

Egyptian Hieratic Roots of Modern Arabic

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Although there have been great changes over the four thousand years of its existence, it is still not difficult to demonstrate that modern Arabic script is the direct descendant of what we call Egyptian hieratic. The following Arabic characters are all identical or very close to their hieratic ancestors with exactly the same sounds: J, D, T, K, Q, R, H, F, S, in addition to all of the numerals, which with slight transposition come directly from ancient Egyptian hieratic. Here are some examples demonstrating the direct descent of Arabic letters from the Egyptian hieratic. In each case, two Arabic characters are presented so that you can see the true shape of the letter, i.e. without the final flourish.

The Arabic T ت and Hieratic T 𐤛 are identical, merely facing opposite directions. The little raised part on the far right of the Arabic is the initial T.


The Arabic letter B ب is likewise the same shape but the opposite direction, and much smaller, than the Hieratic B 𐤛. A dot is put under the Arabic B to distinguish it from the Arabic T.

The ancient Egyptian RZH sound 𐤛 is preserved in the Arabic J ج which is identical, but facing the opposite direction. Once again, two such letters must be typed to show one in combined form.

The Arabic S س is identical to the Hieratic S 𐤛, except that it has three vertical lines instead of two.



The Arabic W و, was taken directly from hieroglyphic 𐤛, which was proportionately smaller in the hieroglyphs as و is in Arabic compared to other letters. It is exactly the same character used in exactly the same way.

An interesting character in Arabic is the ه which is used precisely as the 𐤛 in Egyptian. Both carry the sound H, and the Arabic ه as you can see is simply an abbreviation of the 𐤛 by preserving only the top loop. In both Egyptian and Arabic, in the final position the character can carry the sound of TH. Remember Japheth 𐤛𐤛𐤛, which Egyptologists misread as the Hebrew word גֶּרֶךְ GEREKH, "stranger"?

The Arabic F ف is essentially the same as the F in Hieratic . Of course it is irrelevant that the Arabic flourish always goes up and the Hieratic has no flourish.

The Arabic letter ع is identical to the Hieratic , turned the other way as always.

The original sound was a nasal, represented by NG and GN, at the end or beginning of a syllable, respectively. When we say “sing” we do not actually pronounce the N, we simply nasalize it. The Greeks preserve this character with their double gamma γγ as in αγγελος, ANGELOS, a messenger. The Egyptians preserved this as an M, and the Arabs have preserved this as a respectful grunt. The Hebrews have the same letter in נ, but they have forgotten altogether what it sounded like so the Hebrews maintain a deferential silence in memoriam of a sound that has altogether died out of their language.

I think the point is made, so I’ll close this note with the fact that the light H sound in Arabic  is identical to the light H sound in Egyptian hieratic, .

Arabic is the direct ancestor of the language the gold plates of Moroni were written in - Hebrew language but Egyptian Hieratic characters, or “Reformed Egyptian.” It is surprising that it is neglected by Egyptologists as much as it is. For example, there are some subtleties in Arabic that provide insight into ancient Egyptian. I already demonstrated that the characters are all descended from Egyptian hieroglyphs, and that the sounds of the modern Arabic characters are the same as those represented by their parent hieroglyphs. But here is an example of a subtlety that would never occur to the uninitiated mind: the change in a verb by doubling the consonant. دَرَسَ DARASA means “to study” but دَرَّسَ DARRASA means “to cause to study,” “to make someone study.” The only difference is the َ “fathatan” instead of the ِ “fatha.” The fathatan means the consonant is doubled. The fatha merely means that it is followed by an A vowel. Yet see what a great difference in translation that tiny little line makes!

Palmer states that no Arabic word can begin with a vowel unless it starts with a vowel-holding letter, ALIF. But W and Y are also essentially vowels, and they have their corresponding placeholding characters. This is precisely analogous to Egyptian from which Arabic is descended, and if Egyptologists knew Arabic they would be much better at their craft. Budge has REPA where modern Egyptologists say ERPA. Budge, discredited by modern Egyptologists, is correct in this and many other cases where modern Egyptologists are again wrong.

Arabic preserves a characteristic which I am convinced was true in ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic, which is this: No word in Arabic can begin with a vowel unless the character ٱ ALIF is there for it to perch on.

The word “vowel” you know is cognate with the English “fowl” and the German “Vogel” of the same meaning. Vowels are fleeting, especially in old languages. They can shift places or fly away altogether through different forms of a word. For example, we have “lead,” “led,” “light,” and “lit.” Here they have flown away altogether. When we reach a “solution” by “solving” something, the vowel U hardens into a consonant V. When we “dissolve” something onto a “solution” the consonant melts into a vowel. When we shift tenses, which in the original language was the same as shifting degrees, the vowels shifted not position, but actual value: sing, sang, sung.

The Arabic ʾ is the descendant of the Egyptian Hieratic ⲁ supposedly A but also of ʾ H and also of the Egyptian Hieroglyphic 𐦀 A. The reason I say this is that the ancient stand alone value of 𐦀 was HAH as demonstrated in previous installments.

When a syllable in Arabic begins with a vowel, it must be introduced by the diacritical mark ʾ which is called a “hamzeh.” But hamzeh is a diacritical mark, not a letter, i.e. it is a mark which modifies a character, and not a character in its own right. So it has to have a character to modify, so ʾ is again pressed into service. Bearing its burden, it looks like this: ٱ.

But at the beginning of a syllable, but not of a word, our friend ʾ will carry only the letter or sound A. Here we see another principle of ancient Egyptian preserved down to present day Arabic, which is the only reason we are bothering with Arabic in the first place. Like the crafty gal who is nice to a guy’s roommate because she wants to see the guy more, we have to become acquainted with Arabic to understand its second great grandfather, Egyptian Hieroglyphic. In Egyptian, the hieroglyph 𐦀 can take an A or an E, but it cannot carry an I, an O, or a U. The Arabic ʾ is analogous in this way.

So when a syllable in Arabic starts with an I, the character ى YE has to carry it, just as its great grandfather, the Hieratic 𐤎 and the Hieratic’s father, ancient Hieroglyph 𐦀, all performing exactly the same function.

So now you’re asking, “What character or characters carry O and U?” In Arabic it is و WAW which you can see bears similar features to its great grandfather in Hieratic 𐤎, and to the father of the latter, the Hieroglyphic 𐦀, all of which perform exactly the same function. The quail chick and the previous hieroglyph in 4316 would bear a little more resemblance to their descendants, but it is facing the opposite direction for our convenience. Hieroglyphs, you recall, can be written in either direction, but Arabic and Hieratic can only be written right to left, and therefore always face the right.

Chinese has an interesting analogy to Egyptian, wherein Chinese no word can end with a consonant, so in Egyptian, no word can begin with a vowel. My son

Ben mentioned that his Chinese colleague remarked that no Chinese word ends in a consonant. This is true, but the fact is concealed from Westerners by transliteration schemes that make it appear that the word does in fact end in a consonant, with words like WANG, SHEN, REN, and so on. But when you listen to a Chinese speaker, the NG and N are always nasalized out of existence as consonants and are properly viewed as vowels.