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Two hieroglyphic signs and the egyptian words for «Alabaster» and «Linen», etc.

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TWO HIEROGLYPHIC SIGNS  
AND  
THE EGYPTIAN WORDS  
FOR “ALABASTER” AND “LINEN”, ETC.

BY

ALAN H. GARDINER.

Among the topics treated by the scholar whose contributions to Egyptology we celebrate in this number of the *Bulletin*, there is none where his perspicacity and erudition have been shown to better advantage than in the discussion of individual hieroglyphs. I need only mention his brilliant interpretation of the warrior chieftain's field-kit , and his determination of the readings of the sign of Seth  and of the fish-scale . It seems not unfitting, therefore, that my personal *hommage* should take the form of a study of certain hieroglyphs; and the hieroglyphs which I have chosen for the purpose are those representing respectively a loop of rope  and a bag . The conclusions which I shall seek to draw are, indeed, already set forth in brief in the sign-list to my *Egyptian Grammar*, but certain recent Egyptological publications (ERMAN, *Ägyptische Grammatik*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., *Schrifttafel*, under V 6, V 33; *Ä. Z.*, 64, 136, line 2; POLOTSKY, *Zu den Inschriften der 11. Dynastie*, p. 14, line 4) show that these conclusions have been either overlooked or rejected. For that reason it seems desirable to defend them in a less categorical and more argumentative form.

I

The specific functions of the two hieroglyphs in question had, previous to the appearance of my *Grammar*, been quite imperfectly understood by Egyptologists, in whose excuse it may be said, however, that therein they were

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but following the example of the Egyptians themselves. A still more valid excuse lies in the fact that not only do the forms of the signs closely resemble one another, but also their phonetic values (*šš*, *ššr*) were such as to render fusion and confusion practically inevitable. The generally accepted view has been that the bag or pouch either is the determinative of  “to envelop”, “bind up”, or else has the value *g*, whereas the rope or cord *ṣ*, properly the word-sign for  *šš* “rope” is the hieroglyph which enters into a whole series of words beginning with *šš* originally, but in some cases subsequently betraying a metathesis of those two letters. Such seems to have been the opinion of Griffith (*Hieroglyphs*, p. 48), Davies (*Ptahhetep*, I, p. 33), Erman and Grapow (see their *Handwörterbuch*, p. 186), to mention only living authorities. It has been taken for granted that the words  “linen”,  *Wertvolles* (*sic*),  “corn”, and  “alabaster” all embarked on their literary careers with the reading *šš*, see the *Handwörterbuch*, *loc. cit.*, whereas I shall be at pains to show that this is true only of the last of these four words, the first three reading *ššr*, or at least having had that value in their early days. That the bag  ever had the reading *gb* is an error avoided by Griffith (*loc. cit.*) and expressly corrected by Lacau (*Rec. de trav.*, 35, 231); it lingers on quite unrepentantly in the *Schrifttafel* of the latest edition of Professor Erman's classical Egyptian Grammar. The earlier literature of the most important contributions to the subject comprises the fundamental article by Brugsch in *Ä. Z.*, 18, 1 and Griffith's discussion of *ṣ ṣ* ( ) in *Proc. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, 13, 74.

## II

That two distinct hieroglyphs are represented by *ṣ* and  has always been known, and a perfectly correct statement of their pictorial signification will be found in GRIFFITH, *Hieroglyphs*, p. 48. My own account merely repeats that just quoted in rather more elaborate form.

The loop of rope *ṣ* (V 6 in my sign-list) is shown in examples of Dyn. IV with transverse markings representing the twisted strands, as in the sign of the tethering-rope . See figure 1, *a* from JUNKER, *Giza*, I, Pl. 27; the sign is white with red markings, like  on the same plate; quite similar contemporary specimens will be found in Lutz, *Egyptian Tomb Steles*, Pls. 1; 2, 1;

2, 2. A variant type which is possibly rather earlier shows a double cord arranged in the same way, but displaying a tiny loop at the end where the cord doubles back upon itself. See Fig. 1, *b* from PETRIE, *Medum*, Pl. 13 (reading ←→); similarly *op. cit.*, Pl. 16, bottom right; MURRAY, *Saqqara Mastabas*, Pt. 1, Pls. 1, 2 (in these three last cases in the combination ♂ ♀); the loop of the double end would, in our printed hieroglyphs, be on the left. Commoner at all periods are forms showing no internal markings, neither the transverse ones indicating the twisted strand, nor the central and parallel marking indicating that the cord is a double one; figure 1, *c* from PETRIE, *Medum*, pl. 16, bottom left, is typical; see too DAVIES, *Ptahhetep*, I, Pl. 14, no. 291. In this normal form ♂ is identical with the phonetic sign for *šn* ♂ (*op. cit.*, Pl. 14, no. 300), save that the latter sign (V 7) always shows the ends downwards instead of upwards. Probably a rigid convention was adopted in the very earliest period to employ ♂ for the verbal notion of “encircling”, as with a cord, in Egyptian  $\overset{\circ}{\text{𓂏}}$  *šni* (3ae. inf.), whence the phonetic value *šn*, while ♂ was chosen for the substantival notion of “cord”, “rope”, in Egyptian —| ♂ *šš*, whence the phonetic value *šš*. On one funerary stela of Dyn. IV (JUNKER, *Gtza*, I, Pl. 29)  $\overset{\circ}{\text{𓂏}}$  is written for the usual  $\overset{\circ}{\text{𓂏}}$  *šš* “alabaster”; cf. ♂  $\text{𓂏}$ , SETHE, *Urkunden*, I, 147, 12. For practical purposes we may eliminate the sign ♂ (V 7) from our discussion.

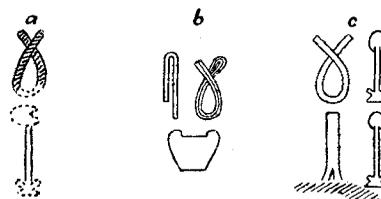


Fig. 1. — Old forms of the sign for the “rope” ♂ *šš*.

a. JUNKER, *Gtza*, I, Pl. 27;

b. PETRIE, *Medum*, Pl. 13;

c. *Op. cit.*, Pl. 16, bottom left.

To turn now to the bag or pouch ♀ (V 33). The fine coloured plate in LEPSIUS, *Denkm.*, II, 96 gives several examples of the sign, the upper part being red and the lower part white. I frankly do not understand this colouring, since the sign there serves as an ideogram for “linen”, which one would expect to be wholly white. Bags of the same kind, doubtless containing eye-paint (*mšdmt*, cf. NAVILLE, *Deir el Bahari*, Pl. 78) have similar colouring in DAVIES, *Puyemrē*, Pl. 34, where they are part of the Syrian tribute; in DAVIES and GARDINER, *Tomb of Huy*, Pl. 16, there are such bags containing gold-dust which are shown alternately red and white. Even where no colour is left, as in the fine example HOLWERDA and BÖESER, *Die Denkmäler des alten Reiches*,

Pl. 15, my figure 2, *d*, a line bisecting the bag horizontally often indicates that it was parti-coloured. Are we to imagine a bag of linen of which the upper half was covered with leather? Or was the upper half painted red? Or, as a third alternative, is this colouring purely ornamental and fanciful?

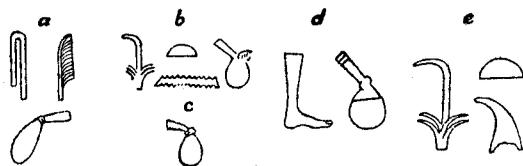


Fig. 2. — Old forms of the sign for the  
“bag”  $\text{𓆎}$  *rf, šr, g.*

- a. PETRIE, *Medum*, Pl. 13;
- b. BORCHARDT, *Grabdenkmal des Sahurē*, Pl. 61;
- c. *Op. cit.*, Pl. 60;
- d. HOLWERDA and BORSER, *Denkmäler des alten Reiches*, Pl. 15;
- e. BISSING, *Gemnikai*, II, Pl. 38.

This last explanation must, at all events, hold good of the very variously represented bags for eye-paint on the Middle Kingdom coffins, see JÉQUIER, *Les frises d'objets*, p. 153, as well as in the example reproduced in colour GRIFFITH, *Beni Hasan*, III, Pl. 3, no. 27, from the entry  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{rf w} \text{d} \text{ 2}$  “two bags of eye-paint” in a list of offerings. Griffith and Jéquier both conjecture that the bags in question

were made of leather, but the evidence which I shall produce renders it impossible not to conclude that they were of linen, at least in part. Since the hieroglyph constantly stands as the sign for “linen”, that material must have been definitely characteristic of such bags. The various alternative forms of the sign will be illustrated as we proceed.

### III

I now pass on to discuss the use and phonetic value of the two hieroglyphs in question, beginning as before with the sign of the rope  $\text{𓆎}$ . Brugsch (*Ä. Z.*, 18, 2) seems to have been the first to call attention to the word  $\text{—} \text{𓆎} \text{šš}$  found in the tomb of Ptahhotpe at Saqqārah in the legend  $\text{𓆎} \text{—} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  “twisting ropes” over a scene of rope-making (see now DAVIES, *Ptahhetep*, I, Pl. 25); he also quoted examples of the abbreviation  $\text{𓆎}$  with its plural  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  (see now *op. cit.*, Pl. 26) from the same wall. Thus was provided the explanation of the phonetic value *šš* which Goodwin (*Ä. Z.*, 14, 105) had already discovered from variants of the interrogative word  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{—} \text{𓆎}$  *iššt* “what?”. Brugsch proceeded to enumerate various words containing  $\text{𓆎}$  in which the value of this



1447) seemed to him sufficient corroboration of his view (*Ä. Z.*, 18, 2). However, it was not very clear what benefit thousands of cords were going to confer upon the dead, so that before long some scholars at least had discarded “cords” and were translating *šš mnht*—often written together as *ššmnht*—by “linen bandages” or the like. In this they were undoubtedly influenced by the supposed word *šš*  *šš* for “linen”, which Brugsch discussed in the same article. Such has, I think, for many years past been the prevailing view, though some have substituted “clothing” for “linen bandages”. Perhaps no Egyptologist has been very clear as to what was exactly intended by *šš* and by *mnht* respectively; something in the clothing line seemed to be meant, but nothing more precise could be said than that.

Such too was my own state of mind with regard to the problem when, in correspondence with Sethe, I submitted for his opinion my observations on the two signs *š* and *mn*. In his reply, Sethe startled me with the rendering “thousands of alabaster and thousands of cloth”. The incongruity of this collocation seemed so great, that I asked for evidence, which for once my learned friend had not ready to hand. A little research on my part showed me, however, that Sethe’s view, however unpromising at first sight, was not only plausible, but certain. At some time or other the Old Kingdom proofs must have attracted his attention, and particularly the passages from the Pyramid Texts which I shall quote below. Fortunately, Sethe’s acute discernment of the true rendering reached me in time for inclusion in my *Grammar* (p. 172).

Additional evidence has come before me recently, and both for this reason and since scepticism has been expressed in certain quarters, it seems worth while to set forth the arguments in favour of the rendering “alabaster” at length. In the first place let it be realized that *š šš* in the offering formula could not possibly have anything to do with clothing, since, as we shall see below (under VI), the word for linen is *ššr*, not *šš*, and since there is absolutely no justification for supposing that the word for “rope” had also a subsidiary meaning “thread” or “cloth-fabric”. The choice, therefore, is between Brugsch’s “thousands of rope” and Sethe’s “thousands of alabaster”, the presumption being in favour of the latter for the reason that alabaster vessels containing ointment were regularly buried with the dead, while coils of rope were not.

That , later written , really means “alabaster” was formally proved by Brugsch (*Ä. Z.*, 18, 6) from the dedicatory inscription of the alabaster shrine in the temple of Ramesses II at Abydos. An unusually shaped monument made of alabaster, which was found by Legrain at Karnak (*Annales*, IV, 225), is described in its dedication as    “a place of purification (?) made of alabaster of Hatnub”; and an alabaster shrine of Amenophis I, recently found in the same temple (*Annales*, XXIII, 113; XXIV, 57) is likewise described in its inscriptions as    “of alabaster of Hatnub”. Alabaster of Hatnub is mentioned *Urk.*, IV, 640 and also in the quarries of that place, where the reading  (ANTHES, *Die Felseninschriften von Hatnub*, no. 10, 6; no. 25, 20) varies with  (*op. cit.*, no. 43, 2). I do not know why the Hebrew dictionaries (Gesenius-Buhl, Brown-Driver-Briggs) have ignored Brugsch’s comparison of the Hebrew word for “alabaster”  $\psi\psi$ ,  $\psi\psi$ , and have preferred to connect  $\psi\psi$  with the assyrian *šaššu*. Mr. Gadd tells me that the meaning of *šaššu* is quite uncertain, one text seeming even to indicate that it was a rare designation of “gold”. But the identification of the Hebrew word with “alabaster” also appears to be also somewhat doubtful.

In Greek the words *ἀλάβαστος* (*ἀλάβαστρος* is a less good form) and *ἀλάβαστρον* are both used for receptacles made of alabaster, like our own English archæological term “alabaster”, of which *NED* quotes an example from the year 1398. Nothing could be more natural than that materials should give their names to the principal objects made of them, cf. our “fire-irons”, “biscuit-tins”; and if Egyptian used its word for “alabaster” in the same way as ourselves, this is a likely enough coincidence. Now some of the earliest tomb-stelæ give lists of funeral furniture, and here in two cases at least the word *šš* “alabasters” is found; so   (see here figure 1, b) in *Medum*, Pl. 13, beside vessels of red granite, lapis lazuli, etc.; and   JUNKER, *Giza*, I, Pl. 29, b, see too p. 280, next  “*nmst*-jars” and  “*wht*-bowls”. It is all the more illuminating for Sethe’s thesis that under each of the items in the last-named list stands the word  “thousand”. If we now turn to the equally early stela of  in Lutz, *op. cit.*, Pl. 2, 2, we shall find under the offering-table the legend , which we cannot do otherwise than render







In the inscriptions of Dyn. XI  $\text{ⲛ}$  is substituted for  $\text{ⲟ}$  of the offering formula with great consistency, see *Brit. Mus.* 614, vert. 1; NAVILLE, *XI<sup>th</sup> Dyn. Temple*, Pl. 21; *Cairo* 20512,7; 20543,2; *Moscow*, 4071,1; these examples are from POLOTSKY, *op. cit.*, p. 13, where more will be found. Since  $\text{ⲛ}$  is clearly a form of  $\text{ⲟ}$ , we see that at this period the signs for  $\text{šš}$  and  $\text{ššr}$  were already confused. The cause of this is evidently similarity of form combined with similarity of phonetic value, though it does not seem that the metathesis  $\text{ššr}$  for  $\text{šš}$  is anterior to Dyn. XVIII. Nor am I quite sure that the interpretation “alabasters” is shown by this writing to have been abandoned for “linen” at so early a date, for, as we have seen,  $\text{ⲟ}$  is not uncommon in Dyn. XII. Possibly throughout the Middle Kingdom there were two schools of thought in this matter, the one interpreting as “alabaster”, the other as “linen”.

## V

The uses of the sign for the “bag” or “pouch”  $\text{ⲟ}$  next claim attention. Its ideographic functions seem to result from the three different aspects in which the object in question can be regarded, namely (1) its purpose, (2) its contents, and (3) its material. I will deal with these in turn.

(1) The Egyptian word for a “bag” is  $\text{ⲟ}$   $\text{ʿrf}$ , a word which often occurs in the long list of offerings as the receptacle for black ( $\text{mšdmt}$ ) or green ( $\text{wšdw}$ ) eyepaint; cf. MURRAY, *op. cit.*, I, Pls. 21, 23; FIRTH and GUNN, *Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, Pl. 3; BLACKMAN, *Meir*, IV, Pl. 12; NEWBERRY, *Beni Hasan*, I, Pl. 17 (the entire entry was quoted above as source of the coloured example GRIFFITH, *Beni Hasan*, III, Pl. 3, no. 27). Where the spacing makes it desirable, the alphabetic signs are omitted, so that we have such abbreviated writings as  $\text{ⲟ}$   $\text{wšdw}$   $\text{ʿrf}$  “bag of green eyepaint”, STEINDORFF, *Grab des Ti*, Pl. 126; so too MURRAY, *op. cit.*, Pl. 19, and *Pyr.* 54. In these cases there is a certain variation in the shapes of the sign  $\text{ⲟ}$ , but not the extreme variety which we shall find below in the writing of  $\text{ššr}$  “linen” and the similarly sounded words to which it gives rise. The normal form in  $\text{ʿrf}$  is as in the printed hieroglyph  $\text{ⲟ}$  or as in Fig. 2, *c. d.* No examples of the triangular shape  $\text{ⲟ}$  have been found, and indeed in BISSING, *Gemnikai*, II, Pl. 41, the word  $\text{ʿrf}$  is written with  $\text{ⲟ}$  while, on the same Plate,  $\text{ššr nšwt}$  is written with  $\text{ⲟ}$ . In the scene in question,

assistant *ka*-priests are shown bringing  in bags of the shape of the hieroglyphs, but displaying an unintelligible hollow in the middle.

The cognate verb   'rf "envelop", "bind up" has not been noted before the Middle Kingdom, but good examples can be quoted to show that its specific determinative was certainly the bag and not the cord. See NAVILLE, *Deir el Bahari*, Pl. 84, 2; SETHE, *Urkunden*, IV, 364, 5. Earlier hand-copies of inscriptions containing this verb, like NEWBERRY, *El Bersheh*, II, pl. 21, 6 (Sayce); PIEHL, *Inscr. hiér.*, III 73, 6, usually substitute  $\varepsilon$  wrongly for .

(2) From the use of  to indicate a bag or the act of enclosing in a bag to its use as a determinative of what is so enclosed is but a short step, and that step was early taken. In PETRIE, *Medum*, Pl. 13 an entry  occurs in the midst of the oils and unguents, see figure 2, a; if  is a *linen* bag, *is* can hardly be an oil as the Berlin *Wörterbuch* (I, 130) supposes, but only some dry sweet-smelling substance. The same holds good of  MURRAY, *op. cit.*, Pl. 2, variant  *ib.*, Pl. I, which *Wb.* should have recorded under *wrs* rather than under *swr*, and also of  in the tomb of Methen, *Aeg. Inscr. aus. . . Berlin*, I, 87, which *Wb.* I, 63 does not quote, but implicitly and rightly connects with the ointment . In these very early names of perfumes or ointments we find the sign  presented at an angle different from that of the more normal form seen in our hieroglyphic type, and this seems to have been its original aspect.

From these specific terms  will next have passed to the generic word for "perfume"  often so written in the Old Kingdom (e. g. *Pyr.* 18, 696, 1113; LEPSIUS, *Denkm.*, II, 22 b) and in the archaizing monumental inscriptions of Dyn. XVIII, e. g. NAVILLE, *Deir el Bahari*, Pls. 82, 94; *Annales*, XXIV, Pl. IV of the article by M. Pillet. The same sign enters into , R 9 in my sign-list, but this I will not discuss further here.

(3) The evidence set forth above does but amplify what is known and accepted, but in dealing with the use of  to indicate *linen material* I am seeking to controvert the view held hitherto, according to which the word for "linen" was *ss* and consequently employed the sign of the rope  $\varepsilon$  and not that of the bag . I shall create a more favourable atmosphere for my innovation, perhaps, if I start with some related facts which are not of the very earliest date.

In DAVIES, *Deir el Gebráwi*, I, Pl. 8 are found the writings  $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$  (see Fig. 3, *a* for the exact form) “bed”, “bedding” and  $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$  (the first sign is damaged) “good fine linen”. Exceptional as is this use of  $\text{𓏏}$  it links up (*a*) with the common use of  $\text{𓏏}$  from Dyn. XIX onwards ( $\text{𓏏}$  and  $\text{𓏏}$  are by this time often

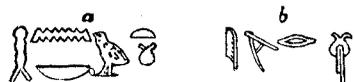


Fig. 3. — Exceptional O. K. determinatives for “clothing”.  
*a.* DAVIES, *Deir el Gebráwi*, I, Pl. 8;  
*b.* STEINDORFF, *Grab des Ti*, Pl. 111.

interchanged) as a determinative of cloth and clothes of any kind, and (*b*) with the by no means infrequent variant  $\text{𓏏}$  as substitute for  $\text{𓏏}$ , of which the earliest example I have found is in the word  $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$  “bind thou(?)”, sense unintelligible, STEINDORFF, *Grab des Ti*, Pl. 111, reproduced Fig. 3, *b*; *Wb.*, II, 105 quotes an O. K.

place-name  $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$ ; from Dyn. IX and throughout the Middle Kingdom  $\text{𓏏}$  is common, cf. PETRIE, *Gizeh and Rifeh*, Pl. 13 *c* ( $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$ ); GRIFFITH, *Siut*, Tomb I, l. 247 (*id.*). Just as  $\text{𓏏}$  represents a strip of cloth with a fringe, combined with the folded cloth  $\text{𓏏}$ , so too, doubtless,  $\text{𓏏}$  represents a common article of linen  $\text{𓏏}$  combined with the folded cloth  $\text{𓏏}$ .

It is the more strange that the reading *śśr* for the word meaning “linen” should have been overlooked, since the evidence for it is both abundant and clear. The hitherto accepted reading *śś* is due to Brugsch (*Ä. Z.*, 18, 5, and earlier *Geogr. Wörterb.*, 873), who having proved the value *śś* (*śś*) for the word for rope  $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$ ,  $\text{𓏏}$  (see above), promptly transferred that value to  $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$ , overlooking the vital fact that in all early examples of this word the sign used is  $\text{𓏏}$  and not  $\text{𓏏}$ . As corroborative evidence Brugsch adduced the Hebrew loan-word *שש* and the Coptic  $\text{ϣϣ} : \text{ϣϣ}$ , both of them equivalents of the Greek  $\betaύσσος$  “linen” (this a borrowing from Hebrew  $\text{בבש}$ ). The Coptic word he regarded simply as *śś* “mit eingeschobenem *n*-laut”, quoting parallels which would not be acceptable nowadays. In taking this course he abandoned his previous recognition that the demotic group  $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$  which corresponds to  $\betaύσσινων \delta[\theta\omicron\nu\iota]ων$  in l. 17 of the Rosetta stone represents a hieroglyphic transcription  $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$  and contains the word for “king” (BRUGSCH, *Wörterbuch* [1862], 1346). For that reason he had identified the demotic group with the word  $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$ , which he read *suten*, and among the variants of which he quoted  $\text{𓏏} \text{𓏏} \text{𓏏}$  from the stela of Piankhi, l. 110. At the same time he added

“das koptische Wort dafür  $\omega\epsilon\eta\epsilon$ ,  $\omega\eta\epsilon$  scheint entstanden zu sein aus der Lesung *šen-suten* oder *šen-su* (cf. *šen* infra =  $\delta\iota$ )”. The last-named reference I am unable to find and can only imagine that Brugsch was confusing  $\delta$  *ś* with  $\alpha$  *śn*. The slipshod argumentation, which leaves it quite obscure what the real relation is between the supposed readings *suten* and *šen-suten*, is thoroughly characteristic of Brugsch’s brilliance of insight coupled with indifference to logic. The combination of the earlier and later views propounded by him seems due to Griffith, who gave *śs-(n)-stn* as his reading of the demotic group (*Stories of the High Priests of Memphis*, p. 89), comparing *Hn(?)*-*n-stn* for  $\epsilon\eta\eta\epsilon$  Ehnâs. But the medial *n* still occasioned difficulty, which was removed only when Sethe proved the word for “king” to read *nīswt*, for which *nzw* was early substituted (*Ä. Z.*, 49, 17). To Sethe’s article I myself made a small contribution (*loc. cit.*, n. 1) by showing that the word thitherto read as  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{⋈} \text{⋈}$  in Late Egyptian papyri did not contain  $\text{⋈}$  at all<sup>(1)</sup>; but I was at fault in transcribing  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{⋈} \text{⋈}$  instead of  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{⋈} \text{⋈}$ . Of this anon; at the present moment I am merely showing that the semi-final stage in the history of the prototype of  $\omega\eta\epsilon$  assumed its reading to be *śś-nīswt* (*śś-nzw*). As such it appears in ERMAN-GRAPOW’s *Handwörterbuch*; so too SETHE in BORCHARDT, *Grabdenkmal des Sahurē*, p. 126, top.

In reality, however, the reading of the hieroglyphic word for Greek  $\beta\upsilon\sigma\sigma\omicron\varsigma$ , Coptic  $\omega\eta\epsilon$ , and Hebrew  $\psi\psi$ , is *śśr(w)nīswt* (*śśr nzw*). A title of which I have three examples from the Old Kingdom is “overseer of the king’s linen” which is written in the following ways :  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{⋈} \text{𓆎}$  MARIETTE, *Mastaba*, p. 307;  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{𓆎}$  *op. cit.*, p. 252;  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{⋈} \text{𓆎}$  LEPSIUS, *Denkm.*, II, 100 c. In the funerary temple of Sahurē (BORCHARDT, *op. cit.*, II, Pl. 61) a fragment shows the writing  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{⋈}$  (fig. 2, b); over a box of linen depicted in a mastaba is written  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{𓆎}$  or  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏}$  FIRTH-GUNN, *Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, I, p. 146; II, Pl. 6 D writes this more fully  $\text{𓆎} \text{—} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{𓆎}$ ; cf. also  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏}$  BISSING, *Gemnikai*, II, Pl. 38, see figure 2, e, with the variant  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏}$  *ibid.* Any doubts as to the identity of the signs  $\text{⋈}$  and  $\text{𓆎}$  are dispelled when we find an “overseer of linen”  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{𓆎}$  LEPSIUS, *Denkm.*, II, 23 carrying an object shaped  $\text{𓆎}$  in his left hand; in BLACKMAN, *Meir*, IV, 8 a  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏}$  carries the same object over his

<sup>(1)</sup> The stroke  $\text{⋈}$  is clear in the great majority of the many instances in the Harris papyrus.

shoulder. In DAVIES, *Deir el Gebráwi*, I, 16 a  stands in front of a (linen)-chest; the stroke shows that  is to be understood pictorially, so that the official is an “overseer of linen”<sup>(1)</sup>. A scene in the tomb of Ti reproduced in my figure 4 is important in various respects. Behind a   stands his

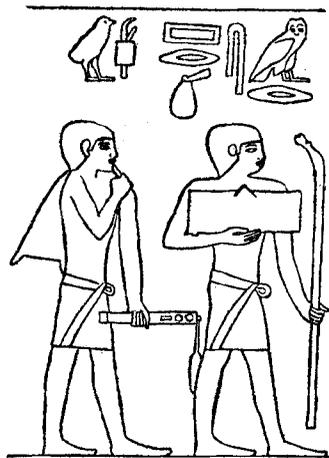


Fig. 4. — Scene from the tomb of Ti (STEINDORFF, *op. cit.*, Pl. 115).

servant, the latter carrying over his shoulder an object shaped  (STEINDORFF, *Grab des Ti*, Pl. 115). Here we find the full alphabetic writing of  or  for the first time. As we have seen, writings showing the first two radicals together with the ideogram are not infrequent; but for similar writings showing the third radical as well I can quote no other example beside that in the tomb of Ti. The discussion of the phonetic use of  and  below (VI) will, however, establish that value beyond a peradventure. For this reason, we need have no hesitation in identifying the word for “linen” written thus ideographically with the synonymous word written   or  . In *Pyr.*

265 we find     and MARIETTE, *Mastaba*, p. 185     among titles. These writings show that the word for “linen” in its fullest form had a final -w; see too in the temple of Sahure, *op. cit.*, Pl. 59. In the tomb of Ptahhotpe at Sakkârah there is a     (QUIBELL, *Ramesseum*, Pl. 38) and in DAVIES, *Deir el Gebráwi*, II, 4 a    ; these are simply alternative writings of the titles already mentioned.

As if the varieties of spelling already quoted were not enough, another one of less certain authenticity has yet to be mentioned. On the funerary stelae of the early IV<sup>th</sup> Dynasty there are often lists of various kinds of cloth, where the word *ššr* would be expected to occur. A common heading there used is  which, since the Old Egyptian word for “arrow” was *ššr*, one would expect to read in the same way. Examples are LUTZ, *op. cit.*, Pls. 1; 2, 2; 2, 3; *Medum*, Pls. 13, 16, 20; MURRAY, *op. cit.*, Pls. 1, 2; *Aeg. Inschr.* . . . . *Berlin*, I, pp. 81, 99; JUNKER, *op. cit.*, I, Pl. 27 and p. 175. Junker has evi-

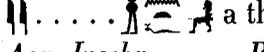
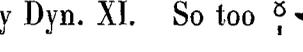
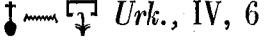
<sup>(1)</sup> In *Urk.*, I, 146, 13 = DAVIES, *Deir el Gebráwi*, II, 13 the word for “linen” is written

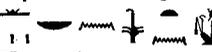
with a stroke and a rather different form from any of those above quoted.





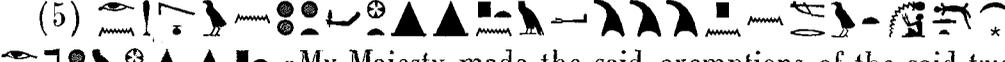
(1) “. . . . . 100 asses being with me bearing oil, honey, clothes, *thnt*-oil, and  everything”, *Urk.*, I, 136, 5. O. K.

(2) “A thousand of bread, a thousand of beer,  . . . . .  a thousand of everything good for the revered . . . . . Antef”, *Aeg. Inschr.* . . . . . *Berlin*, I, p. 122. Perhaps early Dyn. XI. So too   *Urk.*, IV, 60, 17.

(3) “. . . . . valuables being in my charge and under my seal of the choicest of all good things brought to the Majesty of my lord from Upper and Lower Egypt,  consisting of all delectable things”, *Brit. Mus.*, 614, Dyn. XI. So too  stands in parallelism with   *Urk.*, IV, 118, 10-1.

B. Of *actions*, to be rendered “thing”, “action”, “matter”, “service”, “respect”, according as the context demands. Often summarizing a number of actions not severally specified.

(4)  “I did this work adequately (?) in every respect”, MONTET, *Hammâmât*, no. 206 = *Urk.*, I, 149, 9. After O. K.

(5)  “My Majesty made the said exemptions of the said two pyramid-towns from the said things in order that the priestly duties, the monthly services, and the divine rites might be performed in the said two pyramid-cities”, *Ä. Z.*, 42, 11, Dahshûr decree of Phiops I.

So especially in the phrase  “to perform these actions”, “act in this way”:

(6)  “My Majesty does not allow the said priests to perform the said actions which <sup>(1)</sup> are commanded to be done in this land of Upper Egypt”, WEILL, *Décrets royaux*, Pl. II (decree B, Phiops II). The actions in question had previously been enumerated in a long list ending with .

<sup>(1)</sup> The feminine gender of the participle is strictly a breach of concord, *ššrw* being masculine. Perhaps the feminine is due to these same

words having been thus written at the end of the list of special corvées previously enumerated.



lings may be and are. It is now clear that the reading is *ššr* and not *šš*, the full phonetic value being shown by  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  in (4), where the roughly incised determinative shows a passable resemblance to the bag-sign  $\text{𓂏}$  in one of its early shapes (cf. Fig. 2, a). Unhappily in most of the other passages which I quote no quite exact facsimiles of the decisive sign in question are available, but it is at all events clear that the variants correspond closely to those in the word for linen. In  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  of the XII<sup>th</sup> Dynasty example (8) the first and third radicals are shown, a writing like  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$ ; the middle sign is either assimilated entirely to the rope-sign  $\text{𓂏}$  or is at least well on the road thither;  $\text{𓂏}$  in (2) seems to show that the confusion sometimes was made at the very beginning of the Middle Kingdom. In the Old Kingdom the triangular form of the bag-sign  $\text{𓂏}$  or  $\text{𓂏}$  seems to be preferred; so in (1), (5), (6). The reading of the sign in  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏} \text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  of the decrees has been much debated. Moret (*Chartes d'immunité*, troisième partie, p. 140 = *Journ. asiat.*, 1917, p. 377) discusses the question at length, unfortunately deciding in favour of *db*. Borchardt, commenting on (5), had already discerned the true reading, but produced no proof of his view. In (7)  $\text{𓂏}$  appears in much the same form as in the example from Deir el-Gebrâwi, above fig. 3, a, and on the stela of Thethi (3) there is an analogous shape  $\text{𓂏}$  which, however, is also used for *šš* in the formula of offering (vertical l. 1), while a “treasurer” named  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  writes  $\text{𓂏}$  for *g* (see below) in quite the normal form. I shall allude to the hieratic variants at the end of this article. The only writing yet to be discussed is  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  (9) of which other examples of later date may be mentioned (*Golénischeff glossary*, 1, 2; CHASSINAT, *Edfou*, II, 13; *Ä. Z.*, 18, 10). Here apparently we have a metathesis of *š* and *š*, yielding *ššr* as in the case of the word for “linen”. Another word where similar variations of writing occur is  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  “corn” hitherto wrongly read *šš*. This word, quite common from the New Kingdom onwards, is written  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  with the rope-sign  $\text{𓂏}$  already in the Annals of Tuthmosis III (*Urk.*, IV, 743, 1), but the variants  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  (*Urk.*, IV, 372, 14) and  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  (ROUGÉ, *Inscr. hiér.*, 178, 3) definitely prove the reading *ššr* and show that the sign concerned is the bag-sign.

Finally, a rare verb  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  apparently meaning “to utter”, “express” something (GARDINER, *Admonitions*, p. 101) must also be read *ššr*. The Dyn. XVIII writing  $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂏}$  (NEWBERRY, *Rekhmara*, Pl. 2, l. 15), with others of similar

appearance but later date (see my note *loc. cit.* and *Ä. Z.*, 18, 10-1) points to a metathesis such as we have found in late *šsr* for *ššr* both as “linen” and as “thing”. What account is to be given of the later variant  $\frac{\text{𓆎}}{\text{𓆎}}$  for  $\text{—} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  “tongue” of the Pyramids I do not know. Doubtless all the words written with  $\frac{\text{𓆎}}{\text{𓆎}}$  have influenced one another.

## VII

Yet another phonetic value appertaining to the bag-sign 𓆎 is *g*<sup>(1)</sup>. Whence this value was obtained is not definitely known. Griffith (*Hieroglyphs*, p. 48) connected it with the verb  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  *g:w* “to be narrow”, “compressed”, and the suggestion in my sign-list linking it together with  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  *g:t* “bundle”, (see on V 32, 33) is really the same view in another guise. Unhappily neither of these two related words is ever written with 𓆎, though such may have been the case in very early inscriptions not preserved. The value *g* is, however, indisputable. The words in which it occurs—I quote all that I can find at the present moment—are as follows :

$\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  *wgg* “be miserable”, *Ptahhotpe*, 9; *Sinuhe*, B 168; var.  $\text{𓆎} \frac{\text{𓆎}}{\text{𓆎}} \text{𓆎}$   
*Proc. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, 18, 202, 9.

$\frac{\text{𓆎}}{\text{𓆎}}$  *f'g* a locality near El-Kâb, TYLOR, *Paheri* (E. E. F.), Pl. 8, cf. GAUTHIER, *Dict. géogr.*, s. v.; var.  $\frac{\text{𓆎}}{\text{𓆎}}$  BLACKMAN, *Dendûr*, p. 27.

$\text{𓆎} \frac{\text{𓆎}}{\text{𓆎}} \text{𓆎}$  *Mggi*, masc. proper name, *Brit. Mus.* 614, Dyn. XI.

$\frac{\text{𓆎}}{\text{𓆎}} \times \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  *ngg* “break” *Ebers*, 40, 12, 14; geminating form of  $\frac{\text{𓆎}}{\text{𓆎}} \times \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$ , see *Berlin Wb.*, 2, 348.

$\text{𓆎} \text{—} \text{𓆎}$  *gbt* “to slit (?)” a fish, see MONTET, *Scènes de la vie privée*, p. 37. Two O. K. examples; for one of them see fig. 2, *d*.

$\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  *Gbb*, writing of the divine name  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$ ,  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  on a Lisht coffin, see *Ä. Z.*, 43, 147-149.

$\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  *gbb* “earth” *Urk.*, IV, 146, 14; *Millingen*, 2, 8; var.  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  *Piankhi*, 55.

<sup>(1)</sup> I am indebted to R. O. Faulkner for a reference to  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  “Take to thyself the fluid (??) which came forth from Osiris” *Pyr.* 117, where  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  takes the place of the

usual  $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆎}$  (*ibid.*, 39, 105). The writing with 𓆎 is to me inexplicable, and in its isolation can hardly be taken to prove an equation 𓆎 = *k*.

𐀓𐀓] *ggbg* “dismember (?)”, *Pyr.* 678, cf. 𐀓]— above; or else “overthrow” cf. later 𐀓]𐀓]𐀓 “be overthrown”, e. g. *Urk.*, IV, 658, 1.

𐀓]𐀓 *Gbtw* Koptos, see GAUTHIER, *op. cit.*, s. v.; var. 𐀓]𐀓𐀓<sup>⊕</sup>, MONTET, *Hammamdt*, no. 47, l. 3.

𐀓𐀓𐀓 *Gzi* (?), masc. personal name, BORCHARDT, *Sahurē*<sup>c</sup>, Pls. 57-58. Sethe (*op. cit.*, p. 124, and index) does not transcribe the name. Can it be the adj. from *Gš*; *Ḳûš* in spite of —?

𐀓]—𐀓<sup>⊕</sup> *Gš*; *Ḳûš*, *Pyr.* 308; var. 𐀓]—𐀓<sup>⊕</sup> *Pyr.* 312 and later 𐀓𐀓]𐀓<sup>⊕</sup> see GAUTHIER, *op. cit.*, V, 178 for references.

The above list does not contain 𐀓]𐀓<sup>⊕</sup> var. 𐀓<sup>⊕</sup>𐀓<sup>⊕</sup> formerly identified with Goshen, Γέσημ, for the reasons I have given in *JEA*, 5, 218-223. Gauthier (*op. cit.*, 145) also accepts my reading *šsm*, though with some little hesitation<sup>(1)</sup>. A further argument in my favour, and one which I have not hitherto employed, is that in GRIFFITH, *Kahun Papyri*, 2, 14 𐀓]𐀓<sup>⊕</sup> is written with the hieratic sign for 𐀓 *šš*, not that for 𐀓 *g*, see below. But as the examples of *wgg* and *ngg* quoted above show, this argument is not decisive. In the Ramesseum Glossary both *Ḳûš* and Koptos are written with hieratic 𐀓. In hieroglyphic, let it be noted, the triangular form 𐀓 is never employed for the value *g*.

The use of 𐀓 for *g* is, as the examples cited above show, very strangely distributed. It is predominantly as an initial consonant that 𐀓 is so used, a position which would most easily be explained if 𐀓<sub>1</sub> or \*𐀓<sub>1</sub> in some contexts were readable as *g*; or *g*:*t*. But of this we have no evidence. Perhaps at the start 𐀓=*g* was confined to the two town-names *Gbtw* and *Gš*. The name of Koptos will have supplied the reason for using 𐀓 in a number of other words beginning with *gb*. I cannot help thinking that the doubled 𐀓 in 𐀓𐀓]𐀓<sup>⊕</sup> is due to the dual appearance of ]𐀓 following, this recalling the suffix 3<sup>rd</sup> fem. sing. after dual nouns. The existence of 𐀓𐀓 in this latter variant of the name of *Ḳûš* will have motivated the use of 𐀓𐀓 in *wgg* and *ngg*, besides the two personal names *Mggi* and *Gzi* (?), all these being words where two *g*'s follow one another. Finally, *F'g* will have been written with 𐀓 simply because it is a place-name.

<sup>(1)</sup> It is not clear to me why Gauthier (*op. cit.*, 5, 179) reads the town 𐀓<sup>⊕</sup>𐀓<sup>⊕</sup>𐀓<sup>⊕</sup> as *qsmoui* (i. e. *gsmwy*).

VIII

With the usual summary of results appended to philological discussions I can here dispense, since that summary may be found in the sign-list of my *Grammar*. But a few words must be added upon the hieratic rendering of the signs here studied. The influence of hieratic upon hieroglyphic was far


  
*rope* *a* *b*


  
*bag* *c* *d* *e*

Fig. 5. — Hieratic forms of the “rope”  $\delta$  and the “bag”  $\gamma$ .

greater than is usually believed, and I am convinced that this has been the main source of confusion between  $\delta$  and  $\gamma$ . I must trespass no further upon the hospitality of the *Bulletin*, and a complete revision of Möller’s treatment of these two signs must be left to others. In Fig. 5 I have drawn up a schematic summary of the distinction between  $\delta$  and  $\gamma$

as seen in hieratic of the Middle and New Kingdoms. The rope  $\delta$  is made either in two (*a*) or in three (*b*) strokes; the characteristic feature is that the projecting ends form an angle with one another. Careless scribes, like those of *Sinuhe B*, *Prisse*, and *Ebers* write  $\gamma$  in the same way, and our transcriptions ought then to show  $\delta$ . More learned or conscientious scribes employ a sign for  $\gamma$  not unlike hieratic  $\gamma nw$ , the distinguishing mark being a horizontal, or nearly horizontal, line at the top (*c*). I have noted above that Koptos and  $\text{K}\ddot{u}\text{s}$  are thus written in the *Ramesseum Glossary*; so too  $\text{s}\ddot{s}r m$ ; in the Kahûn medical papyrus (GRIFFITH, *op. cit.*, 6, 26; however, not quite certain). Late Egyptian is much more careful about this distinction, which is usual in  $\gamma$  — “(in) order”, “(in) good condition”, and invariable, as it would appear, in  $\gamma$   $\delta$ . It is an extremely curious fact that Late Egyptian regularly uses  $\delta$  as the determinative of clothing, though this certainly originated in  $\gamma$ ; perhaps that determinative was now consciously believed to be the rope. Möller’s evidence shows that a form of  $\gamma$  with diacritical point (*d*) was sometimes employed in  $\gamma$  —, and further that a new differentiation (*e*) was used in *Gbtjw*, but nowhere else. In transcribing types *c*, *d*, and *e*  $\gamma$  ought undoubtedly always to be adopted. Whether in *d* and *e* indications of the new diacritical marks should be added is a matter where difference of opinion is comprehensible.

ALAN H. GARDINER.

POSTSCRIPT.

I am indebted for some very valuable remarks to M. Kuentz, who has devoted to the printing of my article a care and an interest far exceeding what could have been expected of an editor. These remarks I append below in somewhat abbreviated form, together with a few comments of my own.

P. 170, line 4. M. Kuentz inquires whether  is a closed (solid) or an open (hollow) sign; in the latter case it might be  with some exaggeration of the tie binding the two ends of the cord. So far as I can see,  is always solid, and is therefore likely to be an equivalent of . See, moreover,    (approximately so) for *ššrw* “actions” on p. 178, l. 2.

P. 175, lines 5-6. “Sans doute les Pyramides réservent à la flèche  la valeur phonétique *ššr* (406, 1545, 1866), tandis que *ššr* («traire»; «lin») n’a jamais  (265; 4437). Mais dans les tombeaux, au contraire,  a bien la valeur phonétique *ššr*”. M. Kuentz then cites examples of (1)  “boucher hermétiquement(?)”, var.  (MONTET, *Scènes de la vie privée*, pp. 240, 252) and of (2)  “to milk”, with many variants all pointing to *ššr* (*op. cit.*, pp. 107-8); and ends with the query: “Y a-t-il contradiction? ou faudrait-il lire aussi *ššr* les groupes   *Pyr.* 406, b;   1545, a;   1866, b;   1545 a? Y aurait-il là quelque métathèse graphique?”

P. 176, lines 9-12. “*Ššr tpy* signifierait-il: ‘première qualité’? Pour *ššr* ‘sorte’, ‘genre’ (sens connexe de celui de ‘manière’, p. 178), cf. p. ex. CHASSINAT, *Edfou*, II, p. 204 (laboratoire)     — ‘j’ai apporté l’encens sous toutes ses formes, avec toutes ses variétés’; cf. encore IV, p. 354    .

 A suggestion well worth considering, in my opinion.

P. 180, note 1. “*Nk > ng* serait-il un exemple de cette sonorisation de sourde au contact de *n*, à laquelle Sethe avait songé pour expliquer   =  ?”