

HYPOTHESES ON GLIDES AND *MATRES LECTIONIS* IN EARLIER EGYPTIAN ORTHOGRAPHIES

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WITH THIS CONTRIBUTION, I would like to argue that, in future research on Earlier Egyptian morpho-syntax, we also need to focus on key issues of orthography. That is, we need to research individual orthographic standards of particular scribal “schools,” of particular documents, and we should check, or at least make explicit, our presuppositions on the orthographic system. In this regard, a key issue is the relationship of written and underlying phonological and phonetic forms (e.g., what might be labeled the “Defective Spelling Hypothesis,” the “Frozen Spelling Hypothesis,” the “Pre-Coptic Syllable Structure Rules Hypothesis,” including the “Zweisilbengesetz” and the “Consonantal Auslaut Hypothesis,” the “Three Vowel Qualities Hypothesis,” the “Pre-Coptic Vowel Length Rule Hypothesis,” and so on).¹

To exemplify the need for more discussion about these issues, I am going to present and argue for a set of hypotheses on Earlier Egyptian orthographies that—given the reader accepts it—has an impact on the identification of certain morpho-syntactic forms such as, for example, the Subjunctive *sḏm(=f)*, the Posterior *sḏm.w/y(=f)* (alias Prospective), the Resultative *sḏm.kw/sḏm.ti/sḏm.w/...* (alias Pseudo-participle), the Passive *sḏm(.w)(=f)*, and the relation of the Passive Distributive Participle *sḏm.w* and the Imperfective Relative Form *sḏm.w/y(=f)*.²

PART I. THE CONCEPT OF *MATER LECTIONIS* IN EARLIER EGYPTIAN ORTHOGRAPHY; OR: WHY *sḏmw* MIGHT REPRESENT A SUBJUNCTIVE **sčmá*

Normally, occurrences of the glides (“semi-consonants” or “semi-vowels”) *w* (𓂏, 𓂐, in 𓂑, 𓂒, and others) and *i* (𓂓, in 𓂔 and others), *y* (𓂕), or *ī* (𓂖 or 𓂗)³ have been taken as evidence that the respective forms actually contained a corresponding *consonantal* phoneme /w/ or /j/.⁴ This is, of course, reasonable if the spelling exhibits the glides more often than not. But in some influential works on Earlier Egyptian grammar and vocalization, the same thing is also assumed in those cases in which the glides were spelled out in only a very limited number of occurrences (if any). Some scholars assume that the consonants were present in the spoken form but not in the written form (“Defective Spelling Hypothesis” proper); others assume that the consonants were present at some earlier time but no longer at the time of the creation of the relevant document (“Traditional Spelling Hypothesis”). A third explanation is that the consonants are somehow present conceptually but are not spoken phonetically (“Phonetic Phonology Hypothesis”). Anyhow, in

1 This contribution tries to work on the basis of the Three Vowel Qualities Hypothesis and the Pre-Coptic Syllable Structure Rules Hypothesis, except that it allows for open syllables at the end of the word (-CV), and on the kernel idea of the Pre-Coptic Vowel Length Rule Hypothesis as regards the fate of stressed vowels in open and closed syllables. It is hesitant about the validity of the *Zweisilbengesetz* in inflected forms. It substitutes the Defective Spelling Hypothesis for a Fluctuating Glide Hypothesis (see Hypothesis no. 5, Part IV, below). It also acknowledges Frozen Spellings to a certain extent.

2 Throughout this article phonemes are marked by /.../, approximate phonetic renderings by [...], and single graphemes by <...>. A “V” stands for an unknown vowel. A list of abbreviations not in the Bibliography is appended at the end of this article.

3 Traditionally, the transliterations of both 𓂖 and 𓂗 equal the transliteration of 𓂕 rather than that of 𓂓 (Werning 2007). Brose (2014, §§ 9.6, 18) states that, in certain Middle Egyptian documentary texts, a rather large 𓂖 always equals 𓂕 while 𓂗 doesn’t.

4 Throughout this paper, the phonological interpretations of *i* are based on the assumption that the grapheme <𓂓> primarily refers to a glide (/j/). The arguments, however, also work if one subscribes to the assumption that it primarily refers to a glottal stop /ʔ/ (the only exception being the semi-vocalic nature of the *ult.-inf.* radical of verbal roots: see Part IV, below).

many past publications from and in the following of Sethe (1923, § 4), Fecht, Edel, and Osing—and this is the crucial point—even very occasional spellings of forms with glides have been taken as evidence that there was a full consonant in the form. The reconstruction of such a “consonantal glide” has certain consequences for the reconstruction of the syllable structure of the word. In particular, according to the Syllable Structure Rules Hypothesis, there has to be at least one vowel next to it.⁵

In this tradition, for example, the *tw*-passive of certain suffix conjugation tenses followed by a monoconsonantal personal pronoun is reconstructed as follows:

$\mathfrak{z}mm.t(w)=f / \mathfrak{z}mm.tw=f$	$*\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}m^{\sim}mt^{\sim}W^{\sim}f$	$*/_R VmVm'tV:WVf/;$
$\mathfrak{z}m.t(w)=f / \mathfrak{z}m.tw=f$	$**\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}mm^{\sim}t^{\sim}W^{\sim}f \rightarrow *\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}mm^{\sim}t^{\sim}W^{\sim}f$	$*/_R Vm'mVtWVf/;$
$pr(i).t(w)=f / pr(i).tw=f$	$*p^{\sim}r^{\sim}It^{\sim}W^{\sim}f$	$*/_p VrVJ'tV:WVf/$
	or $*p^{\sim}r^{\sim}It^{\sim}W^{\sim}f \rightarrow *p^{\sim}r^{\sim}It^{\sim}W^{\sim}f$	$*/_p Vr'JVtWVf/.$

And the plural of, for example, the following nouns is reconstructed as

$\mathfrak{z}h(i)$ “spirit”	$*\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}h^{\sim}I$	$*/'ri:xVJ/$	$>^{AA2} \mathfrak{z}h \sim ^{B1} \mathfrak{z}h^{\sim},^6$
$\mathfrak{z}h(i).w / \mathfrak{z}h(i.w)$ “spirits”	$**\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}h^{\sim}I^{\sim}W \rightarrow *\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}h^{\sim}I^{\sim}W$	$*/'ri:xJVW/;$ ⁷	
$it(i)$ “father”	$*i^{\sim}at^{\sim}I$	$*/'ja:tVJ/$	$>^{SB} \mathfrak{e}i\omega t,$
$it(i).w / it(i.w)$ “fathers”	$**i^{\sim}at^{\sim}I^{\sim}W \rightarrow *i^{\sim}at^{\sim}I^{\sim}W$	$*/'ja:tJVW/$	$>^S \mathfrak{e}i\omega t\epsilon;^8$
$hrw(w)$ “day”	$*h^{\sim}ar^{\sim}w^{\sim}W$	$*/'harwVW/$	$>^{SBA} \mathfrak{z}oo\gamma \sim ^{AA2} \mathfrak{z}oo\gamma\epsilon,$
$hr(w).w(w)$ “days”	$*h^{\sim}ar^{\sim}w^{\sim}w^{\sim}W$	$*/har'WV:wVW/ > (?) >^{AA2} \mathfrak{z}p\epsilon\gamma;$	

or, if we take Wolfgang Schenkel’s revision of Earlier Egyptian syllable structures (1983b, 198) into account, we may reconstruct:

$\mathfrak{z}h(i).w / \mathfrak{z}h(i.w)$ “spirits”	$**\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}h^{\sim}I^{\sim}W$	$*/'ri:xVJW/;$	
$it(i).w / it(i.w)$ “fathers”	$*i^{\sim}at^{\sim}I^{\sim}W$	$*/'ja:tVJW/ > (?) >^S \mathfrak{e}i\omega t\epsilon;$	
$hr(w).w(w)$ “days”	$*h^{\sim}ar^{\sim}w^{\sim}ww$	$*/har'WVww/ >^{AA2} \mathfrak{z}p\epsilon\gamma.$	

Within the framework of the traditional set of hypotheses on Earlier Egyptian syllable structures, there is a limited number of other options. It usually follows that, besides $/wV/$, $/Vw/$, $/jV/$, and $/Vj/$, rather substantial phonological clusters like $/Vjw/$, $/jVw/$, and $/V:wV/$ were allegedly often left unwritten in Earlier Egyptian orthographies. In particular, cases of alleged omission of intervocalic glides, i.e. $/VwV/$ and $/VjV/$, have always been very suspicious to me. This leads me to my first axiomatic pre-assumption:

Pre-assumption 1 (“Intervocalic Glide Axiom”)

Intervocalic glides ($/VwV/$ and $/VjV/$) usually appear spelled out as *w* and *i* or *y*, respectively.

As an alternative to taking any even sparse occurrence of a glide in a specific word form as a proof for the existence of a consonant, it is also possible to assume that the phonograms $\langle w \rangle$, $\langle i \rangle$, $\langle ti \rangle$ and probably $\langle y \rangle$ can hint at a vowel (“*Mater Lectionis* Hypothesis”). This has been assumed by different scholars from time to time—most explicitly Thacker 1954 (7–31)—but I am probably not mistaken in saying that later


5 For the traditional hypotheses, see, e.g., Schenkel 1990, Chapter 2; Peust 1999.

6 Cf. Schenkel 1983b, 176; revision in Schenkel 2009b, 270–73.

7 Cf., e.g., Edel 1955–64, §§ 335, 339.

8 Cf., e.g., Satzinger 1999a, 373.

mainstream discussion has not yet explored this hypothesis in depth, surely not in its full consequences.⁹ On the other hand, there is barely any scholar who has not at least taken into account the possibility that *w* and/or *i* might hint at a vowel, either explicitly in a comment or implicitly in one or another analysis.¹⁰ There are, however, some recent studies that have come independently to the conclusion that there are *matres lectionis* in Earlier Egyptian orthographies.¹¹

When I say that the *matres lectionis* “hint at a vowel” rather than “represent a vowel,” I want to be cautious not to easily equate ⟨*w*⟩ with /u/ or /u:/ and ⟨*i*⟩, ⟨*y*⟩, ⟨*ī*⟩ with /i/ or /i:/ . Indeed, it seems that, for example, the “glide”  might hint at the existence of various different vowels in the OK, or even at the existence of *any* vowel, no matter what quality or quantity.¹² This also implies that the notion of “*mater lectionis*,” as I use it, is a broader one: a reading aid that hints at either a specific vowel or generally at a non-specified vowel.

Instead of tracing the arguments that led the respective scholars to conclude that *matres lectionis* exist in Earlier Egyptian, I would like to explore specific possible examples and more general consequences. I start with a first fundamental working hypothesis:












Hypothesis 1 (“*Mater Lectionis* Hypothesis”)

If a certain word or morpheme is spelled much more often *without* a specific glide at a certain position than *with* the glide, the occasionally written glide hints at a vowel (yet to be determined) which occupies a *vocalic slot* in the syllable structure (rather than at a respective consonant that occupies a consonantal slot).

This hypothesis surely needs some refinement, for example as regards the text corpus and as to how much “much more” actually is. But the point that I want to make is to reject the traditional hypothesis that even rare occurrences of glides testify to the existence of a consonant (which needs to be assigned a consonantal slot in the assumed possible syllable structures).

Operating with Hypothesis 1, the following are probably cases that are occasionally spelled with *matres lectionis*.

Table 1: Cases of possible *matres lectionis* in Earlier Egyptian orthographies

	OK SPELLINGS	MK SPELLINGS	RECONSTRUCTION HYPOTHESIS	SEE NOTE
Resultative ending, 1SG	usually  ; relig. texts also  ; once 	 ,  ,  ,  ,  ; rarely  ,  ,  (see n. a)	*/(‘a:)ku/	b)

9 But see now Allen 2013. For a list of consequences that result from a vocalic reconstruction of the nisbe morpheme, see Schultheiß 2014, Chap. 8.3 “Zusammenfassung und Schlussbetrachtungen.”

10 E.g., Gardiner 1957, § 20 (*i* and *w* as “semi-vowels”); Loprieno 1995, 62–63 (noun endings); Kammerzell 1998, 113 (*ti/tw*-Passive); Malaise & Winand 1999, § 24 (*i* for */i/, *w* for */u/); Allen 2000/2010, § 2.4 (*i* for */i/, *w* for */u/), § 17.2 (Resultative endings); now Allen 2013, 38 and 53 (*i* “to signal a vocalic desinence”), 43 and 53 (*w* for */u/, *w* “also represents a final vowel”); Vernus 2000, 185 (Resultative endings); Grandet & Mathieu 2003, § 1.4 (*i/ī* for */i/, *w* for */u/); Schenkel 2005c/2012a, Chap. 2.1 (*i* possibly vocalic ending); ; Stauder 2014a, 12–13 (*ti/tw*-Passive and Resultative endings).

11 Schenkel 2009b, 269–74; Werning 2011, I, §§ 56–57, 60, 65, 81; Schultheiß 2014.

12 Thacker 1954, 31; Schenkel 2009b, 273–74 (long vowels only?); Werning 2011, I, § 57.

	OK SPELLINGS	MK SPELLINGS	RECONSTRUCTION HYPOTHESIS	SEE NOTE
Resultative ending, 2SG.M			*/(‘a:)ta/	c)
Resultative ending, 2SG.F	usually ⲁ;	ⲁ, ⲓⲓ	*/(‘a:)ti/	
Resultative ending, 3SG.F	rarely ⲓ, ⲓⲓ, ⲁⲓⲓ, ⲁⲓ		*/(‘a:)tV/	
Resultative ending, 3PL.F		rarely ⲓⲓ; usually → 3PL.M	see 3SG.F see 3PL.M	
Resultative ending, 3SG.M	usually ⲟ; also ⲓ; more rarely ⲓ	usually ⲟ; more rarely ⲓ, ⲙ	*/a/	d)
Resultative ending, 3PL.M	usually ⲟ; also ⲓ; more rarely ⲓ, ⲓⲓ, ⲓⲓⲓ, once ⲓ	usually ⲟ; more rarely ⲓ, ⲙ	*/u/	e)
Resultative ending, 1PL	ⲓⲓⲓⲓ (rarely attested); probably once ⲟ	ⲓⲓⲓⲓ, ⲓⲓⲓⲓⲓ, ⲙⲓⲓⲓ; (plus ⲓⲓⲓ, see n. f)	*/u:nu/, after */‘a:/: [‘awnu]	g)
Resultative ending, 1PL (secondarily)		ⲓⲓⲓⲓⲓⲓ (plus ⲓⲓⲓ, see n. f)	*/(‘a:)wi:n/	
Resultative ending, 2PL	ⲓⲓⲓⲓ	ⲓⲓⲓⲓⲓ, ⲓⲓⲓⲓⲓⲓ, rarely ⲓⲓⲓⲓ	*/(‘a:)tu:ni:/	h)
<i>t</i> -passive morpheme	usually ⲁ; relig. texts also ⲓⲓ, ⲓ	ⲁ, ⲁⲙ, ⲁⲓⲓ, rarely ⲓⲓⲓ	*/tV/	i)
Nominal forms M.SG (allegedly) with final weak consonant	usually ⲟ; very rarely ⲓ, ⲓ	ⲟ	*/V/ (* /u/, */i/, */a/?)	j)
Nominal plural mor- pheme, M	ⲟ or ⲓ	ⲟ or ⲓ, ⲙ	*/u:/, after vowel: *[w]	k)
	(optionally plus ⲓⲓⲓ or equivalent, see e. f)			
Nominal plural end- ing, F	ⲁ	ⲁ	*/V:t/ (vowel lengthening)	l)
	(optionally plus ⲓⲓⲓ or equivalent, see n. f)			
Suffix pronoun, 1SG (trad. =i)	usually ⲟ; relig. texts often ⲓ	ⲓ; rarely ⲓⲓ, ⲓ, ⲓ, ⲟ (and sim., see n. a)	*/i:/, after vowel: *[j]	m)




































































	OK SPELLINGS	MK SPELLINGS	RECONSTRUCTION HYPOTHESIS	SEE NOTE
Enclitic personal pronoun, 1SG (trad. <i>wi</i>)	usually  ; rarely  ; very rarely  	  ;  ; rarely   (and sim., see n. a)	<i>*/wV/</i> <i>*/wu/</i> or <i>*/wa(?)</i>	n)
Nisbe ending, M.SG	usually \emptyset , also  ; rarely  .	\emptyset , \mathfrak{u} , \mathfrak{w} ; rarely  	<i>*/i:/</i>	o)
Nisbe ending, M.PL	usually  ; also \emptyset ; rarely  (optionally plus \mathfrak{u} \mathfrak{u} \mathfrak{u} or equivalent, see n. f)	 \mathfrak{e} ; also \emptyset	<i>*[i:w]</i> (\sim <i>*/i:u:/</i>)	
Nisbe ending, F(SG/PL)	usually \mathfrak{e} ; rarely  , ( \mathfrak{e} ?) (in PL contexts optionally plus \mathfrak{u} \mathfrak{u} \mathfrak{u} , see n. f)	\mathfrak{e}	<i>*/i:t/</i>	
Nisbe ending, M.SG, nouns <i>ult.-t</i>	usually \mathfrak{e} , also  or  ; rarely  , 	\mathfrak{e} , $\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{u}$	<i>*/ti:/</i>	
Nisbe ending, M.PL, nouns <i>ult.-t</i>	usually  ; rarely   ,   , \mathfrak{e} (optionally plus \mathfrak{u} \mathfrak{u} \mathfrak{u} or equivalent, see n. f)	 ; rarely:  , $\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{u}$, \mathfrak{e}	<i>*[ti:w]</i> (\sim <i>*/ti:u:/</i>)	
Nisbe ending, F(SG/PL), nouns <i>ult.-t</i>	$\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{u}$	$\mathfrak{e}\mathfrak{u}$	<i>*/ti:t/</i> (in PL contexts optionally plus \mathfrak{u} \mathfrak{u} \mathfrak{u} , see n. f)	
Particle <i>iw</i>	 , before suffix pronoun also  ; relig. texts rarely   	 ,  \mathfrak{e}	<i>*/?V:/</i> or <i>*/V:/</i> <i>*/?u:/?</i> , before mono-cons. suffix pronoun: <i>/?u.../?</i>)	p)

Table notes

- a) The morpheme is spelled with one of the default “grammato-classifiers” (Werning 2011, I, § 6) of the 1SG, , , or \mathfrak{u} , or with a “semantic classifier,” e.g. , , ,  (the last not earlier than NK), etc. These classifiers categorize a grammatical morpheme as 1SG in, e.g.,  **ianák* and  **w*, or they just hint at an otherwise unwritten morpheme **/i:/* as in  (= *i*), trad. transliterated as “=i”). It is now generally accepted that the  in MK spellings in forms such as ,   and   are inherited from OK spelling traditions (but cf. Sethe 1899, II, 16, n. 1). The classifiers are not a hint to a specific phoneme; cf. the spelling  for **ianák* > *ANOK*.
- b) Spellings: Edel 1955–64, §§ 572–73; Gardiner 1957, § 309; Sethe 1899, II, §§ 34–35. Semitic equivalent as **/ku:/* (Thacker 1954, 98); as **/ku/* (Satzinger to appear). Egyptian reconstructions: as **/ku:/* [\sim **/kwV/(?)*] (Thacker 1954, 125–26); as **/ki/* > **/ku/* (Reintges 1994, 214–15; Reintges 1997, 270); as **/'a:ku/* (Loprieno 1995, 36), as **/'aku/* (Allen 2000/2010, § 17.2), as **/ku/* (Satzinger 1999b, 29; Satzinger 2007, 494; Vernus 2000, 185; Allen 2013, 67), **/'a:ku/*, **/ku/* (Satzinger to appear [Stative vs. Perfect]), as **/('a:)ku(:)/* (Schenkel 2009b, 273). For earlier approaches with consonantal ending, cf. Kammerzell 1991; Schenkel 1994a, 170; Loprieno 1995, 76.

- c) Spellings: Edel 1955–64, §§ 572–73; Gardiner 1957, § 309; Sethe 1899, II, §§ 23–33, 49–50. Semitic equivalent as 2SG.M */ta:/, 2SG.F */ti:/, 3SG.F */at/, 3PL.F */a:/ (Thacker 1954, 98); as 2SG.M */ta/, 2SG.F */ti/, 3SG.F */at/ (Satzinger to appear). Egyptian reconstructions: as 2SG.M */ta/, 2SG.F */ti/, 3SG.F */tV/, 3PL.F */a:/ ~ */tV/ (Thacker 1954, 121–24); as */ta/ ~ */ti/ (Satzinger 1999b, 29; Satzinger 2007, 496); as */tV/ (Vernus 2000, 185); as 2SG.M */('a)ta/, 2SG.F */('a)ti/, 3SG.F */('a)ta/ (Allen 2000/2010, § 17.2); as 2SG.M */ta/ or */tu/, 2SG.F probably */ti/, 3SG.F */tV/, 3PL.F probably = 3SG.F (Allen 2013, 67). For earlier approaches and the possibility of two paradigms, cf. Kammerzell 1991; Schenkel 1994a, 170.
- d) Spellings: Edel 1955–64, §§ 572–73; Gardiner 1957, § 309; Sethe 1899, II, §§ 15–18. Semitic equivalent as */a/ (Thacker 1954, 98); as */a/ or ø (Satzinger to appear). Egyptian reconstructions: as */V/ > */[ə] (Thacker 1954, 121); as */u/ (Vernus 2000, 185); as */a/ (Allen 2000/2010, § 17.2); as */u/ or */a/ (Allen 2013, 67). For earlier approaches, cf. Kammerzell 1991; Schenkel 1994a, 170 [*/aw/ ~ */ju:/, */aw/ ~ */ji/].
- e) Spellings: Edel 1955–64, §§ 572, 574; Gardiner 1957, § 309; Sethe 1899, II, §§ 44–46. Semitic equivalent as */u:/ (Thacker 1954, 98); Akkadian */u/ (Vernus 2000, 185). Egyptian reconstructions: as */u:/ (Thacker 1954, 122); as */u/ (Allen 2000/2010, § 17.2; Vernus 2000, 185); as probably */u?u/ > */u/ (Allen 2013, 67). For an earlier approach, cf. Schenkel (1994a, 170 [*/'awu/ > */'aju/, */'awwi/ > */'ajji/]).
- f) Plural morphemes are optionally spelled with one of the default “grammato-classifiers” (Werning 2011, I, § 6) for PL such as   , or   , or, in certain cases, with a tripling of a sign or sign group.
- g) Spellings: Edel 1955–64, §§ 572, 574 (with a comment on the possibly secondary character of *w~n*); Gardiner 1957, § 309; Sethe 1899, II, § 53. Semitic equivalent as */nu:/ (Thacker 1954, 98); Akkadian */nu/ (Vernus 2000, 185). Egyptian reconstructions: as */...nu:/(?) (Thacker 1954, 126–27); as */'anu/ (Allen 2000/2010, § 17.2; Allen 2013, 67); secondary form as */wVn/ (Vernus 2000, 185).
- h) Spellings: Edel 1955–64, §§ 572, 574; Gardiner 1957, § 309; Sethe 1899, II, § 51. Semitic equivalent as 2PL.M */tunu:/, 2PL.M */tina:/ (Thacker 1954, 98); Akkadian 2PL.M */tunu/, 2PL.M */tina/ (Vernus 2000, 185). Egyptian reconstructions: as */tun/ or */tin(i?)/(?) (Thacker 1954, 124); as */'tawni/ (Schenkel 1994a, 170); as */'tu:nV/ (Satzinger 1999b, 29; Satzinger 2007, 496); as */tu:n/ (Vernus 2000, 185); as 2PL.M */('a)tunu/, 2PL.M */('a)tina/ (Allen 2000/2010, § 17.2; Allen 2013, 67).
- i) OK spellings: Edel 1955–64, § 177; Kammerzell 1998, 112. Egyptian reconstructions: as */tV/ > */[tə] or the like (Thacker 1954, 315); as */ti/ > */tu/ (Reintges 1997, 270); as */tV/ (Kammerzell 1998, 113); as probably */tu/ (Allen 2013, 38); as */t(V)/ (Stauder 2014a:12).
- j) This refers to nouns that are attested with final *i* or *w* in very rare cases (or even only once) or to nouns of the type Earlier Egyptian *(...)*KK* → Copt. (...)*Kⲟ(K)* / (...)*Kⲟϣ(K)* / (...)*Kⲓ(K)* / (...)*Kⲏ(K)*: Schenkel 2009b, § 3; Werning 2011, I, §§ 65a–b; cf. also Schenkel 1983, 202–204; Loprieno 1995, 36 and 62–63.
- k) Spellings: Edel 1955–64, §§ 269–78; Gardiner 1957, §§ 72–74. Egyptian reconstructions: as */u:/ (Vycichl 1955, 264; Lambdin 1958, 183; Werning 2011, I, §§ 65a–b); as */wu/ (Vergote 1969); as **[u]+[u] > */[u:] > */[w] (Schenkel 1983, § 8, with a detailed discussion; cf. also Allen 2013, 61; Schenkel actually uses [u] instead of [w] as I should have in many cases in this very contribution; cf. also Barber 2013, 1 n. 2). For traditional reconstructions as */Vw/, cf. e.g. Vergote 1969, 77–79, Satzinger 1999a. I assume that some of the spellings with  represent */Vw/-collectives morphologically rather than “true” plurals; cf. Werning 2011, I, §§ 65a–b.
- l) Cf. Schenkel 1983, 208–209. I assume that spellings with  (and ) generally represent */wVt/-collectives morphologically (for  >  */jVt/, cf. Schenkel 2012a, 105–106 and Part III below); cf. Werning 2011, I, §§ 17, 20.
- m) Spellings: Edel 1955–64, §§ 159–60; Gardiner 1957, § 34. Egyptian reconstructions: */i/ (Erman 1894, § 140; Allen 2000/2010, § 5.3; Allen 2013, 66); as */i:/ after consonant, */jV/ after vowel (Thacker 1954, 21–23); as */i:/

(Vycichl 1955, 265); */aj/ (Loprieno 1995, 63–64). Note that the classifier itself does not hint at the phonological quality of the morpheme (cf. n. a, above).

- n) Spellings: Edel 1955–64, §§ 166–67; Gardiner 1957, § 43. Egyptian reconstructions: */wV/, perhaps */wa/ (Allen 2013, 68). A vocalization */wi/ is unlikely since we never observe the assimilation effect */Vwi/ > */Vji/ as observed in other cases (cf. Part III, Hypothesis 4, below).
- o) Werning 2011, I, § 56 (M.SG */i:/, M.PL */i(:)u/, F.SG */i(:)t/, F.PL */i:t/), see the references Werning 2011, I, 140 n. 145, 141 n. 149; additions: Schenkel 2008, 273 [M.SG */i:/, F.SG */it/, Schenkel 2009b, 270–71; Allen 2013, 74 [M.SG */i:/, M.PL */iu/, M.DU */iua/ → */iwa/, F.SG */iat/ ~ */it/, F.PL */iuat/ > */iwat/, F.DU */iata/ > */ita/]; Schultheiß 2014: Tables 6.1–6.2, 7.1, 7.3–7.4, 7.7 (spellings OK), Table 8.2 [*status absolutus*: M.SG */i:/, M.PL */i:w/, M.DU */i:wa:/], Table 8.1 [F.SG */i:t/, F.PL “*ût”, F.DU */i:ta:/].
- p) Cf. the spelling of *iw=f* (OK:  ~ , later  ~ ) and *if* */'(?)uf/ or */'(?)if/ > */'(?)εf/ > ^{SB}ⲁϣ */'(?)af/ ‘flesh’ (; NK:  ~ ), Edel 1955–64, §§ 881 with reference to Gardiner 1947a, II, 237–38*.

If we accept these reconstructions, we would conclude that in certain endings(!) the following relations exist:

Table 2: Spellings of vocalic and glide endings in Earlier Egyptian orthographies






















































ENDING		OK SPELLING	MK SPELLING	NOTES
/w/	e.g., Plural morpheme after vowels	 , (⌀)	 , (⌀)	
/tVw/	e.g., Nisbe	 , (⌀)	 , (⌀)	
/u:/	Plural morpheme	⌀, 	⌀, 	
/u/	Resultative ending 3PL.M	⌀, 	⌀, 	
/tu:/	inside Resultative ending 2PL(?)	⌀, 	⌀, 	
/tu/	(no example; passive morpheme?)			
/a:/	(no example)			
/a/	Resultative ending 3SG.M	⌀, 	⌀, 	
/ta:/	inside personal pronoun 3SG	⌀, (⌀)		a)
/ta/	Resultative ending 2SG.M	⌀,  ,  , 	⌀, 	
/j/	e.g., Nisbe morpheme after vowels, suffix pronoun 1SG after vowels	[ , (⌀)]	[ ,  ,  ,  , (⌀)]	
/tVj/	(no example)			
/i:/	Nisbe morpheme (after consonant), (Resultative ending 2PL?)	⌀, 	⌀,  ,  , 	
/i/	(no example)			
/ti:/	Nisbe M.SG from nouns <i>ult.-t</i>	⌀,  ,  , 	⌀,  , 	
/ti/	Resultative ending 2SG.F	⌀,  ,  , 	⌀, 	
UNCLEAR				
/tV/	Resultative ending 3SG.F	⌀,  ,  , 	⌀, 	
/tV/	Passive morpheme	⌀, 	⌀,  , 	
/wV/	Enclitic personal pronoun 1SG	 ;  ;  ;  ; 	 ;  ;  ;  ; 	

Table notes

- a) Cf. the rare spelling of the personal pronoun 3PL *ntsn* */Vnta:cin/ (cf. 2PL *nttn* */Vnta:cin/ > Ⲣⲧⲱⲧⲛ) as  and  in the OK (Edel 1955–64, § 41).

Or, organized the other way around:

Table 3: Possible interpretations of word-final or morpheme-final “glide” graphemes in Earlier Egyptian orthographies

SPELLING	OK	MK	ENDING	NOTES
...𐎗	/i:/		Nisbe morpheme (after consonant)	
	/j/	(/j/)	Nisbe morpheme after vowel	
	/a/		Resultative ending 3SG.M	
	/u/		Resultative ending 3PL.M	
...𐎗𐎗	var.		𐎗 twice; or 𐎗 plus DUAL	a)
		/i:/	Nisbe morpheme (after consonant)	
		(/j/)	Nisbe morpheme after vowel	
...𐎗𐎗, .. 𐎗𐎗		/i:/	Nisbe morpheme; Resultative ending 2PL(?)	
		/j/	e.g., Nisbe morpheme after vowel	
...𐎗𐎗	/w/	/w/	e.g., Plural morpheme after vowel	
	/u:/	/u:/	Plural morpheme	
	/u/	/u/	Resultative ending 3PL.M	
	(/a/)	/a/	Resultative ending 3SG.M	
...𐎗	like 𐎗			
...𐎗, ...𐎗𐎗	/ti/	/ti/	Resultative ending 2SG.F	
	/ta/	/ta/	Resultative ending 2SG.M	
	/tV/	/tV/	Resultative ending 3SG.F	
	(/ta:/		inside personal pronoun 3PL; rarely)	
	/tV/		Passive morpheme	
...𐎗𐎗		/ti:/	Nisbe M.SG from nouns <i>ult-t</i>	
...𐎗𐎗, ...𐎗𐎗	/tVw/	/tVw/	Nisbe M.PL from nouns <i>ult.-t</i>	
		/tV/	Passive morpheme	
...𐎗𐎗	/tVw/	/tVw/	Nisbe M.PL from nouns <i>ult.-t</i>	b)
	(/tu:/	/tu:/	inside Resultative ending 2PL)	

Table notes

a) For 𐎗 in the OK, cf. Sethe 1899, I, §§ 121–121bis; Edel 1955–64, §§ 148, 150. Cf. also Allen 2013, 207 n. 2.

b) The reading of 𐎗 as *tw*, not *tiw*, is discussed in detail in Schultheiß 2014, chapter entitled “Zur Lesung des Zeichens 𐎗.”

Assuming that we are on the right track, the results have serious further consequences for the identification and interpretation of written forms, which have not yet been taken fully into account. For example, based on the spelling of the Resultative 3SG.M *sāčma /'sac'ma/ as *sđmi* (OK) and *sđmw* (MK), we would naturally conclude that *sđmi* (OK) and *sđmw* (MK) are possible writings not just for the Posterior *sđm.w(=f)* but also for the Subjunctive *sđm(=f)* *sčmā /sVc'ma/.¹³ In particular, Subjunctive spellings with final 𐎗 might represent the *auslaut* */na/ as in NK syllabic spellings.¹⁴ This, by the way, puts even more analytic load on the variant spellings of the stem of verbs *Ilae gem.* (Posterior *šmm* /rV'mVmV/ vs. Subjunctive *šm* /rVm'ma/) and on the syntactic construction.

13 That the final *w* may hint at the final /'a/ in the (respective) verbal form is also assumed by Allen 2013, 114–15.

14 Kammerzell, in Hannig 1995, LV.

PART II. THE PRAGMATICS OF *MATER LECTIONIS* SPELLINGS: GLIMPSES AT READER-ORIENTED SPELLING PRACTICES; OR: WHY THE NISBE MORPHEME IS USUALLY SPELLED OUT IN THE M.SG OF DE-NOMINAL NISBES ONLY

If we assume that *matres lectionis* are part of Earlier Egyptian orthographies, naturally the question arises: What considerations triggered the use of a *mater lectionis* as a reading aid? This is a complete change in perspective. Traditionally, on the basis of the Defective Spelling Hypothesis (which takes any glide as a hint at a consonant in a consonantal slot of the syllable structure), the question was: What triggers the *omission* of the consonantal glide grapheme? — which has never been satisfyingly addressed, in my opinion. On the basis of the *Mater Lectionis* Hypothesis, on the other hand, we ask: What triggers the *inclusion* of an orthographical hint at a vocalic phoneme? Now it is the written mark that is to be explained and not its omission.

An illuminating case, I argue(d), is that of the nisbe spellings in Earlier Egyptian orthographies.¹⁵ Based on selected evidence from Semitic languages, it is traditionally assumed that the nisbe morpheme was originally at least partially consonantal */Vj/, probably */i:j/. There are, however, good reasons to assume that cases with consonantal /j/ in Semitic languages are secondary renderings (*/i:/ + /V/ → */i:jV/).¹⁶ Indeed, the nisbe morpheme is not usually spelled out in standard Earlier Egyptian orthographies in the M.PL and in the F (see Table 1 **Error! Reference source not found.**). The traditional “*Consonantal Nisbe Hypothesis*” cannot easily account for this fact. According to the “*Mater Lectionis Hypothesis*” (no. 1, above), however, these spellings suggest that the nisbe morpheme is a vowel rather than a consonant. The quality of the vowel in question is to be determined as */i:/, very probably long */i:/ (Table 1 **Error! Reference source not found.**, n. o). The vocalic nature explains why it is not usually written. What needs to be accounted for in the light of the new “*Vocalic Nisbe Hypothesis*” is the comparatively common spelling of the morpheme in the M.SG (OK: *i* / *tī*; MK *i*, *y* / *tī*).

According to the *Mater Lectionis* Hypothesis and the Fluctuating Guide Hypothesis (no. 5, below), we might assume that, as a secondary effect, the M.SG ending */i:/ was pronounced as *[ij] in some instances of the M.SG. There is, however, another solution: against the *Mater Lectionis* Hypothesis, we might still take the occasional spellings *i*, *ī*, and *y* as *matres lectionis* for vocalic */i:/. But how do we account for this exception? And why didn’t the Egyptian scribes spell all the other nisbes (M.PL, F, ...) with a *mater lectionis* as well? An answer partially lies in the nature of *matres lectionis* itself. If the scribes did not use a *mater lectionis* in the M.SG, the reader could more readily misunderstand the written form. For example, she or he could misinterpret the form *dw3t* not as the nisbe */tuw3’*tī* “one of the netherworld” but as the non-derived form */tūw3’*t* “netherworld.”¹⁷ A spelling *dw3tī* with an additional *mater lectionis* *ī*, however, solves the problem for the reader. The possibility of a misinterpretation, in contrast, is not present in the case of the spellings *dw3tt* and *dw3tw*, which can only be interpreted as the nisbes */tuw3’*tīt* and */tuw3’*tīw*, respectively. As opposed to the case of M.SG, a *mater lectionis* is usually simply not necessary in the case of M.PL and in the case of F.¹⁸

The *Mater Lectionis* Hypothesis also explains some other observations that I made in the text-specific orthography of the Book of Caverns (early Neo-Middle Egyptian; 19th Dynasty; Werning 2011, I, § 36).

15 Werning 2011, I, §§ 56–57.

16 Cf. Schultheiß 2014, Chap. 3.2 “Weitere Probleme mit Nisben,” esp. Part (4).

17 Note that the use of classifiers may also inform the reader (cf. Werning 2011, I, § 37). Also note the interesting puzzle of the spelling of *d3.t* (OK) */tʰu:RVt/ > *dw3t* (NK) */tʰuʁV/ > (?) */tʰu:jV/ > ^{Ak}TH/THI */tʰi(:)j/ “netherworld.” Or is *dw3t* itself also a spelling that renders a vowel: *dw3t* */tʰu:RVt/ with *w3* for */u:R/?

18 For the cases of nisbes M.PL and F based on nouns ult. non-*t*, see below.

The spelling of nisbes in Caverns deviates from spellings in standard Middle Egyptian orthographies in that a *mater lectionis* *y* is quite often used for the nisbe morpheme **/i:/* not only in the M.SG, but also occasionally in the M.PL and the F — but *only* in nisbes based on nouns *ult. non-t*.¹⁹

Table 4: Spellings of nisbe endings in Earlier Egyptian and in the Book of Caverns

NISBE ENDING	OK SPELLING	MK SPELLING	BOOK OF CAVERNS (19TH DYN.)	RECON- STRUCTION
M.SG	usually ; also (!); rarely	, (!), (!); rarely	de-nominal: (!), rarely ; de-prepositional: , rarely	<i>*/i:/</i>
M.PL	usually ; also ; rarely	, ; also	de-nominal: (!), ; ; rarely ; de-prepositional: ; rarely	<i>*/i:w/</i>
	(optionally plus or equivalent)			
F(SG/PL)	usually ; rarely , (?)		de-nominal: (!), ; de-prepositional:	<i>*/i:t/</i>
	(in PL contexts optionally plus or equivalent)			
M.SG, nouns <i>ult.-t</i>	usually , also or (!), rarely ,	,	(!); rarely	<i>*/ti:/</i>
M.PL, nouns <i>ult -t</i>	usually ; rarely , , , ,	; rarely: , ,	de-nominal: ; rarely , , , , ; de-prepositional:	<i>*/ti:w/</i>
	(optionally plus or equivalent)			
F(SG/PL), nouns <i>ult.-t</i>				<i>*/ti:t/</i>
	(in PL contexts optionally plus or equivalent)			

Why this rather complex pattern? Again, it is the *reader-oriented* purpose of a *mater lectionis*. In the case of de-prepositional nisbes, there is most often no need for a *mater lectionis* since (i) the spelling of the stem marks the form as a nisbe already (**i-mī*, **i-rī*, **h-rī*, **t-pī*, as opposed to **m*, **r*, **h-r*, **t-p*) or (ii) the bare fact that they have an inflectional ending or marks the form as a derived form—very probably a nisbe (**h-rī*, **h-rīw*). And in the case of nisbes based on words *ult.-t* (nouns as well as prepositions), the spellings and are indicative enough to identify them as nisbe forms (F **...tīt*, M.PL **...tīw*). To make a complex story short: *cum grano salis*, a *mater lectionis* for the nisbe vowel **/i:/* is used in cases that could be misinterpreted by the reader if it was missing, but not necessarily in cases in which the nisbe form can easily be recognized as such by other clues.

I conclude with the following claim:

19 Other de-nominal nisbes as well as de-prepositional nisbes are usually spelled without *mater lectionis*, just as in standard Middle Egyptian orthographies.

Hypothesis 2 (“Spelling Pragmatics Hypothesis”)

If the distribution of spelling out and not spelling out of ⟨*w*⟩, ⟨*i*⟩, or ⟨*y*⟩ is in a systematic relation to the possibility or ease for the reader to identify the underlying form, the ⟨*w*⟩, ⟨*i*⟩, or ⟨*y*⟩ is likely to be a *mater lectionis* that hints at a vowel.²⁰



This hypothesis may also identify the spellings of the *t*-based passive morpheme as *ti* (OK) and *tw* (MK) as a *mater lectionis* spelling for */tV/.²¹ In pPrisse, for example, *t*-based passives are spelled simply as *t* if a personal suffix pronoun follows, but as *tw* if no suffix pronoun follows (e.g. *sḏmt=* vs. *sḏmtw*).²² The fact that no *mater lectionis* is used if a personal suffix pronoun follows could be explained by the fact that, for example, the form *sḏmt=f* may be recognized by the reader as *t*-passive more quickly than in the case of *sḏmt* without suffix pronoun. Indeed, there is a high probability that a *sḏmt=f* is one of only two forms, either a passive or a relative form. A *sḏmt*, however, may not only represent a passive or a relative form, but also a participle. A *sḏmt* is (statistically) slightly more ambiguous than a *sḏmt=* plus personal suffix pronoun. That the *w* is used in the orthography of the *t*-Passive in pPrisse more often in more ambiguous instances than in less ambiguous instances may, therefore, further support the hypothesis that the optional *w* in *tw* is a reading aid, i.e. a *mater lectionis* (cf. Hypothesis 2).

So far we have seen that there are good reasons to assume that some of the spellings *i*, *i*, *y*, and *w* are actually *matres lectionis* for various vowels in certain grammatical morphemes, and that some of these *matres lectionis* are triggered by reader-oriented considerations in individual texts (“spelling pragmatics”).

PART III. WHY SHOULD WE EVEN BOTHER ABOUT VOWELS, ANYWAY? OR: WHY THE IMPERFECTIVE RELATIVE FORM *sḏm.w/y(=f)* AND THE PASSIVE DISTRIBUTIVE PARTICIPLE *sḏm.w* MAY INDEED BE ONE AND THE SAME FORM MORPHOLOGICALLY

It is a well-known fact that certain forms exhibit spellings with *w* in some cases, but *y* in other cases. Two illuminating cases are the spelling of the nisbe of nouns *ult.*–*w* (e.g. *hpr.w/y*) and the spelling of Imperfective Relative Forms M.SG *sḏm.w/y*.²³ Interestingly, the spellings of the nisbe of nouns *ult.*–*w* very often exhibit a *y* instead of a *w*:

Table 5: Spelling of nisbes based on nouns *ult.*–*w*

NOUN <i>ULT.</i> – <i>w</i>	NISBE	
<i>iwnw</i> ²⁴ “Heliopolis”	<i>iwnw</i> ²⁴ <i>y</i> “the Heliopolitan” (Pyr. 483a P: ) ²⁴	
	<i>iwnw</i> ²⁴ <i>y</i> ²⁴ “the Heliopolitan” (CT VII, 221h: )	
<i>bnw</i> ²⁴ “phoenix”	<i>bnw</i> ²⁴ <i>y</i> ²⁴ “phoenix-like one” (Hb. 22.25)	
<i>hḏw</i> ²⁴ “snake”	<i>hḏw</i> ²⁴ <i>y</i> ²⁴ “snake-shaped one” (Hb. 67.11)	
<i>nꜥw</i> ²⁴ “ <i>nꜥw</i> -snake”	<i>nꜥw</i> ²⁴ <i>y</i> ²⁴ “ <i>nꜥw</i> -snake-shaped one” (Hb. 67.10)	
<i>hprw</i>	<i>hprw</i> ²⁴ <i>y</i> ²⁴ “transformation-like one” (Hb. 75.2 ,76.18)	






20 This may effectively overrule the *Mater Lectionis* Hypothesis (no. 1, above).

21 Cf. Table 1, n. i) above.

22 Based on the transliteration of pPrisse encoded by Peter Dils in the *TLA*.

23 Schenkel 2008, 156–58; Schenkel 2009b, 262–63; Werning 2011, I, §§ 38, 59.

24 Edel 1955–64, § 344 (erroneously cited as *iwnwy* without classifier: cf. Leclant 2001, pl. XX, col. 51).

<i>irw</i> 	“figure”	<i>iry.w</i> 	“figure-shaped ones”	(Hb. 59.20)
		<i>irwy</i> 	“figure-shaped one”	(Hb. 63.3)
<i>sdbw</i> 	“mischief”	<i>sdbw</i> 	“ones destined to mischief”	(Hb. 40.1–4, 42)




According to the *Mater Lectionis* Hypothesis and the Intervocalic Glide Axiom (Hypothesis 1 and Pre-assumption 1, above), the absence of the glide *w* can only be explained by the hypothesis that the consonantal *w* has somehow disappeared. Indeed, this usual disappearance of the *w* can reasonably be explained as a phonetic effect. The nominal ending ...*w* */Vw/ plus nisbe morpheme */i:/ forms an ending */V:wi:/, probably with a stress on the pre-final syllable (e.g. /'a:wi:/ or /'i:wi:/). Phonetically, it is plausible that the /w/ in the cluster /V:wi:/ turns into /j/ under the influence of the vowel /i:/ (phonetic assimilation); for example:


Table 6: Phonetic reconstruction of nisbes from nouns *ult.-w*

NOUN ULT.-W		NISBE DERIVATION	
*/ʔV'wa:nVw/ ²⁵	<i>iw^hnw</i>	**/*ʔVwa:'nV:wi:/	> *[*ʔVwa'nV:ji:] <i>iw^hn{w}y</i>
*/'bV:nVw/	<i>bnw</i>	**/*bV'nV:wi:/	> *[*bV'nV:ji:] <i>bn^y</i>
*/'xupraw/	<i>hprw</i>	**/*xup'ra:wi:/	> *[*xup'ra:ji:] <i>hpr^y</i>
*/'sVt'bvVw/	<i>sdbw</i>	**/*sVt'bvV:wi:w/	> *[*sVt'bvV:ji:w] <i>sdb^yw</i>

Schenkel (2008, 167) observed the same effect in the case of the noun *hprw* before the personal suffix pronoun 1SG. Here, again, we can reconstruct a phonological cluster */a:wi:/ (ending */aw/ plus suffix pronoun 1SG */i:/):²⁶

Table 7: Phonetic reconstruction of nouns *ult.-w* plus personal suffix pronoun 1SG

NOUN ULT.-W		PLUS PERSONAL SUFFIX PRONOUN 1SG	
/'xupraw/	<i>hprw</i>	**/*xup'ra:wi:/ > *[*xup'ra:ji:]	<i>hpr^y</i>  = (i)  (CT V, 242c S10C)
			<i>hpr^y</i> = (i)  (CT IV, 141j B7C) ²⁷

The same effect can also be observed in the case of yet another grammatical formation: the Imperfective Relative Form (*sḏm.w/y*). In this form, the ending *w* usually turns into *y* before the personal suffix pronoun 1SG (**sḏmw* → *sḏmy* = (i) ).²⁸ The same, however, happens occasionally before mono-consonantal suffix pronouns.²⁹ I suggest blaming the assimilating force of a following *Bindevo*kal */i/³⁰ before the personal suffix pronoun, which is only employed in the case of the mono-consonantal suffix pronouns (see Table 8).³¹

25 Cf. Schenkel 2008, 158 with n. 52.

26 Cf. Table 1 **Error! Reference source not found.**, nn. a) and m) above.

27 Schenkel 2008, 167.

28 Schenkel 2009b, 262; Werning 2011, I, § 59.

29 Schenkel 2009b, 262–63; cf. Schenkel 2000a, 97–98 for the comparable case of the Posterior.

30 Cf. Loprieno's approach (1995, 55–56), assuming an */i/ as an old genitive/possessive case ending.


31 I further hypothesize (i) that the vowel before the */w/ is a */u/ and (ii) that there is an optional contraction */uw/ > [u:] in order to explain the cases of spellings without any glide. Differently, Schenkel (2009b, 264–69) hypothesized a vocalization pattern */CV'CVVCwV(C)/ (with mono-consonantal suffix pronoun) ~ */CVCVC'wV:/ (other cases) and that it is a preceding consonant *r* or *n*, more rarely probably *l* or *g*, that triggers the change *w* > *y*. The same effect, however, is also attested in Caverns after *s* before a 1SG personal suffix pronoun (*nsy* = (i) ), which, admittedly, could be blamed on the pronoun. Anyhow, I am not ready to embrace Schenkel's hypothesis before I learn more on the assumed phonetic reason why specifically *r* /r/, *n* /n/, and probably *l* /l/, *g* /g/, *ʕ* /ʕ/ (and *s* /s/?), but not *ʒ* /ʒ/, *h* /h/, *d* /d/, (and *s* /s/?)) would trigger a change such as Schenkel

Table 8: Phonetic reconstruction of the Imperfective Relative Form

NON-CONTRACTED STEM		OR CONTRACTED STEM			
i) Strong verbs					
<i>sḏmw</i>	*/sVcʔV':muw/	or <i>sḏm</i>	*[sV'cʔV':mu:]		
((<i>sḏmw</i> =(i) ³²)	*/sVcʔV' mu:wi:/))	> <i>sḏmy</i> =(i) ³²	*[sVcʔV' mu:ji:] or <i>sḏm</i> =(y) ³²	*[sV'cʔVmu:j]	
(<i>sḏmw</i> =k	*/sVcʔV' mu:wik/	> <i>sḏmy</i> =k	*[sVcʔV' mu:jik])	or <i>sḏm</i> =k	*/sV'cʔVmu:k/
<i>sḏmw</i> =sn ⁱⁱⁱ	*/sVcʔV' muwsin/	(or <i>sḏm</i> =sn ⁱⁱⁱ		*/sVcʔV' mu:sin/)	
ii) Verbs IIIae-inf.					
<i>mrrw</i>	*/mV'rV:ruw/	or <i>mrr</i>	*[mV'rV:ru:]		
((<i>mrrw</i> =(i) ³²)	*/mVrV'ru:wi:/))	> <i>mrry</i> =(i) ³²	*[mVrV'ru:ji:] or <i>mrr</i> =(y) ³²	*[mV'rVru:j]	
(<i>mrrw</i> =k	*/mVrV'ru:wik/	> <i>mrry</i> =k	*[mVrV'ru:jik])	or <i>mrr</i> =k	*/mV'rVru:k/
<i>mrrw</i> =sn ⁱⁱⁱ	*/mVrV'ruwsin/	(or <i>mrr</i> =sn ⁱⁱⁱ		*/mVrV'ru:sin/)	

This explanation for the phenomenon that an expected final *w* may appear spelled out as *y* in the case of the Imperfective Relative Form and in the case of the Posterior not just before the vocalic suffix pronoun of the 1SG */i:/ but also before mono-consonantal personal suffix pronouns, works—to spell it out explicitly—with the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3 (“Personal Suffix Pronoun Attachment Hypothesis”)

Personal suffix pronouns are attached to their base in different ways, depending on whether the base ends with a vowel (thematic) or with a consonant (athematic). In the case of mono-consonantal suffix pronouns attached to an athematic base, there is need for a *Bindevokal* */i/.

SUFFIX PRONOUN	AFTER CONSONANT	AFTER VOWEL
Bi-consonantal, e.g.	*/...Csin/ ...C=sn ⁱⁱⁱ	*/...Vsin/ ...=sn ⁱⁱⁱ
1SG	*/...Ci:/ ...C=(i) ³²	*/...Vj/ ...=(y) ³²
Mono-consonantal, e.g.	*/...Cif/ ...C=f	*/...Vf/ ...=f

32

Since we can explain the spellings of the Imperfective Relative Form with *y* as a secondary phonetic effect that is triggered by a following /i:/ of */i/, the way is paved to argue that the Imperfective Relative Form *sḏm.w/sḏm.y*= and the Passive Distributive Participle *sḏm.w* are indeed one and the same form, not only etymologically but also synchronically,³³ despite the different spellings of the forms (*sḏmw/sḏmy* vs. *sḏmw*).

The three cases discussed above support the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4 (“/Vwi/ > /Vji/ Hypothesis”)

A phonological cluster /Vwi(:)/ was pronounced as [Vji(:)] in certain varieties of Earlier Egyptian. This is an effect of assimilation of /w/ to the following /i(:)/.³⁴ The phonological

proposes (2009b, 269: *rw* */lw/ > */lj/ > */lʃ/; *nw* */nw/ > */nj/ > */nʃ/); and I also wonder, if Schenkel’s hypothesis is right, whether we wouldn’t expect many more cases of *y* in the spelling of other forms and words.

32 For the vocalization of the personal suffix pronouns themselves, cf. also Loprieno 1995, 63–64. For the 1SG, cf. Table 1 **Error! Reference source not found.** nn. a) and m) above.

33 Cf. the references in Werning 2011, I, 96 n. 37.

34 Probably only after certain stressed vowels.

effect may be represented by the spelling *y* or by the “hybrid” spelling *wy* (as a hint at the change *[w] > *[j]).

More generally, we have seen that there is good reason to assume that phonology and phonetic effects are possibly properly represented in spelling, i.e., that not all spellings are “frozen” orthography. This—I take it—urges us to address the question of “frozen” orthography and phonetic spelling in grammatical morphemes/endings more thoroughly.³⁵

PART IV. THE FUNCTIONS OF *y*;
OR: LET’S STOP IDENTIFYING ANY *y* AS AN “ENDING” BY DEFAULT

Traditionally, a spelling *y* is most often identified as part of an ending or inflection, either explicitly or by the transliteration as “.y” with a separating dot.³⁶ There are, however, quite a few different possibilities³⁷ that are not always thoroughly considered as an option:

1) Spelled after or instead of *ʒ*, *r*, *w*, or *ʕ* (?), the grapheme *i* or *y* might **indicate a sound change**:

i) *ʒy* ~ *y* /r/ > /j/ (cf. Werning 2011, I, § 52), for example in

ʒt{ʒ}y.t “mysterious” (F.SG) (Caverns),

ʕ{ʒ}y.t “great” (F.PL) (Caverns),

ʕ{ʒ}y(.w)/ʕ{ʒ}y(.t) “great” (PL) (NK);

ii) *ri* ~ *i* or *ry* ~ *y* /r/ > /j/, for example in

zwr ~ *zw{r}i* ~ *zwi* “drink” (DZA 28.584.200–240),

Hpr ~ *Hp{r}i* ~ *Hpi* “Khepri; the Transforming one” (Werning 2008a, 130–31; 2011, II, 504),

{r}i.t(i)=f “his jaws” (Hb. 39.17),

ds{r}y, *ds{r}y.w*, *ds{r}y.t* “sacral” (Book of Gates; Werning 2011, I, § 53);

iii) *wy* ~ *y* /w/ > /j/, for example in

ʒn{w}yt=f “his entourage” (Hb. 10.15; cf. Werning 2011, I, § 63), *ʒnwt* > *ʒnyt* “entourage” (DZA 30.157.810–30),

cf. also part III above;

and probably, I argue,

iv) *ʕy* /ʕ/ > *[ʕ]³⁸, esp. in the neighborhood of *h* (and *h*?), for example, in Caverns (cf. Werning 2011, I, §§ 80, 84, with additional reference to the case of certain Late Egyptian spellings):

h{ʕ}y(.w) *['ʕaħəu] (Resultative 3PL; once),

hʕ(.w) ~ *h{ʕ}y(.w)* *['hVəu] (Resultative 3PL; 2:2),

hʕ(.w) ~ *h{ʕ}y(.w)* *['hVəV] (Imperative PL; 3:1).

35 This and other spelling phenomena in Caverns provide evidence that the authors still had their own precise ideas about the pronunciation of *Egyptien de tradition* forms such as the Imperfective Relative in the 19th Dynasty (for the date of Caverns, cf. Werning 2011, I, Chap. V).

36 The dot, however, is sometimes used even explicitly against better knowledge (cf., for example, Schenkel 2000a, 69).

37 Cf. the discussion of Late Egyptian spellings by Schenkel 1994b.

38 Cf. Peust 1999, 100, with reference to Kammerzell in Hannig 1995, L.


- 2) A *y* might represent a consonantal **realization of the ult. inf. glide** of a verbal root in certain forms, for example the Subjunctive */sVc' ma/ *sḏm*, but */cVs' ja/ *ṯsy* ~ */cVs' ia/ *ṯs(i)* “may raise” (cf. Schenkel 1994b, 13; 2000a, 68; 2012, 215).

I support the hypothesis that the *ult. inf.* glide of a verbal root may either surface as *i* / *y* *[j] or not ø *[i] (cf., for example, Schenkel 2000a, 68). Actually, I support the following more general hypothesis:³⁹

Hypothesis 5 (“Umphonetisierungshypothese” / “Fluctuating Glide Hypothesis”):

A phonological glide may be spoken as consonant and surface as *i* / *y* *[j] or *w* *[w], respectively, or it may be spoken as vowel *[i(:)] or *[u(:)], respectively, without written representation. The possibility of a realization as consonant or vowel, respectively, is dependent on its position in the syllable structure.⁴⁰

- 3) A *y* might be a *mater lectionis* for **vocalic** /i:/ (or a similar closed frontal vowel) in the specific orthographies of certain texts, for example in the Book of Caverns (19th Dyn., early Neo-Middle Egyptian), see Part II above.

As a consequence, for example in verbal forms of verbs ult.-i-inf. and verbs whose last non-inf. consonant is *ʒ*, *r*, *w*, or *ʕ*, an immediately following *y* is quite unclear as far as its interpretation is concerned. For example,  <pry> might be interpreted as */prj/ *pr.y* with /j/ as an ending, as */prj/ *pry* with */j/ as a realization of the ult. inf. glide, as */pj/ *p{r}y* (or even */prj/ *pr{r}y*) with */j/ as a reflection of a sound change, or, for example in Caverns, even as */pri:/ *pr.y* with *y* as a *mater lectionis*. The acknowledgement of this may have quite an impact on morphological analyses as far as the number of clearly illuminating cases are concerned.⁴¹ The judgment has always to be made depending on the observed individual orthographic system of the respective text.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We have seen that there are good reasons to assume

- 1) that some of the spellings *i*, *ī*, *y*, and *w* are actually *matres lectionis* for various vowels in certain grammatical morphemes (Part I, especially Table 3);
- 2) that some of these *matres lectionis* are triggered by reader-oriented considerations in individual texts (“spelling pragmatics”; Part II);

and we saw

- 3) that, in some cases, phonetic changes triggered by inflectional and derivational combination of morphemes are regularly reflected in the spelling of glides (Part III), and
- 4) how this makes the attribution of glide spellings to either the root or an ending more complicated than often considered (Part IV).

39 Cf. also Schenkel 1983, 189; Reintges 1997, 214–15. For a comparable phenomenon in Indo-European languages, cf. Barber 2013, 1–2, 377, 381.

40 Cf., for example, my Intervocalic Glide Axiom (Pre-assumption 1, above).

41 E.g. in Schenkel’s (2000a, Tables 4 and 5) discussion of Subjunctives after a form of *rd(i)* that are spelled with *y*, 19 of 27 verb instances with *y* are instances of verbs with a pre-final consonant *ʒ*, *r* or *w* (*hʒy*, *šwy*, *try*, *pry*, *mry*, *hry*). This leaves only 8 instances of the verbs *šby*, *hʒby*, *hsy*, *ṯsy*, *ksl* (plus one erroneous *bn{y}*), which clearly support this part of his argument on the reflection of the ult. inf. glide in the subjunctive as */CVC' ja/ CCy ~ */CVC' ia/ CC(i). For a similar problem concerning Late Egyptian verbal morphology, cf. Schenkel 1994b.

In each of the four parts above, we have seen how far a set of hypotheses on the vocalization of forms and a set of hypotheses on the relation of spoken form to hieroglyphic spelling that includes the idea of *matres lectionis* in spellings of endings(!) in Earlier Egyptian may explain certain phenomena more naturally than the traditional theory. Compare, for example, the following reanalysis of the “problematic” forms from the beginning of this paper (Part I):

$\mathfrak{zmm}.t=f / \mathfrak{zmm}.tw=f$	$*\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}m^{\sim}m^{\sim}t^{\sim}f$	$*/RVmV'mV:tVf/$	
	or $*\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}m^{\sim}mt^{\sim}f$	$*/RV'mVmtVf/;$	
$\mathfrak{zm}.t=f / \mathfrak{zm}.tw=f$	$*\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}mm^{\sim}t^{\sim}f$	$*/RVm'mV:tVf/;$	
$pr\dot{i}.t=f / pr\dot{i}.tw=f$	$*p^{\sim}r^{\sim}i^{\sim}t^{\sim}f$	$*/pV'rV:tVf/ (?)$	
	or $*p^{\sim}r^{\sim}i^{\sim}t^{\sim}f$	$*/pV'rV:tVf/ (?)$.	
\mathfrak{zh} ‘spirit’	$*\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}i^{\sim}h^{\sim}$	$*/'ri:xV/$	$> {}^{A2}\mathfrak{I}\mathfrak{Z} \sim {}^{B1}\mathfrak{I}\mathfrak{P}, {}^{42}$
$\mathfrak{zh}.w / \mathfrak{zh}(.w)$ ‘spirits’	$*\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}i^{\sim}h^{\sim}\bar{u}$	$*/'rixV\bar{u}:/ > *['ri:xV\bar{W}]; {}^{43}$	
it ‘father’	$*i^{\sim}a^{\sim}t^{\sim}$	$*/'ja:tV/$	$> {}^{SB}\mathfrak{E}\mathfrak{I}\mathfrak{O}\mathfrak{T},$
$it.w / it(.w)$ ‘fathers’	$*i^{\sim}a^{\sim}t^{\sim}\bar{u}$	$*/'ja:tV\bar{u}:/ > *['ja:tV\bar{W}] > (?)$	$> {}^S\mathfrak{E}\mathfrak{I}\mathfrak{O}\mathfrak{T}\mathfrak{E};$
hrw ‘day’	$*h^{\sim}a^{\sim}r^{\sim}w^{\sim}$	$*/'harwV/ > */'hawwV/$	$> \overline{\mathfrak{C}}\mathfrak{E}\mathfrak{A}\mathfrak{A}\mathfrak{P}\mathfrak{Z}\mathfrak{O}\mathfrak{O}\mathfrak{Y} \sim {}^{AA2}\mathfrak{Z}\mathfrak{O}\mathfrak{O}\mathfrak{Y}\mathfrak{E},$
$hr(w).w$ ‘days’	$*harw^{\sim}\bar{u}$	$**/har'wuu:/ > *['har'ruw](?)$	$> {}^{AA2}\mathfrak{Z}\mathfrak{P}\mathfrak{E}\mathfrak{Y}.$

While the traditional theory often cannot easily explain the attested hieroglyphic spellings in a natural way (see Part I above), the reconstructions proposed here that are based on the set of hypotheses mentioned above are much more in line with the attested spellings.⁴⁴

As a veritable “(complex) hypothesis,” the set of hypotheses outlined above makes predictions about expected spellings which can be tested (this is much less the case for the traditional Defective Spelling Hypothesis). It also generates new questions; for example: Why do the spellings of the Posterior of verbs *ult. inf.* with 1SG personal suffix pronoun (and, equally puzzling, spellings of the Imperfective Relative Form with 1SG personal suffix pronoun) not always exhibit a *y* ($*/\dots'V:wi:/ > */\dots'V:ji:/$; compare my suggestions in Part III above)?; or, Are productively derived forms, such as, for example, plurals,⁴⁵ necessarily in line with the traditional syllable structure “rules”? An interesting puzzle! — in which hypotheses on vocalized forms and the spelling of glides and hints on vowels (i.e., *matres lectionis*) have a part to play!

ABBREVIATIONS

DU	dual	MK	Middle Kingdom
F	feminine	NK	New Kingdom
gem.	<i>geminatae</i>	OK	Old Kingdom
Hb.	See Werning 2011 (vol. 2) in the Bibliography	PL	plural
inf.	<i>infirmas</i>	SG	singular
M	masculine	ult.	<i>ultimae</i>

42 Cf. Schenkel 2009b, 274 (“ $*\mathfrak{z}^{\sim}i^{\sim}h^{\sim}.i/e/[\mathfrak{e}]?$ ”).

43 For this plural formation hypothesis, which operates with thematic nouns and a vocalic plural phoneme, cf. Werning 2011, I, §§ 65a–b.

44 The only case that the new theory cannot easily explain is the main vowel in some Coptic plural forms such as ${}^S\mathfrak{E}\mathfrak{I}\mathfrak{O}\mathfrak{T}\mathfrak{E}$ “fathers.” However, for an evaluation of the traditional Pre-Coptic Syllable Structure Rules Hypothesis and the Pre-Coptic Vowel Length Rule Hypothesis, cf. Peust 1999, Chap. 4 and Appendix 4; Schweitzer 2000.

45 Cf. the discussion in Werning 2011, I, § 65a–b.

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