

# A NEW CORPUS OF RAMESSIDE OSTRACA FROM THE EXCAVATION OF HOWARD CARTER IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS<sup>1</sup>

*Khaled HASSAN* \*

## INTRODUCTION

Following the death of Theodore Davis, Lord Carnarvon obtained the concession to excavate in the Valley of the Kings. He appointed Howard Carter between 1915-1922 to direct the fieldwork.<sup>2</sup> Several digging seasons in this area revealed large numbers of finds, especially ostraca inscribed in different scripts and addressing various topics. The excavators fully recorded the results of the excavations, and most of these records, diaries, and notebooks, are now kept in the Griffith Institute, Oxford.<sup>3</sup>

This paper presents a set of ostraca, most of which are in hieratic script, discovered during Howard Carter's excavation in the Valley of the Kings. They were stored in the basement of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, without precise information concerning their provenance in the records. Nevertheless, they were mentioned in Gunn's notebooks with their exact find location, along with an initial transcription in Gunn's hand.<sup>4</sup> According to the information given by Carter and Gunn, most of these ostraca were discovered in two sites: first, a group of workmen's huts in front of the tomb of Ramses VI (KV 9), and second, the area around the tomb of Siptah (KV 47).<sup>5</sup>

Many of the ostraca uncovered by Carter were published by Černý in a volume of the *Catalogue Général*,<sup>6</sup> while the rest is still unpublished. This paper aims to introduce the content of these unpublished ostraca to the scholarly world for the first time, and to identify their exact provenance. The ostraca are sorted according to the type of texts they bear, i.e., literary and administrative texts, subdivided by topics.

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1 My sincere appreciation is due to Prof. Dr Robert J. Demarée (Leiden University) for his guidance, discussion, and reviewing this paper. Particularly, he draws my attention to Gunn's notebook and provides me with the pages that contained notes on the current ostraca. I would also like to thank my friend Dr Mansour Mohamed for recombining some photos on Photoshop. Finally, many thanks also go to the reviewers of this paper for their valuable comments.

2 REEVES 1990, p. 321.

3 As also the journal of Lord Carnarvon's excavations giving the order and position of objects found <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/cc/page/data.html>.

4 One can also check the ostraca with Carnarvon numbers with their page numbers in Gunn's notebooks <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/4higun.html>.

5 REEVES 1990, pp. 328, 330.

6 ČERNÝ 1935; The CG numbers of the ostraca found in the site of KV9 are: CG 25798, 25802, 25803, 25805, 25806, 25807, 25808, 25809, 25813, 25815, 25816, 25821, 25828, 25829, 25832. REEVES 1990, p. 328. While the ostraca found in the site of KV 47 are: CG 25779, 25780, 25781, 25782, 25783, 25784, 25785, 25786, 25787, 25790, 25792, 25793, 25794, 25796, 25799, 25800, 25801, 25804, 25806, 25810, 25814, 25828, 25831. REEVES 1990, pp. 330-331. Some other hieratic ostraca found near KV 47 are also published by CILLI 2011, pp. 95-110; and also, one can find more information about the ostraca uncovered around KV 47 in CILLI 2014, pp. 7-15.

## LITERARY OSTRACA

### *Writing Exercises*

#### 1–HO. Cairo 30<sup>7</sup>=O. Carter–Carnarvon 281

Description: Limestone, 9 x 11 cm; the ostracon seems to be intact besides small parts at the bottom and on the left sides.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings.

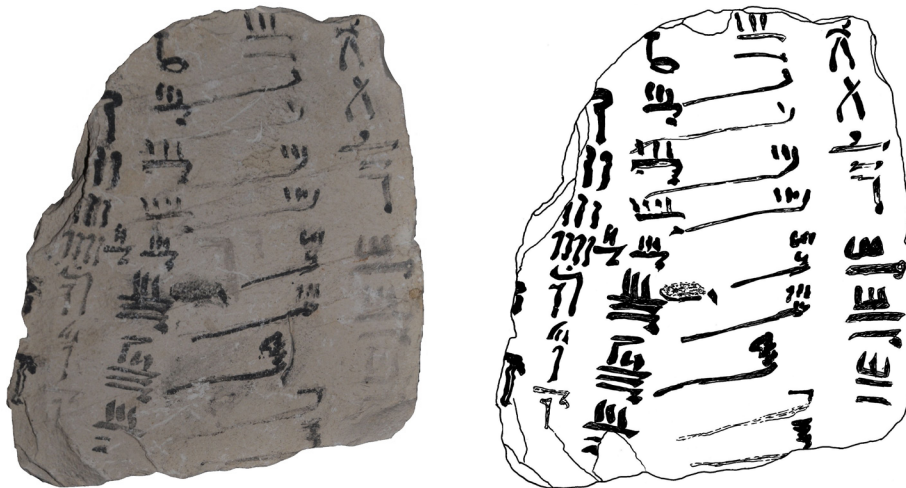
Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn notebook 45a. 51

Content: The text on the *recto* represents a writing exercise on numbers.<sup>8</sup>

The *verso* is palimpsest; faint traces of an earlier text are still visible.

rt.



7 This number represents the serial number assigned by a team of the Cairo University. The author was part of this team, who was authorized to make a classification of the whole ostraca housed in the basements of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. These new numbers do not relate to the entry or the temporary numbers of the museum's registers. It is worth mentioning that these ostraca are not recorded in the registers of the Cairo Museum.

8 For similar writing exercises cf. GRANDET 2000, p. 5, no. 827; VENTURINI 2007, pp. 1885-1896.

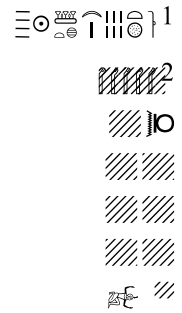
vs.



rt.

	↑		↓	⌒⌒⌒	⌒⌒	1
	↑↑		↓↓↓	9	⌒⌒⌒	2
	↑↑↑		↓↓↓	99	⌒⌒⌒⌒	3
	↑↑↑↑		↓↓↓↓	999	⌒⌒⌒	4
	↑↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↓↓↓	9999	⌒⌒⌒	5
	↑↑↑↑	↑↑	↓↓			
	↑↑↑↑↑	↑↑↑		↓↓↓↓↓	999	6
	↑↑↑↑	↑↑↑		↓↓↓↓↓	99	
	↑↑↑↑			↓↓↓↓↓	999	7
	↑↑↑			↓↓↓	999	
				↓↓↓↓↓	9999	8
				↓↓↓↓↓	999	
					9999	9
					9999	
					999	10
					999	
					999	

vs.



*Transliteration*

rt.

[1]	20	90	1000	10000		
[2]	30	100	3000	20000		
[3]	40	200	3000	30000		
[4]	50	300	4000	40000		
[5]	60	400	5000	5000	50000	80000?
[6]	90	500	9000 tr.	60000	90000?	
[7]	90	600	7000	70000		
[8]		700	9000			
[9]		800				
[10]		900				

vs.

- [1] *rnpt-sp 6 3bd 1 3ht sw 4*
- [2] *10000, 10000, 10000, 10000, 10000?*

*Translation*

vs.

- [1] Year 6, first month, day 4
- [2] 10000, 10000, 10000, 10000, 10000?

The date on the *verso* most probably represents the date of writing of this exercise. The other two signs could be read as *šn* and *hh*.

**2–HO. Cairo 66 = O. Carter-Carnarvon 300 M.16.A**

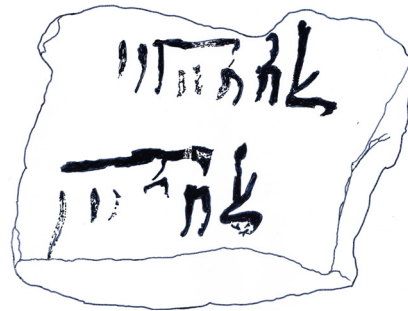
Description: Limestone, 5.5 x 6.5 cm; the ostrakon seems to be complete.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen’s huts in front of KV 9.

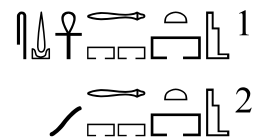
Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45b, 58.

Content: Writing exercise.



*Transcription*



*Transliteration*

[1] *st pr-ʿ3 ʿw.s*

[2] *st pr-ʿ3*

*Translation*

[1] King's tomb L.P.H.

[2] King's tomb

This text represents a writing exercise and most probably was written by a junior scribe. Many of these beginners' exercises were found on ostraca in the Ramesseum and Deir el-Medina.<sup>9</sup> The beginners would not write on expensive papyrus, because the ostraca provided a free writing material perfectly suited to their needs.<sup>10</sup> In the corpus of Deir el-Medina ostraca, we find different subjects for these exercises: toponyms,<sup>11</sup> hieratic signs such as *hnw*, Seth signs,<sup>12</sup> and *ʿ* sign.<sup>13</sup>

9 McDOWELL 2000, p. 221.

10 McDOWELL 2000, p. 221.

11 GASSE 2005, p. 29, no. 1789

12 GASSE 2005, p. 11-12, no. 1776, p. 13, no. 1777, p. 25, no. 1787.

13 VERHOEVEN 2012, p. 57.

## Teaching

### 3–HO. Cairo 34+37<sup>14</sup>=O. Carter-Carnarvon 414

Description: Limestone.

**34** (9.5 x 16.5 cm) is broken on the left and bottom edges, however very few signs of the last line remain on the *recto*. The *verso* is complete on the left side, while many signs are missing on the right, particularly in the first two lines.

**37** (10 x 5 cm): the *recto* is complete on the right side because it represents the counterpart of the text on ostracon 34. On the *verso*, the text is broken in the lower part, and therefore some words are missing.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the deepest layer, around KV 47 (Siptah).

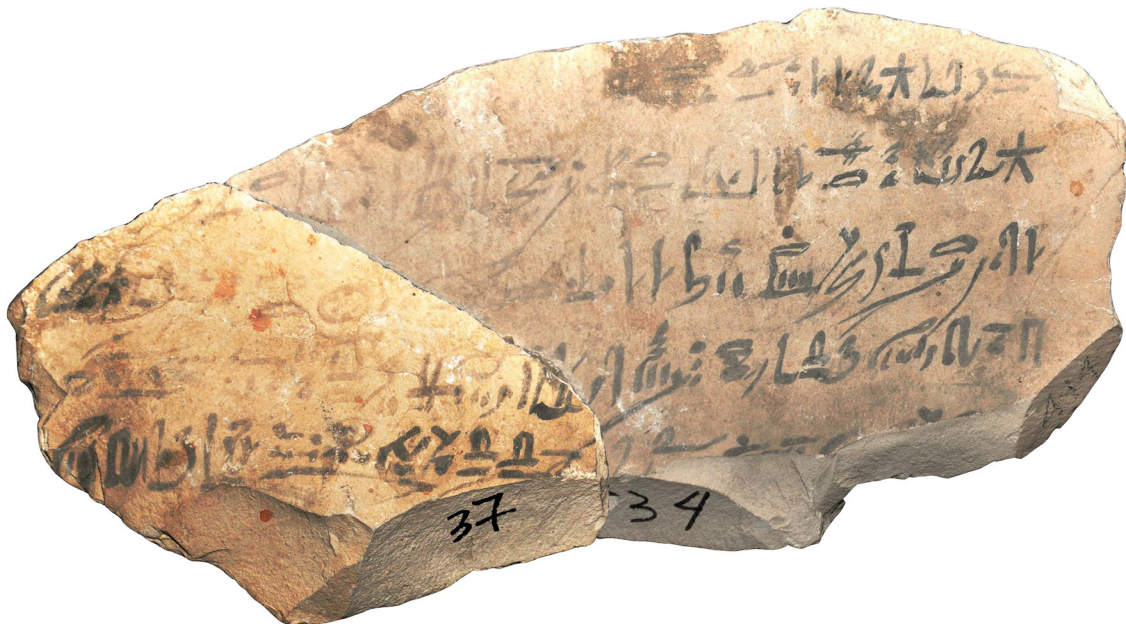
Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn MSS Notebook 45a, 20.

Content: Teaching of Dua-Khety to his son Pepy.

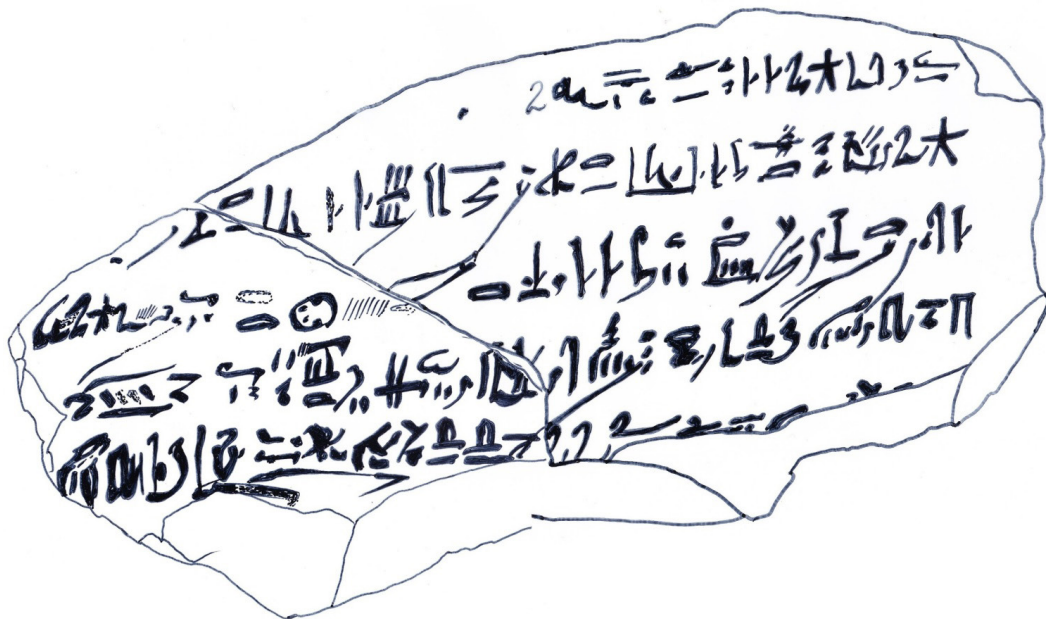
The Teaching of Dua-Khety was a popular didactic text for the students in Ancient Egypt. Thus, it is frequently found in places of the Valley of the Kings,<sup>15</sup> and Deir el-Medina. It is often found alongside other literary compositions such as the Teaching of Amunnakhte, The Dialogue of a Man and his Soul, and an Hymn to Ramses VII.

rt.

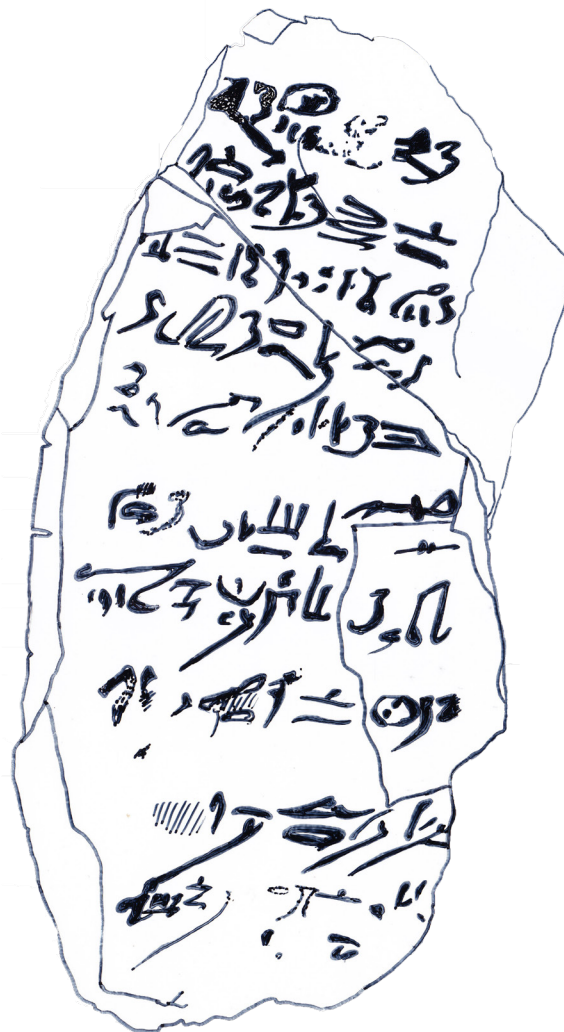
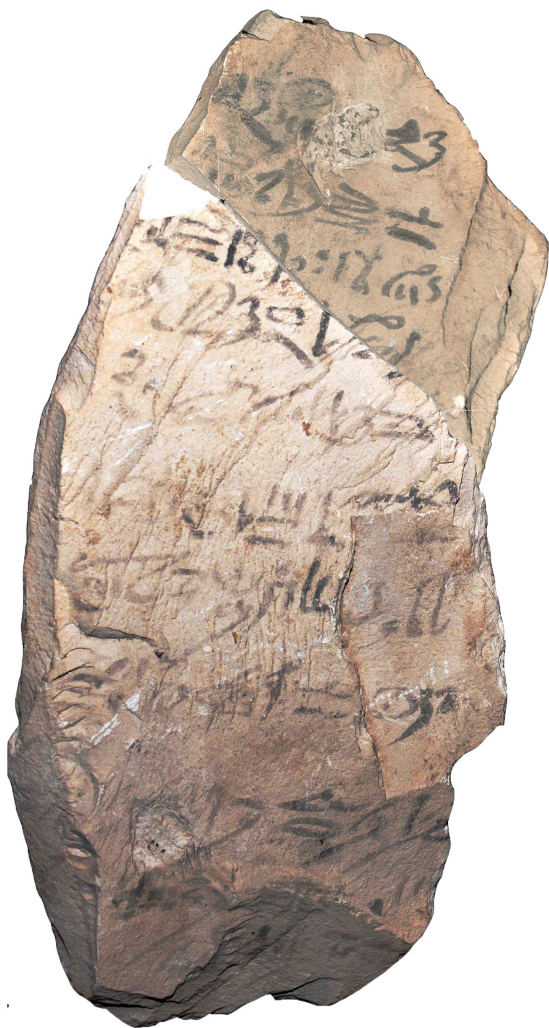


14 This ostracon was found in two pieces in the Egyptian Museum of Cairo and had two different numbers. It was joined by the author into one piece.

15 DORN 2011, pp. 446, no. 727; 450, no. 732; 450, no. 733; 451, no. 733; 453, no. 736. For more information about the Instruction of Dua-Khety cf. BRUNNER 1942; HELCK 1970; JÄGER 2004.



vs.

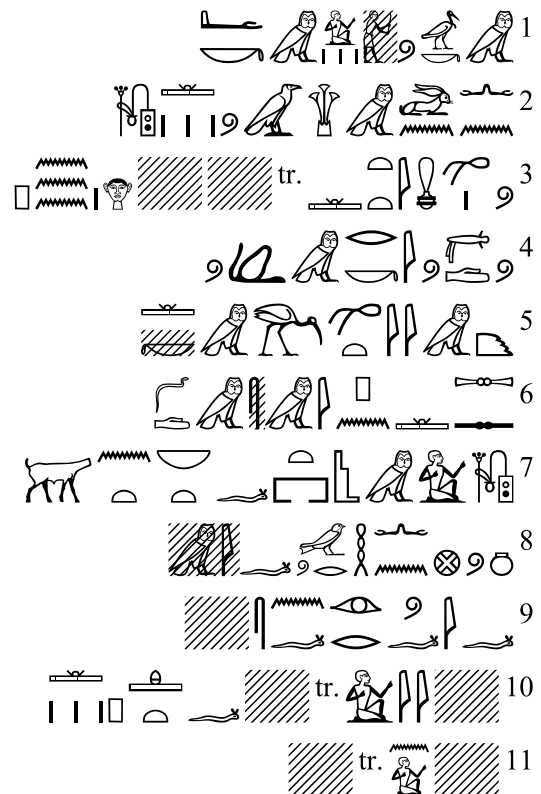


Transcription

rt.



vs.



Transliteration

rt.

- [1] *h3.t- ' m sb3y.t ir.t.n s [n 73r.t] •*
- [2] *dw3.w-h3ty rn.f n s3.f• Ppy rn.f•*
- [3] *ist r.f sw m hntyt r hn.w r rdi.t.f m sb3*
- [4] *n.t sš.w m-k{n}3b.f ms.w sr.w imy hr h3.t n.t hnw*
- [5] *[ 'h '.n dd.n.f, n.f] m33.n.i knkn.w dd.k ib.k m-s3 sš.w*

vs.

- [1] *[dg3.n.i nhm tw] m b3kw[.f] mk*
- [2] *nn wn m-h3w sš.w*
- [3] *mitt hr mw pw*
- [4] *šd ir.k m pħwy*
- [5] *Kmy.t gm.k*

- [6] *ts pn im.s m-dd*
- [7] *[ir] sš m s.t.f nb.t n.t hn.w*
- [8] *nn hwr.f im*
- [9] *f iw.f ir.n.f s[3r.t]*
- [10] *[n k]y [nn pr].f htp.w*
- [11] *[n m33] n.i.....*

*Translation*

rt.

- [1] Beginning of the teaching made by a man [of Tjaru]
- [2] called Dua-Khety for his son called Pepy
- [3] while he was sailing south to the residence to place him in the school
- [4] of writing among the children of officials, of the foremost of the residence.
- [5] [Then, he said to him] I have seen violent beatings, so direct your heart behind writing.

vs.

- [1] [I have witnessed someone seized] for his work, look
- [2] Nothing excels writing.
- [3] [It is like] a loyal man
- [4] [Read] for yourself the end [of]
- [5] The Kemyt and you find
- [6] This phrase in it saying
- [7] [As for] a scribe, whatever his places are at the residence
- [8] He cannot be poor in
- [9] it, he accomplishes [the wish]
- [10] [of] another when he is failing.
- [11] I [do not see] .....

*Hymn*

**4–HO. Cairo 100=O. Carter-Carnarvon 300 M.16 B**

Description: Limestone 14 x 10 cm (in two pieces); broken off on all sides.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen's huts in front of KV 9.

Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45b, 58.

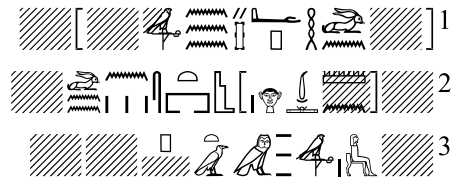
Content: Most probably part of an hymn to the Nile.

Where the first line of the *recto* is missing, the inscriptions are restored, partly based on the initial transcription made by Gunn. Likewise, the text on the *verso* is copied from Gunn's notebook since no recent photos for this side is available.



*Transcription*

rt.



vs.



*Transliteration*

rt.

- [1] [...wn h'py.....]
- [2] ...mn hr s.t.sn wnn...
- [3] .....šps m t3 p.....

vs.

- [1] kd gb.t i.....
- [2] ....hmk3 m s .....
- [3] .....ip.....

*Translation*

rt.

- [1].....Hapy was existed.....
- [2]..... [stable on] their seat, if.....
- [3]..... in the .....

vs.

- [1].....qd? leaf.....
- [2].....???
- [3] .....ip.....

The expression  is mentioned in the Hymn to the Nile on O.DeM 1675.<sup>16</sup>

**Onomasticon?**

**5–HO. Cairo 33=O. Carter-Carnarvon 357**

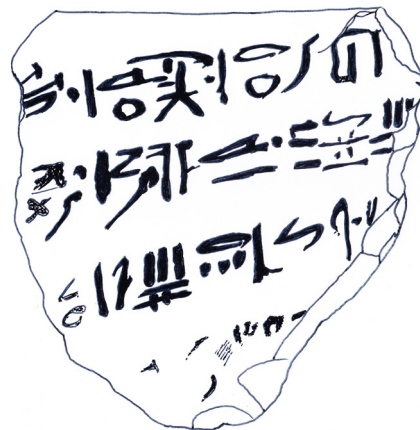
Description: Limestone, 9 x 5.5 cm; broken off on right, left and bottom edges.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found at the east side of KV 47 (Siptah) in the top loose rubbish from earlier excavations.

Date: Ramesside Period.

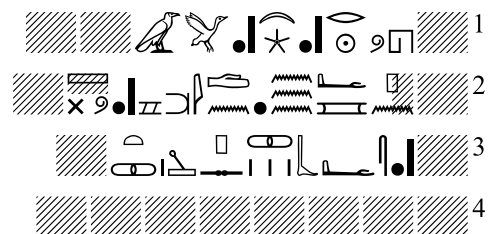
Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45a, 40; Černý MSS 17.14, 20 Nr. 357.

Content: onomasticon?



In this ostracon, the scribe used vertical strokes and black dots to separate the units of meaning. Most probably, this text represents a part of an onomasticon, or of similar thematic lists attested in the Miscellanies<sup>17</sup>. However, the exact meaning remains uncertain.

*Transcription*



*Transliteration*

- [1] .....hrw• 3bd• p3.....
- [2] .....pn• dni[.t]• wš?

<sup>16</sup> POSENER 1977-1980, pl. 82.

<sup>17</sup> Thanks to the reviewer of this paper for this suggestion.

[3] .....tr. • s 'b<sup>18</sup> ps<sup>19</sup>.....

[4] tr.....tr.....

*Translation*

[1] .....day • month • the.....

[2] .....cataract • dam, •.....?

[3] .....tr. • sâb-bread, pes-bread.....

[4] tr.....tr.....

*Royal titles*

**6–HO. Cairo 47=O. Carter-Carnarvon 300 T**

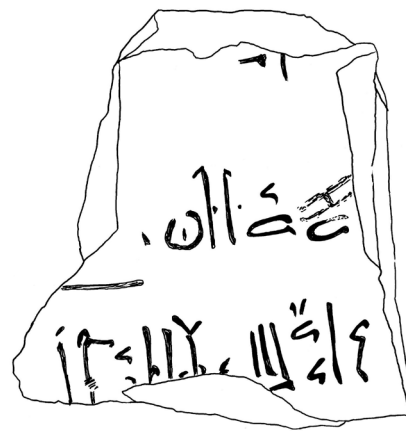
Description: Limestone 12 x 10.5 cm; broken off on all sides.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen’s huts in front of KV 9.

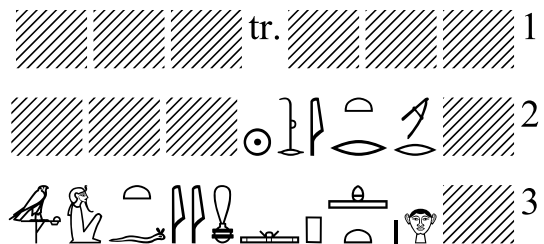
Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45b, 65.

Content: Probably part of a royal titulary.



*Transcription*



18 For more information about this bread cf. JANSSEN 1961, p. 20; JANSSEN 1975, p. 346; GRANDET 2006, 10041 rt.

19 JANSSEN 1961, p. 20; JANSSEN 1975, p. 346; JANSSEN 1997a, p. 22

*Transliteration*

- [1] .....
- [2] .....*mr tr*....
- [3] *hr htp mi it*

*Translation*

- [1].....
- [2].....love time?
- [3]...rest like (his) father?

**7–HO. Cairo 48=O. Carter-Carnarvon 297/3**

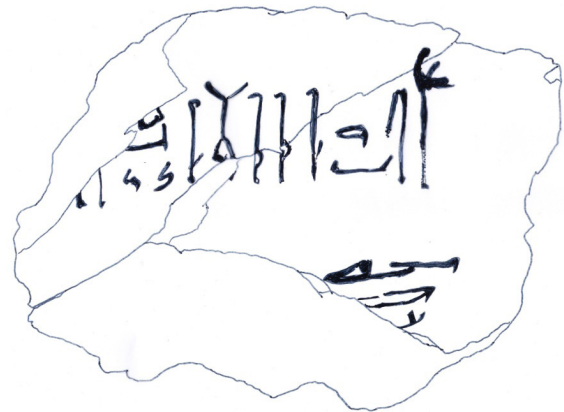
Description: limestone, 16 x 12 cm; this ostracon was found in the museum in two pieces, recombined by the author. The text is broken off below and on its left edge.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen’s huts in front of KV 9.

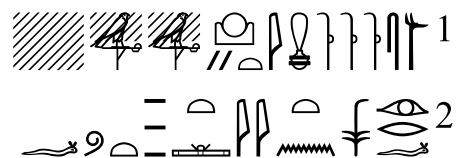
Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45a, 55.

Content: Royal titles of an unknown king.<sup>20</sup>



*Transcription*



*Transliteration*

- [1] *Wsr rnpw.t mi zhty...*
- [2] *irr.f nsy.t tw.f*

20 For similar ostraca from the Valley of the Kings cf. DORN 2011, p. 454, no. 739; p. 455, no. 740.

Translation

[1] Powerful in years like (Ra-Hor)-Akhty .....

[2] which makes his Kingship.

*Wsr rnpw.t* was part of many royal names, especially in the golden name as shown in the table below. However, as far as I know, the complement *mi 3hty* was not mentioned once with *wsr rnpw.t* in the same name, except in the present text.

Ramses II <sup>21</sup>		<i>Wsr rnpw.t '3 nht</i>
Ramses III /V <sup>22</sup>		<i>Wsr rnpw.t mi itm</i>
Ramses IV <sup>23</sup>		<i>Wsr rnpw.t wr nht</i>
Ramses VI <sup>24</sup>		<i>Wsr rnpw.t mi t3-tnn</i>
Ramses VII <sup>25</sup>		<i>Wsr rnpw.t mi imn</i>
Ramses IX <sup>26</sup>		<i>Wsr rnpw.t mi R' dt</i>

**8–HO. Cairo 50=O. Carter-Carnarvon 294/2<sup>27</sup>**

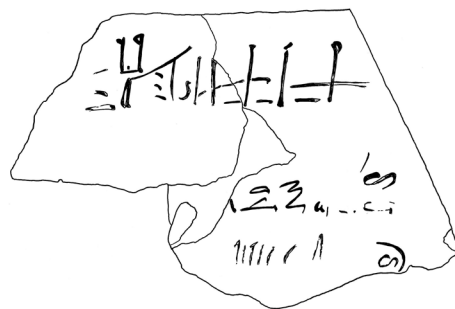
Description: Limestone 18.5 x 16.5 cm; broken off on right, left and bottom edges.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen's huts in front of KV 9.

Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45a, 55.

Content: Titulary of an unknown king.



21 VON BECKERATH 1999, p. 155.

22 VON BECKERATH 1999, p. 167.

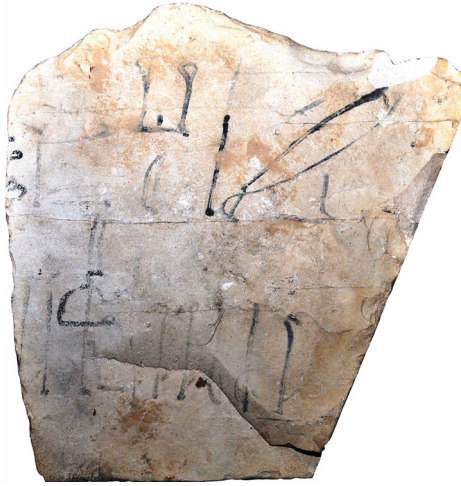
23 VON BECKERATH 1999, p. 171.

24 VON BECKERATH 1999, p. 171.

25 VON BECKERATH 1999, p. 249.

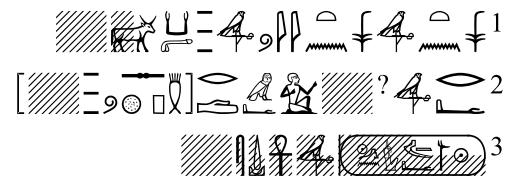
26 VON BECKERATH 1999, p. 173.

27 The *recto* of this ostracon was found in the museum in two pieces and recombined by the author.



*Transcription*<sup>28</sup>

rt.



vs.



*Transliteration*

rt.

- [1] *nsw.t nsy.t k3*....
- [2] *R' ? mr spw..?*
- [3] (*Wsr-m3 't-r 'stp n R'*) 'w.s

vs.

- [1] *Ir k3-nh.t mry*....
- [2] *Íty 'w.s s3 im[n]*

*Translation*

rt.

- [1] King of Kingship, the (strong) bull....
- [2] Re? of fortunate deeds?
- [3] (*wsr-mAa.t-ra stp n Ra*) L.P.H.

<sup>28</sup> The inscriptions between [...] were seen by Gunn but do not exist in the current images.



- [3] ... [wr ph.ty?] mi [i]mn (R'-ms-sw-s3-ptḥ  
 [4] .....[di] 'nh dt nhḥ

*Translation*

- [1] ..... the two ladies. Touto who unites the crowns.....  
 [2] .....like his father Re, the double King.  
 [3] .....[the great strength?] like Amon (Ramses, son of Ptah  
 [4].....[may be given] life, eternity forever.

This text contains names and epithets of king Siptah. Presumably, it represents a writing exercise written by a student. This kind of exercise about the royal names and titles is known from other sources.<sup>30</sup>

**10- HO. Cairo. 1 = O. Carter-Carnarvon 276**

Description: Limestone, almost complete.<sup>31</sup>

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the area between KV 2 and KV 7.

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> dynasty, reign of Seti II.

Bibliography: Not recorded in Gunn's Notebooks.

Content: Throne name of king Seti II.



*Transliteration*

- [1] Nb t3.wy (wsr-hprw-R'-stp-n- R')

*Translation*

- [1] The lord of the two lands, Seti II.

30 GASSE 2005, p. 25, no. 1787 rt.

31 The measurements of this ostracon are not available.

**11- HO. Cairo. 36 = O. Carter-Carnarvon 293 LF**

Description: Limestone, 9x 13 cm; complete.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings.

Date: Ramesside period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45a, 50.

Content: title.



*Transcription*



*Transliteration*

[1] *Íty* 'w.s

*Translation*

[1] Sovereign L.P.H.

*Figured ostracon*

**12–HO. Cairo 40=O. Carter- Carnarvon 288**

Description: Limestone, complete.<sup>32</sup>

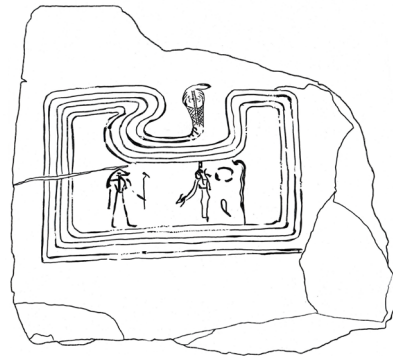
Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen's huts in front of KV 9.

Bibliography: not recorded in Gunn's notebooks.

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<sup>32</sup> The measurements of this ostracon are not available.

Content: drawing of a long circular snake with figures of standing gods inside his body.<sup>33</sup>



This scene is closely related to similar scenes appearing in the Book of the Night. Inside the Uraeus-snake are representations of the sun-god Ra and the goddess Maat.<sup>34</sup>

## ADMINISTRATIVE OSTRACA

### Letters

#### 1–HO. Cairo 43=O. Carter-Carnarvon 291

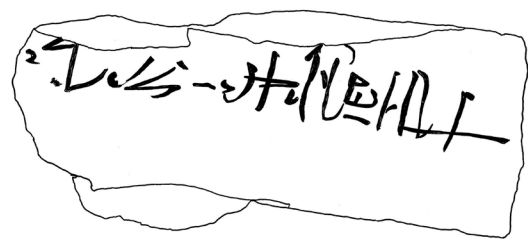
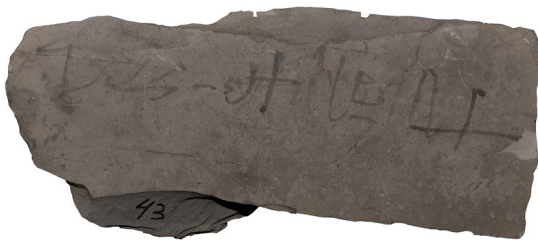
Description: Limestone, 8 x 20 cm. The text is broken on the left side.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen's huts in front of KV 9.

Date: Ramses II.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45a, 50.

Content: a letter?



### Transcription



33 Cf. VANDIER D'ABBADIE 1946, pl. XCV, no. 2731; BRUNNER-TRAUT 1979, pl. 38; BACKHOUSE 2011, pp. 25-39.

34 A similar representation could be seen in: ROULIN 1996, part II, pl. xvi.

### Transliteration

[1] *sš-nsw Ḳmn-w3ḥ-sw n p3 mr...?.....*

### Translation

[1] The royal scribe Amenwahsu to the.....?

Most probably, this line is the beginning of a letter. It belongs to a known scribe of the time of Ramses II, Amenwahsu, whose tomb (TT 111) includes several titles such as ‘scribe of the sacred books in the House of Amun’, ‘scribe who copies out the annals of the gods and the goddesses in the House of life’.<sup>35</sup> He also possesses the title ‘scribe of the divine writings in the estate of Amun’ in the temple of Ramses II.<sup>36</sup> His name is also mentioned on a wooden palette now in the Berlin Museum.<sup>37</sup>

## 2–HO. Cairo 19=O. Carter-Carnarvon 300 M.16 H

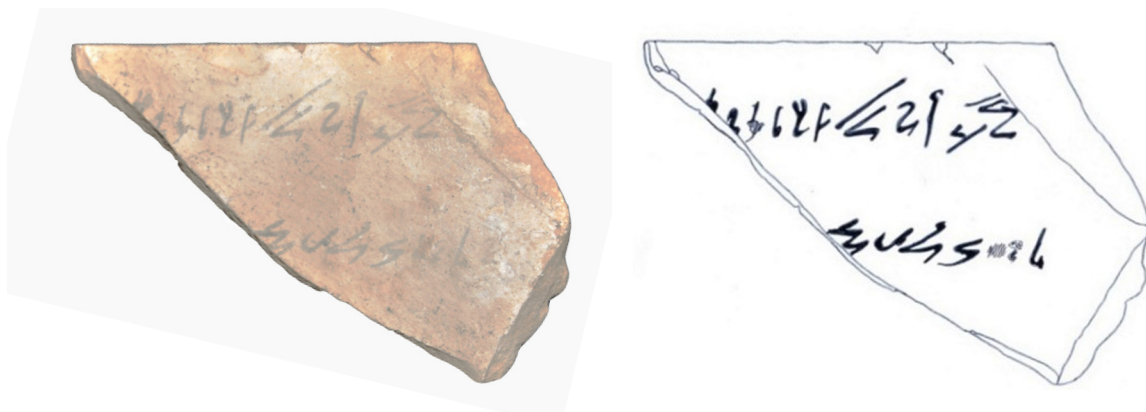
Description: Pottery (vase fragment), 9 x 7 cm. The top is intact as well as the lower edge on the right side. The text on the left side is broken.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen’s huts in front of KV 9.

Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45b, 60 Nr. 300 H.

Content: The text may represent a letter from or to Pentaweret. The subject of this letter is not clear because of the damaged condition of the ostrakon.



35 AMER 2000, p. 1; Collins 1976, p. 33. for more information about the inscriptions in his tomb, cf. KRI III, 302-307.

36 PM I, p. 129.

37 Ägyptisches Museum Berlin 6764.

*Transcription*



*Transliteration*

- [1] .....[P3-n-t3]-wrt hn '-dd.i İti....
- [2] t3 st r p3 r(3)- ' [b3kw]?

*Translation*

- [1] .....[Penta]weret, then sovereign
- [2] the place to the work?

***Distribution of products***

**3–HO. Cairo 24 = O. Carter-Carnarvon 300 GG**

Description: Limestone 9 x 8 cm; broken off on all sides except the left and bottom sides.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen's huts in front of KV 9.

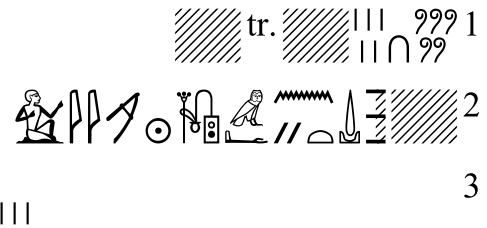
Date: Mid-20<sup>th</sup> dynasty.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45b, 72.

Content: Most probably an administrative text recording a distribution of a product or ration.



*Transcription*



*Transliteration*

- [1] .....515....tr.
- [2] *dʒ? nty m- ' sš Mry-R '*
- [3] 3

*Translation*

- [1].....515.....
- [2] remainder? which is with the scribe Meryre
- [3] 3

The name of the scribe Meryre is mentioned in ostraca from Deir el-Medina from the time of Ramses IV.<sup>38</sup> One represents a delivery log, while the other is a distribution of commodity.<sup>39</sup> Such large numbers of distributed items may have been related to fish.<sup>40</sup> It is not clear if the number 3 written on the left side of the ostracum belongs to the main text.

**4–HO. Cairo 59=O. Carter-Carnarvon 300 LL**

Description: Limestone, 9 x 11.5 cm; broken off on all sides except the left edge.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen's huts in front of KV 9.

Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45b, 74.

Content: Distribution of grain.

38 Most probably he is the scribe Meryre (IV) son of Hori who occurs in two texts from Deir el-Medina dated to Ramesses IV (DAVIES 1999, p. 189).

39 GRANDET 2017, p. 23, 68, no. 10292, 10333, co. VIII, 2.

40 For examples of distribution of fish, cf. GRANDET 2017, no. 10294.



## Transliteration

rt.

- [1] .....½, *ipt* 2
- [2] *ipt*) 3 ½, *ipt* 2 ½, *ipt* 1, 2?
- [3] *ipt* 3 ½, *ipt* 3
- [4] ..... ½ *ipt* 2
- [5] ...½, *h3r* 1

vs.

- [1] .... *h3r* 13, *ipt wḥm*
- [2] *3r* 4, *ipt* 2 *iw*
- [3] *h3r* 4 *ipt* 2 *iw* 3
- [4] *h3r* 4 *ipt* 2 *iw*

## Translation

rt.

- [1].....½, 2 oipe
- [2] 3 ½ oipe, 2 ½ oipe, 2 oipe?
- [3] 3 ½ oipe, 3 oipe
- [4].....½, 2 oipe
- [5].....½, khar 1

vs.

- [1] khar 13, oipe again
- [2] khar 4, 2 oipe delivered
- [3] khar 4, 2 oipe delivered 3
- [4] khar 4, 2 oipe delivered

The red sign *iw* is mentioned in several ostraca related to distribution of products, and it was also used to refer to the attendance of a workman to work or to indicate that he received his rations.<sup>41</sup>

## 5- HO. Cairo 63 = O. Carter-Carnarvon 300 M.16 V

Description: Limestone, 8 x 6.5cm; broken off on the left edge and the bottom.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen's huts in front of KV 9.

Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45b, 66.

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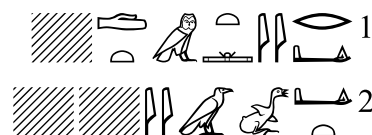
41 GRANDET 2017; GRANDET 2003, 912, 913, 915. for the attendance to the work cf. JANSSEN 1997b, pp. 87-98.

Content: Possibly the remaining text is part of a distribution of products, rations, tools, etc.



*Transcription*

rt.



vs.<sup>42</sup>



*Transliteration*

rt.

[1] *rdi.t m-dr.t*.....

[2] *di.t t3y*

vs.

[1] *nsw.t*....

*Translation*

rt.

[1] given by the hands of.....

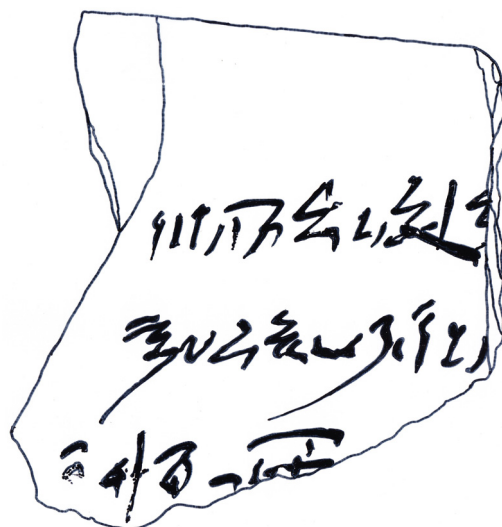
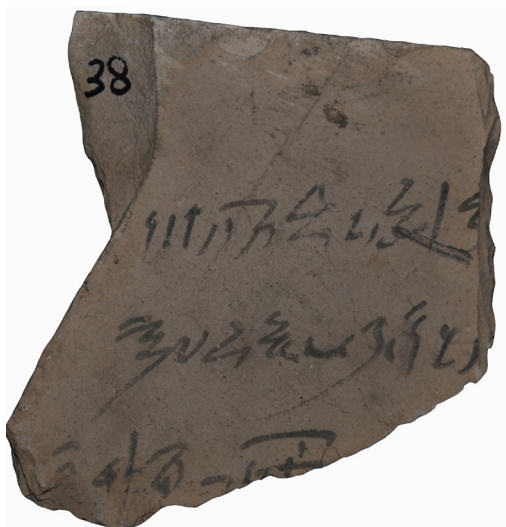
[2] to cause taking.....

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42 According to Gunn's notebook, there are few inscriptions on the *verso* of this ostracon, unfortunately no available photo for the *verso*.







*Transcription*



*Transliteration*

- [1] .....[p3]-r(3) - 'b3kw n pr- '3 'w.s
- [2] .....w.i m di.tn p3 wn
- [3] .....3bd n(y) hrw<sup>46</sup>

*Translation*

- [1] ..... [the] work of the Pharaoh L.P.H.
- [2] ...my...with you because of
- [3] .....a month of days

**8- HO. Cairo 62= O. Carter- Carnarvon 388**

**Description:** Limestone, 15 x 7.5 cm. The text is complete.

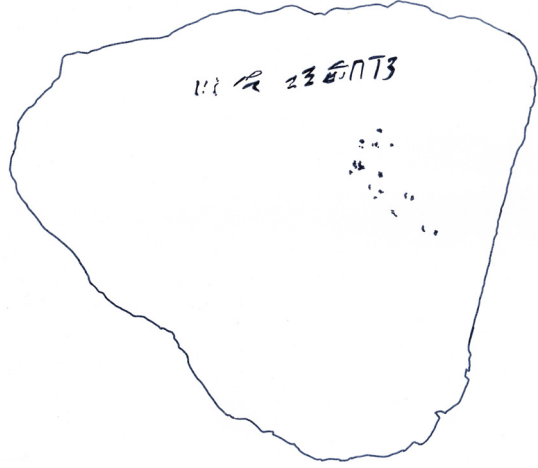
**Provenance:** Valley of the Kings, found in loose rubbish in front and on both sides of KV 47 (Siptah).

**Date:** Ramesside Period.

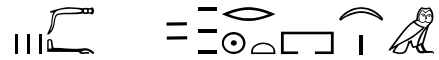
**Bibliography:** Gunn Notebook 45a, 40.

**Content:** log note on work progress.

<sup>46</sup> This is one of the frequent terms in the ostraca of Deir el-Medina. Its literary translation would be 'un mois de jours' (GRANDET 2010, p. 129ff, Nos. 10248).



*Transcription*



*Transliteration*

[1] *m 3bd 1 pr.t sw 5 mh 3*

*Translation*

[1] In the first month of *Peret* season, day five, cubit three.

**𓄠** : could represent an unusual form of the sign **𓄡**, which is the normal classifier of the word *mh*. The reading remains uncertain.

It seems that this text is a work report as it refers to the length that had already been hacked out of the tomb by the stonemasons that day. This kind of text mentions the amount of work that was carried out by the workmen in the royal tomb every day.<sup>47</sup>

**𓄡** *mh*: This term was normally used in the documents related to the work in the rock-cut tomb.<sup>48</sup> Similar term **𓄡** *nbi*, meaning ‘rod’,<sup>49</sup> was also used in such documents.

*Unknown topics*

**9- HO. Cairo 75 = O. Carnarvon 300 PP**

Description: Limestone 16 x 8 cm; the ink is very faint in most of the text except the last two lines.





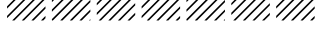
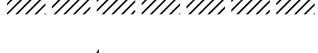
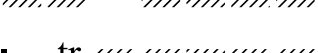



47 For the measurements related to the tomb construction cf. DORN & POLIS 2016, pp. 129-161.

48 HAYES 1942, pl. XIV, 69, pl. XVI, 76; HAYES 1960, pl. IX, 1; GRANDET 2010, pp. 72-74, no. 10188, p. 74, no. 10189.

49 HAYES 1942, pl. XIII, no. 62, pl. XIV, no. 69, pl. XV, no. 73. It could possibly be a wooden tool used as a unit of linear measure by the masons who were cutting the tomb to estimate roughly the amount of each day’s work. The length of this *nbi* was between 65 and 77 centimeters, HAYES 1960, p. 36.



*Transcription*

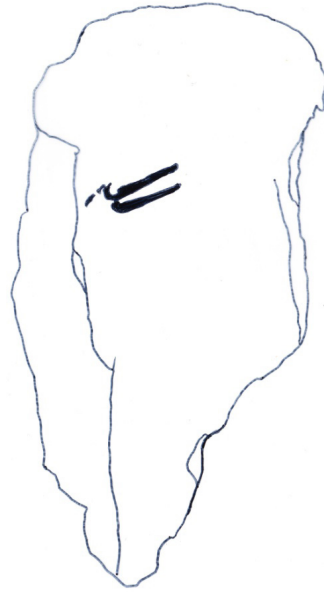
- 1  1
- 2  2
- 3  3
- 4  4
- 5  5
- 6  6
- 7  7
- 8  8
- 9  9
- 10  10

*Transliteration*

- [1] .....tr.....
- [2] .....tr....
- [3] .....
- [4] .....
- [5] .....
- [6] .....
- [7] .....tr....
- [8] .....ll?
- [9] '3 n ist Q3h s3
- [10] hmww wr lwy

*Translation*

- [1] .....tr....
- [2] .....tr.....
- [3] .....
- [4] .....
- [5] .....
- [6] .....
- [7] .....tr....
- [8] .....tr....
- [9] the foreman Qaha son of
- [10] the chief of craftsmen Huy



Interestingly, the last two lines, written in red ink, mention the names of the foreman Qaha and his father Huy. Qaha was one of the foremen of the Left Side at the time of Ramses II. He and his wife Tuy founded a large family of at least six sons.<sup>50</sup> His father, Huy, served as the chief of craftsmen in the Place of Truth in Western Thebes.<sup>51</sup>

#### 10- HO. Cairo 105 = O. Carter-Carnarvon 300 KK

Description: Limestone 8 x 4 cm; broken off in some parts of the right and left sides.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found in the workmen's huts in the front of KV 9.

<sup>50</sup> ČERNÝ 1973, p. 128; DAVIES 1999, pp. 12-13.

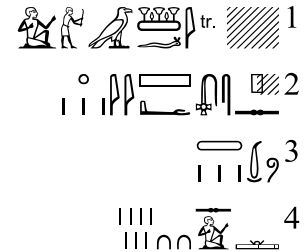
<sup>51</sup> DAVIES 1999, p. 13.

Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45b, 73.

Content: Administrative text.

*Transcription*



*Transliteration*

- [1] .....tr. *išfty.w*
- [2] *ps- š 'y[.t]*
- [3] *wdn[.t]*
- [4] *dmd s 27*

*Translation*

- [1] .....tr. Isheftyou
- [2] The baker of *Say[.t]*-cake.
- [3] offering
- [4] Total men: 27.

Although this text is readable, the meaning is unclear. Probably, the inscription of the first line is a proper name. The second and third lines refer to a baker and bread. The last one gives a total of 27 men. Unfortunately, it is not easy to find a clear link between them.

1.2: *ps-š 'y[.t]*: The word *ps* for 'baker'<sup>52</sup> in the present text is derived from the verb *psi* 'to bake' or 'to cook.'<sup>53</sup> This term was used during the New Kingdom along with other products to specify some kinds of bakers and cooks such as: *ps-š 'y.t*<sup>54</sup> 'the baker of *Say.t* -cake,' *ps-sgnn*<sup>55</sup> 'the baker of ointment.'

52 *Wb* I, p. 552.12.

53 *Wb* I, p. 551.18.

54 *Wb* I, p. 552.12.

55 *Wb* I, p. 552.13.

*Numbers*

**11–HO. Cairo 79=O. Carter-Carnarvon 362**

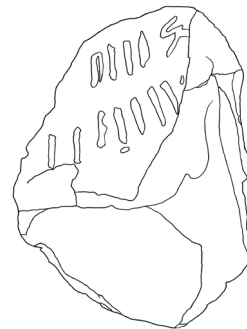
Description: Limestone, 7 x 5.5 cm. Almost complete.

Provenance: Valley of the Kings, found east of KV 47 (Siptah).

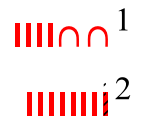
Date: Ramesside Period.

Bibliography: Gunn Notebook 45a, 41.

Content: numbers in red ink.



*Transcription*



*Transliteration*

[1] 24  
[2] 8

*Translation*

[1] 24  
[2] 8

## CONCLUSION

The set of ostraca published in this article, and belonging to a larger group found by Carter, shares a find-context with those found by Davies in 1905-1906.<sup>56</sup> They can also be linked to the group found by the Ägyptologische Seminar of Basel University project, MISR, and published by Celli in her PhD thesis and few related papers.<sup>57</sup> All these ostraca were mostly found in the rubbish around the tomb of Siptah (KV47). The ostraca found in this area display a wide range of topics and undoubtedly different handwritings as well. The majority of them are administrative texts related to the work that has been done in this area, such as lists of supplies, lists of names, letters, etc.<sup>58</sup> Alongside the administrative ostraca published here and the previously mentioned literary one, the current paper also presents texts written for didactic purposes such as writing exercises and copies of teachings by the hand of students accompanying their seniors in the worksite.

\* **Khaled HASSAN**

Cairo University

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56 The ostraca found by Davies in this area in 1905-1906 and published in *Catalogue Général* were marked (N.Tb) 25502, 25503, 25522, 25527, 25561, 25591, 25593, 25603, 25632, 25638, 25639, 25641, 25719, 25730, 25731, 25641. 25732, 25733, 25734, 25735, 25739, 25740, 25755, 25756, 25766.

57 In her PhD thesis, Cilli treated only the administrative ostraca. CILLI 2014, p. 8.

58 About the purpose of these deliveries cf. CILLI 2011, p. 109.

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