

Transcriptions and Phonetics

Egyptian

The orthography used in Egyptian words is the standard one used by Anglo-American Egyptologists, the only exception being that the sign traditionally transcribed as ḳ is written q in this volume.

Whatever the exact sound of the ḳ in Old and Middle Egyptian (3400–1600 B.C.E.), it was used where Semitic names contained r , l , or even n . This consonantal value was retained until the beginning of the New Kingdom. In Late Egyptian (spoken, 1600–700 B.C.E.), it appears to have become an ʔ -aleph and later, like the Southern English r , it merely modified adjacent vowels. The Egyptian ḳ corresponded to the Semitic ʔ -aleph and yōd . ʔ -aleph is found in many languages and in nearly all Afroasiatic ones. It is a glottal stop before vowels, as in the Cockney “ $\text{bo} > \text{l}$ ” and “ $\text{bu} > \text{ə}$ ” (bottle and butter). The Egyptian ʕ -ayin, which occurs in most Semitic languages, is a voiced or spoken ʔ -aleph. The Egyptian form seems to have been associated with the back vowels o and u .

In early Egyptian, the sign w , written as a quail chick, may have originally had purely consonantal value. In Late Egyptian, the stage of the Egyp-

tian spoken language that had most impact on Greek, it seems to have been frequently pronounced as a vowel, either o or u. The Egyptian sign transcribed as r was more usually rendered as l in Semitic and Greek. In later Egyptian, as with the 3, it weakened to become a mere modifier of vowels.

The Egyptian and Semitic ḥ was pronounced as an emphatic h. It appears that the sign conventionally transcribed in Egyptian as ḥ was originally a voiced ḡ. In Middle and Late Egyptian, it was devoiced to become something approximating the Scottish ch in “loch.” The sign transcribed as ḥ was pronounced as ḥy. In Middle and Late Egyptian, it was frequently confused with š. š is used to transcribe a sign that originally sounded something like ḥ. It later was pronounced as sh or skh.

As mentioned above, q represents an emphatic k.

The letter t̄ was probably originally pronounced as tʷ. Even in Middle Egyptian it was already being confused with t. Similarly, ḏ was frequently alternated with d. In Late Egyptian, voiced and unvoiced stops tended to merge. Thus, there was confusion among t̄, t, ḏ, and d.

EGYPTIAN NAMES

Egyptian divine names are vocalized according to the most common Greek transcriptions, for example, Amon for Ὠμν and Isis for Ἰς.

Royal names generally follow A. H. Gardiner’s (1961) version of the Greek names for well-known pharaohs, for instance, *Ramesses*.

Coptic

Most of the letters in the Coptic alphabet come from Greek and the same transcriptions are used. Six other letters derived from Demotic are transcribed as follows:

ϣ	š	ϥ	ḥ	ϧ	j
ϥ	f	Ϩ	h	ϩ	č

Semitic

The Semitic consonants are transcribed relatively conventionally. Several of the complications have been mentioned above in connection with Egyptian. Apart from these, one encounters the following.

In Canaanite, the sound *ḥ* merged with *ḫ*. Transcriptions here sometimes reflect an etymological *ḥ* rather than the later *ḫ*. *ṭ* is an emphatic *t*. The Arabic letter *thā'* usually transcribed as *th* is written here as *tʸ*. The same is true of the *dhāl*, which is written here as *dʸ*. The letter found in Ugaritic that corresponds to the Arabic *ghain* is transcribed as *ǧ*.

The West Semitic *tsade* was almost certainly pronounced *ts* and the letter *śin* originally seems to have been a lateral fricative similar to the Welsh *ll*. In transcriptions of Hebrew from the first millennium B.C.E. the letter *shin* is rendered *š*. Elsewhere, it is transcribed simply as *s* because I question the antiquity and range of the pronunciation *š*.

Neither the *dagesh nor begadkephat* are indicated in the transcription. This is for reasons of simplicity as well as because of doubts about their range and occurrence in antiquity.

Vocalization

The Masoretic vocalization of the Bible, completed in the ninth and tenth centuries C.E. but reflecting much older pronunciation, is transcribed as follows:

Name of sign	Plain	with ם y	with ן w	with ה h
<i>Pataḥ</i>	ַ ba	—	—	—
<i>Qāmeṣ</i>	ָ bā	ִ bā	—	ֶ bāh
<i>Ḥîreq</i>	ִ bi	ֵ bî	—	—
<i>Şērê</i>	ֵ bē	ֶ bē	—	ֶ bēh
<i>S°gōl</i>	ֶ be	ֶ bē	—	ֶ beh
<i>Ḥōlem</i>	ֹ bō	—	ֹ bō	ֹ bōh
<i>Qibûṣ</i>	ֹ bu	—	ֹ bû	—

The reduced vowels are rendered:

ֶ b^e ם ḥă ן ḥě ה ḥō.

Accentuation and cantillation are not normally marked.

Greek

The transcription of the consonants is orthodox; *v* is transcribed as *y*; the long vowels η and ω are written as \bar{e} and \bar{o} , and where it is significant the long α is rendered as \bar{a} ; accentuation is not normally marked.

GREEK NAMES

It is impossible to be consistent in transliterating these, because certain names are so well known that they have to be given in their Latin forms—Thucydides or Plato—as opposed to the Greek Thoukydidēs or Platōn. On the other hand, it would be absurd to make Latin forms for little-known people or places. Thus, the commoner names are given in their Latin forms and the rest simply transliterated from Greek. I have tried wherever possible to follow Peter Levi's translation of Pausanias, where the balance is to my taste well struck. This, however, means that many long vowels are not marked in the transcription of names.

Chapter 6

In chapter 6 some extra transcriptions are used. These are the International Phonetic Alphabet and the Pinyin system for Chinese characters. Also in this chapter, Greek accents are usually marked.