Possible scripts for the “reformed Egyptian” referred to in the Book of Mormon include abnormal hieratic and carved hieratic.
Two Notes on Egyptian Script

John Gee

Moroni, at the end of his father's record, states, "we have written this record according to our knowledge, in the characters which are called among us the reformed Egyptian" (Mormon 9:32). Since the publication of this statement many suggestions have been made concerning the identification of the script. This note is intended to broaden the base of possibilities thus far considered by adding two hitherto unconsidered options.

Abnormal Hieratic

Most discussions of reformed Egyptian deal with demotic. Yet "Demotic is . . . derived . . . from one of two hieratic styles used in Lower Egypt itself." This other style of hieratic script,

2 A convenient summary of the suggestions is found in William J. Hamblin, "Reformed Egyptian" (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1995).

abnormal hieratic, has not be considered in discuss Malinine, who did the modifying abnormal hieratic do and preferred to call it "cursive" while Georg Möller Kursive," but Griffith's that has stuck. "Abnormal the development of cursive was elaborated and used in particular, at Thebes, and be followed, almost with Eighteenth Dynasty until Dynasty." An adaptation of orthography, abnormal Egypt mainly for legal an Twenty-fifth and Twenty-
abnormal hieratic,⁵ has not received attention and ought at least to be considered in discussions of reformed Egyptian. Michel Malaline, who did the most work toward deciphering and publishing abnormal hieratic documents, did not like the term himself and preferred to call it “cursive thèbaine tardive” (late Theban cursive)⁶ while Georg Møller preferred the term “spätägyptische Kursive,”⁷ but Griffith’s term, “abnormal hieratic,” is the one that has stuck. “Abnormal hieratic’ represents the final stage of the development of cursive writing in the New Kingdom, which was elaborated and used in the southern half of Egypt and, in particular, at Thebes, and whose progressive changes can actually be followed, almost without interruption, from the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty until the penultimate reign of the Saite Dynasty.”⁸ An adaptation of hieratic characterized by “wild orthography,”⁹ abnormal hieratic in its second phase was used in Egypt mainly for legal and administrative purposes¹⁰ during the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Dynasties (727–548 B.C.).¹¹ after

⁸ Malaline, Choix des textes juridiques, 1:iv.
¹⁰ Malaline, Choix des textes juridiques, 1:iv. For the administrative purposes of early demotic, see ibid., 1:xvi.
which time it was replaced by demotic.\textsuperscript{12} Though abnormal hieratic is usually thought only to have been used in southern Egypt,\textsuperscript{13} it has now been dubiously argued that it was used in northern Egypt as well.\textsuperscript{14} Be that as it may, it is yet another modified Egyptian script available in Egypt in Lehi's day.

### Carved Hieratic

It is important to realize also that demotic, like hieratic (and abnormal hieratic), was usually written with a brush on papyrus until Ptolemaic times (third century B.C.), when the Greek kalamos or reed pen began to be used.\textsuperscript{15} Hieratic from the beginning was a script adapted for brush on papyrus; for carving, hieroglyphics were used.\textsuperscript{16} After the conquest of Egypt by the Libyans ushered in the Twenty-first Dynasty,\textsuperscript{17} hieratic began to be used for carving in stone. During the Twenty-second Dynasty, hieratic steleae containing official royal decrees became common, but hieratic disappeared from official decrees with the archaizing fashion of the Saite Period (Twenty-sixth Dynasty).\textsuperscript{18} The ductus

of hieratic (and demotic) that has been engraved is altered from that found on papyrus—carving tends to be more angular,\textsuperscript{19} while the brush adapts itself well to rounded forms—which makes it more difficult to read if one is not used to it. When engraved, hieratic and demotic are normally engraved in stone, but there are examples of demotic engraved into metal,\textsuperscript{20} including a bronze palette.\textsuperscript{21} Though, to my knowledge, no one has raised this objection before, it is worth noting that a tradition of engraving forms of cursive Egyptian is attested by Lehî’s day\textsuperscript{22} and that engraved forms of cursive do not necessarily coincide with those forms produced by brush and ink.

What follows are selected lists of documents in abnormal hieratic\textsuperscript{23} and carved hieratic\textsuperscript{24} and a selected bibliography of works dealing with abnormal hieratic.


\textsuperscript{21} Cairo CG 30691 (Roman period), in Spiegelberg, \textit{Die demotischen Denkmäler}, 1:80–82 and Tafel XXVI. This document is a temple inventory; for other examples see Jasanoff, “The Hieratic Wooden Tablet Varille,” 99–112, and bibliography in p. 100 n. 10.

\textsuperscript{22} Möller, \textit{Hieratische Paläographie}, 3:8.

\textsuperscript{23} In 1953 Malinine knew of about 150 documents in early demotic and abnormal hieratic, of which about thirty at most had been published; Malinine, \textit{Choix des textes juridiques}, 1:iv. He said there were about forty texts in abnormal hieratic; ibid., 1:ix.

\textsuperscript{24} This does not include incised hieratic ostraca that came to my attention too late to be included.
Selected Chronological List of Abnormal Hieratic Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Egyptian Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P. Berlin 3063</td>
<td>21–22 Dyn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin &quot;Grundbuch&quot;</td>
<td>21–22 Dyn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Berlin 10459</td>
<td>21–22 Dyn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Ermitage 2969</td>
<td>21–22 Dyn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Vienne 12011a</td>
<td>21–22 Dyn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Vienne 12011b</td>
<td>21–22 Dyn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Vienne 12011c</td>
<td>21–22 Dyn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Vienne 12013</td>
<td>21–22 Dyn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Brit Mus 10800</td>
<td>22 Dyn</td>
<td>14.2.ḥḥt.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Berlin 3048</td>
<td>833 B.C.</td>
<td>14 Takelot II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Leiden F 1942/5.15</td>
<td>728 B.C.</td>
<td>21.2.ḥḥt.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatican (10.574) 2038 c</td>
<td>726 B.C.</td>
<td>22 Py</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25 Conversion of the dates to our calendar here, and generally through the article, follow those of Kenneth A. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt (1100–650 B.C.)*, 2nd ed. (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1986). The format for the Egyptian date where given is taken from the Egyptian date formula of the documents themselves, using Egyptian format. Thus the date 17.1.šm.13 Psammetichus I means: year 17, first month of harvest (summer), day 13 of Psammetichus I. Restorations are in brackets.

26 First eight items unpublished, see Malinine, "L’hiératique anormal,” 1:32.


30 Michel Malinine, “Une vente d’esclave à l’époque de Psamétique Ier (papyrus de Vatican 10574, en hiératique «anormal»),” *Revue d’Egyptologie* 5 (1946): 119–31; Parker, “King Py, a Historical Problem,” 111–14; Malinine,
Papyrus Louvre E 3228 e 707 B.C. 10.4.šmw.3rqy Shabaka31
Papyrus Louvre E 3228 b 706 B.C. 13.3.ḥt.24 [Shabaka]32
Papyrus Louvre E 3228 d 688 B.C. 3.1 prt.10 Taharqa33
MMA 35.3.318 verso 688 B.C. 3.1.šmw.11 [Taharqa]34
MMA 35.3.318 recto 686 B.C. 5.1.šmw.2 [Taharqa]35
Papyrus Cairo 30884 686 B.C. 5.1.šmw.16 [Taharqa]36
Papyrus Louvre E 3228 f 686 B.C. 5.3.šmw.19 [Taharqa]37
Papyrus Louvre E 3228 c 685 B.C. 6.2.šmw.6 Taharqa38
Papyrus Cairo 30841 686 B.C. 7.4.[x] Taharqa39
Papyrus Cairo 30886 680 B.C. 13.2.šmw.29 [Taharqa]40
Papyrus Louvre 3168 [10] Taharqa41
Cairo CG 30907 + 30909 669 B.C. 22 Taharqa42

36 Wilhelm Spiegelberg, Die demotischen Denkmäler, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Drugulin, 1904; Strassburg: Fischbach, 1906; Strassburg: Schauberg, 1908; Berlin: Reichsdrukkeri, 1932), 2.1:194, 2.2:plate LXVII.
39 Spiegelberg, Demotischen Denkmäler, 2.1:190; 2.2:plate LXV.
40 Ibid., 2.1:194; 2.2:plate LXVII.
Papyrus Cairo 30878 668 B.C. 23 [Taharqa]\(^{43}\)
Papyrus Cairo 30865 Taharqa\(^{44}\)
Papyrus Louvre E 3228 g [Taharqa]\(^{45}\)
Cairo CG 50012 [Taharqa]\(^{46}\)
Papyrus Cairo 30894 [Taharqa]\(^{47}\)
Papyrus Cairo 30906 [Taharqa]\(^{48}\)
Papyrus Wien 12004 (4) Psammethicus I\(^{49}\)
Louvre Stele C 101 656 B.C. 8.2.21\(\frac{1}{2}\) Psammethicus I\(^{50}\)
Brooklyn 47.181.3 650 B.C. 14 Psammethicus I\(^{51}\)
Papyrus Wien 12003 647 B.C. 17.1.3\(\frac{1}{2}\)mw.13 Psammethicus I\(^{52}\)
Papyrus Vatican XL 643 B.C. 21.3.21\(\frac{1}{2}\).12 Psammethicus I\(^{53}\)
Papyrus Wien 12002 639 B.C. 25 Psammethicus I\(^{54}\)
Papyrus Louvre E 2432 635 B.C. [2]9.3.3\(\frac{1}{2}\)mw.13 Psammethicus I\(^{55}\)

45 Malinine, “Quatre textes du Musée du Louvre,” 96-97 and plate 5.
47 Ibid., 2.1:195; 2.2:plate LXVIII.
48 Ibid., 2.1:196; 2.2:plate LXVIII; Thissen, “Frühdemotische Papyri,” 107.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Papyrus Turin no.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(246) 2118</td>
<td>634 B.C.</td>
<td>30.4.šmw.5</td>
<td>Psammetichus I&lt;sup&gt;56&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2118 verso</td>
<td>633 B.C.</td>
<td>31.1.šmw.12</td>
<td>Psammetichus I&lt;sup&gt;57&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(244) 2119</td>
<td>33-42</td>
<td>Psammetichus I&lt;sup&gt;58&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(247) 2120</td>
<td>619 B.C.</td>
<td>45.1.prt.5</td>
<td>Psammetichus I&lt;sup&gt;59&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(248) 2121</td>
<td>617 B.C.</td>
<td>47.3.šmw.18</td>
<td>Psammetichus I&lt;sup&gt;60&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papyrus Louvre E 7858</td>
<td>609 B.C.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Necho II&lt;sup&gt;61&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papyrus Louvre E 7849</td>
<td>591 B.C.</td>
<td>5.4.šmw.21</td>
<td>Psammetichus II&lt;sup&gt;62&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papyrus Brit Mus 10113</td>
<td>568 B.C.</td>
<td>20.2.šmw.10</td>
<td>Apries&lt;sup&gt;63&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papyrus Louvre E 7861</td>
<td>567 B.C.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Amasis&lt;sup&gt;64&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papyrus Louvre E 7848</td>
<td>558 B.C.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Amasis&lt;sup&gt;65&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leiden I 431</td>
<td>556 B.C.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Amasis&lt;sup&gt;66&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papyrus Brit Mus 10432</td>
<td>555 B.C.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Amasis&lt;sup&gt;67&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<sup>65</sup> Thissen, “Frühdemotische Papyri,” 110.

Papyrus Louvre E 7845  553 B.C.  17  Amasis
Papyrus Louvre E 7846  548 B.C.  22.3.šmw.5  Amasis
Cairo CG 30657  546 B.C.  24  Amasis
Papyrus Louvre E 3168  ?  16.1.šmw.26  71
Papyrus Brooklyn  37.1799 E  ?  ?  72

Select Annotated Bibliography on Abnormal Hieratic


Bakir, Abd el-Mohsen. *Slavery in Pharaonic Egypt*. Cairo: Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 1952. The standard discussion of Egyptian slavery, it is also the first publication of several abnormal hieratic slave transactions.


---


Concernant un partage (Pap. 1er). Revue d’Égyptologie 25 of two cessions in normal hieratic and demotic writing to subject. Volume 1 slations, and commentary, as normal hieratic, while volume 2 ones and some plates. 

Égyptiens relatifs au dépôt de 30657.) Mitteilungen des Instituts Abteilung Kairo 16 of two legal documents in deposits.

Textes et langages Cent cinquante années de mmane à Jean-François 5. Cairo: Institut Français An historical overview of the c. rendu à Thèbes sous la XXVe (c.). Revue d’Égyptologie 6 a court case over the owner, with an analysis of the slave trade in Egypt. hiéroglyphiques de quatre crits en hiéroglylique anomal.” 32–83): 93–100. The hiero-

ormal hieratic documents in 

ens de l’époque d’Amasis Revue d’Égyptologie 8 (1951): documents concerning the rental arly cursive demotic, one in arly demotic.

GEE, EGYPTIAN SCRIPT


Malinine, Michel. “Vente de tombes à l’époque saïte.” Revue d’Égyptologie 27 (1975): 164–74. The publication of two Saïte period stelae containing the sale of tombs, one of which (Louvre C101) was thought to be in abnormal hieratic, which Malinine denies.


Möller, Georg. Zwei ägyptische Eheverträge aus vorsäußerischer Zeit. Berlin: Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1918. General overview of all Egyptian marriage documents, but based on two abnormal hieratic documents, as the earliest examples of the genre.

Parker, Richard A. “King Py, a Historical Problem.” Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde 93 (1966): 111–14. The discussion of the date in P. Leiden F 1942/5.15. This article forced a rereading of Shabako’s predecessor’s name from Pianchi/Piankhy to Py or Piye.

Parker, Richard A. A Saite Oracle Papyrus from Thebes in the Brooklyn Museum (Providence: Brown University Press, 1962), 1–34. Publication of an oracle papyrus in abnormal hieratic, with an excursus by Jaroslav Černy on oracles that is the standard work on ancient Egyptian oracles.


Spiegelberg, Wilhelm. Die demotischen Denkmäler, 3 vols. Leipzig: Druglin, 1904; Strassburg: Fischbach, 1906; Strassburg: Schauberg, 1908; Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1932. Part of the Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, this important corpus of demotic material includes several papyri in abnormal hieratic. (There are three
volumes, volume two comes in two parts; all parts have been published by different publishers.)


**Selected Chronological List of Carved Hieratic Documents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monument</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brit Mus 138</td>
<td>21st Dyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strasbourg 1588</td>
<td>22nd Dyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caves IFAO n de séquestre 14456</td>
<td>22nd Dyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leningrad Ermitage 5630</td>
<td>c. 935 B.C. (year 10 of Sheshonq I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York MMA 10.176.42</td>
<td>c. 918 B.C. (year 6 of Osorkon I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago OIM 10511</td>
<td>823 B.C. (year 3 of Sheshonq III)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

75 Georg Müller, *Hieratische Lesestücke für den akademischen Gebrauch*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1910–27), 3:33–34. The text, according to Müller, is a Twenty-first Dynasty forgery; it purports to be from the Middle Kingdom.
78 Ibid., 666 # 22.1.10; Kitchen, *Third Intermediate Period in Egypt*, 291 n. 278.
80 Meeks, “Les donations aux temples,” 668 # 22.8.3.

---

GREE, EGYPTIAN SCRIPT

Glyptothèque Ny-Carlsberg
E. 917
Louvre E 20905
Brooklyn Mus 67–118
Berlin 7344
Strasbourg 1379
Moscow I 1a 5647
Cairo 21/3/25/15
location unknown
Moscow I 1a 5648
British Mus 73965
location unknown
Brooklyn Mus 67–119
Cairo JdE 30972
Farouk collection

---

82 Ibid., 668 # 22.8.18.
83 Ibid., 668 # 22.8.22.
88 Ibid., 691 # 22.8.4.
89 Stephen Quirke and Jeffrey Spence, *Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), 162.
Glyptothèque Ny–Carlsberg
E. 917
Louvre E 20905
Brooklyn Mus 67–118
Berlin 7344
Strasbourg 1379
Moscow I 1 a 5647
Cairo 21/3/25/15
location unknown
Moscow I 1 a 5648
British Mus 73965
location unknown
Brooklyn Mus 67–119
Cairo JdE 30972
Farouk collection
818–793 B.C. (reign of Pedubast I)81
808 B.C. (year 18 of Sheshonq III)82
804 B.C. (year 22 of Sheshonq III)83
798 B.C. (year 28 of Sheshonq III)84
796 B.C. (year 30 of Sheshonq III)85
795 B.C. (year 31 of Sheshonq III)86
794 B.C. (year 32 of Sheshonq III)87
784 B.C. (year 21 of Iuput I)88
c. 825–773 B.C. (Sheshonq III)89
761 B.C. (year 7 of Sheshonq V)90
760 B.C. (year 8 of Sheshonq V)91
753 B.C. (year 15 of Sheshonq V)92
749 B.C. (year 19 of Sheshonq V)93
732 B.C. (year 36 of Sheshonq V)94

81 Otto Koefoed-Petersen, Recueil des inscriptions hiéroglyphiques de la
glyptothèque ny Carlsberg (Brussels: Foundation Égyptologique reine
Élisabeth, 1936), plate V; Jean Yoyotte, "Un étrange titre d’époque libyenne,"
Bulletin de l’institut français d’archéologie orientale 58 (1959): 97; Kitchen,
Third Intermediate Period in Egypt, 339–40 n. 536.
82 Ibid., 668 # 22.8.18.
83 Ibid., 668 # 22.8.22.
84 Günther Roeder, Aegyptische Inschriften aus den Königlichen Museen
temples,” 669 # 22.8.28; Yoyotte, "Un étrange titre d’époque libyenne," 98.
86 Ibid., 669 # 22.8.31; Yoyotte, "Un étrange titre d’époque libyenne,"
97.
87 Meeks, “Les donations aux temples,” 669 # 22.8.32; Yoyotte, "Un
étrange titre d’époque libyenne,“ 99.
89 Ibid., 681 # B 4.
90 Stephen Quirke and Jeffrey Spencer, The British Museum Book of
Ancient Egypt (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 201; Ian Shaw and Paul
162.
92 Ibid., 670 # 22.10.15; Kitchen, Third Intermediate Period, 351 n. 609.
93 W. Max Müller, Egyptological Researches, 3 vols. (Washington, DC:
donations aux temples,” 670 # 22.10.19; for the correct attribution of the ruler,
see Kitchen, Third Intermediate Period in Egypt, 349–51 esp. 351 n. 610.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Dynasty/Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cairo JeE 45549</td>
<td>788 or 730 B.C. (year 38 of unnamed king, Sheshonq III, Y?)</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo JeE 85647</td>
<td>c. 767–730 B.C. (Sheshonq V)</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louvre IM 3305</td>
<td>22nd Dyn.</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louvre IM 19</td>
<td>22nd Dyn.</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo 27/6/24/3</td>
<td>22nd Dyn.</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashmolean Mus 1894–107b</td>
<td>724 B.C. (year 24 of Py)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athens G3, 409</td>
<td>720 B.C. (year 8 of Tefnakht)</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stela Zagazig</td>
<td>714 B.C. (year 3 of Shabako)</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York MMA 55.144.6</td>
<td>711 B.C. (year 6 of Shabako)</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo JeE 28731</td>
<td>(year 6 of unnamed king)</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stela Suez</td>
<td>646 B.C. (year 19 of Psammetichus I)</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo CG 31086</td>
<td>Saite/Persian</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo CG 31094 (JeE 27145)</td>
<td>Ptolemaic/Roman</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95 Ibid., 681 # B 3.
96 Ibid., 669 # 22.10.00a.
98 Ibid., 1:87, 2:plate XXV 87.
105 Ibid., 674 # 26.1.19.
106 Spiegelberg, *Demotischen Denkmäler*, 1:12, Tafel I.
107 Ibid., 1:25, Tafel V.