

## Dots in the Demotic Script

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### المُلخص باللغة العربية:

ظهرت العديد من النقاط أسفل وأعلى بعض العلامات الديموطيقية. وعلى الرغم من أن هذه النقاط ظهرت بصورة واضحة في النصوص الديموطيقية، إلا إنه لم يتم ترجمتها، ولم نكن نعلم سبب وضع الكاتب لها. مع العلم بأن هذه النقاط لم تكن ثابتة؛ أى أن الكاتب كان يقوم أحياناً بوضعها وأحياناً أخرى لم يَقم بكتابتها في نفس النص. وكان الكاتب يتبع هذا الأسلوب مع تكرار العلامة عدة مرات في نفس النص.

**الكلمات الدالة :** العلامات الديموطيقية – النقاط – طائر العقاب المصرى – الحية ذات القرنين - موجة المياه.

### **Abstract**

Several dots appeared beneath and above some demotic signs. Although they are clearly exhibited in the Demotic texts, they have not been translated. However, we do not know why the scribe placed any of them. These dots were not constant as that the scribe used to put them sometimes and ignore them in some instances in the same text. The scribe followed this style with the repetition of the sign many times in the same text.

**Keywords:** Demotic signs – dots - Egyptian vulture – horned viper - ripple of water.

### **Problem:**

Researchers have not set a reason for the dots which exhibited beneath and above some demotic signs.

### **Objective:**

The main objective of this research is to study " **Dots in some alphabetical signs** ". Thus, this work aims to prove that the dots are not part of the Hieroglyphic signs. The researcher try to conclude why the scribe used to put the dots sometimes and ignore them in some instances in the same text.

## Dots in some alphabetical signs

### Introduction

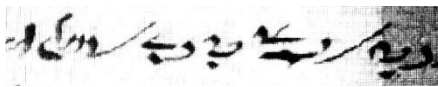
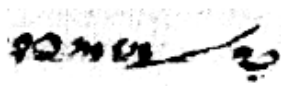
When the dot was exhibited with some demotic signs which are many of the alphabetic signs. Some researchers believed that it is originally part of the Hieroglyphic sign.

Nine of these alphabetic signs have dots such as *3*, *f*, and *n*. The current study will also include three tables. The tables contain the signs within which the dots were used and their positions in the examined documents.

### sign I (3)



This sign represents the Egyptian vulture. The scribe joined the upper and lower parts as one movement which represented the head and the feet respectively. This sign appeared in many Demotic texts with a lower dot, while it was sometimes removed which means that it was not constant. For instance, table 1 fig (s). (12, 13) have been written in the royal names as follows :

|   |  |
|---|--|
| " 3lgs3ntrs "<br>" Alexander "  | " 3rsyn3 "<br>" Arsinoe "  |
|  |  |



The name " 3rkylws" <sup>(1)</sup> was always written without dot, table 1 fig. (14). Although each of the three names were mentioned in the same text <sup>(2)</sup> and in the same line.

The presence of the dot in this sign was not limited to the royal names only. It also appeared with some verbs as in the word " 3k3 ". It means " to lose or lose ", and it was written in the text <sup>(3)</sup> as follows :



" dy 3k3 p3 hm hl n.d.t-k "

" Causing the loss of the slave who was at your mercy " <sup>(4)</sup>

The presence of the dot under the vulture sign was also not permanent in this text. Despite the fact that the sign was repeated again, the scribe deposited the dot beneath it, table 1 fig. ( 6 ).

Other forms of this sign appeared and they are similar to the previous form table 1 fig(s). ( 2, 15 and 16). The only difference between this form and the previous one is expressed by writing the line of the feet. The scribe used the lower dot in this form as well which appeared in the word " g3 " <sup>(5)</sup> which mean " "



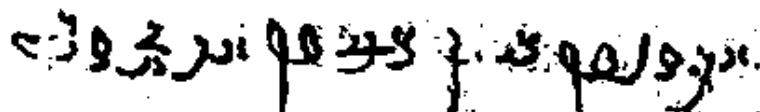
This sign was sometimes depicted as a vertical line and it probably expressed the line of the back, table 1 fig. ( 4 ).

## sign II (f)



This Demotic sign keeps the same elements of the Hieroglyphic one, which shows the slanting line linked to the horned viper. The use of the dot in this sign varied between the upper dot and the lower dot. This dot was not constant. It is noticed that three cases, whether with an upper dot, or a lower dot or without dots. It was translated as "f" " the third person pronoun " table 2 fig(s). ( 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10 : 15 and 19).

Although, the sign was repeated several times in the same text, the dot was not constant, table 2 fig(s). ( 6 and 7). This sign was duplicated in the same text 337 times; being written with a lower dot 41 times and 296 times without the dot. All of them were translated as a third person pronoun table 2 fig(s). ( 14 and 15). They were written in the same line as follows :



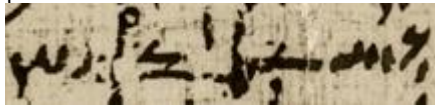
" iw.f n ( grg sys be iw.f) whm "

"It is furnished with repetitive beams and doors. " <sup>(6)</sup>

A dot is also noticed beside this sign in this text <sup>(7)</sup> where it has been translated as "

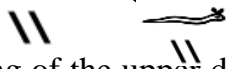
". n

The dot has not only appeared in this sign when used as a pronoun, but also in several other words such as the word " *fy tn nwb* " ( 8 ) which means " Kanephoros "



"the one who carries the golden basket" table 2 fig. ( 10 ).

The forms (4, 10 and 16) were mentioned in the same previous word " *fy nt nwb* ". The dot was used in each of them although the three signs were written on different dates. This dot might represent the two strokes in this case " " ( ).



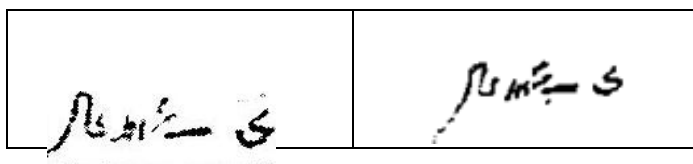
The using of the upper dot was prevalent in this sign more than the other. Although the scribe also followed the style of non-constant dots. This style has been used in the same text <sup>(9)</sup>. For example, table 2 fig. (17) which appeared in the word " *mh.f* s " ( 10 ) means " grab it " or " seize it ".



### Sign III ( *n* )



It was mostly written in the form of a flat horizontal line. The position of the dot varied between the upper and the lower dot. For example, fig(s). (14 and 15 ) were mentioned in the same document and in the same word " *ir-ny* " everyday " as follows :



This word was repeated in the text seven times (four times without a dot and three times with a lower dot). Sometimes it was written in the middle of the sentence as a dot table 3 fig. (16). Mostly, it was translated as a preposition " in " as follows :

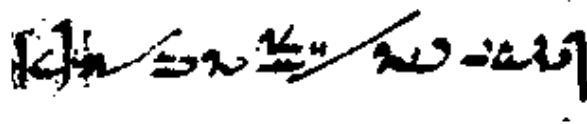


" *p3 nfr mn n t3 tw3. ( t ) .f* " *ir ny* <sup>(11)</sup> "

" The good person lasts in his underworld every day " <sup>(12)</sup>

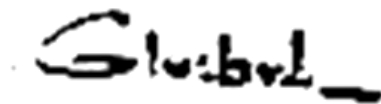
The dot in this sign was not limited to a lower dot or a dot in the middle of the sentences only. However, it also appeared sometimes with an upper dot table 3 fig. (18). This dot was also not constant table 3 fig(s). (12 and 13).

Both of them have been written in the same document <sup>(13)</sup> as follows:



" w<sup>c</sup>b n 3lgs3ntrs "

" Alexander priest " <sup>(14)</sup>



" n s – hmt.t hr – n<sup>h</sup>"

" To the women hr - n<sup>h</sup> " <sup>(15)</sup>

## Conclusion

Finally, it has been noticed that The dots are not constant in these cases. They cannot be considered part of the Hieroglyphic sign; because of all the elements of the Hieroglyphic sign were written. So these dots probably refers to signs, according to the evidence that was attached to the study.

**Table 1**



















| Hieroglyphic  | Demotic   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
|   | Early Demotic   | Ptolemaic Period   | Roman Period   |
|  | 1. <br>P. Lille dem. I 27, 6     | 5. <br>P. Lille dem. 5 a, 9                     | 15. <br>P. Rylands dem. 44, 6 |
|   | 2. <br>P. Lille dem. I 27, 7     | 6. <br>P. . Lille dem. 5 a, 4                   | 16. <br>P. Rylands dem. 44, 5 |
|   | 3. <br>P. Cairo CG 50058, 1      | 7. <br>P. Paris BN 215, II, 4                   | 17. <br>P. Michigan V 250, 4  |
|   | 4. <br>P. Strasbo rg dem. 2, 5 | 8. <br>P. Paris BN 215, V, 11                 | 18. <br>P. Carlsberg 67, 7  |
|   |   | 10. <br>P. Cairo 50123, 6                     |  |
|   |   | 11. <br>P. BM EA 10242, 13                    |  |
|   |   | 12. <br>P. Chicago Hawara 7A, 25255, I.1      |  |
|   |   | 13. <br>P. Chicago Hawara 7A, 25255, P.40 I.1 |  |
|   |   | 14. <br>P. Chicago Hawara 7A, 25255, I.1      |  |
|   |   |  |  |
|   |   |  |  |
|   |   |  |  |
|   |   |  |  |
|   |   |  |  |

Table ( 2 )









































| Hieroglyphic  | Demotic  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
|   | Early Demotic  | Ptolemaic Period  | Roman Period  |
|  | 1. <br>Stele Kairo CG 31085, rto. 6 | 6. <br>P. Kairo CG 30646, kol. IV. 4   | 12. <br>P. Rhind I, VIII. d 7        |
|   | 2. <br>P. Kairo CG 50068, 3         | 7. <br>P. Kairo CG 30646, kol. III. 15 | 13. <br>P. Rhind I, X. d 11          |
|   | 3. <br>P. Louvre E 7836, 11         | 9. <br>P. BM EA 10399, rto. x + II. 1  | 14. <br>P. Rylands dem. 44, 4        |
|   | 4. <br>P. Loeb 1, rto. 7           | 9. <br>P. Onch, 19 ? 6               | 15.. <br>P. Rylands dem. 44, 4      |
|   | 5. <br>P. Fitzhugh 3, 2 / 8       | 10. <br>P. Cairo 50149, 3            | 16. <br>P. Rhind I, VIII. d 6      |
|   |  | 11. <br>P. Cairo 50059 c, 9          | 17. <br>P. Cairo 50142, 25         |
|   |  |   | 18. <br>P. Carlsberg XIII, b. I. 7 |
|   |  |   | 19. <br>P. Tebt. Botti 3, 3        |

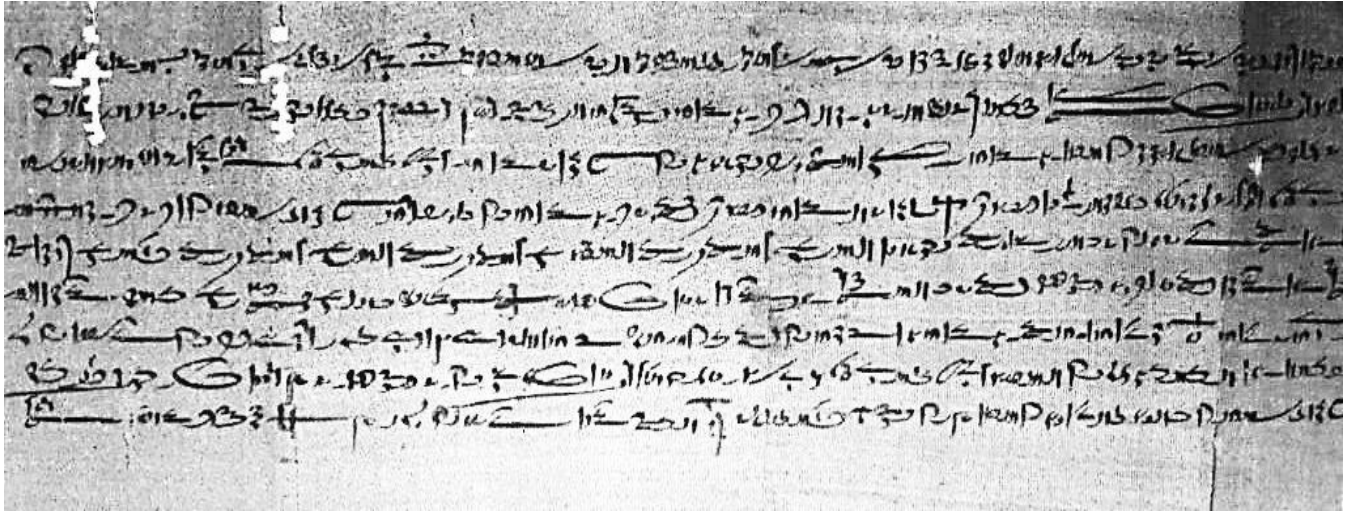
Table ( 3 )

| Hieroglyphic   | Demotic   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
|  | Early Demotic   | Ptolemaic Period  | Roman Period  |
| <br> | <p>1. <br/>P. Carlsbourg dem. 5, B. 4</p> <p>2. <br/>P. Louvre E 10935, 6</p> <p>3. <br/>P. Berlin P 13540, 5</p> <p>4. <br/>P. Berlin P 13540, 4</p> | <p>5. <br/>P. Kairo CG 30646, kol. V. 7</p> <p>6. <br/>P. Kairo CG 30646, kol. V. 2</p> <p>7. <br/>P. BM EA 10413, 8</p> <p>8. <br/>P. BM EA 10643, rto. 14</p> <p>9. <br/>P. Kairo JE 89362, 12</p> <p>10. <br/>P. Berlin P 11332 B, 1</p> <p>11. <br/>P. Berlin P 11332 B, 1</p> <p>12. <br/>P. Chicago Hawara, 25388, l. 1</p> <p>13. <br/>P. Chicago Hawara, 25388, l. 2</p> | <p>14. <br/>P. BM EA 10507, VII. 13</p> <p>15. <br/>P. BM EA 10507, V.3</p> <p>16. <br/>P. BM EA 10507, VII. 13</p> <p>17. <br/>P. Berlin P 15518, 4</p> <p>18. <br/>T. Wien Nationalbibliothek MT 12, 3</p> |



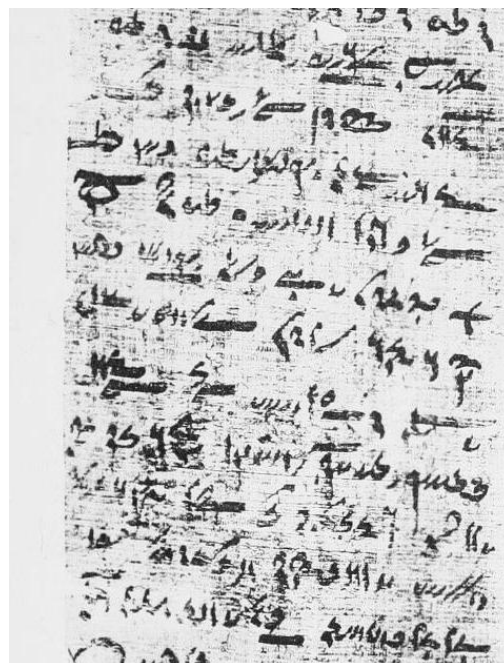
- Some fragments of papyri to illustrate the shapes and positions of the dots in the Demotic texts :

Figure ( 1 ) :



Chicago Hawara Papyrus 7A ( P.O.I 25255 )<sup>(16)</sup>

Figure ( 2 ) :



P. Lille dem. I 5<sup>(17)</sup>

## References

(\*) Research extracted from a master's thesis in preparation with the title " The Dots and Strokes in the Demotic Script " under supervision of Prof. Dr. Ola Mohamed Abd Elaziz El- Aguizy and Prof. Dr. Ahmed Talib Abd El- Dayem Khalil, Student counter, Doaa Mohamed Mohamed Rabea, Faculty of Arts, Department of Archeology, Minia University.

(1) George R. Hughes and Richard Jasnow, Oriental Institute Hawara Papyri Demotic and Greek Texts from an Egyptian Family Archive in the Fayum ( fourth to third century B.C. ), Chicago, 1997, Chicago Hawara Papyrus 7A, pl. 40, l. 1, p. 38, 39.

(2) This text is a provisional sale for one – third of a house, it being provided with beam and doors. It measures 18 god 's cubits from south to north and measures 19 god 's cubits from west to east. It is in the Sobek town of Hawara. Party A was " *pa – tr* ( *p3 – ti – n3 – ntr.w* ), son of " *nh – mr – wr* ", party B was " *sbk – htb*, son of *pa – w3* and *hr – nh*. The date is equivalent to July 21, 245 B.C. during the reign of Ptolemy III; see : R. Hughes and Jasnow, Oriental Institute Hawara Papyri, p.39 & 40.

(3) This text is a petition from a servant to his master, or from a subordinate to his superior. It seems that he committed a crime that landed him in prison; see : Henri Sottas, Papyrus Démotiques de Lille, Tome 1<sup>ER</sup>, Paris 1921 , p. 23 & 24.

(4) Henri Sottas, Papyrus Démotiques de Lille, Tome 1<sup>ER</sup>, Paris, 1921, Pl. II, No.5 , l. 9, p. 22 & 23.

(5) Revillout Et Eisenlohr, Corpus Papyrorum Aegypti, Vol.. II, Paris 1885, pl. 2, l. 13, p. 10.

(6) F. Ll. Griffith, M.A., Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester with Facsimiles and Complete Translations, V. III, Manchester 1909, Pap. XLIV, Plate LXXXIV, line 4; The Demotic Palaeographical Database Project, P. Rylands dem. 44 ( = P. Dime 3 12), line 4.

(7) This text is a sale of a house, consisting of agreement for sale, cession and a kind of abstract with signatures in Greek. It was dated to the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of king " Tiberius; see : Ll. Griffith, M.A., Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester with Facsimiles and Complete Translations, V. III, Manchester 1909, p. 300 & 169.

(8) Wilhelm Spiegelberg, Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, V. III ( Demotische Inschriften und Papyri ), 50023 – 50165, Berlin 1932, Tafel LXII, P. 50149, l. 3, p. 110.

(9) This text is part of the battle which occurred between king Aenaros, son of Pasmatic and the Persians; for more details see:





شروق سمير هيكل، الدعم الأثيني للثورة المصرية ضد الفرس ( 464 – 454 ق.م. )، ص. 53 : 63 .

(10) Spiegelberg, Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, vol. III, Tafel LIX, P. 50142, L. 25, p. 104 & 105.

(11) This word was translated by Mark Smith to " *ir r<sup>n</sup> by* ", however, the researcher has different opinion, according to the signs of the demotic word, it will be translated as follows :

This sign expresses the " *ir* ", this sign expresses the " *r* "

, the horizontal line expresses the " *n* " and three strokes express the " *y* "

so it will be translated to " *ir – ny* ".    

Mark Smith, Catalogue of Demotic Papyri in the British Museum, vol. III, London 1987 , VIII ( P. P. Mortuary Texts of Papyrus BM 10507 ), column VII, l. 13, p.44.

(13) The text is an annuity contract ( A Greek docket is appended to the Demotic text). This contract among " *p3 – ti – Wsir* " son of " *nh – mr – wr* " and " *hr – nh* " daughter of " *M<sup>c</sup> – R<sup>c</sup>*". The date of the Demotic text is equivalent to 259 B.C. during the reign of Ptolemy II.

(14) R. Hughes and Jasnow, Oriental Institute Hawara Papyri, P. 6 ( P.O.I. 25388 ), pl. 32, l. 1, p.33 & 34.

(15) R. Hughes and Jasnow, Oriental Institute Hawara Papyri, pl. 32, l. 2, p.33 & 34.

(16) R. Hughes and Jasnow, Oriental Institute Hawara Papyri. Pl. 40, l(s): 1 : 9 .

(17) Sottas, Papyrus Démotiques de Lille, Tome 1<sup>ER</sup>, Pl. II, l(s): 5 : 15 .