume I. P. Ox. Griffith nn. 1–75 (Testi e Documenti per lo Studio dell’Antichità, 49), Milano 1975, nos. 60–72.

7.3. Unofficial documents

7.3.1. Expressions of religious feeling

A. Votive Inscriptions

Votive inscriptions, written on all kind of writing grounds, are texts that link the name of the donor or author with a deity or deified person. These can be short dedicatory inscriptions on vessels, small statues, or other gifts that were probably placed in or near the temple. The bulk of the graffiti similarly show the devotion of the visitors or
employees. Votive inscriptions on stelae or on architecture also demonstrate how the faithful expected a blessing from the god in return for their offerings and the pious deeds they performed. The account of their meritorious conduct can even be stretched to such a length that it reminds us of the autobiographies of earlier periods. In the Roman period some important officials even proclaimed their gifts in a trilingual stela, in imitation of the royal decrees (see above, p. 125). Compare also the funerary stelae (see above, p. 120).


For the stelae and graffiti, see above, p. 79.

**B. LETTERS TO GODS**

In letters to gods (‘Briefe an Götter’) private persons address one or several deities to complain about an injustice which they have suffered, and to demand retribution and punishment for the evildoer. It probably is preferable to interpret these documents as ‘magical’ texts and successors of the ‘letters to the dead’, rather than to consider them as complaints used in a trial by ordeal, or as parallels to the oracle questions.


**C. ORACLE QUESTIONS**

For oracle questions (‘Orakelfragen’) a query or statement was written twice on a small piece of papyrus, one version affirmative, one negative. The papyrus was then divided into these two parts and both were handed over to the representative of the oracle. Only one part was returned as an answer to the query. The subjects can refer to past or future: has someone stolen clothes or not? Is it opportune to till land or to set out on a journey? Most Demotic oracle questions are Ptolemaic; in the Roman period they were almost exclusively written in Greek.


For an example of the affirmative and negative versions, see for instance E. Bresciani, L’archivio demotico del tempio di Soknopaiu Nesos nel Griffith Institute of Oxford, Volume I, P. Oz. Griffith nn. 1–75 (Testi e Documenti per lo Studio dell’Antichità, 49), Milano 1975, nos. 1–2.


D. DREAM DESCRIPTIONS

To know the future or to have an idea of the best course of action, one could also resort to the interpretation of dreams. These could be spontaneous dreams, but often they were the result of incubation: in that case the person involved or a priest spent the night in the temple to receive a message from the god. Before going to sleep magical spells were recited to evoke visions.

An account of these dreams could be given to the priests, who then interpreted them largely on the basis of reference books (see above, p. 107). There are several examples in the so-called katochoi-archive, both in Greek and in Demotic. Closely related to these is the ‘Archive of Hor of Sebennytos’, which consists of many ostraca containing such oneiric descriptions or perhaps rather a draft for their interpretation.


For some examples on papyrus, see E. Bresciani et al., Una rilettura del papiro dem. Bologna 3173 e 3171, in: EVO 1 (1978), pp. 95–104.


Sometimes within a Greek letter Demotic is used for an exact description of the dream, see above, p. 42.

E. CALCULATIONS FOR HOROSCOPES

These are calculations of the position of celestial bodies for a specific date, namely the day of birth of the person for whom the actual forecast, of which there is no trace, is made. All Demotic examples are written on ostraca, dating between 38 BC and 57 AD. Those of later date are in hieroglyphs, for example on a coffin-lid or on the walls of a tomb.


There is also an example of a small document (Faiyum; between 122 and 138 AD) recording the exact time of birth of three individuals, presumably to cast their horoscopes.
7.3. Unofficial documents


F. INCANTATIONS

In addition to the magician’s manuals preserved on papyri (see above, p. 108), there are also ‘practical applications’ on many other writing materials such as ostraca, wooden ‘mummy labels’, or even in a graffito. These spells and incantations can be apotropaic, for instance against serpents; exorcizing, for instance medical recipes; or belong to black magic, for instance a curse. The oldest examples are possibly pre-Ptolemaic, but magic is one of the genres for which Demotic remained in use until the third century AD and later.

For curses on papyrus, see W. Spiegelberg, *Die demotischen Denkmäler* (30601–31270; 50001–50022). II. *Die demotischen Papyrus* (Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire), Strassburg 1906–1908, vol. 1, pp. 237 & 266 (nos. 31045; 31147 verso; the former probably a letter to a god; the latter probably fourth or third century rather than Saite).


An incantation on a wooden tablet was published by W. Edgerton, *Wooden Tablets from Qau*, in: *ZAS* 72 (1936), pp. 77–79.


7.3.2. Daily life

A. LETTERS, REPORTS, ...

Demotic letters are attested between the middle of the sixth century BC and the third century AD. Generally the sender himself or a scribe wrote down the message on a piece of papyrus, which was afterwards folded, sealed, and transported to the addressee. This last reads the text after removing the seal, which consequently is only seldom preserved. Most letters deal with business affairs: simple greetings or mere inquiries about the health of the addressee are rare. For less important communications and for short distances, often ostraca are used.

Although a number of different formulae and stereotype phrases can be distinguished, the content of letters is by definition unpredictable, and sometimes even intentionally cryptic. As a result, the messages are in most cases hard to interpret. An often cursive script and a curtailed orthography constitute further difficulties.

For a catalogue of the texts from Elephantine, amongst which many letters, see K.-Th. Zauzich, *Ägyptische Handschriften, Teil 2 (Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, 19)*, Wiesbaden 1971. A substantial amount of them have been published by the same author in *Papyri von der Insel Elephantine (Demotische Papyri aus den Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, 1 & 3)*, Berlin 1978 & 1993.


7. Demotic documentary texts

For memoranda, see above, p. 137; for Demotic letters addressed to gods, see above, p. 149.

B. ‘LABELS’

These labels are various short texts that concern the object on which they were written: the weight of metal vessels, the contents of jars, the name of the owner, …

For examples of inscriptions giving the weight or indicating the former contents, see above, pp. 78 and 81.
The texts on linen used as wrapping for precious documents can also be classified here, see above, p. 82.

C. CAPTIONS TO DRAWINGS

The most famous example here is a map with mainly Greek, but also some Demotic captions. A similar Greek text, with a plan for the irrigation of new land to be developed, adds the Demotic names for some points of the compass. Further explanations to drawings are relatively rare.

The Greek text is P. gr. Lille I 1.
8. Archives and libraries

The analytic character of the papyrological sources can be partly neutralized by studying them within the framework of the archive to which they belong. An archive is defined as a collection of manuscripts made in antiquity by a private person or by an institution. The term is often confused with a dossier, this last being a group of texts which have been brought together today because they contain information on a particular person, family or subject.


Important documents were often kept in a safe place, where they are sometimes found in modern times. If this is the result of official excavations, the archive can be published in its entirety without problems. But if the documents were found and traded illegally, they may be scattered over various collections. In that case the archives have to be reconstructed by means of internal criteria, or sometimes museum archival data such as the inventory numbers and the dates of acquisition.

For museum archival data as aid for the reconstruction of archives, see K. Vandorpe, Museum Archaeology or how to Reconstruct Pathiris Archives, in: EVO 17 (1994), pp. 289–300. See also the publication of Pestman mentioned above.

The great majority of documents preserved must once have belonged to archives, although this is usually difficult or impossible to trace. It should be stressed here also that many ostraca were kept as proof, just like the papyri. Somewhat different are the collections of literary texts, preserved by the temples in their libraries (see below, p. 161). In private archives Demotic literature is rare.


What follows is not an exhaustive list of all archives known, but a short survey of those that have been published as such or received attention recently. An elaborate list of the various archives and the papyri or ostraca which constitute them is given in E. Lüddeckens, Urkundenarchive, in: LA VI (1986), cols. 876–886.

8. Archives and libraries


8.1. Private archives

Private archives consist of covenants preserved by private citizens to prove certain rights, for example ownership, or to attest certain actions, for example payment of taxes. Sometimes unofficial documents with sentimental value can be added, although this is only rarely the case. Quite often, however, agreements from the professional sphere are also included in this type of archive. Although it has been proposed to create a separate category of ‘accountant archives’ for these cases, it is perhaps best to study them here as well, because it is often far from easy to distinguish professional activities from those belonging to the private sphere.

Quite a few of the private archives that have been preserved once belonged to choauchytes. Since these worked as libationers in the necropolis, they had plenty of opportunities to store away their documents in a very safe place, namely in the tombs of which they took care.

8.1.1. Early Demotic

Private archives from this period often contain both Demotic and abnormal hieratic documents. Those that consist exclusively of the latter are not taken into account here.

A. Thebes

A thoroughly studied archive is that of the woman Tsenhor, containing fifteen papyri dated between 556 and 487 BC. Most of these were drawn up for the keeper, for example title-deeds (concerning a slave, a building, land, ...) or a marriage settlement, but a few were deposited by her daughter and her oldest son.


B. El-Hibeh

Intriguing because of the presence of the pseudo-literary petition P. Rylands 9 (see above, p. 102), is the archive of Petesis, containing nine papyri ranging from 644 until 513 BC. One would expect the other documents to be the supporting evidence for his claim to rights in the temple, but oddly enough they seem to contradict the argumentation of the plaintiff.
8.1. Private archives


8.1.2. Ptolemaic period

Most of the family archives extant belong to the Ptolemaic period. In the beginning of this period the majority are still exclusively Demotic, but from the middle of the third century BC onwards bilingual, Demotic-Greek archives become common. Gradually Greek gains the upper hand and in the Roman period private archives with Demotic documents completely disappear.

A. EDFU

The archive of *Pabakhitis* consists of twenty-five papyri dated between 265 and 208 BC. It contains not only documents that concern land (documents concerning money, cessions, and a loan on mortgage), but also marriage settlements, a division, and a lease. Apart from the *editio princeps* of Spiegelberg, the archive has received relatively little attention.


B. GEBELEN

Because the papyri from Gebelein were acquired on the antiquities market, the archives to which they belonged must be reconstructed. All of them were established by the offspring of soldiers who came to Gebelein, bought land, and married there. The largest archive is that which eventually came into possession of *Peteharsemteus* (more than 70 papyri and other documents; 145–88 BC). The title-deeds, receipts for payment of taxes, and letters of which it consists are mainly Greek, but about one third is drawn up in Demotic.


The bilingual archive of *Horos son of Nekhoutes* (about 70 papyri, the majority in Demotic; 134–89 BC) is the only one from Gebelein that was found and sold in its entirety, probably the former contents of a pot. The last keeper was a soldier whose father had married a member of an important family of military men.


Similar is the archive of *Pelaias* (about 20 documents, of which roughly half is Demotic; 152–88 BC); it contains both Greek and Demotic contracts, mainly concerning the woman Nahomsesis, her son-in-law Eunus, and her grandson, the last owner of the archive. Some marriage settlements of female relatives are also part of it.
8. Archives and libraries


Another important archive is that of the Cretan cavalry officer Druton and his offspring (some 50 documents; between 174 and 94 BC). The Demotic documents (about one third) are mainly loans, marriage settlements, and documents of divorce.


K. Vandorpe, Museum Archaeology or how to Reconstruct Pathyris Archives, in: EVO 17 (1994), pp. 289–300, in which a new publication of the entire archive is announced.

C. Thebes

Again most of the Demotic archives known from this period come from Thebes. One of the oldest Ptolemaic ones is that of Teos and his wife Taba (12 documents; 327/326–306 [?] BC). Apart from title-deeds of a house, some documents from the professional sphere are included as well.


Of the archives that have been found during official excavations, two have already been published, at least partially. The oldest one is that of Psenninis: thirty-two papyri found in a house during excavations in Dra-Abu-el-Naga in 1922. The archive covers six generations or one hundred years (317–217 BC) and finally came into the possession of the above mentioned scribe. It contains documents from the choaichy family of the previous husband of his wife, as well a series of contracts concerning his own house.

For a publication of the first 26 documents, see M. El-Amir, A Family Archive from Thebes. Demotic Papyri in the Philadelphia and Cairo Museums from the Ptolemaic Period, Cairo 1959.

A recent short discussion with reference to the earlier literature is given in P.W. Pestman, The Archive of the Theban Choachytes (Second Century B.C.). A Survey of the Demotic and Greek Papyri contained in the Archive (Studia Demotica, 2), Leuven 1993, pp. 28–29.

The archive of the woman Teitauteus (about 18 documents; 315–274 BC) has been reconstructed from papyri in London, Brussels, Moscow, and Manchester. All texts, either directly or indirectly, concern a house of which the ownership changed through the years. The title-deeds of this property, rather than the family affairs, form the core of this archive.

The archive has been partially published and studied by S.R.K. Glanville, A Theban Archive of the Reign of Ptolemy I, Soter (Catalogue of Demotic Papyri in the British Museum, 1), London 1939.


The archive of Pechutes, covering seven generations of a family of choaichytes (334–199 BC), has remained virtually unpublished. It is kept in London and Paris.

The archive is referred to by E. Seidt as that of Pr-di-rîy, by E. Löddeckens as Pr-tamt

Two jars discovered in 1905 during excavations in Deir el-Medina contained the archive of Totoès. The papyri (53 of which 9 are Greek; 189–100 BC) are loans, receipts, sales,
exchanges, leases of property, and others illustrating the private affairs of the keeper, but also include documents from 'Totoes' wife and her family.


Probably the largest archive that can be reconstructed through internal and external criteria is that of the Theban chochochtes (about 80 documents; 182–98 BC). It actually consists of two separate collections: that of Osorocris and that of Panas, both leading members of the association of chochochtes of the necropolis of Djeme. For this reason we also find administrative documents such as rules of cult-guilds, besides deeds concerning personal property.

For a survey, see in P.W. Pestman, The Archive of the Theban Chochochtes (Second Century B.C.), A Survey of the Demotic and Greek Papyri contained in the Archive (Studia Demotica, 2), Leuven 1993.

The bilingual archive of Amenothes (16 papyri; 171–116 BC) contains documents concerning his family, his property, as well as his professional activities as embalmer and chief lector priest.


Since the edition of C.A.R. Andrews, Ptolemaic Legal Texts from the Theban Area (Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the British Museum, 4), London 1990, many new texts from this area have become known, but the study of these documents as archives has only just begun, see P.W. Pestman, A Family Archive which Changes History. The Archive of an Anonym, in: S.P. Vleeming (ed.), Hundred-Gated Thebes. Acts of a Colloquium on Thebes and the Theban Area in the Graeco-Roman Period (P.L.Bat., 27), Leiden (...) 1995, pp. 91–100.

D. SIUT

The archive of the lector priest Tefhape from Siut was the first one to be published as such in Demotic studies. It contains thirteen papyri dated between 185 and 169 BC, of which three are documents belonging to Tefhape’s sister. She preferred these to be kept in the archive of her brother, rather than in that of her husband, since they contained commitments by the latter. The remaining ten documents all concern a trial about the inheritance of the father of Tefhape, who had been married twice. An account of the trial and the judgement, passed in 170 BC, was found in this archive, as well as various contracts containing the evidence laid before the court by the keeper of the archive.

Published by H. Thompson, A Family Archive from Siut from Papyri in the British Museum, including an Account of a Trial before the Laocrite in the Year B.C. 170, 2 vol., Oxford 1934.

E. HERMOPOLIS

One of the relatively few written sources available for Hermopolis is the bilingual family archive of Dionysios (41 papyri, of which 8 Demotic; 139–104 BC). The
8. Archives and libraries

Demotic texts are all contracts containing transactions of immovable property, livestock, or wheat.


F. MEMPHIS

For Memphis there is a large Undertakers’ Archive (some 30, mainly Demotic papyri; between 203 and 65 BC), acquired by Anastasi in the first half of the nineteenth century, and later scattered among museums all over Europe. These papers of five generations are mainly marriage settlements and divisions of property. The majority of the texts is only available in out of date publications.


Furthermore only small papyrus archives, such as that of the priest Horos son of Petosiris (3 cessions; 201–181 BC) or that of the merchant Harmachis (4 loans of money that will be paid back in kind; 108 BC) have been published.

P.W. Pestman / J. Quaegebeur / R.L. Vos, Recueil de textes démotiques et bilingues, Leiden 1977, nos. 1–3 (Horos); 4–6 (Harmachis).

A very special archive is that of Horos of Sebennytos (second century BC), found during excavations in Saqqara. It consists of about seventy Demotic and some Greek texts, all drafts written on ostraca. The intriguing texts concern dreams and oracles, as well as a cult of ibises. Some of these have direct historical significance.


G. FAIYUM

The embalmers’ archives of Hawara (late third until middle first century BC) again contain documents both from the private and the professional sphere. They are split between different collections (Chicago, Copenhagen, Oxford, ...) and have only partially been published.


The most extensive archive from the Ptolemaic period is the so-called Zenon-archive (about 2000 papyri, of which only 25 are at least partially Demotic; 274–227 BC). These documents were kept by the manager of a large estate in Philadelphia, granted by Ptolemy II Philadelphos to his dioiketes Apollonios. Because they were found in unofficial excavations at the end of the nineteenth century, the papyri have been scattered all over the world. The bulk of the texts is Greek and concerns the
management of the estate or the private affairs of Zenon, both of which are often intermingled in the archive.


### 8.2. Administrative archives

Administrative archives consist of official documents kept by a state official. Most Demotic examples date from the early Ptolemaic period, when at least part of the proceedings could be effected in the language of the local population; typical examples are census lists and other administrative documents. In the course of time Greek as the language of the upper class became predominant, and in the Roman period Demotic is even scarcely used for official purposes.

**A. Elephantine**

The archive of the administrative official Milon (39 papyri of which 10 at least partially Demotic; 225–223 BC) was found in Elephantine, but the contents clearly point to Edfu as its original provenance. Several documents are tenders for the leasing of land that formerly belonged to a rich priestly family in Edfu but was confiscated because of tax debts. The Demotic texts bear a short summary in Greek, in all probability because Milon did not know the language of the native population. Although it is known from the archive that Milon took refuge in Elephantine because of problems concerning his post in Edfu, it is unclear why he left these documents on the island.


**B. Oxyrhynchos**

About 1800 ostraca in Pisa and in Cologne were originally thought to have come from Oxyrhynchos. In all probability, however, the texts were found in a desert outpost between the Nile and an oasis. This explains why so many documents (mainly diaries and letters) concern the transport of water and grain. Palaeography and the level of prices mentioned in the ostraca suggest a date in the later years of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (145–132 BC), rather than one in the Roman period. The organization of this administrative archive (or archives?) will probably only become clear after all the texts have been published.


For an introduction and references to the various articles in which the ostraca have been published, see U. Kaplony-Heckel, *Wasser für den Aussenposten (Das demotische Archiv der Oxyrhynchos-Ostraka)*, in: *B. Menu (ed.), Les problèmes institutionnels de l’eau en Egypte ancienne et dans*
8. Archives and libraries


C. FAIYUM

From the district of Polemon in the Faiyum come a number of surety contracts and tenders for lease of land. It is not unlikely that all documents belong together and were kept by the toparch of Crocodilopolis.


Many papyri recovered from mummy cartonnage that was found in Ghoran, Lahun, and Magdola can probably be grouped to form one or possibly more archives of nomarchs. The reconstruction of this bilingual official archive from the third century BC is a very complicated affair, however. The various groups seem to be official letters, surety contracts, census lists, and other administrative documents. The papyri, of which the bulk is still unpublished, are kept in the Sorbonne.


8.3. Temple archives and libraries

Like the royal administration, the temples also collected documents that were important for their practical functioning and preserved them in their own archives. In this special environment Demotic was frequently used until well in the Roman period, but eventually here also Greek triumphed.

Closely linked with the archives are the libraries, collections of literary texts kept by the priests. They contained hieroglyphic, hieratic, but from about the fourth century BC onwards also Demotic papyri. In the Roman period some of the literature was also written down in Greek, but as a whole these temple libraries were the last bastions of the native languages and scripts.

8.3.1. Archives

A. ELEPHANTINE

In the course of German excavations in Elephantine at the beginning of this century a temple archive was discovered. Almost all papyri are letters concerning the affairs of the Khnum-priests of Elephantine, which illustrate how these men lived and worked, as well as the various disputes and arguments in which they were engaged. Minor groups are formed by the title-deeds, accounts, and lists. The letters are mainly Ptolemaic (or somewhat earlier?), but several early Demotic and a few early Roman examples have
also been found. The structure and the various chronological layers of the archive are still unclear.


B. TEBTUNIS

More than one hundred self-dedications, some examples of rules of cult-guilds, and other documents from the second century BC belonged to the archive of the temple of Sobek in Tebtunis.


C. DIME (SOKNOPAIU NESOS)

The archive of the temple of Sobek was found during unofficial excavations at the end of the nineteenth century and acquired by various museums all over the world. The collection of the Griffith Institute in Oxford, which counts about three hundred papyri from Dime, is of very diverse contents. A number of Ptolemaic texts (middle second century BC) have already been published and contain oracle questions, letters, hypomnemata, tenders for the collection of taxes, contracts, and receipts. Accounts, lists, and fragments will follow later. Papyri in other collections, which contain much Roman material, are also gradually being published.


A number of Roman Demotic examples have been published: see for the most recent instalment, K.-Th. Zauzich, *Spätägyptische Papyrusschriften IV*, in: *Enchoria* 7 (1977), pp. 151–180. See also the above work of E. Bresciani, p. XIV n. 2.

8.3.2. Libraries

A. TEBTUNIS

The most famous example is the extensive temple library of Tebtunis, consisting of literary texts of all kinds: narrative, mythological, astrological, astronomical, medical, mathematical, and other. Illicit diggings took place from the nineteenth century onwards and were the only source until about 1930, when official excavations began. The manuscripts have found their way to many collections all over the world. Thus more than one thousand numbers have been given to the papyri and fragments in the collection in Copenhagen alone. Most texts have been situated between the middle of the first and the third century AD; the great variety of different hands shows that these libraries were not the work of individuals, even if certain prolific temple scribes can be identified.

A survey of the contents of the library, with a first instalment of new publications of these texts, is P.J. Frandsen (ed.), *The Carlsberg Papyri 1. Demotic Texts from the Collection (CNI Publications, 15)*, Copenhagen 1991.

B. DIME

Another temple library is that connected to the already mentioned temple of Sobek in Dime. The majority of these again very diverse texts is preserved in Vienna, and must be situated between about the first century BC and the third century AD. Since these papyri were not found during official excavations, their exact provenance cannot be determined with absolute certainty, but Soknopaiu Nesos is one of the most likely candidates.


For the texts from Medinet Madi, see above, p. 43.
9. Selected topics

9.1. The calendar system

Traditionally in Egypt more than one calendar was employed. Two of them were based exclusively on the moon, whereas a third one tried to follow the course of the sun, even if it was essentially still a schematic or ‘average’ lunar year. Only this last system, the so-called Egyptian civil year of 365 days, is adopted in Demotic, although for religious purposes the two other calendars remained in use.

For the different calendars of Egypt, see R.A. Parker, The Calendars of Ancient Egypt (SIAOC, 26), Chicago 1950.

The extensively discussed absolute chronology of ancient Egypt is considered in Ägypten und Levante 3 (1992). Especially the dates of the New Kingdom are often revised, see for example recently J. von Beckerath, Chronologie des ägyptischen Neuen Reiches (HAB, 39), Hildesheim 1994.

9.1.1. The era of the ruling pharaoh

Demotic documents date themselves by referring to the year of rule of the pharaoh, which is calculated from the first year during which the pharaoh ascended the throne, or sometimes the time when the (previous) king or queen took him or her as an associate. The second year begins on the following New Year’s Day (Thot 1). In early and Ptolemaic Demotic, the royal name is only explicitly mentioned in larger documents, in that case often with the king’s cult titles. For smaller texts, such as letters or accounts, it is therefore not always easy to determine to which pharaoh the year refers. During the Roman period the name of the emperor was more commonly given, even in less important texts. After Diocletian, however, the succession is sometimes left out of account in unofficial documents, and the years continue to be counted from 285 AD according to the era of Diocletian (‘The Era of the Martyrs’).


Demotic graffiti dated according to the era of Diocletian are referred to in R.S. Bagnall / K.A. Worp, The Chronological Systems of Byzantine Egypt (Studia Amstelodamensia ad Epigraphicam, Ins Antiquam et Papyrologicam pertinentia, 8), Zutphen 1978, p. 47.

For the names and titles of the Roman emperors in Demotic documents, see J.-C. Grenier, Les titulatures des empereurs romains dans les documents en langue égyptienne (Papyrologica Bruxellensia, 22), Bruxelles 1989.

For the conversion of the dates to our Christian era, see above, p. 66, and below.

9.1.2. The eponymous priests

A supplementary dating system, combined with the preceding one in important documents such as notary-contracts, lists the eponymous priests of Alexander the Great and the deified Ptolemies. These officials gave their name to the Macedonian year during which they functioned in the Greek cities of Alexandria (from 290 BC onwards) and Ptolemais (from 215 BC onwards). After Ptolemy VI (180–145) the scribes often omitted the names of the priests because of their ever increasing number, and ultimately this led to the disappearance of the practice as a whole in the early first century BC.

9.1.3. The calendar: days, months, and seasons

The Egyptian year consists of 365 days, or twelve months of thirty days plus five epagomenal days. The months are grouped into three seasons of four months each. Because of the very cursive writing of the signs indicating the season (*ḥ.t* ‘flood’, *pr.t* ‘seed-time’, or *šmw* ‘harvest’), it is often difficult to determine the precise date. Moreover Demotic contracts, in opposition to abnormal hieratic ones, do not mention the day on which they were drawn up before the reign of Ptolemy VI.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ibd-1</th>
<th>ibd-2</th>
<th>ibd-3</th>
<th>ibd-4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ḥ.t ‘Month 1’</td>
<td>ḥ.t ‘Month 2’</td>
<td>ḥ.t ‘Month 3’</td>
<td>ḥ.t ‘Month 4’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ḥ.t</em> ‘inundation’</td>
<td>Thot</td>
<td>Phaophi</td>
<td>Hathyr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>pr.t</em> ‘winter’</td>
<td>Tybi</td>
<td>Mekhir</td>
<td>Phamenoth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>šmw</em> ‘summer’</td>
<td>Pakhons</td>
<td>Payni</td>
<td>Epeiph</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The seasons, months and their Greek equivalents.

\[\begin{array}{llll}
\text{ينا م} & \text{ḥ.t} & \text{ئب م} & \text{pr.t} \\
\text{ار م} & \text{ḥ.t} & \text{ئب م} & \text{pr.t} \\
\text{؟س م} & \text{šmw} & \text{šmw} & \text{šmw} \\
\end{array}\]

The writing of the seasons in Demotic. In the Ptolemaic period (top) *pr.t* and *šmw* are likely to be confused; in the Roman period *ḥ.t* and *pr.t* are often very similar. See K.-Th. Zauzich, in: *Enchoria* 7 (1977), pp. 172–173.

In this Egyptian calendar New Year’s Day (Thot 1) is fixed, in opposition to the lunisolar Macedonian calendar, often used in Greek papyri, in which the date of accession to the throne also marks the beginning of a new year. A third calendar is the financial one, used in the third century BC (Ptolemy II Philadelphos and III Euergetes). The only difference from the Egyptian calendar is the date of New Year: Mekhirk 1 instead of Thot 1. It is not used to date Demotic texts, but it may sometimes be referred to in tax receipts.


E. Greybek, *Du calendrier macédonien au calendrier ptolémaïque. Problèmes de chronologie hellénistique* (Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft, 20), Basel 1990; see reviews by H. Hauben, *La chronologie macédonienne et ptolémaïque mise à l'épreuve. A propos d'un livre d'Erhard*
9.2. Measures, weights, and money

Our knowledge of the various systems in Demotic for measuring and weighing is still very incomplete. Various reasons have been brought forward to explain this: the fact that the measures used were often not mentioned because of their obviousness to the then reader; chronological and geographical diversity; and lack of progress in the study of lists and accounts, where clues to a better understanding of these measures can probably be found. We are best informed about the Ptolemaic period.

The following remarks are essentially based on the article by S.P. Vleeming, Maße und Gewichte, in: \textit{LA} III (1980), cols. 1209–1214.

9.2.1. Linear and square measures

The basic unit for linear measures is the so-called God’s-cubit (\textit{mib-ntr}), presumably equalling 52.5 cm from the late pharaonic period onwards. Its subdivisions are the palm (\textit{sft}) and the finger (\textit{tb}), equal to respectively 7.5 and 1.875 cm. Amongst the larger units the schoinon (\textit{h-nwh}) of 52.5 m is the one most frequently used.
9. Selected topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schoinon</th>
<th>God’s-cubit</th>
<th>Palm</th>
<th>Finger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$h$-nwh</td>
<td>$m\text{h}$-ntr</td>
<td>$sp$</td>
<td>$tb^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.5 m</td>
<td>0.525 m</td>
<td>0.075 m</td>
<td>0.01875 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The square measures are derived from the above ones. Thus there are the square-cubit ($m\text{h}$-hti) of 0.275 m$^2$, the ground-cubit ($m\text{h}$-itn) of 27.5 m$^2$ and the aroura ($st^f$) of 2756.25 m$^2$. The latter is the most common one, and often its subdivisions of 1/2, 1/4, 1/8, 1/16 and 1/32, each with their own sign and name, are used to indicate the area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aroura</th>
<th>Ground-cubit</th>
<th>Square-cubit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$st^f$</td>
<td>$m\text{h}$-itn</td>
<td>$m\text{h}$-hti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2756.25 m$^2$</td>
<td>27.5 m$^2$</td>
<td>0.275 m$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


9.2.2. Cubic measures

Various system are adopted according to what is measured. Sometimes a cubic cubit seems to be used, but mostly a different unit for liquids and dry materials is employed.

For dry materials such as wheat, the history of the various measures of capacity has been reconstructed as follows. Originally the most common one was the sack ($b^r$) equalling 4 oipe (ipy. $t$) or 160 hin (hr, probably between 0.45 and 0.50 litres). During the Achaemenid rule the Persian artaba ($rb^h$), equal to 60 hin or about 30 litres, was introduced. The sack continued to be used, but under the influence of the artaba it was reduced to 80 hin or about 40 litres. When the Greeks came to Egypt, they adopted both systems, leading to two values for the artaba in Greek sources, either 29/30 or 40 choinikes (1 choinix equalling about one litre).
9.2. Measures, weights, and money

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sack</th>
<th>Oipe</th>
<th>Sack</th>
<th>Greek Artaba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$hpr$</td>
<td>$ipy.t$</td>
<td>$hpr$</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Stage 1)</td>
<td>(Stage 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160 hin</td>
<td>40 hin</td>
<td>80 hin</td>
<td>40 choimikes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about 80 l</td>
<td>about 20 l</td>
<td>about 40 l</td>
<td>about 40 l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artaba</th>
<th>Greek Artaba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$rtb$</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 hin</td>
<td>30 choimikes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about 30 l</td>
<td>about 30 l</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


See the article by K.-Th. Zauzich cited above.

For liquids apparently a great variety of receptacles are used for measuring, also dependent on the type of fluid. The only measure which can be equated with our metric system is the already mentioned hin.


9.2.3. Weights

The basic unit used in Egypt from the New Kingdom onwards is the kite ($k$), equal to about 9.1 grams. Ten kite form one deben ($dhn$) or 91.5 gram. Weights are mainly used to estimate the value of precious materials, especially valuable metals such as gold, copper, or silver. Quantities of this last were the most common means of payment before the arrival of coinage in Egypt. Frequently the Treasury of Ptah or that of Thebes is mentioned, which was traditionally interpreted as the temple authority controlling the alloy of the metal, probably by marking it. In view of the lack of archaeological evidence for these ‘coins avant-la-lettre’, it seems more likely, however, to connect the treasuries with the maintenance of correct standard weights.


9.2.4. Money

The Egyptian monetary system is based on working with certain amounts of precious metal, generally silver or copper. The situation in the early Demotic period before about the middle of the fourth century is described in the preceding section. From that period onwards, or perhaps even earlier as is suggested by new evidence in the ostraca of Manawir, the kite was artificially connected with the Greek stater (2 kite = 1 stater): shortly
afterwards, with the arrival of Alexander the Great and the ensuing Greek supremacy, coins become a regular feature in Ptolemaic Egypt. Until 210 BC the coinage was based on a silver standard; from that time onwards, one based on copper was employed. Subsequently the relative value of copper with respect to silver was halved several times during the second century BC, which made the level of prices rise. The inflation was stopped in 30 BC, when Octavian, the later Augustus, returned to the silver standard.

For Demotic the basic money unit is the kite (kt), usually referring to copper. If silver was meant, this was generally specifically indicated (ḥḏ sp-ḥ). Ten kite form one deben (dbn). These traditional Egyptian units are used in combination with Greek ones. A very large amount is the talent (kkr, 300 deben). Smaller ones are the obol (tb⁻ᵗ, 1/12 kite) and the stater (strτ, 2 kite). This last unit is especially common in the Roman period. The drachma (1/2 kite), the basic unit in Greek, is not used in Demotic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deben (dbn)</th>
<th>Kite (kt)</th>
<th>Obol (tb⁻ᵗ)</th>
<th>Drachma</th>
<th>Stater (strτ)</th>
<th>Talent (kkr)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For inflation and the difference between silver and copper standard prices, see T. Reekmans, *The Ptolemaic Copper Inflation*, in: E. Van 't Dack / T. Reekmans, *Ptolemaica (Studia Hellenistica, 7)*, Louvain-Leiden 1951, pp. 61–118. This can also be a useful dating criterion, see above, p. 70.


### 9.3. Prosopographies

Prosopographies are chronologically, geographically, and sometimes thematically defined lists of the various individuals attested in all available sources. In opposition to the onomastic lists, they are essentially an historical tool, trying to establish in which documents a person is attested: consequently they should not be limited to a certain kind of script, but should incorporate all possible source material. For this reason they are listed here, rather than amongst the palaeographical and linguistic tools (see above, p. 57).

#### 9.3.1. Late pharaonic

There is no real prosopography for the early Demotic period. A preliminary work is for instance G. Vittmann, *Priester und Beamte im Theben der Spätzeit*. Genealogische und prosopographische Untersuchungen zum thebanischen Priester- und Beamtenstum der 25.

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9.4. Demotic as a source for the late Egyptian political history: a sample


9.3.2. Ptolemaic

Only for this period is there an exhaustive prosopography drawing from both Egyptian and Greek sources: the Prosopographia Ptolemaica by W. Peremans / E. Van 't Dack and pupils, published in the series Studia Hellenistica in Leuven (1950–1981). The lists are arranged thematically, according to the persons' titles or occupations (administration, army, temples, agriculture, economy, culture, foreign possessions). It is completed by an Index nominum (1975) and two volumes of Addenda et corrigenda (1975 & 1981). At present it is reorganized as a relational database on computer (FoxPro) and it will soon be available on the Internet.


9.3.3. Roman

In the Roman period Demotic sources play a lesser role, so their information is often neglected. Some of the several prosopographical publications, primarily based on Greek texts, enumerate certain types of officials, whereas others are geographically classified.


9.4. Demotic as a source for the late Egyptian political history: a sample

As already mentioned in the preface to this Companion, I have chosen not to include chapters on history and culture of late pharaonic, Ptolemaic, or Roman Egypt. Indeed, for a study on these subjects not only Demotic, but all other possible sources of information should be taken into account. Even the combination and confrontation of classical literary texts with pieces of
evidence from the Greek papyri is not sufficient: the documents written in native Egyptian languages are needed as well.


For an excellent example of the study of an historical event by drawing in all possible sources, including Demotic, see E. Van 't Dack et al., *The Judean-Syrian-Egyptian Conflict of 103–101 B.C. A Multilingual Dossier concerning a “War of Scepters”* (*Collectanea Hellenistica*, 1), Brussel 1989.

Demotic texts sometimes contain valuable political-historical information, not found anywhere else. In some cases their historical importance is obvious and has already been pointed to in the above: thus one of the the pseudo-prophecies, the Demotic Chronicle (see above, p. 97), is an essential source for the history of the last indigenous dynasties that ruled Egypt. The various decrees (see above, p. 125) are further examples of documents with direct historical significance. This section is only a sample of the contributions of other texts to these questions, and does not claim to be exhaustive at all.

### 9.4.1. Late pharaonic

Even a literary text can contain a piece of historical information not found elsewhere. Thus P. Berlin P. 13588 refers to the tradition that Psammetichus I died abroad, east of Daphne. Consequently the exact description of a lunar eclipse in the papyrus might well be an indication for the precise day of his death: 22 March 610 BC.


For the text, see above, p. 90.

P. Rylands 9 is the only source to mention that Psammetichus II manifested his presence in Palestine in the year 591 BC, through what seems to have been a peaceful mission. Probably the aim was to support the Judeans in their rebellion against the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar.


For the text, see above, p. 102.

A large papyrus fragment from Elephantine lists names and numbers of the participants in an otherwise unknown expedition of Amasis to Nubia in the year 529 BC.


Three documents from a dossier of texts dated to the early fifth century BC have also led to the identification of a pharaoh Psammetichus IV, a rebel king during the Persian domination. Through the information of Herodotus and because of the chronological homogeneity of the dossier, his reign can be dated between 486 and 484 (?)) BC.


9.4. Demotic as a source for the late Egyptian political history: a sample

9.4.2. Ptolemaic

A Demotic ostraca from Karnak mentions the preparations for an expedition of Ptolemy II in the year 258 BC, during the Second Syrian War. This information is confirmed by some Greek papyri from the Zenon archive.


For the publication by E. Bresciani, see above p. 127.

The main information on the two indigenous pharaohs Haronnphoris and Chaonnphoris, the leaders of the rebellion in the Thebaid (205–186 BC), comes from Demotic sources. Recently through the reconstruction of a family archive new light was shed on the exact chronology of their reigns.


The absence of pharaoh Ptolemy VI from Egypt in his thirty-second year of rule (150/149 BC), as mentioned by a Demotic papyrus, can probably be explained by his journey to Ptolemais to marry his daughter to Alexander Balas.


A new Demotic letter with a double date at the end is an important piece of evidence for the reconstruction of the exact course of events in the summer of 145 BC. It emerges that there is no need to suppose a short reign of the so-called ‘Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator’: it seems certain that Ptolemy VIII came into power again immediately after the death of his brother Ptolemy VI.


The events of the year 89/88 BC, with the struggle between Ptolemy IX Soter II and Ptolemy X Alexander I, are confirmed by a Demotic stela mentioning that one of both pharaohs, which one remains unclear, was outside Egypt in the year 26 = 29.


9.4.3. Roman

The only documents with real historical value published until now are the graffiti on the walls of the temple of Isis in Philae and the other sanctuaries in the Dodecachosaeus. Thus an inscription dated to year three of Trebonianus Gallus and Volusianus (253 AD; G. Philae 416) is an essential source for the history of the relations between Rome and the kingdom of Meroe.


A. Burkhardt, Ägypter und Meroiten im Dodekaschosoi. Untersuchungen zur Typologie und Bedeutung der demotischen Graffiti (Meroitica, 8), Berlin 1985, pp. 77–96; 114–117 and other passages.

L. Török, Der meroitishe Staat I. Untersuchungen und Urkunden zur Geschichte des Sudan im Altertum (Meroitica, 9), Berlin 1986, pp. 309–316.
APPENDIX A

The Demotic ‘alphabet’

This is the order of the various transliteration signs as it is used in for instance Erichsen’s Glossar or the indices of the various publications.
APPENDIX B
Abbreviations

What follows is no list of all possible abbreviations, but only of those used in this Companion. Further abbreviations from the Egyptological sphere can be found in *LA* VII (1992), pp. XIV–XIX. For those from the world of classical philology and archaeology, the list of abbreviations in *L'Année Philologique. Bibliographie critique et analytique de l'Antiquité gréco-latine* should be consulted.


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<td>ÂA</td>
<td>Ägyptologische Abhandlungen</td>
</tr>
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<td>AAT</td>
<td>Ägypten und Altes Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AcOr</td>
<td>Acta Orientalia</td>
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<tr>
<td>AegTrev</td>
<td>Aegyptiaca Treverensia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF</td>
<td>Ägyptologische Forschungen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AfO</td>
<td>Archiv für Orientforschung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AfP</td>
<td>Archiv für Papyroforschung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHDO</td>
<td>Archives d’Histoire du Droit Oriental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AnAe</td>
<td>Analecta Aegyptiaca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AncSoc</td>
<td>Ancient Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASAÈ</td>
<td>Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte</td>
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<td>ASP</td>
<td>American Studies in Papyrology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASP</td>
<td>Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCPS</td>
<td>Bulletin of the Center of Papyrological Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>BdE</td>
<td>Bibliothèque d’Étude</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIFAO</td>
<td>Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale</td>
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<tr>
<td>BiOr</td>
<td>Bibliotheca Orientalis</td>
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<td>BMQ</td>
<td>British Museum Quarterly</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRL</td>
<td>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</td>
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<td>BSEG</td>
<td>Bulletin de la Société d’Égyptologie, Genève</td>
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<td>BSÉE</td>
<td>Bulletin de la Société Française d’Égyptologie</td>
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<tr>
<td>CdÉ</td>
<td>Chronique d’Égypte</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRIPEL</td>
<td>Cahier de Recherches de l’Institut de Papyrologie et d’Égyptologie de Lille</td>
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<tr>
<td>EVO</td>
<td>Egitto e Vicino Oriente</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>GM</td>
<td>Göttinger Missellen</td>
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<td>JAOS</td>
<td>Journal of the American Oriental Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>JEA</td>
<td>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</td>
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<td>JJP</td>
<td>Journal of Juristic Papyrology</td>
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<td>JNES</td>
<td>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</td>
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<td>JSEEA</td>
<td>Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karnak</td>
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<td>LA</td>
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<td>MAS</td>
<td>Münchener Ägyptologische Studien</td>
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<td>MDAIK</td>
<td>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo</td>
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<td>MIFAO</td>
<td>Mémoires publiés par les membres de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale du Caire</td>
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<td>Mitteilungen aus der Papyrussammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek (Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer)</td>
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<td>OBO</td>
<td>Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis</td>
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<tr>
<td>OLA</td>
<td>Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</td>
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<tr>
<td>OLP</td>
<td>Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica</td>
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<tr>
<td>OMRO</td>
<td>Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum voor Oudheden te Leiden</td>
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<td>OrSu</td>
<td>Orientalia Suecana</td>
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<tr>
<td>P.L.Bat.</td>
<td>Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava</td>
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<tr>
<td>RdÉ</td>
<td>Revue d’Égyptologie</td>
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<tr>
<td>RecTrav</td>
<td>Recueil de Travaux relatifs à la Philologie et à l’Archéologie Égyptiennes et Assyriennes</td>
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<tr>
<td>RevÉg</td>
<td>Revue Égyptologique</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAK</td>
<td>Studien zur Ägyptischen Kultur</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAOC</td>
<td>Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization</td>
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<tr>
<td>SASÄE</td>
<td>Supplément aux Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte</td>
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<td>SCO</td>
<td>Studi Classici e Orientali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSEA</td>
<td>Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WaO</td>
<td>Die Welt des Orients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WZKM</td>
<td>Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAS</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZDMG</td>
<td>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZPE</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</td>
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APPENDIX C
The Internet

For the time being there is no Demotic home page on the Internet. Nevertheless, several collections with Demotic papyri have a web-site providing interesting information. Some examples:

- The pages of the *Chicago Demotic Dictionary Project* supply annual reports of the undertaking and two interesting lists of institutions and scholars involved in Demotic Studies.
  [Address: http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/oi/proj/dem/demotic.html]
- The *Special Collections Library* at the *Duke University* provides a list of its Demotic papyri with links to their photographs, as well as a general introduction to Demotic by W. Clarysse.
  [Address: http://odyssey.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/demotic.html]
- The *Carsten Niebuhr Institute* in Copenhagen features a list of its Demotic papyri on the Internet.
  [Address: http://www.ihi.ku.dk/cni/papcoll/pap_dem.htm]

In default of a Demotic home page, the search for interesting information can also be started from the Egyptological, (Greek) papyrological, or Coptic pages:

**Egyptology**

- The home page of the *Centre for Computer-Aided Egyptological Research* features access to for instance lists of egyptological institutions, museums, or egyptologists themselves; a “Multilingual Egyptological Thesaurus” (professional terms in German, English, and French); or a “Prosopographia Aegypti” (which in contrast with its name is no prosopography, but an onomastic list).
  [Address: http://www.ccer.ggl.ruu.nl/ccer/default.html]
- An alternative is to start from the *Cambridge Egyptological Home Page*, which provides access to pages with recent news, announcements of future gatherings, and much more.
  [Address: http://www.newton.cam.ac.uk/egypt/index.html]
- A further possibility is the ABZU, a guide to resources for the study of the ancient Near East available on the Internet, more specifically the regional index on Egypt.
  [Address: http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/oi/dept/ra/abzu/abzu_regindx_egypt.html]

**Greek** Papyrology

- A *Papyrology Home Page* provides links to the home pages of various institutions and papyrological collections.
  [Address: http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jmucci/papyrology]

**Coptology**

- The useful facilities for Coptology can be found through the *Coptic Home Page*.
  [Address: http://cs-www.bu.edu/faculty/best/pub/cn/home.html]
APPENDIX D

The Demotic Transliteration System

() supplied from elsewhere: used to supply a word or part of a word omitted in accordance with widespread scribal practise; also used about the resolution of a symbol or an abbreviation.

[] lost or lacuna: in principle used where no trace survives of a word or individual sign.

<> emended: omission in the original, where this is clearly a mistake rather than a conventional abbreviation or elision.

{} superfluous: cancelled by the editor as an error by the original scribe.

/// uncertain: in principle used where signs are sufficiently damaged that more than one reading is in theory possible; sometimes also used to express doubt over a reading.

[]] deleted by the original scribe.

\ interlinear (superscript) addition by the original scribe.
AEDS 6111

The Dynamic Translation System

The Dynamic Translation System is a tool for generating computer programds from natural language descriptions. It is designed to be used in a variety of applications, including software development, knowledge management, and natural language processing. The system is based on a parser that extracts the structure of a natural language utterance and a generator that produces a corresponding computer program. The parser and generator are implemented as a set of rules that are applied to the natural language utterance. The rules are designed to be as general as possible, so that they can be applied to a wide range of different types of natural language utterances. The system is also designed to be extensible, so that new rules can be added as needed. This makes it possible to adapt the system to new applications and to improve its performance over time.

The Dynamic Translation System is currently implemented as a standalone software tool. It can be used in a variety of different ways, depending on the specific needs of the user. For example, it can be used to generate code from natural language descriptions, to transform existing code into a different format, or to extract information from natural language descriptions.

The Dynamic Translation System is written in Python, which is a popular programming language that is well-suited for natural language processing tasks. It is also designed to be modular, so that different parts of the system can be developed and tested independently. This makes it easy to extend the system to new applications and to improve its performance over time.

In summary, the Dynamic Translation System is a powerful tool for generating computer programs from natural language descriptions. It is designed to be easy to use and to be extensible, so that it can be adapted to new applications and to improve its performance over time. It is currently implemented as a standalone software tool, and it can be used in a variety of different ways, depending on the specific needs of the user.
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