

Illustrated ostracon with a hieroglyphic text dedicated to Meretseger by Amenkhau

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Exercise: find the names of **Meretseger** (though I do not see the “t”!) and **Amenkhau**.

Knowledge of the alphabetic signs is almost sufficient: you need some more info about some very widespread bilateral signs.

In the next image (created with JSesh) you find, top to bottom: signs for *mr*, *mn*, and *h^c*. A couple of interesting words follow in the vocabulary.

   *mr* (U6, U7, N36)

 *mn* (Y5)

 *h^c* (N28)

Vocabulary

  *mr(i)* "to love"

  *mry* or  *mr(y)* "beloved"

The first line shows three signs which correspond to Gardiner list entries U6, U7, and N36 (left to write). They express the same phonetic value: all of them are read *mr* ("mer"). Actually there are other bilaterals for the same phonetic, but these three are related in their "meaning" too. They enter in words such as *mr(i)* (to love), or *mry* (beloved), which I have reported in the vocabulary in the same picture. In "to love", After *m* and *r* you have the A2 determinative, the sitting man with his hand at the mouth, which indicates actions concerning eating, but also speaking, and thus also sentiments. What do these sign represent? U6 and U7 are hoes, and N36 is a canal! A hoe can be used to dig a canal, and both witness the love of a farmer for her land! Isn't this fascinating? Now that you know how to write "beloved", you will find these hieroglyphs everywhere in stelas! Beloved "of" this god, or beloved "of" some relative.

The second bilateral sign is *mn* ("men") As an ideogram, this sign means "stable". You will find it in some names/titles of pharaohs, for example Thutmose III:



which means something like “stable is the appearance of Ra” (note that Ra is written at the beginning, as a form of respect).

The third biliteral sign is *h^c* (“kha”) and represents the sunrise above a hill.

Now you have everything you need... solve the exercise!

By the way, as you are reading so well these signs, search for another important glyph: *imntt*, occidental . For the Ancient Egyptians, the west is the afterlife.