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## TOWARDS THE ETYMOLOGY OF EG. *m3t* „TO THINK OUT“

*Abstract:* The article considers all the possible equivalents in the cognate Afrasian (Semito-Hamitic) languages for the ancient Egyptian term *m3t* „to think out“ ( $^*mlk?$ ), which has been so far unexplained in comparative Afrasian linguistics. For our word the most promising etymology is a connection with the common Semito-Agaw (Central Cushitic) root  $^*\sqrt{mlk}$  with the original sense „to look“ (Eg. 3 is often  $<^*l$ ). The eventual biconsonantal origin of  $^*\sqrt{mlk}$ , and the various problems arising in connection with it, complete the discussion.

1. Among the Egyptian words being so far without a satisfactory etymology in the Afrasian lexical stock, we find also Eg. *m3t* „erdenken, ersinnen“ (OK, Wb II 34, 17–18). The word continued in late Eg. *m3wt* ( $^*m\dot{3}wet$ ), from which we have Dem. *mwj* „denken“ (DG 156) and later Cop. (S) *meeue* „to think“ (Černý 1976, 95; Vycichl 1983, 127).

2. When searching for Afrasian cognates of Eg. *m3t*, we may hypothetically postulate the following possible proto-forms: PAA  $^*m'k^{(w)}$ ,  $^*mVrak^{(w)}$ - or  $^*mVlak^{(w)}$ -.

Concerning the vocalisation of the second syllable in the last two hypothetical archetypes, we can account for that the combination of  $^*r/l$  with the following  $^*i$  (and perhaps also  $^*u$ ) would probably yielded Eg. *-j-*, cp. D'jakonov 1965, 24–25, note 9; 1984, 6; 1988, 40; D'jakonov et al. 1987, 28 etc.

Below we make an attempt to give a survey of all possible etymological solutions for our Egyptian word.

3. If the Eg. word historically goes bac to a biradical root  $^*\sqrt{mk}$  on the Proto-Afrasian level, then cp. the following eventual parallels in ECu.: Burji (Bambala) *makk-* „to measure“, Afar *makk-it-* „to figure out, reasom“ (Sasse 1982, 139). Phonologically, fully possible correspondences. Afar is especially close to Eg. in the semantics.

4. On the other hand, Eg. *m3t* can reflect a root  $^*\sqrt{mrk}$  too. In this case our form can correspond to NOm. Janjero *mirk* „consigliare“

compared by E. Cerulli (1938 III, 80) with Eth. -Sem.: Amhara *mak-kara* „consigliare“, *meker* „consiglio“ (a metathesis in Eth. -Sem.?); However, we cannot exclude that Janjero belongs to the root  $\sqrt{mlk}$  (contra Cerulli), and comes from  $\sqrt{milk}$ .

5. Nevertheless, the most reliable cognates appear in Sem. Akk.  $\sqrt{mlk}$  „(be)raten“, *mālik-um* „Ratgeber, Berater“ (AHW 593; Lipin 1957, 120); cp. Eth. -Sem.  $\sqrt{mlk}$ : Amhara *tamalakkata*, Gura (Chaha) *tamolakata*, (Gogot) *tamelakata* etc. „to observe“ (Cerulli 1951, 471) ~ Agaw (CCu.) Qwara *malakat* (influenced by Eth. -Sem. or borrowed?), Bilin *mark* (regular from  $\sqrt{malk}$ , by no means a borrowing) „hinblicken, schauen“ (Reinisch 1885, 99). Thus we may consider Eg. *m3t* of Common Afrasian origin.

6. It can be supposed that our Common AA root  $\sqrt{mlk}$  is enlarged by the quite frequent root complement  $\sqrt{-k}$  (see Moscati 1947, 128 for Hebrew; SISAJa I–III passim with AA examples; also Ehret 1989, 131, 145 for Arabic [and his critique by Belova 1992]). This presumption may be based on that the above described forms from the root  $\sqrt{mlk}$  originate ultimately in PAA  $\sqrt{ml}$  „to look, see“ (with the semantic shift into „to think“ attested in ECu. and Om). This verbal root the branches of Afrasian:

Semitic: Ar.  $\sqrt{ml}$ : *ta'ammala* (stem *V*) „to see, observe“ (Baranov 1976, 44).

Egyptian  $\sqrt{m3}$  (possibly <  $\sqrt{m-l}$ , if not from  $\sqrt{m-r}$ ): *m33* „to look, see“ (OK, FD 100), *m3.tj* „the two eyes (about the moon and the sun)“ (LP, Wb II 11, 12), *mr.t* „eye“ (BD, Wb II 107, 10–15), *m3r.w* „viewing place (in the sun cult)“ (Amarna, FD 103).

Berber: Common Berb.  $\sqrt{ml}$  „to show, indicate“: Tuareg *aməl* „indiquer, louer“, Qabyle *məl* „montrer“ etc., but Kel-Ui, Djerba *aməl* „dire“ (see Basset 1883, 310, 336).

Cushitic: Agaw (CCu.): Bilin *mili' y-* „to look (around)“, Qwara *mäl, mal-* „spähen, beobachten, herumschauen“, *malanā* „Späher“ (Reinisch 1885, 98), Qemant *mēl-* „to look, (Cerulli:) guardare“ ~ ECu. Somali *mal-* „supporre, credere“, *mala* (Cerulli: *mal*) „thought“; and HECu.  $\sqrt{mal-}$  „to guess, suppose“ (Hudson 1989, 417) > i.a. Sidamo *mal-* „consigliarsi“, *malā* „consiglio“, see also Zaborski 1975, 323.

Omotic: NOM. Omoto: Wolamo *mil-* „credere“, Kaffa *mall-et-* „osservare“ (Orel and Stolbova set up POM.  $\sqrt{mall-}$  „to lokk, see“(!)).

See still Cerulli 1938 II, 214; 1951, 471 (Kaffa, Agaw, ECu.); Cohen 1947, #9 (Berb. -Eg.); Dolgopol'skij 1973, 180 (PCu.  $\sqrt{mALLA'}$  „to look“ > Agaw, ECu., NOM.); Gluhak 1978, 23 (id.); Illič-Svityč 1971, 260–261 (Ar. -Eg.- Berb.); Orel-Stolbova 1992, 176 (Agaw-Om. -Eg.); Militarev (in Starostin et al. 1995, 17: Berb., Agaw, ECu., Om.).

**6.1.** Nevertheless, we must note that the Eg. forms quoted here can alternatively reflect also an original consonant sequence \**m-r*. In the literature, therefore they (and especially *m33*) are often equated with Common Sem. \* $\sqrt{mr}$  „to look, see“: Akk. *amār-um*, Ug. *'amr* „id.“ (with development of meaning into causative in Hebr. *'amar* „to say“, Geez *'ammara* [II.] „to show“, Aistleitner 1963, #283; Rabin 1975, 89, #73; Albright 1927, 218). See Ember 1930, #10.a.11; Calice 1936, #616; Cohen 1947, #9; Illič-Svityč 1971, #124; Hodge 1981, 404).

The Sem. root finds a reliable correspondence in ECh. *Bidiya mer* „to look, peer“ (HSED #1761: Sem.-? Eg. -*Bidiya*).

**6.2.** W. F. Albright and M. Cohen (loci cit.) trace back to Common Sem. \* $\sqrt{mr}$  also Hebr. *'amīr* „sommel“ and Ar. *'amār-at-*, *'amar-at-* „pyramidal heap of stones (Calice: Steinsäule, Denkmal)“ (act. \* „mark, sign“?), with which Albright and later Calice (1936, #631) compare ultimately also Eg. *mr* „pyramid“ (OK, Wb II 94, 14–16).

**6.2.1.** We are, however, still far from a satisfactory etymology of the Eg. word „pyramid“, since recent results by comparativists suggest its connection with the Common Afrasian word for „building“ or sim., cp. Agaw Bilin *maraa* „hom, estate; place immediately in front of the door“ ~ ECu. Boni *moor* „home“, Gawwada *moor-xo* „meeting area“, cf. Saho *mar-* „to dwell, reside“ ~ SCu. PRift \**mar-* „house“: Iraqw *maray* (pl.), Burunge *mara*, Asa *mor-ok*, pl. *mariya*, Qwadza *mali-ko* („in the house“) ~ ?WCh. Daffo-Butura, Sha *mawar* „roof“ ~ CCh. Nakatsi *mare* „house“.

See Ehret 1987, #426 (Agaw-Sahhə-SCu.); Militarev-Orel-Stolbova 1989, 154 (PAA \**mar-* „house“: Eg., Nakatsi, Bilin, SCu); *ibid.*, 154 (PAA \**mawar-* „roof, house“); Orel-Stolbova 1989, 133; 1992, 190 (Nakatsi-Eg.); HSED #1732 (Eg., Bilin SCu.).

**6.2.2.** On the other hand, W. Vycichl (1958, 393), and with more scepticism also G. Conti (1976, 268) equate Eg. „pyramid“ (Vycichl: from \**mīr*?) with Sem. Ar. *raym-* (dial. *rēm*) „Hügel, Grab, Aufhäufung“ (also *rīm-* „tombeau, sépulchre“), accounting for a metathesis in Eg. Interestingly enough, later Vycichl [1959, 73] quoted an Ar. *mayr-* „Haufen, Hügel, Grab[hügel]“ in comparison with Eg. *mr* „pyramid“.

Ar. *raym-* (as already noted by Conti) derives from Common Sem. \* $\sqrt{rwm/rym}$  „to be high“ (data in e.g. Zaborski 1971, #202; add Ar. *warima* „to be swollen, grow“, *waram-* „tumor“). The Sem. root has its sure Eg. cognates, however, in totally different forms: *wrm* „hochragende Figur“ (Gr., Wb I 333, 1), cf. the not attested Eg. word \**wrm* „to swell up“, reconstructible on the basis of *wrm* „Bez. der Überschwemmung“ (Gr., Wb I 332, 19), *wrm.t* „eine paarweise vorkommender Körperteil: die Hoden (?)“ (CT, Wb I 333, 4), and last

but no least Cop. (S) *ōlām* (< \**wrm*) „to swell, rise“, sp. e.g. Albright 1927, 209 (Sem., Eg. -Cop.). Further Afrasian cognates can be found in Chadic: WCh. Hausa *rīmī* „to stand (on hind legs)“ (HSED #2120: Sem.-Hausa) ~ CCh. Musgoy (Daba) *urúm* „Berg“ (Strumpell 1910, 462). The isogloss of Eg. *wrm.t* „roofing (originally awnings)“ (Pyr., Wb I 333, 2–3; FD 64) and WCh. Tangale *wurum* „to thatch“ (Orel-Stolbova 1989, 133; Militarev-Orel-Stolbova 1989, 158; HSED #2550: Eg.-Tangale) may perhaps also be related.

7. When speaking about Eg. *m33*, it is worth calling attention to the problem of the Eg. introductory particle *m* „see, behold“ (OK, Wb II 4; FD 100), which has been connected by A. S. Četvetuhin (1990) with various derivatives of PAA \* $\sqrt{ml}$ .

7.1. Concerning the phonological change *m* < \**m3*/\**mj* proposed by him, we can support it with a considerable number of parallel examples, e.g.:

7.1.1. Eg. *w* (probably from \**w3*) „Bezirk, Gebiet“ (OK, Wb I 243, 1–7; FD 52) < AA \**war*-/\**wur*- attested in ECu. Oromo *warra* „family, kin“, Arbore *wari* „household“ ~ WCh. Hausa *wùrîi* „place“ (Skinner 1977, 34) ~ CCh. Ga'anda-Gabin *wùure* „town“, Kotoko: Makeri *woro* „village“, Jara *wure* „house“, Bachama *vura-te* „town, district“ ~ ECh. Dangla *wére*, Migama *wèré* „place“, ?Somray *wóram* „Stamm“. See Newman-Ma 1966, 238 (PCh. \**w-r-* „a place“ > W-CCh.); Mukarovsky 1987, 285 (WCh. -ECh.); Militarev-Orel-Stolbova 1989, 154 (ECu., W-C-EChh.); Blažek 1994, 2 (ECu., W-C-ECh.).

7.1.2. Eg. *nb.w* „gold“ (\**náb.aw* < \**nábj.aw*; act. „melted metal“) < Eg. *nbj* „eigtl. das Feuer durch Blasen durch Blasen anfachen (to melt metal)“ (OK, Wb II 236, 6–7; FD 129), of the same origin with *nbj* „brennen, in Brand sein“ (Pyr., Wb II 244, 3), *n-bj-bj* „to be hot“ (Med., Wb II 245, 3; FD 130) ~ Sem. \* $\sqrt{nbl}$  (Eth. -Sem. \* $\sqrt{n-bl-bl}$  [cp. Eg. *n-bj-bj!*]) „to burn, flame“ ~ SBerb. \*-*bawil* „кострище“: Shenwa *a-bāl* „to be boiling“, Ahaggar *e-bawil* „место для разведения костра“, Ayr *e-bewil* „печение в углях“ ~ Bed. *belol* „s'allumer“, Ammar'ar *bálool* „flame“ ~ Agaw Hamir *bil-* „to be boiling“, Qwara *bāl-* „to be hot“, *bel-* „to be boiling“, Qemant *bulu y-* „to be boiling“ (cf. Appleyard 1984, 50); cf. also with prefix \**n-*: Qwara *embelaw-*, Qemant *āmbäläw-*, Hamir *eblaw-* „to be hot“ ~ ECu. Saho *bolol-*, Afar *boli-* „s'allumer“, Isaq of Somali *bélbel* (var. *belel*) „flamme, incendie“, Sidamo, Darasa *bululo* „ashes“ (Bender 1974, 87) ~ NOm. Wolamo *bola* „flame“ ~ WCh. \**b[a]*- „verbrennen“ (data in Stolbova 1987, 156: \**b[H]*- [add still Mupun *bil* „to light a fire, ignite“, Frajzyngier 1991, 5]; Stolbova 1977, 153: PAngas \**bel*) ~ CCh. ?Margi *bürül* (if < \**bullul*) „verbrennen“, Gisiga *bāl* „to set on fire“ ~ ECh. Bidiya *'ebel* „to flare up (of coal)“, *'ubāla* „burning coal“.

See Reinisch 1885, 42 (Agaw-ECu.); Behnk 1927, 82, #17 (Eg.-Sem.) followed by Albright 1927, 202; Cohen 1947, #403 (Bed., Agaw, ECu.) and #460 (Sem.-Eg.-Agaw); Hintze 1951, 85, #460 (Sem.-Eg.); Pilszczikowa 1960, 122, #119 (= Cohen #460); Illič-Svityč 1966, 17, 19 (WCh., Margi, Sem., Agaw, Bed., Saho); Dolgopolskij 1966, 51 (Agaw, Bed., ECu., PCh.); 1973, 198 (Agaw, Bed., ECu., Wolamo, Eth. -Sem., PCh.); Conti 1980, 50–51 (Sem.-Eg.); SISAJa I, 95, #117 (Berb., ECu., Agaw, WCh., CCh., Sem.); Militarev 1984, 9, #42; 1984a, #8; and 1995, 122, #24 (Bed., ECu., Hamir, Berb., WCh. \**bal-*, Sem.); HCVA 2, #132 (Berb., N-C-ECu., WCh., Gisiga, Bidiya); Takács 1995 (for the etymology of Eg. „gold“).

7.1.3. Eg. \**g* (prob. from \**g3* = \**gl*) „ring-stand for jars, red earthenware pot round at the bottom“ (word reconstructible on the basis of the hieroglyphic sign for *g*, Gardiner 1927, 513; W11–13), ultimately of the same origin with *g3j* „Napf, Schal“ (NE, Wb V 150, 5–13) ~ WCh. Nbauchi gr. \**gal-* „calabash“ (Pa'a *galka*, Mburku, Kariya *gali*, Warji *galiy-ai* (Skinner 1977, 14), Sbauchi \**gali* „calabash“ (Geji *gale*, Burma *kal*, Buli, Wangday *gal*) ~ CCh. \**gal-* „pot“: Bana *gālā*, Chibak *gil-əm*, Banana (only misprint in HSED for Bana?) *gala* ~ ECh. \**g<sup>w</sup>al-*: Lele *gòlù* „pot“.

Does Eg. *gn.t* „Gefäss für Wein“ (NK, Wb V 173, 2) represent a continuant of the same stem \**gal-* (NB: Eg. *n* can also come from \**l*)?

See Orel-Stolbova 1989, 134; 1992, 191 (C-ECh. + Eg. *gn.t*); HSED #878 (WCh., Banana, Eg. *gn.t*). For further details on the origin of Eg. \**g*, *g3j* and *gn.t* see Takács 1994.

7.1.4. Eg. *j* (prob. from \**j3*) „reeds, loaves of reeds“ (MK, Wb I 25, 5; FD 7), cp. the hieroglyphic sign for *j* representing a „flowering reed“ (Gardiner 1927, 471: M17), which are of the same origin with *j3r.w* „rushes“ (OK, FD 9; Wb I 32, 5: „Binse?, Sumpfgas?“) ~ Sem. Ar. *yara'* „reed no used for writing“ ~ WCh. Tangale *yiro* „reed“ (Orel 1994, 5; Eg.-Ar.-Tangale).

7.2. Nevertheless, it is just as well possible that in the case of the Eg. introductory particle *m* we simply have the development from \**mj* < \**m[a]y* (and not \**√ml*). This possibility seems to be strengthened by the Chadic data, which represent the perfect match for Eg. *m* „see, behold“ both in the phonology and the semantics: WCh. Bole-Tangale gr. \**mayu* „to see“ (Schuh 1984, 217) ~ CCh. Buduma *me* „to see“.

It is to be noted that in the literature these Chadic forms have often been compared directly with Eg. *m33* „to look, see“ (above), see Pilszczikowa 1960, 125, #2 (Eg.-WCh.); Illič-Svityč 1971, 260–261 (Eg.-WCh.); Orel-Stolbova 1992, 201 (Eg., W-CCh.); HSED 1995, #1761 (Eg.-Buduma).

Cp. the areal parallel in PCKhoisan \**mũ* „to see“ (Baucom 1972, 26; also already Meinhof 1912, 238 comparing Eg. with the Masa reflex of PCKhoisan).

7.2.1. The Eg. particle *m* is attested usually with the personal pronoun suffixes of the 2nd person (sg. and pl.) in the same meaning, e.g. *m-k*. Very probably, this latter form was borrowed into Ug. *mk* „lo!“ (Gordon 1955, 288, #1098). Since we do not know about any other Sem. cognate to this Ug. word, we cannot speak about an Eg.-Sem. cognate in this case.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

AA: Alfrasian (Hamito-Semitic), Akk.: Akkadian, Amh.: Amharic, Ar.: Arabic, BD: Book of the Dead, Bed.: Bedawye, Berb.: Berber, C: Central, Ch.: Chhadic, Cop.: Coptic, CT: Coffin Texts, Cu.: Cushitic, E: East, Eg.: Egyptian, Gr.: Greek and Roman Period, H: Highland, Hebr.: Hebrew, IE: Indo-European, L: Lowland, LP: Late Period, Mag.: Magical Texts, Med.: Medical Texts, MK: Middle Kingdom, N: New, NE: New Egyptian, NK: New Kingdom, OK: Old Kingdom, Om.: Omotic, P: Proto-, Pyr.: pyramid texts, S: South, (S): Sahidic, Sem.: Semitic, Syr.: Syriac, W: West.

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