

1 On some examples for the Egyptian apheresis of “i“

2 This contribution deals in detail with the Egyptian apheresis of “i“. The
 3 phonetic principle occupies a solid position in the current scientific
 4 literature. The number of examples is enlarged here considerably, viewing
 5 the phenomenon from as many vistas as possible. In each case, the phonetic
 6 circumstances are explained.

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8 **Keywords:** Egyptian philology – Egyptian phonology – apheresis of “i“

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10 This article takes a closer look at the Egyptian apheresis of “i“. Researchers were confronted with this phenomenon early on. The following overview shows the course of development to date¹.

11 The oldest work on this aspect was apparently presented by Erman², who was able to prove the apheresis both globally and in individual formations.

12 The phonetic law was then touched upon by Westendorf³ under the amply flexible term “Defektive Schreibung“.

13 The aspect was last made clear by Kurth⁴ in the spelling “h.t“ for the “ih.t“-cow.

14 The scientific interest in this topic seems to have decreased noticeably afterwards. The existence of the phonetic law is not subject to any doubts.

15 In this contribution, the initiative is taken to deal with this phenomenon again. The amount of data that has been added in the meantime is presorted for this purpose and processed to such an extent that the phenomenon can be viewed in all its facets. In the total sum, ca. 50 examples have accumulated, on the basis of which first statements can be made. The apheresis of “i“ follows certain rules, which differ from case to case, but are always binding. The list presented here uses the Egyptological transliteration alphabet to arrange the evidence. This was the best way to get a handle on the wealth of material. In principle, other tools have been available for the structuring, but after weighing up all the arguments, they turned out to be less useful. Otherwise, the scope of the article would have exceeded an almost unacceptable level, since frequent back and cross references would become unavoidable. The age of the evidence is given in brackets for better orientation. The elision of “i“ started cautiously in the Old Kingdom, only to experience its climax in the Graeco-Roman period.

16 The dominant theme of the investigation is the phonetically conditioned apheresis of “i“. In the further course, the question of the influence of phonetic laws is tried to be answered as often as possible. The discussion is mainly based on spellings of individual words, but then also includes puns in the

¹The loss of initial „i“ in the hieroglyphic reproduction of African country names mentioned by EDEL 1990, 89, may have other causes, which cannot be pursued further here.

²ERMAN 1967/Neudruck der Ausgabe 1910, 96-104.

³WESTENDORF 1962, 12/13.

⁴KURTH 2007, 463.

1 consideration⁵. The environment of puns has crystallized several times as the
 2 gravitational centre of phonetic laws, so that the present cases are no exception.
 3 The puns come from literary texts, where they are known to be particularly
 4 common. The interpretation of the puns follows in the footsteps of Leitz⁶, who
 5 arrives at the conclusion that the mere consonance is sufficient as a constitutive
 6 feature.

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9 The Apheresis of “i“ before “3“

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11 The first group of examples is put under the motto of the apheresis of “i“
 12 before “3“. The most logical explanation is probably the assimilation of “i“ to
 13 “3“ in connection with the phonetic change between “i“ and “3“⁷. The writing
 14 “3.t“⁸ (New Kingdom/Graeco-Roman period) for “i3.t“ “site“ is pointed out
 15 first. The writing “3.t“⁹ (New Kingdom/Graeco-Roman period) for “i3.t“
 16 “back“ should be highlighted as well. The writing “3.t“¹⁰ (New Kingdom) for
 17 “i3.t“ „standard“ follows the same pattern. The theoretically conceivable
 18 connection between “3bw“ “Elephantine“ and “i3b.t“ “Osten“¹¹ (Late Period)
 19 can be seen in the same context. The writing “3r“¹² (Graeco-Roman period)
 20 for “i3r“ “mourning“ fits into the same grid. The relatively rare spelling “3r“¹³
 21 (New Kingdom/Late Period) for the second halve of “sh.t–i3rw“ “field of
 22 rushes“ reflects the same phenomenon. The explanation of “3r.t“ (Middle
 23 Kingdom) as a writing of “i3r.t“ “outflow“ suggested by Lesko¹⁴ would be on
 24 the same line, but was rejected by Sherbiny¹⁵ because of the unusual flesh
 25 determinative. The writing “3d.t“¹⁶ (Late Period) for “i3d.t“ “deficiency“ must
 26 also be considered here. The pun between “3d“ “to rage“ and “i3d.t“
 27 “deficiency“ also goes back to the apheresis of “i“, which can be found in:
 28 “...kii r3 tp-'.wy ir.t hr i3d.t=s, iw 3d=k r=s iw 3d=s r=k“¹⁷ (Late Period) „....
 29 Another spell before the eye of Horus (and) its torment(er). You rage against it
 30 (and) it rages against you“. The puns between “3bw.t“ “Abydos pillar“ and
 31 “i3bii.t“ „left“ respectively “3b“ “to stay“ and “i3bt.t“ “east“ in: “tsi tw m 3bw.t
 32 ir.t i3bii.t n. t R‘, 3b ib=k m i3bt.t“¹⁸ (Graeco-Roman Period) draw back on the

⁵For Egyptian puns cf. GUGLIELMI 1984, 491- 506; BARBASH 2011, 16ff; HAGEN 2012, 52-54; RICHTER 2016, 13-38.

⁶LEITZ 2014, 310 n. 44.

⁷For this phonetic change cf. EDEL 1955/1964, 59f; WESTENDORF 1962, 10f; JASNOW/ZAUZICH 2005, 89; SETHE 1899, 48.

⁸SETHE 1964, 25 k; ALLEN 1960, 46; KUCHAREK 2010, 276/279/326f.

⁹ALLEN 1960, 46; QUACK 2014, 93; WIDMAIER 2008, 146.

¹⁰OCKINGA 2011, 353.

¹¹BEINLICH 2017, 25.

¹²BURKARD 1995, 194 n. 132.

¹³ALLEN 1960, 46; JANSEN-WINKELN 2009, 453.

¹⁴LESKO 1972, 64c.

¹⁵SHERBINY 2017, 231.

¹⁶JASNOW 1992, 108.

¹⁷O’ROURKE 2015, 130.

¹⁸D X, 244, 2-3.

1 apheresis of “i“ as well. The line, which is almost saturated by puns, can
 2 be translated “Raise in/as the Abydos pillar, left eye o Ra, your heart may stay
 3 in the east“.

4

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6 The Apheresis of “i“ before ““

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8 The next subcategory of the apheresis of “i“ can again be demonstrated
 9 with a lager number of examples. The examples connects the fact, that
 10 everywhere “i“ before ““ was expelled. The assumption that here the
 11 assimilation of “i“ to ““ in connection with the phonetic change between “i“
 12 and ““¹⁹ takes place should be correct. The writing “w²⁰ (Middle Kingdom)
 13 for “i‘w“ “washman“ is stressed first. The second example is built by the
 14 writing “b²¹ (New Kingdom/Graeco-Roman Period) for “i‘b“ “bowl“. The
 15 writing “b²² (Old Kingdom/ Graeco-Roman Period) for “i‘b“ “to join²²/to
 16 supply²³“ can be added to the series. In its case, according to Gundacker²⁴, it
 17 should be an aleph prostheticum or dialect doublets. The explanation with
 18 dialectal influence seems to be less probable. The writing “b.t²⁵ (Middle
 19 Kingdom) for “i‘b.t“ “unity“ must also be taken into account in this context.
 20 The writing “f²⁶ (Graeco-Roman Period) for “i‘f“ “to torment“ should receive
 21 the same appreciation. The writing “r²⁷ (Graeco-Roman Period) for “i‘r“ “to
 22 arise“ can be subsumed under the same keyword. The writing “r.t²⁸ (Graeco-
 23 Roman Period) for “i‘r.t“ “uraee“ belongs to the same category. The same
 24 interpretation can be consulted in explaining the writing “h²⁹ (New
 25 Kingdom/Graeco-Roman period) for “i‘h“ “moon“. The same mention should
 26 get the pun between “i‘b“ “to present“ and “b.t“ „vessel“, delivered in
 27 “i‘b.n=i n=k ‘b.t“³⁰ (Graeco-Roman period) “herewith I present you the
 28 vessel“. The pun between “i‘r“ “to arise“ and “r“ “Ra“ allows the same
 29 explanation, which can be observed in the line “i‘(r)=k n=s m rn=k pw n r“³¹
 30 (Old Kingdom) “...you arises to him in this your name Ra”. In addition, a
 31 metathesis is to be assumed. The plausibility of the pun is increased by the
 32 writing “r“ for “i‘r“ discussed above.

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¹⁹For this phonetic change cf. SETHE 1899, 88/90; WESTENDORF 1962, 19; PEUST 1999, 103-104.

²⁰PRIES 2011, 110 n. 358.

²¹BURKARD 1995, 193 n. 116; GOEDICKE 1984, 63; ALLEN 1960, 46.

²²JUNGE 2003, 228.

²³PRIES 2011, 228/229.

²⁴GUNDACKER 2018, 158.

²⁵PARKINSON 2012, 190.

²⁶SANDER-HANSEN 1956, 51.

²⁷ERICHSEN 1959, 61; ALBERT 2013, 20; vgl. auch OTTO 1960, 75.

²⁸TÖPFER 2015, 117.

²⁹SETHE 1964, 174; VOLTEN 1958, 351 n. 1; VON FALCK 2006, 15.

³⁰CAUVILLE 1997, 95.

³¹SETHE 1960, 233 (452b); vgl. dazu auch EDEL 1955/1964, § 428 bb.

1 **The Apheresis of “i“ before “w“**

2
 3 The next examples join together again to form a group, in which the
 4 apheresis of “i“ before “w“ appears. The external prerequisite has certainly
 5 demanded the assimilation of “i“ to “w“ as a result of the phonetic change
 6 between “i“ and “w“³². The writing “w3“³³ (New Kingdom) for “iw3“ “cow“
 7 is listed first. The same look is worth throwing at the writing “w“³⁴ (Old
 8 Kingdom) for “iw“ “heir“. The writing “wr“³⁵ (Graeco-Roman period) for
 9 “iwr“ “pregnant“ will next be noted. The hint at the pun between “iwr“
 10 “pregnant“ and “wr“ “large“ should also be included in this context, which can
 11 be verified in the line “iwr.n t3 wr.t m hnt-t3“³⁶ (Graeco-Roman period)
 12 “pregnant was the Large one in Philae“. The pun is supported by the writing
 13 “wr“ for “iwr“ discussed above.

14
 15 **The Apheresis of “i“ before “p“**

16
 17 The next statements will be entirely in the spirit of the apheresis of “i“
 18 before “p“. In this case, the assimilation of “i“ to “p“ seems to occur. In the
 19 present moment, only the writing “p.t“³⁷ (New Kingdom) for “ip.t“ “harem“
 20 could be detected. The phonetic change between “i“ and “p“ has apparently not
 21 yet appeared. As a way out, analogy formation could be considered. However,
 22 the remarks of Kitchen are otherwise not without problems, so that it may be a
 23 modern misspelling. The example should therefore perhaps be deleted.
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 26 **The Apheresis of “i“ before “m“**

27
 28 The next group consists of examples in which the apheresis of “i“ before
 29 “m“ has taken place. The assimilation of “i“ to “m“ is a possible cause for this.
 30 The process was most likely started by the phonetic change between “m“ and
 31 “i“³⁸. The phonetic change has entailed the corresponding assimilation. The
 32 writing “m3“³⁹ (Late Period) for “im3“ “gracious“ has to be introduced first.
 33 The possibly existing connection between “m3h“ “grain sheaf“ and “im3h“
 34 “venerable“ continues the series⁴⁰. The writing “mn“⁴¹ (New Kingdom/Late
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³²For this phonetic change cf. SETHE 1899, 87f/116f; EDEL 1955/1964, 62; WESTENDORF 1962, 21; OSING 1976, 628.

³³OSING 1992, 62.

³⁴WB I, 50, Belegschrifungen.

³⁵KUCHAREK 2010, 440; BARBASH 2011, 118.

³⁶KOCKELMANN/WINTER 2016, 105.

³⁷KRI III, 305, 12/KRI III, 311, 9.

³⁸For this phonetic change cf. BOJOWALD 2011, 293-295.

³⁹BARBASH 2011, 166.

⁴⁰KAPLONY 1966, 88; cf. HORNUNG 1963, 53; for the word “m3h“ “grain sheaf“ cf. Giza VI, 144; Giza XI, 191; TAKÁCS 2008, 315.

⁴¹HELCK 1961, 187 n. 4; JANSEN-WINKELN, 2007a, 188.

1 Period) for “Imn” “Amon” follows next. The writing “mn.tiw”⁴² (Graeco-
 2 Roman Period) for “imn.tiw” “the Western ones” must also be included in the
 3 statistics. The number of examples can be further increased by the writing
 4 “mh.t”⁴³ (New Kingdom) for “imh.t” “place name”. The assimilation of “i” to
 5 “m” is also documented by the pun between “Imn” “Amun” and “mn” “to be
 6 firm”, which is certified in at least three places. The first case occurs in “i3w.t
 7 rnpi šbb nhḥ, Imn mn m (i)hw.t nb(.wt)”⁴⁴ (New Kingdom), for which can be
 8 translated by “you old one, who rejuvenates, and lives through the eternity,
 9 Amon, who is firm in all”. The second example can be proven in “imn.ti m
 10 Imn m ḥ3.t ntr.w ... hr=k tw m imi p.t mn.ti m R”⁴⁵ (New Kingdom), for
 11 which the translation “(You are) hidden as Amon in the front of the gods ...,
 12 you removes yourself as the one, who is in heaven, firm as Ra” can be offered.
 13 The third example is in “nhb(t.)[=f] m dw.w r nwn [m] Imn mn m ḥ.t nb(t.)”⁴⁶
 14 (Graeco-Roman period), for which the translation “[his] names row reaches
 15 from the mountains to the sea [as] Amun, who is firm in all.”. The pun is made
 16 almost perfect by the writing “mn” für “imn” discussed above.

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19 The Apheresis of “i” before “n”

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21 The next examples begin a new paragraph, in which the apheresis of “i”
 22 before “n” is analyzed. The assimilation of “i” to “n” forms the prerequisite
 23 that was brought about by the phonetic change between “n” and “i”. The last
 24 phenomenon has been treated e. g. by Westendorf⁴⁷. The writing “nb”⁴⁸
 25 (Middle Kingdom) for “inb” “wall” serves as first example. The writing
 26 “npii”⁴⁹ (Graeco-Roman period) for “inpī” “the one belonging to Anubis”
 27 must also come up for discussion.

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29

30 The Apheresis of “i” before “h”

31

32 The next example again opens up a new paragraph in which the apheresis
 33 of “i” before “h” is portrayed. The search has so far resulted only in one
 34 example that hides in the writing “hb”⁵⁰ (Graeco-Roman period) in one
 35 manuscript instead of “ihb” “?” in another manuscript. In the Egyptian
 36 language, the definitive proof of the phonetic change between “i” and “h” does
 37 not seem to have been successful so far, the phonetic change between “i” and

⁴²BARBASH 2011, 152.

⁴³LÜSCHER 2010, 93; for the connection between “mh” and “imh.t” cf. LEITZ 2014, 298/299.

⁴⁴LANGE 1927, 34.

⁴⁵ZANDEE 1947, pl. 3; vgl. dazu SMITH 2002, 103.

⁴⁶KLOTZ 2006, 74.

⁴⁷WESTENDORF 1962, 28.

⁴⁸BRUNNER 1944, 32.

⁴⁹LEITZ 2014, 142.

⁵⁰VON FALCK 2006, 28.

1 “h“ in Egyptian-Semitic direction will step in as a provisional replacement⁵¹.
 2 The late writing “hmś.t⁵² for the Horus son “Im-śt“ “Amset“ may also indicate
 3 this phonetic change. The assimilation of “i“ to “h“ has been productive in the
 4 example of Kurth discussed above.

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6

7 The Apheresis of “i“ before “h“

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9 The next examples constitute a new paragraph, in the centre of which is
 10 the apheresis of “i“ before “h“. The assimilation of “i“ to “h“ as a result of the
 11 phonetic change between both consonants can be recognized as a cause. The
 12 phonetic change between “i“ and “h“ is one of the rarer types, but it has been
 13 proven with certainty⁵³. The base can perhaps be additionally expanded by the
 14 writing “śnwi⁵⁴ for “śnwḥ“ “to cook“. The writing “ḥ⁵⁵ (Old Kingdom) for
 15 the particle “ih“ must be highlighted as the first example. The same process can
 16 also be illuminated from another perspective with the writing “ḥḥ⁵⁶ (New
 17 Kingdom) for “ibḥw⁵⁷ „dusk“. The loss of “w“ at the end of a word would
 18 also cause no difficulties as a second factor.

19

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21 The Apheresis of “i“ before Gutturals

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23 In the next section, the examples for the apheresis of “i“ before gutturals
 24 will be examined more closely. The assimilation of “i“ to the subsequent
 25 guttural offers itself as a cause. The phonetic change between “i“ and gutturals
 26 has not yet find a consensus, but a separable study is to be published in the
 27 foreseeable future that will him provide with better security. The writing
 28 “kr⁵⁸ (New Kingdom) for “ikr“ “excellent“ starts the series. The writing
 29 “gp⁵⁹ (Middle Kingdom/Late Period) for “igp“ “cloud“ must not be missing
 30 either.

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33 The Apheresis of “i“ before Dentals

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35 The next examples appear again as an organic unit whose common
 36 denominator consists of the apheresis of “i“ before dentals. The assumption
 37 does not go too far that the assimilation of “i“ to the dentals in connection with

⁵¹For this phonetic change cf. EMBER 1967/Neudruck der Ausgabe 1911), 89.

⁵²WIDMER 2014, 138.

⁵³WESTENDORF 1962, 36.

⁵⁴WB IV, 157.

⁵⁵Grunert 2005, 122.

⁵⁶ALLEN 1960, 46.

⁵⁷For the word “ixxw“ „dusk“ cf. LACAU 1970, 40; LACAU 1972, 57/81.

⁵⁸GARDINER 1932, 34 a.

⁵⁹WB I, 141, 1; VANDIER 1950, 223/234; KLOTZ 2006, 91; JANSEN-WINKELN 2007b, 341;
 KNIGGE 2006, 168.

the corresponding phonetic change is responsible for this. The existence of the Egyptian phonetic change between “i” and dentals could be sufficiently cemented some time ago⁶⁰. The writing “tn”⁶¹ (New Kingdom/Graeco-Roman period) for “itn” “sun disc” should be illustrative of this. The writing “tm”⁶² (New Kingdom) for “Itmw” “Atum” evokes the same interest. The writing “tr.w”⁶³ (New Kingdom) for “itr.w” “river” can also be classified in this category. The list is further completed by the writing “ti” for “iti”⁶⁴ “to take”. The writing “dn”⁶⁵ for “idn” “to represent” further rounds off the picture. The writing “db”⁶⁶ (Late Period) for “idb” “shore” should also be named in this context. The hint at the writing “dmi”⁶⁷ (Middle Kingdom) for “idmi” “red garment” also seems appropriate. The pun between “dmi” „to snuggle up“ and “idmi” “red garment” is to be evaluated in the same light, for which two examples can be given. The passage “ḥd=k m ḥd.t, w3d=k m w3d.t, sm=k irtiw, dmi=k idmi”⁶⁸ (Graeco-Roman period) is of first importance, for which the translation “You are with in white clothes, you are green in green clothes, you unites with blue linen, you snuggle up to the red linen” can be chosen. The second example can be decrypted in the line “m n=k idmi dmi=š r ‘wt=k nb.t”⁶⁹ (Graeco-Roman period), for which the translation “Take the red garment, so it snuggles up to all your body” makes an adequate impression. The pun between “dr” “to subdue” and “idr” “herd” also belongs here, which is to be seen in the passage “rh ph.ti=f dr idr n sm3 mi hr n hr”⁷⁰ (New Kingdom) “who knows his power and subdues the herd of wild bulls face to face”. The pun between “Itmw” “Atum” and “tm” “to be complete” goes back to the same principle, which shines up in the passage “...mšhn.t tm.ti ḫr.t Itmw mši.t šw hn’ tfn.t”⁷¹ (New Kingdom) „...Mesechenet, while you are complete, hand of Atum, who bore Schu and Tefnut“. The probability of the pun is successively increased by the writing “tm” for “itmw” discussed above.

The core statement of the contribution remains to be briefly summarized at the end. The apheresis of “i” could be outlined clearer by the foregoing considerations. In the majority of cases, phonetic reasons for the apheresis could be identified. The tendency of the consonant to drop out is certainly related to its own weakness. The same behaviour is shown by the two other

⁶⁰BOJOWALD 2013b, 27-35.

⁶¹ALLEN 1960, 59; GRIMAL 1981, 45; HOFFMANN 1996, 372.

⁶²ALLEN 1960, 46.

⁶³GARDINER 1948, 36 a/42 a.

⁶⁴GRUNERT 2005, 124.

⁶⁵WB V, 463, unter dn II.

⁶⁶BACKES 2016, 411.

⁶⁷BRUNNER 1937, 23 59.

⁶⁸RICKERT 2011, 230/233.

⁶⁹D X, 222, 10–12; for this passage cf. LEITZ 2011, 24.

⁷⁰KRI V, 112, 16; for this passage cf. HSU 2017, 245.

⁷¹YAMAZAKI 2003, 24.

1 weak consonants “3”⁷² and “w”⁷³. The overall development is not isolated in
2 the world of the oriental languages⁷⁴.

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