

**REPORT ABOUT**

- **The Ostraka with Egyptianizing hieroglyphs of Iruña-Veleia**
- **Egyptian names written in Latin on bone or on ostrakon of Iruña-Veleia**

**By Ulrike Fritz**

## The Ostraka with Egyptianizing hieroglyphs of Iruña-Veleia

In the Roman "Domus Pompeja Valentina (DVP)" at Iruña-Veleia 270 items of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.C. with different inscriptions and drawings have been found. Some of the pieces are like Egyptian ostraka (pottery fragments) with "Egyptianizing" hieroglyphs and some are bones with the Latin inscription of Egyptian gods and names of Egyptian queens and kings.

First it is necessary to make a definition of the place, where the pieces have been found: The place is a part of a Roman villa, build in Flavian times in the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.C. which was used until the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.C. The 270 pieces (date: 250-300 A.C.) have been found underneath a room outside the private part of the house and it is possible that this room was something like a "library" or a classroom, where the pieces have been "inscribed" by scholars.



fig. 1: air photo of the "DVP" in Iruña-Veleia

„library“ or classroom  
of the DVP?

In general the Roman villa became in addition to "a place for living" in the first century B.C. an "educational establishment"<sup>1</sup> where the Romans try to get the "Greek style of life" (with architectural, artistical, physique, philosophical, ethical, religious and literary ideas). This is the reason why in the villas besides theatres, art collections, gardens and *palāstras* existed also a kind of library<sup>2</sup>. The interior of the "library" was simple, maybe it was a small room with shelf for the books and papyri-rolls and if we look at the DVP, we notice that the place, where the pieces have been found, can represent a "library" or classroom.

<sup>1</sup> Harald Mielsch, Die römische Villa. Architektur und Lebensform, München 1978, 94ff.

<sup>2</sup> Harald Mielsch, Die römische Villa. Architektur und Lebensform, München 1978, 114f, Abb. 79.

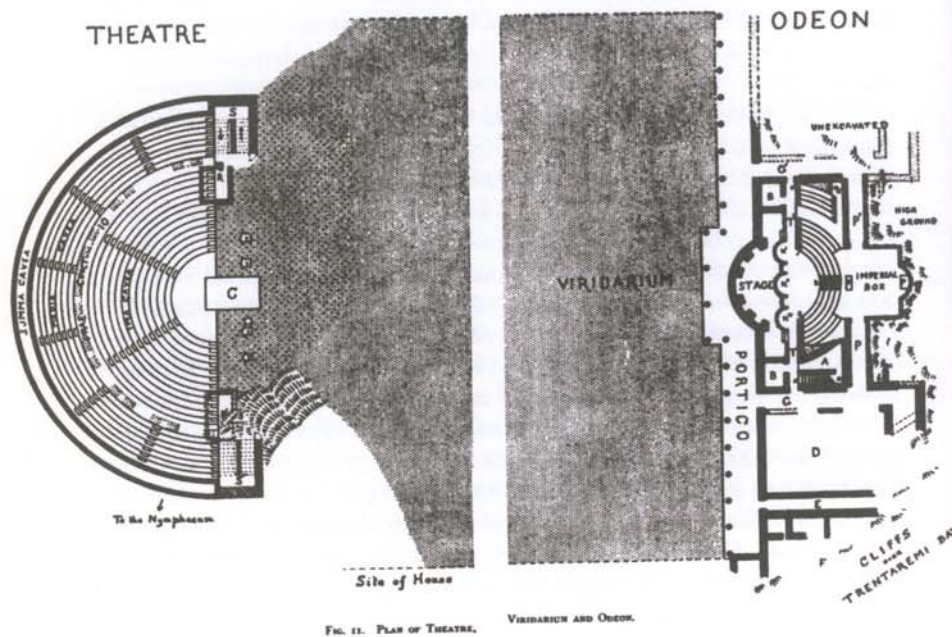


FIG. 11. PLAN OF THEATRE.

VIRIDARIUM AND ODEION.

fig. 2: villa with theatre, *viridarium* and *odeion*, Naples

Beside the well known agricultural personnel, the so called "familia rustica", the personnel of the house, the "familia urbana" is usually only known from inscriptions in tombs. But we know that the stuff "inside the villa" consist of a special kind of slaves and freeborn-citizens:<sup>3</sup> of the *dispentatores* (inspectors), the *tabularii* (secretaries), the *pedesequi* (entourage), the *nomenclatores* (who know the names), the *lectiarii* (carriers of the sedan), the *cubicularii* (valets), the *paedagogia* (page, servant for the children of the house, teaching stuff) and also of medicines, librarians, musicians, dancers, comedians, cooks, gardeners.

In our case the owner of the villa was a veteran, who was retired from his military service and the military men often get "slaves" instead of money for payment. So it is possible that the owner of the DVP employed different slaves (from Egypt, Greece, Italy), whom had the job of a *paedagogus* and maybe they work as "teacher of languages" and try to instruct the scholars in the "idioms" of their country. And the lessons took place in the "library", so the scholars have their own room, where they tried to write down what they have heard from the teacher. It seems that all the pieces are used in an ancient „class“, where scholars tried to learn something about the „languages“ of their time and also about historical events or persons. The *paedagogus* has knowledge of the ancient languages like Greek and Latin and also of the history of the Ancient world and this is the reason, why there exist combinations of Egyptian gods, queens, and kings and the writing of hieroglyphs (not very well done, but possible to identify the different signs) on the other hand.

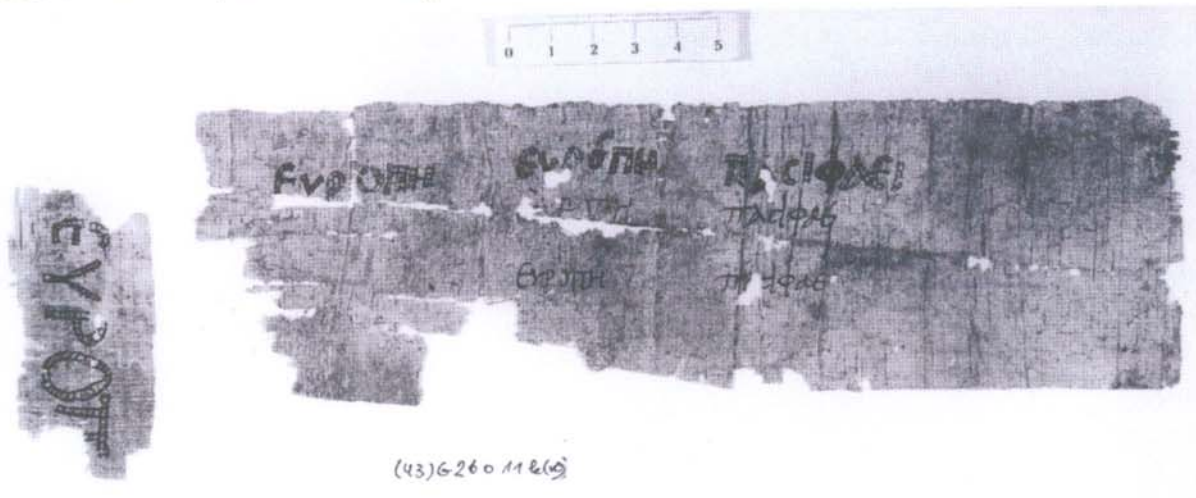
<sup>3</sup> Harald Mielsch, Die römische Villa. Architektur und Lebensform, München 1978, 133f..

The hieroglyphic writing (or drawing) on the pieces of Iruña-Veleia differs, because there are various scholars with a different kind of handwriting. And like on Egyptian ostraka (e.g. from Deir el-Medineh)<sup>4</sup>



**fig. 3: ostraca from Deir el-Medineh, with hieroglyphic writing and drawing of the goddess Meretseger (in ancient Egyptian language: “the one who loves the silence”)**

and papyri with calligraphic “training” (e.g. from the Fayum)<sup>5</sup> there are also false written letters and words, so we can imagine that the writer was in education.



**fig. 4: calligraphical “training” on papyrus (3<sup>rd</sup> century A.C.), today in Vienna**

The exercise book (fig. 5) gives an example for bilingual writing of Greek and Coptic and for this and if we have a look on the historical and cultural circumstances, the pieces of Iruña-Veleia with bilingual inscriptions in Latin and with Egyptianizing hieroglyphs are nothing unusual.

<sup>4</sup> Karola Zibeli-Chen (Hrsg.), Das Alte Ägypten. Museum Schloß Hohentübingen, 68, Abb. 53.

<sup>5</sup> Katja Lembke et alii, Ägyptens späte Blüte. Die Römer am Nil, Mainz 2004, 115, Abb. 204 und 205.

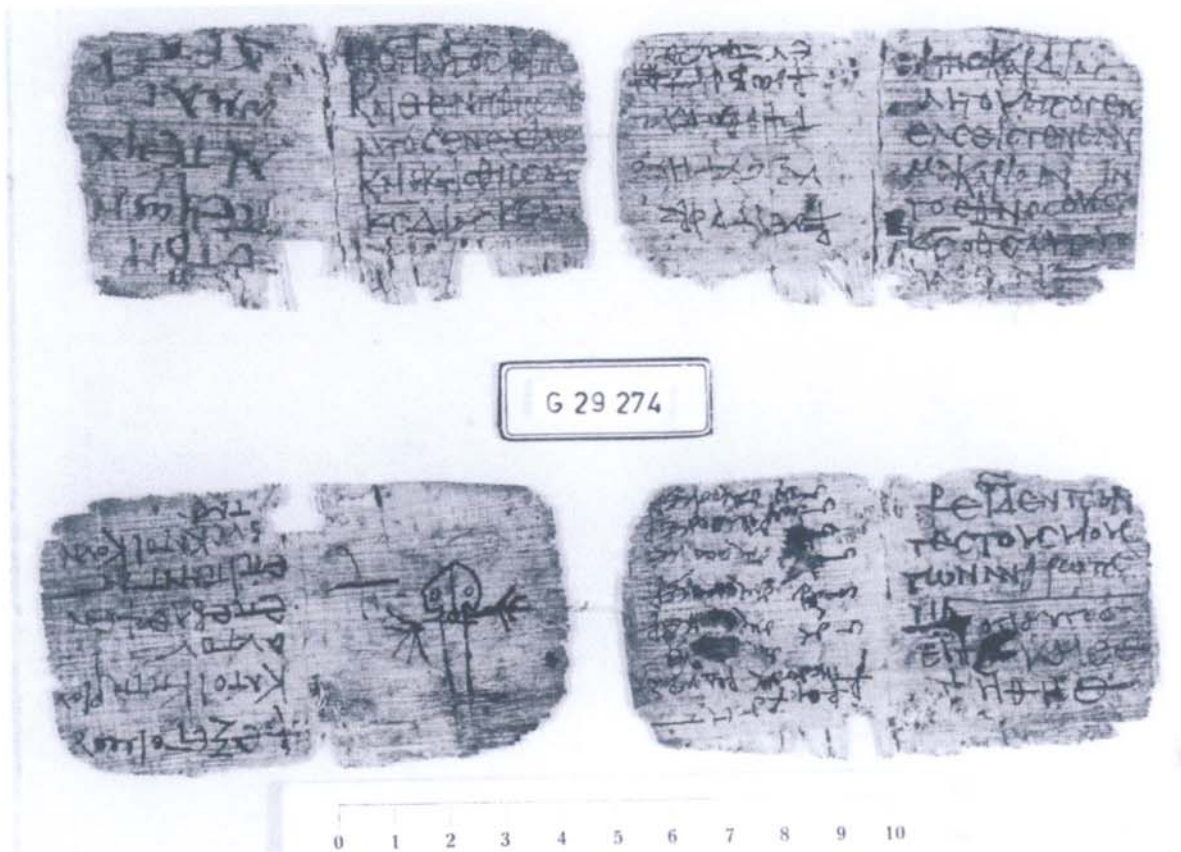


fig. 5: exercise book with texts in Greek (psalms) and upside down in Coptic and Bad Greek (4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century A.C.), today in Vienna

If we examine the ostraka with the Egyptianizing hieroglyphs there is reason for thinking about the fact that the teacher has no real knowledge about the ancient Egyptian language, he only remembers important signs he has seen as hieroglyphs on official buildings like temples. And even in the Roman time the inscriptions of the "pharaohs (caesari/augusti/imperatores)" have been in hieroglyphs (cf. the temple of Mandulis at Kalabscha/Augustus<sup>6</sup> or the obelisk of the Iseum Campense/Domitian<sup>7</sup> in Rome).

**"Egyptianising" hieroglyphs with possible compatibility to the sign-list of Gardiner<sup>8</sup>**

The hieroglyphs on the pottery fragments from Iruña-Veleia can be identified as Gardiner-signs, and for later times (the Graeco-Roman period) also as signs from the "Hieroglyphica"<sup>9</sup> but at the first sight there's no sentence or possible Egyptian name, which can be read.

<sup>6</sup> Joachim Willeitner, Nubien. Antike Monumente zwischen Assuan und Khartum, München 1997, 92-95.

<sup>7</sup> Ernst Batta, Obelisken. Ägyptische Obelisken und ihre Geschichte in Rom, Frankfurt am Main 1986, 101-112.

<sup>8</sup> Alan Gardiner, Egyptian Grammar. Being an introduction to the study Hieroglyphs (3rd ed.), Oxford 1982: His sign-list is used by Egyptologists worldwide.

<sup>9</sup> Nicholas Grimal et alii, Hieroglyphica. sign-list, Utrecht-Paris 2000: Beside the signs of Gardiner there are much more signs in the Graeco-Roman time and in the extended sign-list „Hieroglyphica“ we can find all the combinations and new or different forms of that time.

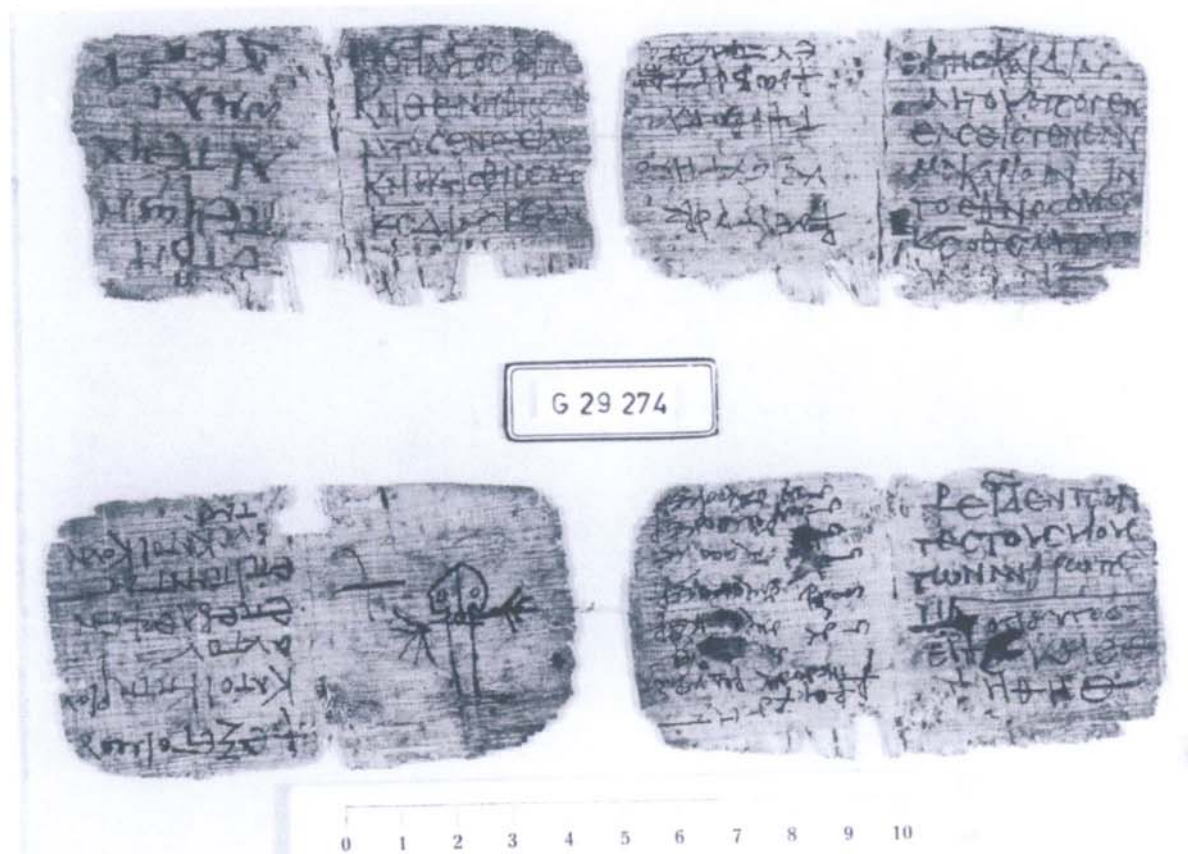


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Sometimes we have special hieroglyphs like the “Udjat-eye” (the eye of the Egyptian god Horus on piece Veleia No. 15928) and the “scarab” (in ancient Egyptian language “xpr” which means “arise” or “come into begin or new beginning” at piece Veleia No. 11301), which can be interpreted as “word”, but on the other hand there are columns of signs (like on the pieces Veleia Nos. 11305, 11380, 10741-b, and 11420) which cannot be read as Egyptian word or sentence. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.C. the Hieroglyphic writing was not very well known and even 800 years before, the “strangers” from outside Egypt (e.g. the Phoenicians and others) cannot understand, write and read the signs very well as we can see on the following two examples of “Egyptianizing” ware from the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. found in Italy:<sup>10</sup>

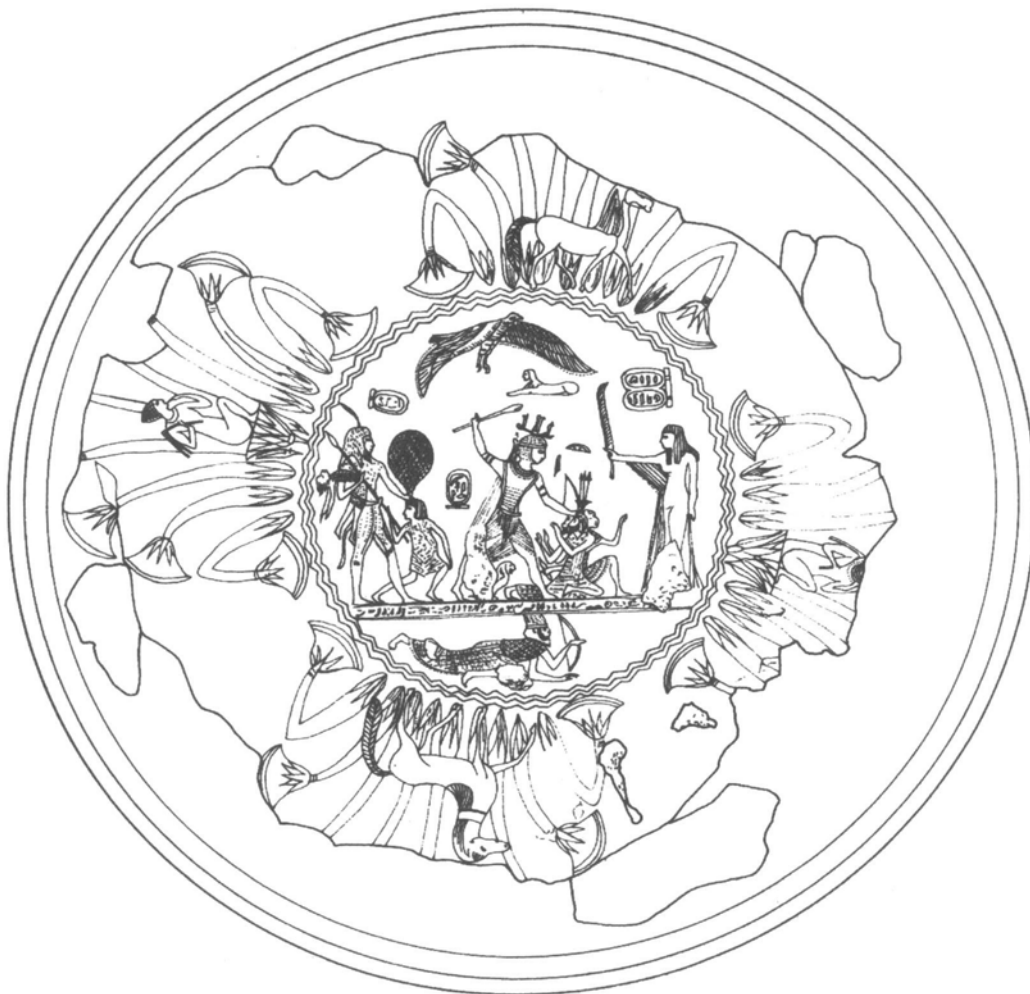


ABB. 6: Silberschale aus Pontecagnano (Kat. Nr. 1032); nach Fröhner, Collection Tyskiewicz, Taf. II.

**fig. 6: Phoenician silver vessel from Pontecagnano with the scene “smiting the enemy” and four pseudo-cartouches, without sense.**

<sup>10</sup> Günter Hölbl, *Beziehungen zwischen der ägyptischen Kultur zu Altitalien*, 2 Bände, Leiden 1979, 293-322, Abb. 6 und Abb. 13.

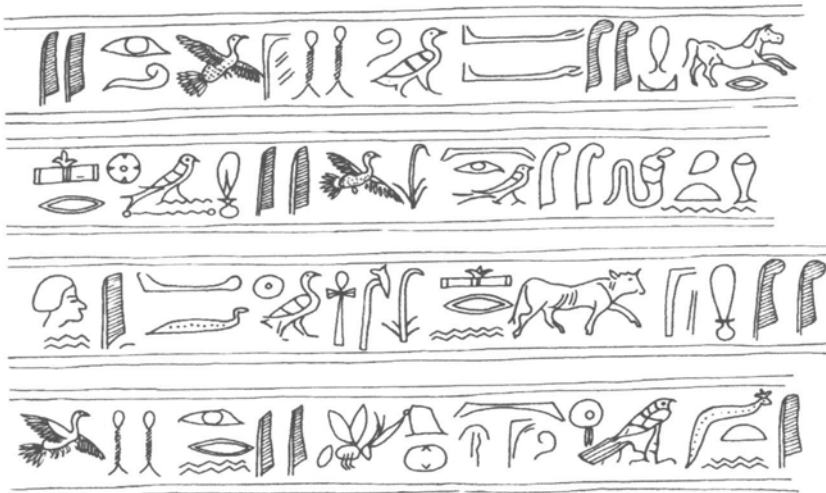


Abb. 13: „Hieroglyphenzeile“ der Kotyle aus Pontecagnano (Kat. Nr. 1031); nach Photo gezeichnet.

**fig. 7: “Hieroglyphic” writing on a Kotyle from Pontecagnano, which cannot be translated (direction of reading: left ← right)**

In the following **ten** ostraka with Egyptianizing hieroglyphs and **one** (recto/verso) with combined writing of hieroglyphs and Latin names will be analyzed.

The signs are classified after Gardiner (which refers to the “classic” era of hieroglyphic writing 2800-950 B.C.) completed by the “Hieroglyphica” (which contains the development and changes of the signs in the Graeco-Roman period).

In view of the “age” of the signs (250-300 A.C.) and the different handwriting of the scholars some signs are doubtful. But the direction of reading – in Ancient Egypt there are three different possibilities to read a word or a sentence: left → right, left ← right, and down like in a cartouche – is clear.

### 1. Ostraka with Egyptianizing hieroglyphs

**10741** eight signs (direction of reading: left → right)

1. Gardiner Q3 **f** = phonogram p or ideogram st (place)
2. Gardiner M17 **î** = phonogram j or ideogram j (reed = phragmites)
3. Gardiner U21 **\_** = phonogram stp (chose, chosen by) or determinative for “cutting”. The sign is written unusually in vertical direction.
4. Gardiner D21 **ë** = phonogram r or ideogram rA (1. mouth; 2. door, entrance; 3. speech, language, spoken word)
5. Gardiner M17 **î** = phonogram j or ideogram j (reed = phragmites)



6. Gardiner D4 **y** = phonogram  $j_r$  or ideogram  $j_r.t$  (eye) or ideogram  $j_r.j$  (to do, make, to place, to put, to work out...) or determinative for "to see, to cry, to wake up, to be blind".

7. Gardiner U1 **K** = phonogram  $m\bar{A}$  or ideogram  $m\bar{A}$  (stern of a boat) or

determinative

(sickle-shaped sword) combined with the sign D4 we get **M** for "to see, to be able to see"

8. Gardiner I9 **TM** (cerastes cerastes) = phonogram  $f$ , in Hieratic we have the "handwritten" form of this phonogram ( $f$ ) very often, especially at the end of the word

or Gardiner I10 **ú** (naja spec.) = phonogram  $D$  or ideogram  $D.t$  cobra, snake)

or Gardiner F20 **7** = phonogram  $ns$  (tongue of a cow) or ideogram (tongue) or determinative for "to taste" or short-cut  $j_m.j-ra$  (superintendent, director, head, chief, manager)

→ the last three signs can be combined as  $m\bar{A}=f$ , "he sees"

### 10828 one sign

Gardiner D4 **y** = phonogram  $j_r$  or ideogram  $j_r.t$  (eye) or ideogram  $j_r.j$  (to do, to make, to place, to put, to work out...) or determinative for "to see, to cry, to wake up, to be blind".

### 11086 one sign

combination D317 (Hieroglyphica): Gardiner D58 **æ** = phonogram  $b$  or ideogram  $b.w$  (place, position) and Gardiner N27 **>** = ideogram  $A.x.t$  (horizon)

or if you turn the sign around you get combination D356 (Hieroglyphica):

Gardiner T14 **5** = determinative for "wood for throwing, bear witness to, rebellion, to create, to honour, number, seek" and D4 **y** = phonogram  $j_r$  or ideogram  $j_r.t$

(eye) or ideogram  $j_r.j$  (to do, make, to place, to put, to work out...) or determinative for "to see, to cry, to wake up, to be blind")

or maybe it is the sign Gardiner S35 **í** determinative for "shadow or standard/ banner"

### 11301 one sign

Gardiner L1 **ø** (scarabeus sacer) = phonogram  $x.p.r$  (come into being, be created, be formed, arise, to develop, grow...) and ideogram  $x.p.r.r$  for "scarab, the god Chepri (the sun in the morning)".

→ Heart-scarabs have often something like a cross on their back, it is the part which divides their wings but maybe we have in this case a combination of Christian and old Egyptian symbolism.

**11305** ten signs (direction of reading: left → right)

1. Gardiner D9 ~ = ideogram  $r\bar{m}j$  (to cry, to lament) or determinative for "to cry, tears, mourning"
2. Gardiner E34  $\hat{E}$  = phonogram  $w\bar{n}$  (to exist, to be)
3. Gardiner D58  $\bar{a}$  = phonogram  $b$  or ideogram  $b\bar{w}$  (place, position)
4. Gardiner Aa1  $\acute{o}$  = phonogram  $x$  combined with D21  $\ddot{e}$  = phonogram  $r$  or ideogram  $r\bar{A}$  (1. mouth; 2. door, entrance; 3. speech, language, spoken word) as preposition  $xr$  (to)
5. Gardiner M18  $\bar{B}$  = phonogram  $j\bar{j}$  or  $j\bar{w}j$  (to walk, come return, to be back) is known as combined form with the preposition  $xr$  and means "come to someone"
6. Gardiner S34  $\grave{a}$  = phonogram  $anx$  and ideogram  $anx$  (life, to live)
7. Gardiner D21  $\ddot{e}$  = phonogram  $r$  or ideogram  $r\bar{A}$  (1. mouth; 2. door, entrance; 3. speech, language, spoken word)
8. Gardiner Q3  $\bar{f}$  = phonogram  $p$  or ideogram  $st$  (place)
- 9.? maybe Gardiner D54  $\int$  = ideogram  $j\bar{w}j$  (to walk, come, coming back) or determinative for "to stand up, finish, to flee, to turn around, to start, runner) in connection with the following sign Gardiner N40  $\bar{L}$
10. Gardiner W25  $\bullet$  = phonogram  $j\bar{n}j$  (to bring)  
or Gardiner N40  $\bar{L}$  = phonogram  $S\bar{m}$  (to walk, to start)

**11380** nine signs (direction of reading: left → right)

- 1.? maybe Gardiner E13  $\text{—}$  = determinative for cat and male cat or E20  $\bar{y}$  = ideogram  $\%tX$  (the god Seth) or determinative for "donkey, angry, rebellion, to disturb"
- 2.? maybe part of Gardiner L1  $\bar{\varnothing}$  (scarabeus sacer) = phonogram  $xpr$  (come into begin, be created, be formed, arise, to develop, grow...) and ideogram  $xpr\bar{r}$  for "scarab, the god Chepri (the sun in the morning)  
or Gardiner L7  $\neq$  = ideogram  $srot$  (for the goddess Selkis)
3. maybe Gardiner Z11  $\bar{\delta}$  = phonogram  $j\bar{m}j$  (nisba, the related one)  
or Gardiner M42  $\hat{O}$  = phonogram  $w\bar{n}m$  (to eat)

- or but doubtful Gardiner V36  $\text{fi}$  = phonogram  $\text{Hn}$  (to organize, to rule) or phonographical determinative  $\text{Hn}$  or determinative for “organize, to arrange”
4. maybe Gardiner M17  $\hat{\text{i}}$  = phonogram  $\text{j}$  or ideogram  $\text{j}$  (reed = phragmites)
5. Gardiner D21  $\ddot{\text{e}}$  = phonogram  $\text{r}$  or ideogram  $\text{rA}$  (1. mouth; 2. door, entrance; 3. speech, language, spoken word)
- 6.? maybe Gardiner F2  $\#$  = determinative for “being angry”
- or Gardiner E7 = determinative for “donkey, monster” can replace sign Gardiner E20  $\ddot{\text{y}}$
7. maybe Gardiner A28  $\text{C}$  = ideogram  $\text{aHaw}$  (servant) or determinative for “be

mighty,

to lament, to be high, joy”

8. maybe Gardiner V10  $\text{C}$  = phonogram  $\text{rn}$  (name) or determinative for “ring” or O6  $\text{T}$  = ideogram  $\text{Hwt}$  (temple, house) or O7 $\text{U}$  = same as sign O6
- 9.? maybe Gardiner I9  $\text{m}$  (cerastes cerastes) = phonogram  $\text{f}$ , in Hieratic we have the “handwritten” form of this phonogram ( $\text{f}$ ) very often, especially at the end of the word
- or Gardiner I10  $\acute{\text{u}}$  (naja spec.) = phonogram  $\text{D}$  or ideogram  $\text{Dt}$  cobra, snake)
- or Gardiner F20  $\text{7}$  = phonogram  $\text{ns}$  (tongue of a cow) or ideogram (tongue) or determinative for “to taste” or short-cut  $\text{jmj-ra}$  (superintendent, director, head, chief, manager)

**11413** three signs written in a cartouche  $\text{C}$  (direction of reading: down)

1. Gardiner Q3  $\text{f}$  = phonogram  $\text{p}$  or ideogram  $\text{st}$  (place) = article of the following word?

2. bird (?) maybe Gardiner G43  $\text{a}$  (coturnix coturnix) = phonogram  $\text{w}$  or G 47  $\sqrt{\text{}}$  = phonogram  $\text{TA}$  and ideogram  $\text{TA}$  for “chicken, young bird, child” or G17  $\text{j}$  (tyto alba) = phonogram  $\text{m}$ .

3. different possibilities

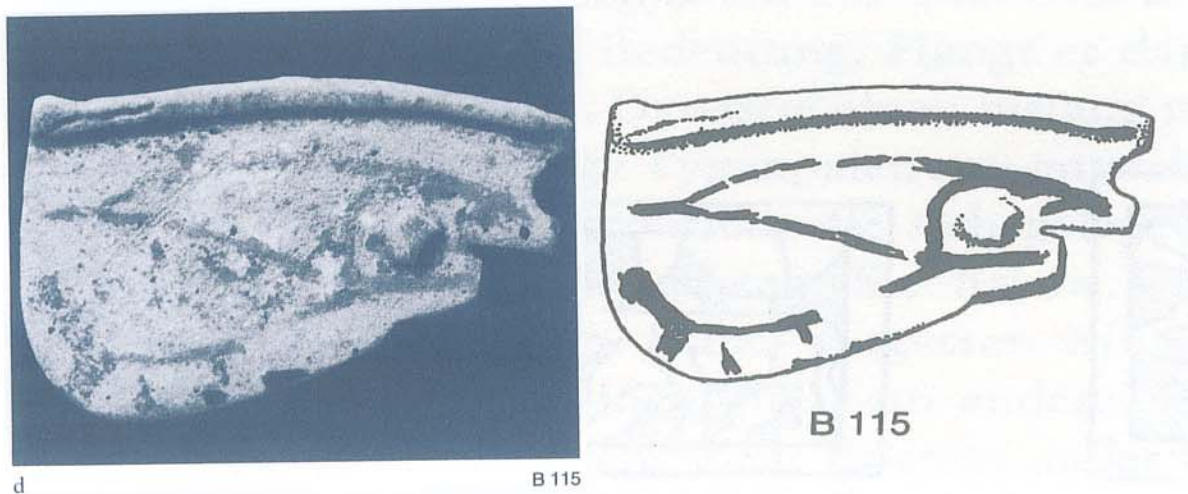
- Gardiner D58  $\text{æ}$  = phonogram  $\text{b}$  or ideogram  $\text{bw}$  (place, position)
- Gardiner W15  $\hat{\text{o}}$  = phonographical determinative  $\text{obH}$  and determinative for “bottle of water, be cooled, libation”
- Gardiner W16  $\emptyset$  (same meaning as W15)
- Gardiner W9  $\text{c}$  = phonogram  $\text{Xnm}$  (to be united with, the Egyptian name of the god Chnum)

→ the combination of signs (e.g. an article and a name of a god) can be a “Royal name” as the scholars understand it. G43 <sup>a</sup> and G17 j fit to the following word Xnm  
 ⚡ and can be a part of this.

**15928** ? maybe Gardiner D10 ⚡, ideogram wDAT determinative for “eye, the Udjat eye”

**16718** Gardiner D10 ⚡ = ideogram wDAT determinative for “eye, the Udjat eye”

→ In the time of the Phoenicians a lot of ancient Egyptian and Egyptianizing ware like amulets, statues and scarabs came by trade to the Iberian peninsula and there's one amulet of an Udjat-eye from the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. from Ibiza (fig. 8), which has resemblance to Veleia No. 16718 (terra sigillata with an Udjat-eye)<sup>11</sup>. It is not sure if the amulet from Ibiza was made in Egypt or in Spain, but it is an example that even 800 years before Egyptianizing ware was “manufactured” on the Iberian peninsula and it is possible that Veleia No. 16718 and maybe also No. 15928 have been used as amulets.



**fig. 8:** amulet “Udjat-eye” from the 7th century BC, Ibiza

## 2. Ostrakon (recto/verso) with combination of hieroglyphs and Latin written names

**11420 recto**, right part of the ostrakon, seven signs (direction of reading: left → right)

1. Gardiner O14 \ = determinative for “to close, portal” and the Latin letter “O”

<sup>11</sup> Ingrid Gamer-Wallert, *Ägyptische und ägyptisierende Funde von der Iberischen Halbinsel*, Wiesbaden, 1978, 153, Abb. 66 (B115); 275; Taf. 64, d.

2. maybe Gardiner A44 **S** = ideogram *nsw* (king, king of Upper Egypt) or determinative for "king, king of Upper Egypt, Osiris" and the Latin letter "C"
3. Gardiner A17a **7** determinative for "child, sitting" and the Latin letter "T"
4. Gardiner T30 **E** = phonogram *dmt* or determinative for "to slaughter, to cut, sharpen" and the Latin letter "A"
5. Gardiner V30 **◊** = phonogram *nb* (everything, all) or ideogram *nb* (basket) or determinative for "basket" and the Latin letter "V"
6. Gardiner I12 **£** = phonogram *wdt* or determinative for "Uraeus-snake, the goddess Wadjet, goddess" and the Latin letter "I"

→ After Augustus (69 A.C.) began the time of the first „Aegyptomania“ and all over in the Roman Empire we can find Egyptianizing buildings, decors and reliefs; e.g. in the Aula Isaica on the Palatine in Rome there are wall decorations with hieroglyphs<sup>12</sup>.



**fig. 9: Egyptianizing hieroglyphs in the Aula Isaica on the Palatine, Rome (1<sup>st</sup> century B.C.)**

The Uraeus-snake has the same form as the written sign 6 (Gardiner I12) on the Ostrakon Veleia No. 11420 recto

7. Gardiner O24 **£** = determinative for "pyramid, tomb, temple" and the Latin letter "O"

→ in this case we have the attempt to "translate" Latin letters into hieroglyphs. Each Egyptian sign has its equivalent in a Latin letter.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Katja Lembke et alii, *Ägyptens späte Blüte. Die Römer am Nil*, Mainz 2004, 13f, Abb. 15.

**11420 recto**, left part of the ostrakon - Under the Latin written name "Octavio" we can see two hieroglyphic signs, cancelled with some cuts:

1. Gardiner V36  $\text{fi}$  = phonogram  $\text{Hn}$  (to organize, to rule) or phonographical determinative  $\text{Hn}$  or determinative for "organize, to arrange"
2. Gardiner A1  $\text{!}$  = ideogram  $\text{s}$  (man) or determinative for "me, in male names, jobs" or A2  $\text{\#}$  = determinative for "to eat, to speak, magic, feelings, knowledge" or Gardiner A3  $\text{\$}$  = determinative for "to sit".

- If we turn the ostrakon 90° to the left the word "Syla" in Latin letters can be read. Underneath there are four hieroglyphic signs:

1. Gardiner D21  $\text{ë}$  = phonogram  $\text{r}$  or ideogram  $\text{rA}$  (1. mouth; 2. door, entrance; 3. speech, language, spoken word)
2. Gardiner S35  $\text{ı̇}$  = determinative for "shadow or standard/banner"
3. maybe Gardiner F13  $\text{0}$  = phonogram  $\text{wp}$  or ideogram  $\text{wpt}$  (horn, crown of the head, zenit)
4. Gardiner E14  $\text{v}$  = determinative for "dog, female dog" or Gardiner E21  $\text{ẏ}$  = determinative for "to shout, anger, the god Seth, chaos" or Gardiner E22  $\text{v}$  = ideogram  $\text{mAj}$  (lion) or determinative for "lion, female lion, sphinx"

**11420 verso**, Underneath the Latin written name "Leonida" there is a row of seven hieroglyphic signs (direction of reading: left → right) and in a second row is the Latin written name "Marco" with five hieroglyphic signs (direction of reading: left → right) underneath.

- 1<sup>st</sup> row: Seven hieroglyphic signs under "Leonida" (direction of reading: left → right)

1. Gardiner L7  $\text{≠}$  = ideogram  $\text{srot}$  (for the goddess Selkis)
2. Gardiner E31  $\text{,,}$  = determinative for "dignity, dignitary" or Gardiner E 28  $\text{\ddagger}$  or E 29  $\text{\cdot}$  = determinative for "gazelle" or maybe Gardiner E1  $\text{f}$  = ideogram  $\text{kA}$  (bull) and determinative for "cow, cattle, bull, to enjoy"
3. Gardiner A28  $\text{C}$  = ideogram  $\text{aHaw}$  (servant) or determinative for "be mighty, to lament, to be high, joy"
4. maybe the same sign? Gardiner A28  $\text{C}$
5. Gardiner D4  $\text{y}$  = phonogram  $\text{j r}$  or ideogram  $\text{j r.t}$  (eye) or ideogram  $\text{j r j}$  (to do, make, to place, to put, to work out...) or determinative for "to see, to cry, to wake up, to be blind")

6. Gardiner A13 1 = determinative for “caught person, enemy, enemy of the gods”
7. Gardiner A55 ^ phonographical determinative sDrw/sDrt or determinative for “death, dead body, to sleep”  
or maybe Gardiner E22 / = ideogram mAj (lion) or determinative for “lion, female lion, sphinx”

- 2<sup>nd</sup> row: Five signs under “Marco” (direction of reading: left → right)

1. Gardiner M10 ʒ = determinative for “lotos”
2. maybe Gardiner A55 ^ = phonographical determinative sDrw/sDrt or determinative for “death, dead body, to sleep”  
or maybe Gardiner E22 / = ideogram mAj (lion) or determinative for “lion, female lion, sphinx”
3. Gardiner V8 } = phonogram Snw (ring, circle) the sign with an “Egyptian” fish looks different, cf. Gardiner K1 © or Gardiner K5\$
4. Gardiner N3I = phonogram S or ideogram (pond, waterbasin, garden) or Gardiner O1 O phonographical determinative pr or ideogram pr (house, building, tomb, or determinative for “house, stable, fort, temple, place”
5. Gardiner C9 n = ideogram @wt-Hr (for the goddess Hathor) or determinative for “goddess Hathor”

By turning the ostrakon 90° to the right three Hieroglyphic signs at the point of the piece can be recognized (direction of reading: down)

1. Gardiner Aa13 ö = phonographical determinative jm (adverb there at this place) or phonogram and ideogram gs (side, flank) or determinative for “rib”
2. maybe Gardiner U15 ʒ = phonogram tm (negative complement not/to be complete/to be finished/the universe/everything)
3. maybe Gardiner R1 ... = ideogram xAyt (offering table) or determinative for “offering table”  
or Gardiner R2 = same as sign R1

**Conclusion:** The ostraka with hieroglyphic signs seem like “exercises” from scholars and if we compare them with examples from Deir el-Medineh and the Fayum we recognize, that the writers have less knowledge of the ancient Egyptian language. Sometimes there’s the impression of Egyptian verbs like “to eat, to see, to sleep, to make and to be” or Egyptian nouns like house, place, animals (dog, lion, bull...) and gods (Seth, Selkis, Chnum...), but it is not easy to read and classify the signs. So the sense of the written “word” or “sentence” is not clear and even if there’s a cartouche (which contains usually a Royal name) it is not possible to decipher the name. In Graeco-Roman times sometimes the meaning of the words are “secret” and we have a kind of cryptographic writing, but usually it was only used by priests in sacred texts in temples and in our case it is not plausible that the teacher and the scholars are able to write in a cryptographic manner.



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## Egyptian names written in Latin on bone or on ostrakon

11288 DERMOPOLIS (ostrakon)

12375 HERMOPOLIS (bone of wild boar?)

12388 RAMSUS SETIFILIO (bone of roedeer)

12391 NERERTITI – NEFERTARI – HAMSE (bone of roedeer)

12392 NEFERTITI (bone of deer)

12395 ISIS – OSIRIS – ANUBIS (bone of wild boar)

The bones with names of Egyptian gods, queens, and kings, written in Latin are from the same place of discovery. The palaeopathologist Dr. Joaquim Baxarias from the Museo d'Arqueologia de Catalunya/Barcelona has the opinion that the encraving of the inscription on the bones are not modern, because they have a special kind of old (or very old) patina<sup>1</sup>. Even if the vocalized form of the names in Latin irritate some "linguists", there is an explanation, why the names have been written in the "modern" vocalized form: they have an indo-european tradition!

If we look at the names of ancient Egypt, written in hieroglyphs, Hieratic, or later in Demotic we can read (or better speak) it in this time (e.g. in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AC) in **two** ways, because we have no knowledge about the real pronunciation. First we can look at other parallels of the **Semitic language family** like Akkadian sources or later the Coptic language (which is the hamo-semitic/in Castellan: camito-semitica) successor of the Ancient Egyptian language written in Greek letters.

And second we can look to the **Indo-european languages** (like Greek and Latin), which exist still at the same time (3<sup>rd</sup> century AC) as the Late Egyptian language or Late Demotic and which are from the beginning phonetic scripts:

<b>Names of Ancient Egypt</b>	→	<b>Coptic Language/Hamo-semitic</b> (in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> century B.C. we have the earliest effort to write Hieroglyphic texts with Greek letters, but the first know Coptic text, a magical text, dates in the 1 <sup>st</sup> century A.C.).
V		

### **Indo-european languages**

**Greek** (In 403 B.C. the Attican Alphabet became official in Athens, the first Greek grammar was written in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.C. in Alexandria. Greek was the lingua franca of the Ancient World)

**Latin** (first evidence 600 B.C., until 90 B.C. only spoken in Rome and after in the whole Roman Empire)

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Baxarias told this after the examination of the photos in a private discussion on the 22nd of December 2008.

In the case of the Latin written Egyptian names the second way is the effective way, because Greek was the lingua franca of the Ptolemies and later of the Romans in Egypt and all over the Roman Empire, and the veterans and their stuff know this language and they are able to read and use it (and teach it as well).

If we compare the writing of the Egyptian gods Isis, Osiris and Anubis (on the piece "Veleia No. 12395/bone of wild boar) with their pendants in Greek and Latin and on the other hand with their "translation" into Coptic, we recognize that the phonetic way/indo-european way is the better one.

	<b>Ancient Egyptian</b>	<b>Greek</b>	<b>Latin</b>	<b>↔</b>	<b>Coptic</b>
	(Transcription)				
<b>Isis:</b>	<i>is.t</i> or <i>ʒs.t</i>	> Ἰσίς	> Isis	↔	HCE, HCI
<b>Osiris:</b>	<i>Wsr</i>	> Οσίρις	> Osiris	↔	OYCIPE, OYCIPI
<b>Anubis:</b>	<i>Inpw</i>	> Ἀνουβίς	> Anubis	↔	ANOYII

It was usual, that **some** Egyptian gods (mainly the three from above) in the Graeco-Roman period were adapted and "transformed" (with their names written in Greek and later Latin) first to Greece<sup>2</sup> and later to the parts of the Roman Empire (cf. Isis-temples in Europe)<sup>3</sup>.

More clear is the phonetic way if we have names of queens and kings like Nefertiti, Nefertari, Ramsis and Seti (like on the pieces Veleia No. 12391/bone of roedeer, Veleia No. 12388/bone of roedeer, and Veleia No. 12392/bone of deer) also used as personal names in the New Kingdom and later<sup>4</sup>.

The use of queens and kings names was not forbidden and even if we have the so called „damnatio memoriae“ the name of queen Nefertiti (as wife of the heretic king Akhenaten) was known and written all over the New Kingdom and later.

<sup>2</sup> - Lexikon der Ägyptologie/LÄ, Bd. II, Wiesbaden 1977: Graeco-ägyptische Literatur, Sp. 875.  
- LÄ, Bd. III, Wiesbaden 1980: Interpretatio graeca, Sp. 170.

<sup>3</sup> - LÄ, Bd. III., Wiesbaden 1980: Isis, Sp. 197-199.

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<sup>4</sup> Hermann Ranke, Die Ägyptischen Personennamen, Bd. I (PN I) Glückstadt 1935, 201: Nefertiti (12) und Nefertari (16) und (17); 218: Ramessu (6) and 322 Seti (7) und (8).

And for the composition of personal or private names it was usual to use the names of queens (e.g. Nefertari) and kings (e.g. Ramsis and Seti)<sup>5</sup>.

Hermann Ranke, who put one focus of his work on the personal names of Ancient Egypt came to the conclusion that the names of Ancient Egypt have been sometimes transformed into Coptic and - very important for the researches in Iruña-Veleia – also direct into Greek<sup>6</sup>. So it is no problem for persons in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AC to write an “inscription”, e.g. a name of a historic or private person of Ancient Egypt in the vocalized Greek form in Latin letters. And the idea of the written names of important historical persons of Ancient Egypt transported to Iruña-Veleia in this time is not unreal, because the above mentioned *paedagogus* wants to teach his scholars not only the language – he wants to tell them something about the historical background of his own roots.

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<sup>5</sup> Hermann Ranke, Die Ägyptischen Personennamen, Bd. 2 (PN II), Glückstadt/Hamburg-New York 1952.

<sup>6</sup> Ranke, PN II, 229: The ancient Egyptian word for „beautiful, good, nice“ *nfr* is written νεφερ in Greek and there are a lot of examples of names composed with *nfr* and written in Greek with the vocalized form νεφερ, cf. PN II, 407: there are a list with references like PN I 196 (4), 198 (6) and (14) and 199, (19).

And for the name of Ramsis we have the whole form written in Greek, see Ranke PN I, 218: The Ancient Egyptian name *r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw* is written in Greek ραμεσσης.