

GÁBOR TAKÁCS
Székesfehérvár
Hungary

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NOTE ON THE ORIGIN OF EGYPTIAN *rm* „FISH“

Abstract: The paper deals with the etymological problem of the general term for „fish“ in Ancient Egyptian with extensive discussion on all possible linguistic and cultural aspects of the question that can lead to the correct solution. Egyptian *rm* „fish“ has apparently no convincing parallels in this meaning in the relative Afroasiatic languages. On the other hand, both historic and linguistic facts reflect that fish was a despised animal even if it was also eaten by common people in Ancient Egypt. What has been well known from Egyptian religion gains new confirmation thanks to the comparative linguistic evidence. The author concludes that Egyptian „fish“ may be genetically cognate with an Afroasiatic stem for „worm“ preserved in Semitic and Cushitic.

1. This general term for „fish“ (OK, Wb II 416, 12) of Egyptian has so far been lacking a reliable etymological explanation in the AA lexical stock.

1.1. Cohen's (1947, #466) equation of Eg. *rm* with Sem. **nūn*- „fish“ (data see in e.g. Rabin 1975, 87, #29) and Brb.: Ahaggar *š-mān*, Sus *a-mun* „sorte de poisson“ is evidently incorrect for the phonology. On the other hand, Cohen's Brb.-Sem. equation may be correct if Brb. *-*mun* resulted by dissimilation from *-*nun*. Sem. (+ ?Brb.) may be of common origin with Eg. *nwn* (nnw) „Urwasser“ > OCop. noun, Gk. *Nouv* (OK, Wb II 214–215) reduplicated from *nw.w*, *nj.w* „Urwasser“ (Pyr., FD 125), *nwj* „water, flood, pool“ (MK, FD 127; Wb II 221, 3–13), *n.t* „Wasser(flut)“ (MK, Wb II 198, 10–15), cognate with WCh.: Tala 'ūnu, Jimi nū „to be wet“ (Orel-Stolbova 1990, 81, #64) || CCh.: Gudu ñyā „water“ (Zima 1990, 53) | Misme *nina*, *nī* „water“ (Militarev in Starostin etc. 1995, 33; HSED #1860: Eg.-Misme), Banana (Masa) *nina* „water“ | Musgu *eneni* „water“ (HSED #1877: Eg.-CCh.).

For the semantic development „fish“ < „water“, cp. Indo-Iranian **matsya*- „fish“: act. **mad-s-ya*- * „Wasser“ from IE **med*- „to be wet“ (KEWA II 567). The idea for the etymology of Sem. **nūn*- is supported by Blažek (pers. comm. in letter on 18 Aug. 1994) or Orel and Stolbova (HSED #1877).

1.2. As for **Eg.** *rm*, Cohen mentions also **LECu.**: Somali *mallay*, *malalay* (cp. Jäbärti of Somali *mallây* „fish“, Reinisch 1904, 78) | **HECu.**: Sidamo *mwoliyā* „fish“. But **ECu.** corresponds well with **WCh.**: SBauchi: Guruntum *mollaṇ*, *mwerrang* „fish“ (Jungraithmayr-Ibriszimow 1994 II, 140). In theory, *Eg. rm* could represent a metathetical cognate (from **lam-*) of the **ECu.**-SBauchi isogloss **m[u]l-*, but the *Cop.* reflexes (S)*rame*, *raame*, (B) *rami* „Nilbarsch“ (Osing 1976, 429: < *Eg.* **řmj* [j/w] and Vycichl 1983, 172: „original“ **řimey*, pl. **řimy-ū* yielding later on **řēm*, pl. **rame*) make it clear that *Eg.* cannot be related.

1.2.1. For the **ECu.**-SBauchi data, however, there may be an *Eg.* correspondence: the second element in the so far rather untranslatable name of King Narmer (*nʿr-mr*) of the I. (or 0.) Dynasty. The first component has been well known and identified with *Eg.* *nʿr* „Wels“ (OK, Med., Gr., Wb II 209, 2–6). If the 2nd component *-mr* (so far unidentifiable on *Eg.* grounds) indeed comes < **ml*, the whole name could have meant „Catfish“. This kind of name of the rapacious Nile fish fits well with the names of the previous kings from the „0. Dynasty“ (predynastic period): *k3* „Bull“, *srq* „Scorpion“ (cf. e.g. Kákosity 1993, 40).

1.2.3. As for the **ECu.**-SBauchi-? *Eg.* isogloss **m[u]l-* „fish“: we do not exclude that it is related to **AA** **mulḥ*/'- „lizard“ attested in **NBerb.**: Qabyle-Jurjura *a-mulab* „Algerian lizard (Tropidosaura algira)“, Menaser *mulab* „lizard“ (Basset 1885, 174; the suffix *-b is attested in several **AA** animal names, Diakonoff 1965, 28, note 40, 52, note 2; 1967, 210; 1970, 461, note 23; 1975, 140; 1986, 47; 1988, 57; Fronzaroli 1969, 307, note 113; Illič-Svityč 1971, 192–193) ||| **LECu.**: Rendille *mulúḥ*, Somali *mulaʿ*, *muluʿa* „lizard“ (Heine 1978, 69: PSam **mulʿ*), Afar *mulluʿit* „lizard“ ||| **WCh.**: Ron: Bokkos *mulúsūs* „grey lizard“ | cf. Hausa *mulwa* „short thick snake“ || **CCh.**: Kobochi *malwāʿ*, Nzangi *mālawá*, Holma *malwé* „chameleon“ (Strümpell 1922–1923, 135) ||| ? **Eg.**: cp. the second element in *k3-mnḥ* „Schildkröte“ (Gr., Wb V 96, 9), *k3-* being < **AA** **kur-* „turtle“.

See Mukarovsky 1987, 245 (Bokkos-**ECu.**); Blažek 1992, 137 (**AA** **mul-*: **ECu.**, **WCh.**, **CCh.**, **Berb.**); 1992a, 158 (**AA** **mul*[']-: **ECu.**, **Berb.**); Orel-Stolbova 1992, 208 (**ECu.**, **WCh.**); Orel 1993, 39 (**WCh.**, **ECu.**); HSED #1792 (Bokkos-Hausa, **ECu.**).

Areal parallel: **NMande** **muluku* „lizard“ (Muk., loci cit.).

The eventual semantic dispersion between „lizard“ ~ „snake“ ~ „fish“ is not unique in **AA**, cp. **Sem.** *Ug.* dg coll. „Fische“, dgi „Fischer“, Hebr. *dāg* „Fische“ (Aistleitner 1963, #725), *dayyāg* „Fischer“ ||| ? **Eg.** *dngngs* „Bez. der Uraeusschlange“ (Gr., Wb V 470, 8) ||| **LECu.**: Oromo *dangal-ée* „tadpole“ ||| **NOm.**: **dingar-*

„snake“: Kaffa dingaro, dingiroo (Bender 1975, 187: díngrò), Gimirra dingar ||| **WCh.**: Hausa k'a-dangara „lizard“ | Karekare dènkàrà, Ngamo dèkùrà „lizard“ || **CCh.** Musgu diñidiñti „lizard“ || **ECh.**: Mubi danguda „Chamäleon“ (Strümpell 1922–1923, 135). See Mukarovsky 1987, 244 (WCh.-Musgu-Oromo-NOM.); Blažek 1989, 212 (Sem.-NOM.); HSED #716 (WCh.-NOM.).

1.3. The most recent comparison of Eg. rm „fish“ (as an areal parallel) with PDrav. *irāma- „sp. fish“ by Blažek (1992, 159) is highly dubious for the geographical and chronological circumstances (though not impossible in a wider perspective). Besides, as we shall see, there is no PAA ancestor for Eg. in a form *ram- or sim. in the meaning „fish“.

1.4. Vycichl (1983, 172) has proposed to derive Eg. rm from a not attested root *rmy „pouler“. This theory, however, would be very hard to prove in the lack of convincing concrete evidence.

1.5. The Eg. popular etymology (as early as the VIth Dyn.) derived rm „fish“ from rmj „weinen“ (Gamer-Wallert 1970, 16).

Note that Eg. rmj > (S) rime is a solid cognate of Sem. Ar. rama'a (with secondary -' on the analogy of Sem. *dm' „Träne vergießen“ [Aistleitner 1963, #760]) „to flow (tears), weep“ (Ember 1911, 93; 1930, #10.a.26: Eg.-Ar.) ||| **ECu.** *'ilm- „tears“ (Sasse 1982, 105; Lamberti 1987, 534, #15) > PSam *ilm „tear“ (Heine 1978, 65) || **Agaw** *'ǝrǝŋ^[w]- (*-ŋ < *-m) „tears“ (Appleyard 1991, 23: Agaw-ECu.) || **SCu.** *'ilma „tears“ (Ehret 1980, 291) ||| **SOM.:** Ari erma „tear“ (Dolgopolsky 1987, 199, #33; Blažek 1994, 27).

Areal parallels in **Nubian**: Dongola olmisse, Kunuzi ormóssi „tears“ (Reinisch 1879, 5).

The Ar.-Eg.-? Agaw isogloss seems to preserve a root with an original *r-. In any case, Eg. and Ar. surely do *not* reflect *l-. The ECu.-SCu.-? Ari isogloss *'ilm- with its prothetic *'i- and (secondary?!) *-l-, on the other hand, seem to have been influenced by ECu.-SCu. (and Common AA) *'il- „eye“. Dolgopolsky (loc. cit.) sees in this isogloss an archaic compound of AA *'il- „eye“ and *mV- „water“, but this hypothesis would be valid only for the Cu. (+ ?Ari) data and is not confirmed by the Eg.-Ar. correspondence with *r-.

There is a long tradition of equating also Bed. mile (Roper), melo (Reinisch) „tear“ with the above forms (Behnk 1928, 139; Cohen 1947, #73; Blažek 1994, 27). But Bed. is not related for having reliable cognates in Ch. languages: **CCh.**: Buduma himālo „tear“ (HSED #1177: Ar.-Buduma) || **ECh.**: Tumak mulāl „tear“ | Mokilko móló „weinen“ (Lukas 1975, 224) ||| **Sem.:** ? Ar. hml „to pour“. That is why these forms should be separated etymologically from AA *rVm- „tear“.

One wonders if the firm Bed.-Ch. isogloss *mVI- „tear“ is connected to **Eg.** mnḥ.w „Schaum (an den Lippen einer wütenden Göttin)“ (XVIII., Wb II 84, 10; FD 109: „froth?“) – from the primary sense „bodily efflux“, cf. **ECu.** *malḥ- „pus“ (Sasse 1979, 21; 1982, 139–140; Ehret 1974, 87; Leslau 1988, 195) > **HECu.** *mala „pus“ (Hudson 1989, 417); **ECu.** *mala[h?]- „to suppurate“ preserved in Galla malaa- „to burst and give off pus“, Burji maliy- „to suppurate“ || **SCu.** *malah- „to expel viscous body fluid“, also *maliḥ- „pus“ (Ehret) ||| **Sem.:** ? Ar. malaḥ- „tumor in suffragine equi (< *abscess)“ (Dolgopolsky 1987, 200, #37: SCu.-ECu.-Ar.).

See Ehret 1980, 154, 323 (SCu.-ECu.); 1987, #422 (PCu. *malḥ- „to ooze out [of body]; pus“ > ECu., SCu.).

2. In the Egyptian culture, fish played a double role. In the everyday life it was one of the most common and popular kinds of food, on the other hand, from the NK onwards, fish had become the object of religious prohibition and abstinence. In the calendar lists of the late NK, eating of fish is forbidden on certain days of religious importance. One cannot find fishes in the offering lists as well. In a postscriptum to the 64th Utt. of the BD, abstinence from eating fish is one of the conditions of religious purity as cleaned feet, no intercourse with women (Gamer-Wallert 1970, 77). As is well known, king Pianhi (747–716 B.C.) considered fish as impure from a religious viewpoint, and a similar view of Egyptians was recorded by Clemens Alexandrinus (Stromata VII, 33, 8) and Herodotos (II, 37), cf. also Schlichting 1984, 1126; Kákosy 1993, 248.

2.1. Gamer-Wallert (1977a, 227; 1977b, 229), however, emphasises that the taboo of fish eating was characteristic of the late NK and Late Period (and even then, it was not generally accepted) with no earlier trace before the late NK. Nevertheless, I think, the evidence of comparative linguistic data speaks for that the view among the Egyptians about fish as a disgusting, impure worm-like creature may have had earlier roots than the NK. This postulation can be supported by the following inner Eg. innovations for „fish“ (some of which are attested much before the NK):

2.1.1. **Eg.** 'wbb.w „Art Fische“ (MK, Wb I 172, 10) vs. 'b.w „Ausdruck für Schmutz“ (CT, Wb I 174, 19; FD 40: „impurity“), 'b „Unheil, Sündhaftes, (Gr.) Schmutz, Unreines“ (NK, Wb I 174, 15–17) ||| **Sem.** *'yb „vice, to shame“, also Geez 'ābā, Tigrinya 'iba, Amhara 'ābāt „dung“ ||| **LECu.** *'eeb- „to be ashamed“: Somali 'eeb-ay- „to put to shame“ (Dolgopolsky 1987b, #22: Sem.-LECu.) ||| **WCh.:** Bade áaban „feces“ (Blažek 1994, 3: Eth.-Sem.-Bade) || **CCh.:** Margi ubi, Kilba ibi, Hildi 'ubī, Kapsiki uvye „faeces, excrements“ (Orel-Stolbova 1992, 185; HSED #1116: Eth.-Sem.-Eg.-CCh.).

As for the semantic connection between „excrement“ ~ „shame“ compare **NWSem.** *bwš „avoir honte“, cf. ? Akk. baštu „parties sexuelles, honte“ (Cohen 1947, #410; Cohen 1970–1976, 91: *bwš) ||| **Eg.** bss „neben Kot erwähnt“ (BD, Wb I 477, 8) ||| **Bed.** bus „Schmutz, Kot“ (Blažek 1994, 9: Sem.-Bed.) ||| **WCh.** *bāsA „bad, rotten“ (Stolbova 1987, 151), cf. Hausa bušabuša „person of dirty habits“ (HCVA 2, #84: Sem.-Hausa).

2.1.2. Eg. bw.t „Art Fisch (dessen Genuss als religios unrein gilt)“ (OK, Wb I 453, 4) vs. bwj „verabscheuen“ (OK, Wb I 453, 6), bw.t „Abscheu, das Widerliche“ (Pyr., Wb I 453–454), cf. also the „fish“ determinative (Barbus bynni, Gardiner 1927, 467: K2) attached to the root *bw ||| **SBerb.:** Tuareg buyy-āt „verabscheut werden, verachtet sein“ (Zyhlarz 1932–1933, 90; 1934, 121: Eg.-Berb.) ||| ? **ECh.:** Ndam bá (if from *baw) „fish“ (Jungraithmayr-Ibriszimow 1994 II, 141): with the same origin as Eg.?

2.1.3. Eg. ḥm.t „Art Fisch“ (LP, Wb III 80, 13) vs. ḥm.t „Unglück, Übel“ (Gr., Wb III 80, 12), which is evidently more archaic, cf. **ECu.** *ḥa/um- „bad“ (Sasse 1979, 38) > PSam *ḥum, pl. ḥumḥum „bad“ (Heine 1978, 64).

2.1.4. Eg. jj „Art Fisch“ (MK, Wb I 38, 8) vs. jj.t „Unheil“ (MK, Wb I 38, 9) ~ ? **WCh.** *way- „disaster“ (Orel-Stolbova 1992, 190: Eg.-WCh.).

2.1.5. Eg. ftt.w „Bez. der Fische“ (BD, Wb I 581, 15; FD 99: „fish“, not connected to fttf „springen“ as Erman and Grapow think). The fish-name originates rather in **AA** *fut- „(to) disgust“: **Eg.** ft „sich ekeln, überdrüssig sein“ (Med., Wb I 580, 8–13; FD 99) ||| **HECu.** *fuut- „to fart“ (Hudson 1989, 409) | **LECu.:** Gawwada fačfat- „to vomit“ (HSED #837: Gawwada-WCh.) ||| **WCh.:** Sura fūt „sich erbrechen, speien“ (Jungraithmyr 1963, 66), Angas fut, Ankwe „to vomit“ (Greenberg 1958, 300; Illič-Svityč 1966, 23; SISAJa I, #133: WCh.-Eg.).

2.1.6. Eg. ḥw.w „die Fische“ (Gr., Wb III 247, 9) vs. ḥw.w „böse Handlungen, Sünde, (Gr.) Unreines“ (MK, Wb III 247, 7–8).

Fish was associated also with the offensive smell:

2.1.7. Eg. hnš „to stink“ (Med., Wb III 301, 1–3; FD 193) is written with a „fish“ determinative. Cf. **Sem.:** ? Ar. ḥnz „stinken“ (Vycichl 1958, 388: Eg.-Ar.) or ?ḥšm „to stink, be large (of nose)“ (Albright 1918, 238: Eg.-Ar.). Both Ar. etymologies are uncertain for the phonology.

2.1.8. Eg. šnj „Gestank von Fischen“ (Med., Wb IV 503, 7) vs. šn „als Bez. für Schlechtes“ (Gr., Wb IV 503, 8) – both words are with „fish“ determinative.

2.1.9. Eg. b'h „in üblen Geruch gebracht (bildlich vom Namen)“ (MK, Wb I 450, 6; FD 81: „to be detested“) written with a „fish“ determinative ||| **LECu.:** Saho-Afar bāh „Gestank“, cf. bah „stinkend werden“ (Reinisch 1890, 9) | ? **HECu.** *bob- „to smell bad, stink“ (Hudson 1989, 406) || **SCu.:** *baa'- „to defecate“ (Ehret): Iraqw ba'a „mud“, Dahalo ḥaa'- „to defecate“ (Ehret 1980, 135), Mbugu bo „to rot, go bad“ ||| **NOM.:** Kaffa proper ibo „dung, mud“ (Fleming 1969, 26: Mbugu, HECu., Kaffa) ||| **CCh.:** Tera ba, Daba buba, Musgoy bāba „dirt“ (Orel-Stolbova 1992, 187; Orel 1994, 2; HSED #179: CCh.-Iraqw „mud“).

Areal parallel: **PBantu** *-bí „excrements“ (Gerhardt 1980, 212).

In some further cases „fish“ seems to be etymologically related to designations for snake, worm or sim., which is probably connected with the despised, disgusting character of fishes in the eyes of the ancient dwellers of the Nile valley, cf.:

2.1.10. Eg. ddb (probably < *guṭb-) „ein Fisch“ (Med., Wb V 633, 2) vs. ddbj „eine Schlange im Jenseits“ (NK, Wb V 633, 5), cf. ? ddf.t „Wurm, Gewürm, auch Schlange“ (BD, Wb V 633–634), cognate possibly (if -b/-f are suffixes) with **ECu.** *goḍ-an/-: Somali god/ḍalol „worm“, Sidamo goṭan-čō „termite“ ||| **NOM.** *guṭun-: Ometo guṭune „worm“, Gofa gučāne „worm“, Wolamo gutunia „worm“ (Dolgopol'skij 1973, 249; Boisson 1990, 20) ||| ? **ECh.:** Kera godnoy „ant“ (HSED #941: Kera-Sidamo-Ometo).

2.1.11. AA *a[č]- „fish“ is probably reflected in **Eg.** 'š(3) „lizard“ (Pap. Ram. V, 21; Gardiner 1927, 465: II; FD 49) ||| **Bed.** aša, aše, Ammar'ar 'āašu „fish“ || **Agaw:** *'as- „fish“ (Appleyard 1984, 44, 57), add Bilin 'azā, Hamir xazā, Qwara, Qemant azā „fish“ (Reinisch 1885, 33; 1887, 654) || **ECu.:** Saho 'asa „fish“ || **SCu.:** Asa azā „fish“ ||| **NOM.:** Kaffa (Reinisch) āžō, hāžō, (Dolg.) hāšō, āšō „Fische (coll.)“ vs. eš „pescare“, Gofa āso „Fisch(e)“ (Reinisch 1888, 265), Mocha, Anfillo hāšo, Bworo aso, Nao aša „fish“ ||| **ECh.:** ? Kera ačo „sardine“ (HSED #1085). Agaw (or LECu.?) > Eth.-Sem.: Geez 'āšā, Tigre, Tigrinya 'asa, Amhara asa „fish“ (Leslau 1988, 85).

See Cohen 1947, #48 (Geez-Bed.); Hintze 1951, 76 (Geez-Bed.-Bilin); Dolgopol'skij 1973, 293 (Bed.-Agaw-Saho-Asa-NOM.-Eth.-Sem.); Bender 1975, 163 (Geez-Kaffa-Bed.-Agaw); Zaborski 1989, 581 (Bed.-Agaw-Saho-NOM.); Orel-Stolbova 1992, 167 (Bed.-Saho-ECh.); Orel 1994, 3; HSED #1085 (Kera-Agaw-Saho).

2.1.12. Eg. zb.j.t „Art Fisch (dessen Genuss eine Entzündung hervorruft)“ (Med., Wb III 432, 13) vs. zb.t „Ungeziefer (Med. als Hautkrankheit, Gr. im Sinne von Schmutz)“ (MK, Wb III 432, 14–16; FD: „parasite insects“): from **AA** *žVb- „worm, insect“ attested

in **Sem.** **ḏubb-/ḏumb-* „fly“ ||| **Brb.** **a/i-zăbb-* „fly“ (Basset 1885, 148) ||| ? **ECu.**: Sidamo *daḡmūli*, Kambatta, Qabenna *zabūllo* „to be worm eaten (of meat)“ (Leslau 1980, 121) ||| **WCh.**: Hausa (Militarev) *žībā* „small termitary“, (Newman-Ma) *žībā* „termite nest“ | Karekare *nzuburi*, Gera *zāwuri* „worm“ | Diri *žimburi* „worm“ | Zaar *žeber* „worm“ (WCh.: Kraft 1981) || **CCh.**: Fali-Gili *žibi* „fly“ | Gudu *žāḡā-čii* „termite, louse“ | ? Pidlimdi *žaxḡa* „termite“.

See Rössler 1983, 333 (Sem.-Brb.); SISAJa III, #56; Militarev-Stolbova 1990, 57–58 (Sem.-ECu.-Eth.-Sem.-Brb.-Ch.-Eg.); Blažek 1989, 209 (Eth.-Sem.-Om.-ECu.-Ch.); Newman-Ma 1966, 240, #107 (Hausa-Pidlimdi); Orel 1993, 38 (Eg.-CCh.-Sem.-Brb.-WCh.-CCh.); Militarev in Starostin etc. 1995, 19 (Sem.-Eg.-Brb.-ECu.-CCh.).

NB: **PCh.** **-žuw-ay/-ak/-an-* „fly“ (data in Skinner 1977a, 52–55: Ch.-Sem.).

2.1.13. Eg. *ḥḏw* „Art Fische“ (Gr., Wb III 355, 19) ||| **WCh.** **HAĈA* „small worm“ ||| **Sem.**: Ar. *ḥaḡaḡ-* „мелкие ракушки“ (Stolbova 1987, 204: Ar.-WCh.).

3. At this point we can turn back to Eg. *rm* „fish“. In the light of all the above mentioned, and after studying the AA cultural lexicon, we can state the following:

3.1.1. Eg. *rm* does not have AA cognates with the same consonant structure **r-m-* in the meaning „fish“.

3.1.2. The only eventual possibility offered so far for Eg. *rm* within AA, is ECu. (and SBauchi) **m[u]l-* „fish“. This etymology for Eg. *rm* is weak not only for the metathesis, but mainly because that Coptic shows an original **r-* and not **l-*.

3.1.3. The linguistic parallels for „fish“ in Eg. and also the facts of Egyptian (or even North African) culture history suggest us that Eg. words „fish“ can be often inner Eg. innovations in this meaning and the external cognates (if there are) designate other kinds of worms, small creeping creatures or simply something negative (dirt, bad smell etc.).

3.2. Because of these reasons and circumstances, we have to account for that Eg. *rm* is of common origin with **Sem.** **rimm-at-* „worm“: Akk. *rimm-at-um* „Made (?)“ (in: *šīru kīma rimmatim*, OAb., AHW 986), Hebr. *rimmā*, Aram. *rēm-et-* „worms (in rotten meat, corpse, etc.)“, Ar. *rimm-at-* „geflügelte Ameise“ ||| **ECu.** **ri/am-*, var. **(r)ir(i)m-* „worm, termite“: Saho *rimme*, *rimmi* „termite, worm, maggot in rotten meat/corpse“, Oromo proper *rämm-o* „worm, parasite“, *rimma*, *ririma*, *rimma* „ant, termite“ (Gragg 1982, 457), Borana of Oromo *rámmo* „worm, maggot“, Gollango *irmátte* „termite“ (AMS 1980, 273), Rendille *ririm*, Baiso *iririm*, Dasenech *’armatti*,

Konso irmatta, Gidole irrimašš „termite“; Burji hírima (*ririm-?), Hadiyya irm-aččo, Sidamo rāmō „termite“ (Sasse 1982, 97) ||| **ECh.**: Bidiya 'irirīmo „insect“ (HSED #2119).

See also Dolgopol'skij 1973, 172 (PCu. *rAmm- „worm, maggot“, Sem.), Majzel'-Militarev 1983, 168.

If so, Eg. joins ECu. Oromo-Sidamo isogloss *raam- (as opposed to *rim-).

3.2. AA *rVm- „worm“ may be connected with **Sem.** *rmm „to rot“: Hebr. rmm „to be rotten (of bones)“, Ar. rmm „to rot, get spoiled“, rimm-at- „rotten bones, corpse, carrion“, Harsusi, Mehri, Shhauri rim, rem „to be worn, frayed“ ||| **Eg.** jm.w (*ri/um?) „vom eitrigen Inhalt eines Geschwulst“ (Med., Wb I 76, 1) ||| **WCh.**: Hausa romo „bad“ || **ECh.**: Mokilko ruume „to rot“ (HSED #2139).

NB 1: We do not know whether also **Eg.** jmk „verwesen“ (Pyr., Wb I 88, 15–16) reflects the same root *rim- with a suffix -k. In any case, comparison of Eg. jmk with Hebr. maq „rottenness, putrefaction“ < „to decompense, dissolve, suppurate (of wound)“ offered by Ember (1913, 118, #80) is problematic because of the irregular correspondence of Eg. -k ~ Hebr. -q.

NB 2: Eg. jm.w seems to reflect possibly *r-m-, though Orel and Stolbova (1992a, 201) compare it to a certain ECh. *Vmya „rotten“.

3.3. As for the semantic dispersion „worm“ ~ „termite“ cp.:

3.3.1. LECu.: Somali lulum-o „maggots or larvae of mosquitoes“ ||| **CCh.** *lum- „termite“ (Bura and Higi gr.) || **ECh.**: Jegu lólmó „ant“ (Orel-Stolbova 1992, 208; HSED ##1679, 1693; Orel 1995, 123).

3.3.2. Cf. the probable etymological connection (already noticed in certain cases by Militarev, Stolbova etc.):

3.3.2.1. AA *dVm- „insect“: **Sem.**: Akk. dimîtu „locust“, dimānu „insect“, Ar. dimm-at- „louse, ant“ ||| **WCh.** *[d]am- „spider“ (Hausa dààm-an-ā; Montol țăm, Gerka tam; Orel-Stolbova 1988, 78: Sem.-WCh.) || **CCh.**: ? Mofu ɗa-ɗamiy-daw „locust“ (Orel 1993, 38; HSED #708: Sem.-Mofu).

3.3.2.2. AA *dum- „worm“: **Eg.** dm „Wurm (unter anderem: alte Handschrift zerfressend)“ (NK, Wb V 451, 6–7) ||| **ECu.**: Burji dūm-a „round worm (Ascaris sp.)“, Sidamo dum'ul-o „worm“, ? Somali dun (*dum) „thread“ (Sasse 1982, 58) ||| **CCh.**: Mbara dum-say „ascarid“.

3.3.2.3. AA *dVm[y]- „snake“: **Nom.**: Mocha dāmo „python“ ||| **Eg.** *dmj „kind of lizard (or sim.)“ (cf. Wb V 453) ||| **WCh.** *d[u]mV „snake“: Hausa dumiya „eel, water snake“ | Sura n-dàẏàn [*-da'am, cf. Dolgopolsky 1982] | Karekare 'àdāmó [Lukas 1966,

198], Kirfi dùmá „snake“ (WCh.: Stolbova 1987, 172) ||| **LECu.**: ? PSam *diim „tortoise“ (Heine 1978, 56).

Cf. Majzel'-Militarev 1983, 168 (Ar.-Eg.); Orel-Stolbova 1992, 183 (WCh.-Eg.); HSED #741 (Eg.-WCh.-Mbará-Burji-Mocha).

3.3.3. Eg. mtj (with worm det.) „?“ (LP Mag., Wb II 169, 9) ||| **LECu.** Somali miḍ (*mit) „a small worm in pool“, cf. Oromo miṭii „black ant“ || ? **SCu.**: Dahalo muṭa „small ant“ ||| ? **Brb.** *ta-midi (Prasse: *māh₃d₃/*māhd₃) „termite, ant“ (data see Wölfel 1955, 40): cf. esp. Ahaggar ta-midi „mite, moth“, ti-mdi-fan „a shining worm“ (a-fa „light“) ||| **WCh.**: Nbauchi *muḍa-[h^wa] „python“ | Ngamo mi-ḍiwi „python“ | Hausa mūḍuwa „python“ (WCh.: Stolbova 1987, 234) || **CCh.**: Bachama miḍu-to „python“ (Skinner 1977, 35: WCh.-Bachama).

See Blažek 1990, 210 (ECu.-PBerb.); Orel 1995, 108, #116 (CCh.-ECu.); HSED #1775 (Tera-ECu.-Dahalo).

3.3.4. ECU. *goḍan/l-: Somali god/ḍalol „worm“ vs. Sidamo goṭan-čo „termite“ ||| **NOM.** *guṭun-: Ometo guṭune „worm“, Gofa guṭōne „worm“, Wolamo gutunia „worm“ ||| ? **ECh.**: Kera godnoy „ant“. Cf. #2.1.10 above.

3.3.5. Eg. zb.t „Ungeziefer (Med. als Hautkrankheit, Gr. im Sinne von Schmutz)“ (MK, FD: „parasite insects“): from **PAA** *ḡVb- „worm, insect“ attested in **Sem.** *ḍubb/*ḍumb- „fly“ ||| **Berb.** *a/i-zābb- „fly“ ||| **ECu.**: Sidamo da^pmūli, Kambatta, Qabenna zabūllo „to be worm eaten (of meat)“ ||| **WCh.**: Hausa (Militarev) ḡībā „small termitary“, (Newman-Ma) ḡiḡā „termite nest“; Karekare nzubūri, Gera zōwūri, Dira žimbūri, Zaar žeber „worm“ || **CCh.**: Fali-Gili žibi „fly“, Gudu ḡāḡā-čii „termite, louse“, ? Pidlimdi ḡaxḡa „termite“. Details under #2.1.12 above.

3.4. The connection of „to rot“ vs. „worm“ in Sem. is not necessarily a contamination as Dolgopol'skij and Militarev suppose, cf. the parallel case in PKartv. *ma-ṭl̥- „worm“ (attested in Georg. maṭl-, Megr. muṭur-, Laz muṭur-, munṭr-; Klimov 1964, 129) traced back to the root *ṭl̥- „to rot, decay, putrefy“ (e.g. OGeorg. ṭl-obay „to gnaw away [about worms]“, Georg. ṭl-ob-a „putrefaction“) by Sarḡvelaze (1981, 116); Gamkrelidze and Ivanov (1984, 877, note 2); Fähnrich (1988, 49, 54, note 10); Penrxi and Sarḡvelaze (1990, 298); Klimov (1991, 328–329). For a different, but morphologically less convincing etymological analysis of Kartv. *maṭl̥- see Džaukjan 1967, 93; Illič-Svityč 1965, 372; 1976, #312.

3.5. Close to Osing, we suggest reconstruction of the vocalized Eg. form as *rām-, which can be confirmed by not only the Coptic reflexes and the ECU. Galla-Sidamo isogloss, but also by that an original *ri/u- would have very probably resulted in Eg. j- and not r-

in the Anlaut (see Diakonoff 1984, 6; 1988, 40; D'jakonov et al. 1987, 28), e.g.:

3.5.1. Eg. jm (*rm) „Ton, Lehm“ (MK, Wb I 78, 2), jmj.t „aus Ton hergestelltes (?)“ (MK, Wb I 78, 4) || **Sem.:** Ar. rimm- „(wet) earth“ (Majzel'-Militarev 1983, 210; Orel 1994, 5).

3.5.2. Eg. jwj „bewässern, (Flüssigkeit) ausgießen“ (MK, Wb I 49, 1–2) || **Sem.:** Ar. riway- „abundant water“, Hebr. rī „moistening“ and Sem. *rwy „to drink“: cf. esp. Geez rwy „bewässern“ || ? **Berb.** *rwy „to mix (liquids)“ || **Bed.** re, ra „Wasseransammlung“ || **LECu.:** Saho raw „reservoir“ || **WCh.:** Hausa rūwāā, pl. rūwāyē „water“ | Galambu rwā „river“. See Majzel'-Militarev 1983, 203; Militarev 1984, 159, #15; D'jakonov et al. 1986, 67; Orel-Stolbova 1988, 81, #91; Zaborski 1989, 586; Blažek 1991, 364; HSED #2140.

3.5.3. Eg. jwn „Wind, Luft“ (Pyr., Wb I 53, 7–8) || **WCh.:** Nbauchi *ruwun- „wind“: Kariya, Miya ruwun, Mburku ruwǎn; cf. Miya arǎwan „soul“ (Orel-Stolbova 1992a, 188; Orel 1994, 5; HSED #2141: Eg.-Nbauchi) || **CCh.:** PTera *rVn- „wind“ (Skinner 1992, 351: Nbauchi-PTera).

ABBREVIATIONS

AA: Afroasiatic (Hamito-Semitic), Akk.: Akkadian, (B): Bohairic dialect of Coptic, BD: Book of the Dead, Bed.: Bed'awye, Berb.: Berber-Guanche, C: Central, Ch.: Chadic, CT: Coffin Texts, Cu.: Cushitic, Drav.: Dravidian, E: East, Eg.: Egyptian, Eth.-Sem.: Ethio-Semitic, Gr.: Greek and Roman Period, H: Highland, Hebr.: Hebrew, IE: Indo-European, Kartv.: Kartvelian, L: Lowland, LP: Late Period, Med.: Medical Texts, Megr.: Megrelian, MK: Middle Kingdom, N: North, NK: New Kingdom, O: Old, OBab.: Old Babylonian, OGeorg.: Old Georgian, OInd.: Old Indic (Sanskrit), OK: Old Kingdom, Om.: Omotic, P: Proto-, S: South, (S): Sahidic dialect of Coptic, Sem.: Semitic, Ug.: Ugaritic, W: West.

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