



LOYALIST INSTRUCTION OF KAIRSU: SECTION 14 (O. NMEC 339)

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ABSTRACT

This paper publishes the hieratic ostrakon (O. NMEC 339) stored in the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization at Cairo, discovered during Edda Bresciani's excavations at Gurna in Thutmose IV temple in the 1970s. Its exact provenance in the temple is unknown, but it is among a group of hieratic ostraca that was found. The ostrakon is a literary fragment inscribed with section 14 of a Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu, considered one of the important literary texts from the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom. This ostrakon is a novel addition to the 18th Dynasty corpus of this composition, which is better known from its Ramesside version.

KEYWORDS

Ostraca- Gurna- Loyalist instruction- §14 from Kairsu loyalist- 18th Dynasty-National Museum of Egyptian civilization (NMEC).

INTRODUCTION

The instructions are part of the broader genre of the Egyptian wisdom literature.¹ In Middle Kingdom compositions, the 'instructions' or 'teachings' have frequently the

I would like to thank Prof. Fredrik Hagen for recognising and identifying the text and many thanks to Prof. Maher Eissa for his revision. Sincere thanks also go to the editors and anonymous referees of the *Shedet*.

¹Buzov, E., 'Notes on Egyptian Wisdom texts,' *JES IV* (2015), 61- 62; Lichtheim, M., *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 155. Fribourg, Switzerland: University Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht. (1997), 7; Schneider, Th., 'Scribes, Sages, and Seers in Ancient Egypt,' in Leo G. Perdue (eds.), *Scribes Sages, and Seers: The Sage in the Eastern Mediterranean World*, *Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments* 219. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, (2008), 34; Williams, R., 'The Sages of Ancient Egypt in the Light of Recent Scholarship,' *JAOS 101* (1981), 1, 7.

المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة الي نشر الشقافة O. NMEC 339 والمحفوظة بمتحف الحضارة بالفسطاط ووفقا لسجلات المتحف فهي من ضمن حفائر معبد تحتمس الرابع في منتصف السبعينات في القرنه بواسطة Edda Bresciani لكن غير مذكور بالتحديد مكان العثور عليها بالمعبد وهي ضمن مجموعة من الاوستراكا الهيراطيقية التي تم العثور عليها في نفس المكان. وتمثل هذه القطعة جزء من الفقرة 14 من نص تعاليم الولاة الخاص بـ Kairsu والتي تعتبر من النصوص الادبية الهامه التي ظهرت ابتداء من عصر الدولة الوسطى وشاعت وانتشرت خلال عصر الدولة الحديثه. تكمن أهمية نشر هذه القطعة في انها عبارة عن إضافة لنسخ الأسرة الثامنة عشرة من هذا القسم الرابع عشر من تعاليم Kairsu ، كما انها تحتوي على بعض المتغيرات والسمات مقارنة بنسخ عصر الرعامسة من هذا النص.

الكلمات الدالة

شقافة- القرنه- تعاليم الولاة- الفقرة 14 من تعاليم Kairsu- الاسرة 18- المتحف القومي للحضارة المصرية.

term *sb3.yt* in their title and starts with *h3.t-ꜥ m sb3.yt ir.n NN*, ‘beginning of the instruction made by NN’.¹ New Kingdom instructions were introduced by the term *sb3.it-mtr.t*² making them distinct from earlier instances without creating a new separate genre.³

Lichtheim divided the genre of instructions into three sub-groups: real, royal, and loyalist.⁴ They were used in an educational context,⁵ particularly since the Second Intermediate Period and with more intensity during the Ramesside Period.⁶ The wisdom literature texts were an individual activity usually copied by the student himself not dictated.⁷ This is supported by the lack of dates on the ostraca. However, Ragazzoli⁸ suggested that the literary texts go beyond the school context (teaching and training) during the New Kingdom, as it reflects the scribal professional activities and Egyptian scribal identity.

The Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu could be considered the ideological attempt to justify and strengthen the authority of the pharaoh, in an explicit appeal to the subordinate being loyal to its sovereign⁹ and responsible of subordinates and workers of lower social standing.¹⁰ The scribe shows in the instruction the objective of bringing the monarchic institution back to its top place by exalting the king¹¹ and respecting dependents to avoid problems for their masters as a kind of application the social concept of *m3ꜥt*.¹² It may be

¹The Instruction of Amenemhat I (P. Millingen, § H1a), the Instruction of Khety (P. Sallier II = P. BM EA 10182, § 1.1), the Instruction of Hordjedef (O. Munich 3400, § H1.1), the Instruction of a Man for His Son (L. BM EA 10258, §§ 0.1-0.2), the Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu (P. Rifeh = P. London UC 32781, § 1.1). The beginning is absent from the fragmentary instructions of Oxford, for Kagemni, of P. Ramsseum II, and of Lahun.

²For instance the instructions of Ani and of Amennakht. See also Silva, A., *The Roles of God in the Ancient Egyptian Instruction Texts of the Middle and New Kingdoms*, PhD thesis, Universidade de Lisboa (2019), 64, 65.

³Dorn, A., ‘Die Lehre Amunnachts,’ *ZÄS* 131, (2004), 51. However, Fredrik Hagen suggested that teachings were used as authoritative sources for behavioural principles. Hagen, F., *An Ancient Egyptian Literary Text in Context. The Instruction of Ptahhotep*, 40-1 & 209-10.

⁴Lichtheim, M., ‘Didactic Literature,’ in Loprieno, A. (ed.) *Ancient Egyptian Literature. History and Forms*, Leiden – New York – Köln, (1996), 243.

⁵Williams, R., ‘Scribal Training in Ancient Egypt,’ *JAOS* 92 (1972), 215-217; Fox, M. V., ‘The Social Location of the Book of Proverbs,’ in Fox, M. V. (eds.) *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haram*, Victor Avigdor Hurowitz, Avi Hurvitz, Michael L. Klein, Baruch J. Schwartz, and Nili Shupak, Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, (1996), 229.

⁶Hagen, F., *An Ancient Egyptian Literary Text in Context: The Instruction of Ptahhotep*, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 218. Leuven: Peeters, (2012), 64; Parkinson, R. B., *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*, London: Continuum, (2002), 235-36.

⁷Burkard, G., *Textkritische Untersuchungen zu ägyptischen Weisheitslehren des Alten und Mittleren Reiches*, *Äg.Abh* 34, (1977), 68-71, 142-145.

⁸Ragazzoli, Ch., ‘La littérature de scribe au Nouvel Empire ou pourquoi les miscellanées ne sont pas des textes scolaires,’ *BSFE* 201, (2019), 44-78.

⁹Posener, G., *L’enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*, 15-16.

¹⁰For a basic edition, see Posener, G., *L’enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*. Geneva: Droz. (1976), in addition, cf. Chappaz, J.-L. ‘Un nouvel ostracon de l’Enseignement loyaliste,’ *BSÉG* 7, (1982), 7; Verhoeven, U., ‘Von der ‘Loyalistischen Lehre’ zur ‘Lehre des Kai’rsu,’ *ZÄS* 136, (2009), 87-98; Hagen, F., *New Kingdom Ostraca from the Fitzwilliam Museum*. Cambridge. Leiden: Brill. (2011), 25 f.

¹¹Carreira J. N., *Filosofia antes dos Gregos*, *Biblioteca universitária* 71, (1994), 117-118.

¹²Canhão, T., *A literatura egípcia do Império Médio: espelho de uma civilização*, PhD thesis, University of Lisbon, (2010), 448.

divided into two distinct sets: the first set consists of section 1 to section 8 or 9, and the second set from section 8 or 9 to section 14.¹

Middle Kingdom attestations preserve the first set of the text up to section 6, referred to as the “short version”. The remaining attestations from the New Kingdom add to this version, reaching a full extension and a “long version”.² Pascal Vernus suggested that the version on the Sehetepibre stela is abridged from the complete later text.³ On the other hand, for James Allen, later sources innovate and expand on the Middle Kingdom text.⁴

The first part of the Loyalist presents the king as a champion of Egypt, and a series of his military virtues are exposed, as well as his ability to speak well, highlighting his leadership.⁵ This is the part preserved in the stela of Sehetepibre found in the temple of Osiris in Abydos (Egyptian Museum, Cairo, CG 20538) which dates from the reign of King Amenemhat III in the 12th Dynasty.⁶ It is usually seen as the “short version” of the text or, better said, the “Shortened version”. The second part of this text refers to all those who are subordinate and their indispensability.⁷ The final sentences of stanza 14 appear in the stela of Rehuankh from Abydos (Berlin 7311), dated to the reigns of Neferhotep I and Sebekhotep IV in the 13th Dynasty.⁸

For the New Kingdom, the Loyalist instruction of Kairsu is known by three papyri (P. Louvre E 4864 recto,⁹ Papyrus Amherst XII + XIII,¹⁰ Papyrus UC 32781),¹¹ and the wooden tablet called the Carnarvon II tablet (Cairo JE 43261D).¹² A large number of literary ostraca come from the tomb workers’ village of Deir el-Medina and its surrounding areas. Fredrik Hagen estimates the number of Instructions of Kairsu copied on ostraca at Deir el-Medina to be 70 copies,¹³ to which the present ostrakon should be added. Among a series of literary graffiti on the tomb N13.1 of the nomarch Iti-ibi-iker at Assiut of the 11th Dynasty, section 1 of the Loyalist instruction of Kairsu was found.

¹As for the division of this instruction, see Vernus, P., *Sagesses de l’Égypte pharaonique*. 2nd ed. rev. Arles: Actes Sud, (2010), 265-66; Schipper, B., ‘Von der “Lehre des Sehetp-jb-Re” zur “Loyalistischen Lehre”. Überlegungen zur Überlieferungsgeschichte loyalistischer Aussagen,’ *ZÄS* 125, (1998), 162n7.

²Silva, A., *The Roles of God in the Ancient Egyptian Instruction Texts of the Middle and New Kingdoms*, 143.

³Vernus, P., *Sagesses de l’Égypte pharaonique*, 265; He was followed in this suggestion by Canhão, T., *Textos da literatura egípcia do Império Médio: Textos hieroglíficos, transliterações e traduções comentadas*. Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, (2014), 831.

⁴Allen, J., *Middle Egyptian Literature: Eight Literary Works of the Middle Kingdom*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2015), 155.

⁵Leprohon, R.J., ‘The Stela of Sehetepibre (CG 20538) Borrowings and Innovation,’ in Silverman, D.P.; Simpson, W.K and Wegner, J.(eds.), *Archaism and Innovation: Studies in the Culture of Middle Kingdom Egypt*, Yale University, (2009), 277- 290.

⁶Vernus, P., *Sagesses de l’Égypte pharaonique*, 265; Leprohon, R.J., in Silverman, D.P.; Simpson, W.K.and Wegner, J.(eds.), *Archaism and Innovation: Studies in the Culture of Middle Kingdom Egypt*, Yale University, (2009), 277- 290.

⁷Canhão, T., *A literatura egípcia do Império Médio: espelho de uma civilização*, 422.

⁸Berlev, O.D., ‘Une méthode pour dater les stèles du Moyen-Empire (la formule: “Ôvous, les vivants, ceux qui sont sur terre”),’ *KCIHA* 46, (1962), 45-87.

⁹Posener, G., *L’enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*, 144

¹⁰Posener, G., *L’enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*, 5-6

¹¹Posener, G., *L’enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*, 6-7.

¹²Posener, G., *L’enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*, 143; Griffith, F., ‘Carnarvon tablets I and II,’ in Carnarvon and Carter (eds.), *Five years’ explorations at Thebes: a record of work done 1907-1911*, Oxford (1912), 37-pl. 29; For Carnarvon Tablet II, see Lilyquist, C. ‘Twelve Carnarvon Writing Boards and their Provenances,’ *JEA* 105 (2019), 157-175; Hagen, F. ‘New Copies of Old Classics,’ *JEA* 105 (2019), 177-208.

¹³Hagen, F., *An Ancient Egyptian Literary Text in Context: The Instruction of Ptahhotep*, 84, 246.

The importance of this graffiti is seen in that it introduces the name of the author of the extended version.¹

THE AUTHOR OF THE LOYALIST INSTRUCTION

Loprieno states that authors of loyalist instructions avoided mentioning three main elements that could generate conflict: ‘anonymity’, ‘god v king’, and ‘success in life v survival after death’.²

The author of the Middle Kingdom version of the Instruction remains unknown. Various schools have argued the potential identities of this individual.³ Since the discovery of the graffiti in the tomb N31.1 at Assiut that includes the beginning of the text,⁴ previously referred to as Loyalist Instruction, author’s name is known as Kairsu. As a result researchers have adopted the term Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu.⁵ Hence Kairsu was considered to be the author only based on New Kingdom sources. Kairsu was one of the eight great authors of ancient Egypt, according to Pap. Chester Beatty IV dating to the 19th Dynasty.⁶

O. NMEC 339

Description: The Ostrakon NMEC 339 (figs. 1–2) is a fragment of hieratic ostrakon⁷ roughly 9 cm wide and 11 cm long. The convex side is inscribed with 5 horizontal lines of hieratic from the end of the literary text “the Instruction of Kairsu”. The text has verse points in black ink. The surface is damaged at the right and left corners and parts of the beginning and end of the three lines of text have disappeared. The sherd is not complete.

Provenance: In 1896, Flinders Petrie discovered the mortuary temple of Thutmose IV in Gurna but it was in great decay.⁸ From 1973 to 1981, the Pisa mission led by Edda Bresciani undertook fieldwork on this site. The mission completed the work in the temple of Thutmose IV and the surrounding area. Many fragments of ceramic vessels, including fragments of hieratic ostraca, were recovered in the temple area.⁹

The lack of detailed information about the find-spot of the hieratic fragments in Edda Bresciani's reports led to the loss of the social context of these ostraca. Only one

¹Verhoeven, U., ‘Von der „Loyalistischen Lehre“ zur „Lehre des Kairsu“ Eine neue Textquelle in Assiut und deren Auswirkungen Hierzu Tafel XII,’ *ZÄS* 136 (2009), 87-88.

²Loprieno, A., ‘Loyalistic Instructions,’ in Loprieno, A., *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms*, Probleme der Ägyptologie 10. Leiden: Brill, (1996), 404-412.

³For example, Georges Posener suggested that the author of Loyalist Instruction was Ptahemdjehuti, Posener, *Litterature et politique*, 34.

⁴Verhoeven, U., *ZÄS* 136 (2009), 87-98.

⁵Hagen, F., *An Ancient Egyptian Literary Text in Context: The Instruction of Ptahhotep*. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 218, Leuven: Peeters, (2012), ix.

⁶p. BM EA 10684 verso, col. III, 5 – 7; Gardiner, A. H., *Chester Beatty Gift*, HPBM 3rd series, London (1935), Tf. 19; Verhoeven, U., *ZÄS* 136 (2009), 91.

⁷This ostrakon is part of collection. See: Nassar, M& Eissa, M., ‘Hieratic wine jar docketts from Tuthmosis’s IV temple in Gurna,’ *SHEDET* 7 (2020), 26- 38; Ewais, M &Eissa, M., ‘Unpublished Administrative Ostraca from Gurna,’ *ZÄS*, (forthcoming).

⁸Petrie, F., *Six Temples at Thebes 1896*, London, (1897), 7-8.

⁹Bresciani, E., ‘l'attivita' archeologica dell'Universita' di Pisa in Egitto: 1977-1980: Tebe (Gurna): 1977-1980,’ *EVO* 3, (1980), 1-8.

ostracon was indicated to have been found in the ‘House of Bread (the oven)’ of the funerary temple of Thutmose IV.¹

Dating: The only criterion available for dating the ostracon is handwriting. Based on the list of ostraca from the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III² and Amherst XII + XIII fragments,³ this ostracon dates to the end of the 18th Dynasty.










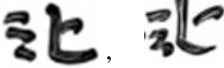























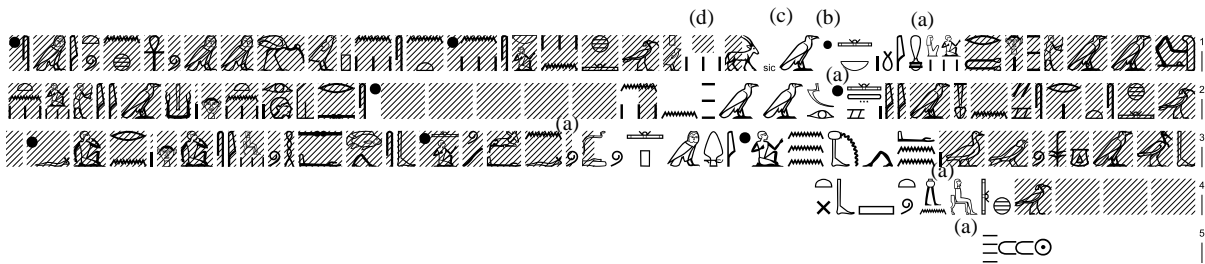
signs	O. NMEC 339	Ostraca from the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III	Amherst XII
			
		 O. T3.L01 O. T3.L03 O. T3.A21	
		 O.T3.A43 rto.	
		 O. T3.A43, rto. O. T3.A56	
		 O. T3.A17 rto.	
		 O. T3.A04 O. T3.A22	
		 O.T3.A44 O. T3.L53	
		 O. T3.A40	
		 O.T3.L06 O.T3.A44	
		 O. T3.A25	

Table 1: Similar signs between O. NMEC 339, Ostraca from the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III and Amherst XII

¹Bresciani, E., *EVO 3*, (1980), 7-8. For this ostracon and other ostraca found in the temple, see Ewais, M and Eissa, M., ‘Unpublished Administrative Ostraca from Gurna,’ ZÄS, No. NMEC No. 406 (figs. 10-12), (forthcoming).

²Hagen, F., *Ostraca from the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III*, Leiden, (2021).

³Posener, G., *L'enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*, 5-6

Transcription:**Transliteration**

- 1- [ḥ3 ḥr rmt] mi sšr nb• ḥwt [pw 3ḥt n nb.sn• ntsn pw gmm ḥḥ.tw im.s]•
 2- [3ḥ st r-sy n] sm3yt t3• m33.w n n[.....]• [stš tp.tn ḥr ḥmw-k3.tn]
 3- [b3gsw s3] ḥnn wḥb• i3m pw ḏdw [n.f iw3• bs sḥ nis ḥr rn.f]•
 4- [.....] 3ḥ šsp in tw šbt
 5- sw 24

Translation:

- 1- [Fight for people] ⁽¹⁾ in every way ⁽²⁾•[they are] the flock ⁽³⁾ [that is good for their lord•
 It is they who find what one lives on it] ⁽⁴⁾
 2-[they are very useful] for burial•. They look to us ⁽⁵⁾ [.....]•[watch over your ka
 priests]
 3-[if the son is neglectful] the pure-priest still returns ⁽⁶⁾•[the one says about the heir
 is]the one who A pleasant ⁽⁷⁾•
 4-[.....] the blessed dead, bring ⁽⁸⁾ the food-offerings ⁽⁹⁾.
 5- day 24 ⁽¹⁰⁾.

Content:

This ostracon represents part of section 14 of the loyalist instruction of Kairsu. The instruction of Kairsu was part of the literary canon of New Kingdom Egypt and a text that most scribes would have read.¹

The presence of this literary ostracon in the temple of Thutmose IV highlights the importance of the temple school during the 18th Dynasty. Christian Leblanc² and Barbotin³ assumed that the large temples on the Theban West Bank dating to the New Kingdom had scribal schools attached to them.

Thanks to the discovery of many literary ostraca inside temples, such as the Ramesseum,⁴ the temple of Merenptah,⁵ or the temple of Thutmose III, Hagen suggested that the scribal schools in New Kingdom temples were not limited to religious and priestly education only. They also included various aspects of life, copies of

¹Hagen, F., *New Kingdom Ostraca from the Fitzwilliam Museum*, 25.

²Leblanc, C., 'L'école du temple (ât-sebait) et le per-ankh (maison de vie). À propos de récentes découvertes effectuées dans le contexte du Ramesseum', *Memnonia* 15, (2004), 93–101.

³Barbotin, C., 'Les ostraca hiératiques de l'école du Ramesseum', *Memnonia* 24, (2013), 73–79.

⁴After the finding of about 100 literary exercises in the south-east corner of the magazine area, Brunner H., *Altägyptische Erziehung*, 2nd ed, Wiesbaden, (1991), 18; Janssen R.M. and Janssen, Jac. J., *Growing Up in Ancient Egypt*, London, (1990), 76; Leblanc, C., *Memnonia* 15, (2004), 93–101; Barbotin, C., *Memnonia* 24, (2013), 73–79.

⁵Müller, M. 'Ostraka aus dem Totentempel des Merenptah in Theben', in Toivari-Viitala; J. Vartiainen, T.; Uvanto S. (eds.), *Deir el-Medina Studies: Helsinki June 24–26, 2009 Proceedings* (The Finnish Egyptological Society Occasional Publications 2). Vantaa: Multiprint, (2014), 144–153.

classical literary works, in majority wisdom instructions.¹ This literary fragment could result from the training of priests in the temple.

In this section, Kairsu instructs his children to respect subordinates and uphold their allotted duties in society.² His children are advised to avoid rebellion against the king, as the follower of the king will become a venerable person. There is no burial for anyone who rebels against the king. His corpse will be thrown into the water.

Posener first compiled the texts of 9 ostraca as the basis for his reconstruction of section 14 of the Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu. However, many of these copies are incomplete and damaged. The discovery of a new attestation of this section of the text is significant. The following list details the 11 sources for section 14 of the Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu.

Sources	Content	Date	Provenance	Publication
P. Louvre E4864	§3, §4, §5, §6, §7, §8, §9, §10, §11, §12, §13, §14	18 th Dynasty	Unknown	-Posener, G., <i>L'enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire</i> , 144
P. Amherst XII+XIII	§10, §11, §12, §13, §14	End of 18 th Dynasty	Unknown	-Posener, G., <i>L'enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire</i> , 5-6
Tablet Carnarvon II	§8, §9, §10, §11, §12, §13, §14	17 th -18 th Dynasty	Deir el Bahari	-Posener, G., <i>L'enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire</i> , 143. -Griffith, F., "Carnarvon tablets I and II," in Carnarvon and Carter (eds.), <i>Five years' explorations at Thebes: a record of work done 1907-1911</i> , Oxford (1912), 37-pl. 29
Ostrakon IFAO Cat. 1236	§14	19 th -20 th Dynasty	Deir el Medina	-Posener, G., <i>Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques littéraires de Deir el Médineh</i> , Tome 2 (Nos 1109 à 1266), DFIFAO 18, 1951, 35, pl. 59-59 a.
Ostrakon IFAO Cat. 1238	§13, §14	19 th -20 th Dynasty	Deir el-Medina	-Posener, G., <i>Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques</i> , 35, pl. 60-60 a.
Ostrakon IFAO Cat. 1241	§14	19 th -20 th Dynasty	Deir el-Medina	-Posener, G., <i>Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques</i> , 36, pl. 61-61 a.
Ostrakon IFAO Cat. 1244	§14	19 th -20 th Dynasty	Deir el-Medina	-Posener, G., <i>Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques</i> , 36-37, pl. 61-61 a.
Ostrakon IFAO Cat. 1418	§14	19 th -20 th Dynasty	Deir el-Medina	-Posener, G., <i>Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques</i> , 34, pl. 19
Ostrakon IFAO Cat. 1419	§14	19 th -20 th Dynasty	Deir el-Medina	-Posener, G., <i>Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques</i> , 35, pl. 19.
O. E.GA 6128.1943	§13, §14	New Kingdom	Deir el-Medina	Hagen, F., <i>New Kingdom Ostraca from the Fitzwilliam Museum</i> , Brill, (2011), 25.



Table 2: An inventory of the sources which include §14 of the Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu


¹More recently, 150 ostraca from the mortuary temple of Thutmose III were published by Hagen. It includes over 50 literary ostraca, several with wisdom instructions (Khety, Amenemhat, Man for his Son). He also discusses in detail the training of scribes and priests at the temple. Hagen, F., *Ostraca from the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III*, Leiden, (2021), 5-8.

²Simpson, W.K., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, and Poetry*. New Haven and London, (1972), 198; Parkinson, R., *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*. London, (2002), 318-319.





Hieratic Commentary:

The lines are inclined in writing. The practiced hand of the copyist shows that was not a beginner.

Line 1.a  : Traces at the beginning represent  as suggested by Ostrakon IFAO Cat. 1236.¹

Line 1.b  The text carries three verse-points in black ink, these invariably occur at the end of semantic and syntactic units, the “verses”. Verse points are common in literary papyri. Perhaps the best-known early paratextual markers, the so-called “verse points,” “structuring points” and “rhythm-points” are dated to the Late Middle Kingdom.² They are found above the hieratic signs like most other literary manuscripts.

However, a notable deviation of standard practice is the black colour of verse-points, which are usually added in red ink. For Gardiner red verse-points should be termed punctuation.³ It appears between lines on horizontal lines in black rather than the usual red.⁴ These marks are indications of the metric system, perhaps for the one reciting⁵. They marked a combination of stress and pause.

Line 1.c  : In this word, the scribe may be mistaken in his writing by using a form that looks like . The normal forms of the word were written with the sign  or .














	O. NMEC 339	Möller list ⁶
		 
		
		 

Table. 3 The different forms of ,  and 

Line 1.d  : The trace at the end of this line may be , according to Ostrakon IFAO Cat. 1236.⁷

¹Posener, G., *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques littéraires de Deir el Médineh*, Tome 2 (Nos 1109 à 1266), DFIFAO 18, 1951, 35, pl. 59-59 a.

²Nassar, N., ‘Writing Practices in El-Lahun Papyri during the Middle Kingdom,’ *JARCE* 55, (2019), 111.




³Gardiner, A., *The Library of A. Chester Beatty. Description of a hieratic papyrus with a mythological story, love-songs, and other miscellaneous texts. (The Chester Beatty Papyri. 1)*, London, (1931), 2.



⁴Ogden, G., ‘Writing Ramesside Hieratic: What the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies Tell us about Scribal Education,’ in: Sue D’Auria (ed.) *Servant of Mut: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Fazzini*, Leiden, (2008), 109.



⁵Tacke, N., *Verspunkte als Gliederungsmittel in Ramessidischen Schülerhandschriften*, SAGA 22, Heidelberger Orientverlag, (2001), 137-145.

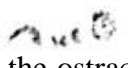

⁶Möller, G., *Hieratische Paläographie. Die aegyptische Buchschrift in ihrer Entwicklung von der fünften Dynastie bis zur römischen Kaiserzeit*, Vol. II, Leipzig, (1927).

⁷Posener, G., *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques littéraires de Deir el Médineh*, Tome 2 (Nos 1109 à 1266), 35, pl. 59-59 a.

Line 2.a  : The beginning of this line is very faint. This part may represent  I, the shape of the same sign in the first line over *nb* .


Line 3.a  : The trace at the end of this line may represent , according to P. Louvre E4864.¹

Line 4.a  : The beginning of this line is faint. According to Ostrakon IFAO Cat. 1236,² this part may be .






Line 5.a  : This line may represent . The date has been interpreted as a sign that the ostrakon is a scribal exercise.³ However, if this fragment is an educational text and the signs in Line 5 represent the date, this practice is usual as the date was written at the end of the educational text in red ink and not black as is the case in this fragment.⁴

Commentary:



The comments on the papyrus depend on a comparative study with another version of section 14 of the Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu (table 4).

(1) *ḥ3 ḥr rmt*: According to Ostrakon IFAO Cat. 1236,⁵ the beginning of the line can be completed to  which represents the title of section 14 of the Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu.

(2) *mi sšr*: the scribe replaced the preposition *m* with *mi*.

(3) *ḥwt*: The scribe writes the word *ḥwt* with the form . The normal form is , , , .⁷ The scribe ignores the sign S39 or T14.

(4) This damaged part represents §14.4 and §14.5.

(5) The normal form of this part is  meaning “see” in this ostrakon the scribe used another form  “They look to us” where he used the plural strokes as the more common Late Egyptian writing of the third person plural pronouns (*w*, “they”/ “one”).

¹Posener, G., *L'enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*, 144.

²Posener, *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques littéraires de Deir el Médineh*, Tome 2 (Nos 1109 à 1266), 35, pl. 59-59 a.


³McDowell A.G., ‘Student Exercises from Deir el-Medina: the Dates,’ in P. Der Manuelian (ed.), *Studies in honor of William Kelly Simpson*, 2, Boston, (1996), 600-608; Hagen, F., *New Kingdom Ostraca from the Fitzwilliam Museum*. Cambridge, 26.

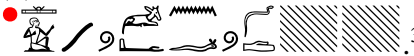
⁴McDowell A.G., in P. Der Manuelian (ed.), *Studies in honor of William Kelly Simpson*, 2, Boston, (1996), 600-608; Kaper, O., ‘A Kemyt Ostrakon from Amheida, Dakhleh Oasis,’ *BIFAO* 110, (2010), 118.

⁵Posener, G., *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques*, 35, pl. 60-60 a; Posener, G., *L'enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*, 138.

⁶LD I, 62.

⁷Wb I, 170.

(6) *ʿnn*: the interesting variant in this ostracon is using the verb *ʿnn*  which means (“to return”, “to turn back”), not “still”, instead of *mnw* which appeared on Ostracon IFAO Cat. 1238¹ and Tablet Carnarvon II.² This matches the meaning captured by Posener well, with a clearer wording: “Watch your ka-priests; if the son is neglectful, the wab-priest will still return” (to look after the cult of the deceased, even if the son neglects his duty).

(7) We restore *ddw* at the ending of the line, followed by the end of §14.8 .

(8) *in.tw*: Based on the previous line and general context of the text, one expects an active verb form. But the scribe used the passive article (*tw*) to represent the passive form of subjunctive *s_dm.f*.

(9) *šb.t*: Section 14 in this ostracon ends at this point. *šb.t* is the final word of this paragraph, although there is space left on the ostracon for more words, the scribe chose to stop here and write the date below.

(10) **Dating formula:** The date formula at the end of the literary text was one of the teaching text features, usually written in red ink. In this ostracon, it was written in black ink at the end of the text. Another unusual feature of this fragment regarding its date is that it is written briefly and intentionally abbreviated (month and season are left out, despite the available space).

So far, this abbreviated form of the date did not appear before, although there was enough space to write it entirely in ostraca from this genre.

McDowell mentioned that the education in Deir el-Medina was on days off, when all the workmen were at home, rather than at the work place in the Valley of the Kings.⁴ This ostracon is dated to Day 24, which was a weekday in the third week of the month.⁵ The same date (Day 24) is mentioned in the Kemyt Ostracon from Amheida, Dakhleh Oasis.⁶

The weekdays actually appear to be working days; however, this was not actually true in some cases as they were not always working days.⁷ The evidence for that is a gathering of the *knbt* at Deir el-Medina on Day 24; that day did not usually concur with a working day.⁸

¹Posener, G., *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques*, 35, pl. 60-60 a.

²Posener, G., *L'enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*, 143.

³Posener, G., *L'enseignement loyaliste. Sagesse égyptienne du Moyen Empire*, 144

⁴McDowell A.G., in P. Der Manuelian (ed.), *Studies in honor of William Kelly Simpson*, 2, Boston, (1996), 603.

⁵The same day appeared in these ostraca: II *šht* 24 (DM 1523), I *šht* 24 (DeM 1113), II *šmw* 24 (Cairo 217), [...] 24 (DM 1377) AI, [...] 24 (DM 1377) AI. See McDowell A.G., in P. Der Manuelian (ed.), *Studies in honor of William Kelly Simpson*, 2, Boston, (1996), 602-606.

⁶The date of the ostracon is *šbd 3 šht sw 24*. Kaper, O., *BIFAO* 110, (2010), 115-126.

⁷Jauhainen, H., “Do Not Celebrate Your Feast Without Your Neighbours”: a Study of References to Feasts and Festivals in Non-Literary Documents from Ramesside Period Deir el-Medina, *Publications of the Institute for Asian and African Studies* 10, (2009), 58-63.

⁸Vleeming, S.P., ‘The days on which the *knbt* used to gather,’ in Demarée, R.J and Janssen, Jac. J.(eds), *Gleanings from Deir el-Medina*, EgUit 1, (1982), 185.

	1236	
	1419	
8	O. NMEC 339	
	PL	
	PAv	
	1236	-----
	1419	
9	O. NMEC 339	-----
	PL	
	PAv	
	1236	
	1419	-----
10	O. NMEC 339	
	PL	-----
	PAv	-----
	1236	
	1419	-----
11	O. NMEC 339	-----
	PL	-----
	PAv	
	1236	-----
	1419	-----
12	O. NMEC 339	-----
	PL	-----
	PAv	
	1236	
	1419	

Table 4: A synoptic edition of the final section of Kairsu

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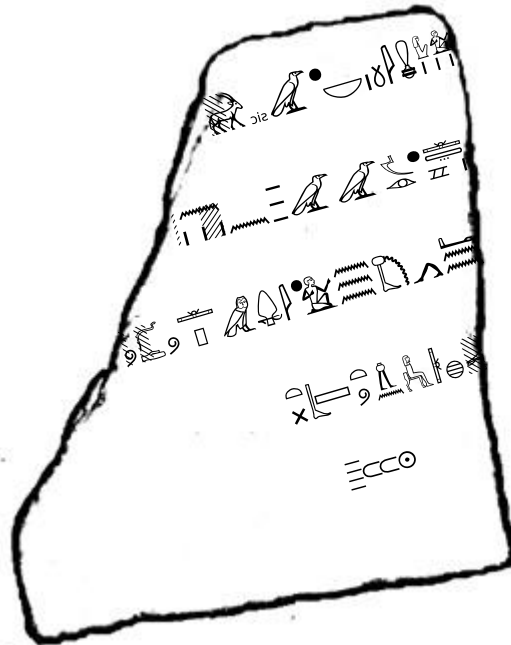
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PLATES



Pl. 1: O. NMEC 339 © the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization at Cairo

Pl.2:Facsimile of O. NMEC 339 (by Marwa A. Ewais)



Pl.3: Transcription of O. NMEC 339 (by Marwa A. Ewais)