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Jaroslav Cerny

Some Coptic Etymologies III.

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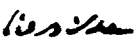




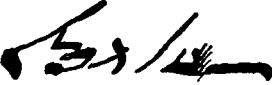
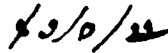
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SOME COPTIC ETYMOLOGIES III⁽¹⁾

BY

JAROSLAV ČERNÝ

1. S. βαζμοϣ. Β. βαλζμοϣ, "Blemys" (38 b)⁽²⁾ = *]  Brhm.

Mentions of the formidable nomads Βλέμυες in the Egyptian language of pre-Coptic times are not numerous⁽³⁾. Griffith⁽⁴⁾ was the first to find a Singular  in a document of 152 B. C. which he read *Blhn* (?). The last sign or group of signs before the determinative  seemed uncertain and he hesitated between reading *n* or *s*. It was only later⁽⁵⁾ that he recognized that this last group is to be read  and the whole name  after he had encountered another example in Plural  in Pap. Dodgson, l. 21⁽⁶⁾. Spiegelberg adduced  from Dem. Pap. Hauswaldt no. 6, l. 1⁽⁷⁾, and suggested that the group  *Brhm(t)* of the Dem. Pap. Rylands IX, 5, 5, concealed the ethnic Blemys⁽⁸⁾; the photograph⁽⁹⁾ indeed seems to admit of his reading. Since Pap. Rylands

⁽¹⁾ See *Coptic Studies in Honor of Walter Ewing Crum*, pp. 35-47; *Ägyptologische Studien Hermann Grapow zum 70. Geburtstag gewidmet*, 30-7.

⁽²⁾ This figure in headings refers to the pages and columns of Crum's *A Coptic Dictionary*.

⁽³⁾ Some have been collected by KIRWAN, *Annals of Arch. and Anthropology* XXIV, 76, n. 1, and *Oxford University Excavations at Firka*, 46.

⁽⁴⁾ *Cat. of the Rylands Papyri* III, 271, n. 18, and 420.

⁽⁵⁾ *PSBA* XXXI [1909], 291.

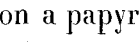
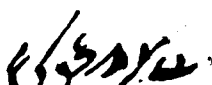
⁽⁶⁾ *Loc. cit.*, pl. XI; cf. pp. 105 and 291. According to Griffith (*loc. cit.*, 102) the papyrus is of a middle date in the Ptolemaic age, that is of about 180 B. C.

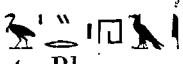






⁽⁷⁾ *Die dem. Papyri Hauswaldt* [1913], p. 22 and n. 3; pl. 10. The date of the papyrus is 220/19 B. C.

⁽⁸⁾ GRIFFITH, *Cat. of the Rylands Papyri*, II, pl. 23; Griffith's reading and interpretation was different, see *loc. cit.* III, 225, n. 10.

⁽⁹⁾ GRIFFITH, *loc. cit.* I, pl. XXVII.

IX is dated in the reign of Darius I (522-485 B. C.), this would be by far the earliest mention of Blemyes who appear in Greek sources only since the time of Theocritus⁽¹⁾ (3rd century B. C.). The importance of the Demotic spellings is considerable, for they discourage any further attempt at an Egyptian etymology of the name of Blemyes which the Coptic forms S. βαζμοϣ, B. βαλζμοϣ (and variants) seemed to invite⁽²⁾.

It has been overlooked that there is also a clear hieroglyphic example of *Brhm* in the name of the female owner of the Book of the Dead written in hieroglyphs on a papyrus at Turin⁽³⁾. She was called , *T-brhmt*, «The (female) Blemys», therefore a feminine counterpart of the Demotic male name , *Blhm(t)*, «Blemys», which H. Thompson quoted to Griffith from a Demotic ostrakon⁽⁴⁾, there not preceded by the definite article. The date of the Book of the Dead of *T-brhmt* has not been stated and is probably difficult if not impossible to fix owing to the uncertainty which still hovers over the palaeography and history of the Book of the Dead, but we are certainly not far off the mark if we guess at the second half of Ptolemaic or early Roman period as its date.

Two other early references which have been claimed for Blemyes, however, are doubtful owing to the absence of the last consonant *m* of the name. Gauthier⁽⁵⁾ wondered whether  of the Onomasticon of Amenōpe (4, 9) did not designate Blemyes and considered changing the  into  in the transcription of the hieratic text. This, as the photograph published since⁽⁶⁾ shows, is unjustified,  being well preserved and beyond doubt. Gardiner, it is true, changed his earlier reading  into , but this latter is equally doubtful, and  might have stood there after all⁽⁷⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Idyll VII, v. 114; see SETHE, *Blemyes* in PAULY-WISSOWA, *Real-Encyclopädie* III, 566.

⁽²⁾ So still in 1910 to W. MAX MÜLLER, *Egyptol. Researches* II, 69 ff.

⁽³⁾ Cat. no. 1816 (FABRETTI-ROSSI-LANZONE, *Regio Museo di Torino*, p. 222).


⁽⁴⁾ At the University of Toronto, D. 169, unfortunately not included in GARDINER-THOMP-

SON-MILNE, *Theban Ostraca*, but see GRIFFITH, *PSBA* XXXI, 291.

⁽⁵⁾ *Dict. géogr.* II, 3-4.

⁽⁶⁾ GARDINER, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*, pl. X.

⁽⁷⁾ GARDINER, *loc. cit.* I, p. 212*, does not of course envisage the identity of *Brhs*, as he now reads the name, with Blemyes.

The other instance is  of a hieroglyphic stela of the Ethiopian king Anlamani⁽¹⁾, who is thought to have been contemporary with the Egyptian XXVIth Dynasty. Macadam⁽²⁾ admits the possibility of this name being identical with that of Blemyes.

In fact, the lack of the final *m* in both these cases need not necessarily stand in the way of the identification. In both the country of Blemyes and not the inhabitants themselves are meant, while all the later instances quoted above refer to single persons. For all we know the final *m* might have been a native ending to form names of people from names of countries. This is, of course, a pure guess, for of the language of the Blemyes nothing has come down to us except for a few personal names.

2. Mani $\alpha\alpha\tau\epsilon\beta\tau\epsilon$, «army» (not in Crum's dictionary) = Demotic *mtgt*, «military camp, army».

From Manichaean Homilies Polotsky collected a number of new words⁽³⁾ for which he promised to supply references and etymologies (as far as these were known to him) in the index. Since to my knowledge neither has the index appeared nor have etymologies of most of the new words been pointed out elsewhere, I may be permitted to record in these Notes one which is apparent at the first sight. Mani $\alpha\alpha\tau\epsilon\beta\tau\epsilon$, «army»⁽⁴⁾, is the Demotic feminine *mtgt* or *mlkt* of the same meaning⁽⁵⁾. Lidzbarski⁽⁶⁾ confirmed an earlier suggestion by W. Max Müller⁽⁷⁾ that the word was a loan-word from Semitic, proposing a derivation from Assyrian *madaktu*, «military camp».

⁽¹⁾ MACADAM, *The Temples of Kawa* I, pls. 15 and 16.

⁽²⁾ *Loc. cit.* I, p. 49, n. 37.

⁽³⁾ POLOTSKY, *Manichäische Homilien*, p. XIX.

⁽⁴⁾ References from the Manichaean Psalms are indexed in ALLBERRY, *A Manichaean Psalm-book*, Part II, p. 16*. A rapid perusal of Polotsky's *Manich. Homilien* revealed only one example 20, 10.

⁽⁵⁾ ERICHSEN, *Dem. Glossar*, 193. Some

references are : Rosetta Decree, l. 7 and Had. Philae Decree, l. 8 (both in SPIEGELBERG, *Der demot. Text... von Kanopus and Memphis*, p. 135, no. 164); SPIEGELBERG, *Der Sagenkreis des Königs Petubastis*, p. 28*, no. 179; Pap. Erbach, l. 3 (= ZÄS 42, pl. III); Serapeum Stela, no. 110 (= ZÄS 57, 69).

⁽⁶⁾ ZÄS 55 [1918], 93.

⁽⁷⁾ OLZ 4 [1901], col. 319-320.

The meanings of the Demotic and Assyrian words did not quite agree, but this sole obstacle to the identification was removed, when the Demotic word was also found, though masculine in this case, with the meaning «camp»⁽¹⁾.

3. B. **ⲁⲱⲓⲣ**, «box for incense» (206 a) = **ⲁⲱⲓⲣ**, *mhyr*, «a basket.»

Many years ago Dr. Keimer presented me with a limestone ostracon⁽²⁾ of Ramesside date which in two lists of objects contained two mentions of **ⲁⲱⲓⲣ**, followed in both cases by **ⲙⲏⲉⲙ** and **ⲙⲏⲉⲙ**. Of these *mndm* is known to be a kind of basket (*Wb.* II, 93, 16-17) and **ⲙⲏⲉⲙ**, hitherto unrecorded, is certainly an exceptional spelling of **ⲙⲏⲉⲙ** = *nfr*, «sieve» (*Wb.* II, 344, 11)⁽³⁾. The determinative **ⲁ** suggests that *mhyr* too was a receptacle made in wicker-work. In its form Coptic **ⲁⲱⲓⲣ**, «box» is identical with the name of the month Mekhir **ⲁⲱⲓⲣ**, and this fact makes plausible its derivation from **ⲁⲱⲓⲣ**, for this too is identical with the prototype of the month-name Mekhir **ⲁⲱⲓⲣ** contained in the name of the festival **ⲙⲏⲉⲙ** as it can be reconstructed from the ostr. Brit. Mus. 5639 a, vo. 6⁽⁴⁾ and the Pap. Cairo J. 86637⁽⁵⁾. The name of the festival means literally «That of the *mhyr*». *Mhyr* therefore is a masculine word and the determinative **ⲁ** suggests that *mhyr* was originally a building. One thinks immediately of **ⲁⲱⲓⲣ**, *mhr* of the Onomasticon of Amenôpe⁽⁶⁾, but there the Editor thinks that **ⲁ** was borrowed from **ⲁⲱⲓⲣ**, *hr*, «(Royal) Tomb», though this is chiefly a Theban local word which one would not expect to influence a text written far from Thebes as is the Ono-

⁽¹⁾ SPIEGELBERG in *Griffith Studies*, 176-7, n. 7.


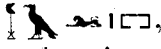










⁽²⁾ Published in ČERNÝ-GARDINER, *Hieratic Ostraca*, pl. LXI, 3.

⁽³⁾ *Nfr* accompanies *mndm*, though not yet *Urk.* IV, 762, 5 and 763, 8, almost always in Ramesside lists on ostraca and papyri, e. g. several times on ostr. Brit. Mus. 5630 (= *Inscr. in the Hierat. and Demotic Character*, pl. XIX); ostr. Gardiner 6,3; ostr. Petrie 17, 7; ostr. Berlin 14214, vo. 9-10; etc.

⁽⁴⁾ Published in *Inscr. in the Hierat. and Dem. Character*, pl. XXVIII; transcription in ČERNÝ-GARDINER, *Hieratic Ostraca*, pl. LXXXV, 1. The end of *mhyr* is lost there, but the ostracon supplies the initial **ⲙ**, which is in a lacuna in the Pap. Cairo J. 86637.

⁽⁵⁾ See *ASAE* 43 [1943], 179; *ibidem*, p. 174 other writings of the month-name Mekhir.

⁽⁶⁾ GARDINER, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica* I, p. 95*, no. 211.

masticon of Amenōpe. As for the meaning of  Gardiner conjectured «*buyer* (?)», since the word is found among occupations; it has been compared with Hebr. מְכִיר, «price», which again sounds like מְחִיר, the Aramaic form of Mekhir⁽¹⁾. The possibility of an influence by  *hšrw*, «street», cannot be entirely excluded, since this word, though written quite differently, must have been pronounced **hšr* as its Coptic descendant $\text{ϩⲓⲣ} : \text{ϩⲓⲣ}$ shows. In view of all these possibilities it is therefore better to be resigned to determining the original meaning of *pš mbyr* in the month-name until ampler evidence becomes available. The festival and month gave the name to the receptacle  which was probably a prominent object used at the festival. A good parallel to such a development is the case of the vase  *kz-hr-kz*, *kuzihku* in cuneiform transcription, which like ⲕⲱⲓⲣ also served for measuring incense⁽²⁾ and received its name from the festival and month of Khoiakh. This was originally a funerary festival called  ⲛⲃⲃⲱⲕⲱ , *nbb-kzw*, «Uniting the ka's», so that *kz-hr-kz* meant «ka [*was*] upon ka»⁽³⁾. Another possible case of an object receiving its name from a festival or month name is  *ipip*, «*ein Gerät aus Alabaster*» (*Wb.* I, 69, 2) which seems clearly connected with the month-name  ⁽⁴⁾, *'Ipip*, a later form of  *'Ipt-hmt*⁽⁵⁾. The origin of *'Ipip* is obscure: it is perhaps nothing more than the late form  *'Ipip* (*Wb.* I, 69, 3) of the name of the old goddess  *'Ipy* (*Wb.* I, 68, 8.9) interpreted eventually as the hippopotamus-goddess Toëris and identified at Thebes with the goddess  *'Ipt* (*Wb.* I, 68, 7). The alabaster object  being thus connected with the goddess Toëris, we may perhaps see in it a designation for libation or purification basins or bowls from which water was


⁽¹⁾ Cf. *ASAE* 43, 177.




⁽²⁾ Pap. Harris 36 a, 6.


⁽³⁾ See GARDINER, *ZAS* 43 [1906], 139.


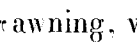
⁽⁴⁾ *Wb.* I, 69, 4; *ASAE* 43, 175.




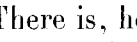
⁽⁵⁾ This is the correct transcription in Pap.

Ebers list instead of  which figures in *Wb.* I, 68, 11, and all publications except in Gardiner's article, *ZAS* 43 [1906], 141

(though  are provided with queries) and in PARKER, *Calendars of Ancient Egypt*, p. 38, fig. 16. The reading is confirmed by  of the astronomical ceiling in the tomb of Senenmūt (WINLOCK, *Excavations at Deir el Bahri 1911-1931*, pl. 66), and  in Ramesseum (*Revue d'ég.* 10, pl. 1). A later expanded form was *'Ipt-hm.s.*, see *Wb.* I, 66. 21: *JNES* 7, pl. VIII. l. 13.





taken and poured on the ground, as an offering to this goddess⁽¹⁾. Most of these basins are inscribed with a *hṭp-dī-nsu*-prayer to Toëris whom the basin Brit. Mus. [28] calls  «*Toëris, the pure water*»⁽²⁾. It is, however, fair to say that the preserved basins are not made of alabaster, but of less precious stones, limestone, sandstone or basalt.




4. S. , «awning, veil» (588 b) =  *hrd*, «a garment.»

Brugsch⁽³⁾ identified  with *hrt* in  *w^s hrt n šs(-n)-nsu*, «a *hrt* of byssus», of I Kham. 4, 19⁽⁴⁾ and Erichsen⁽⁵⁾ compared it with  *šrt*, some kind of cloth (*Wb.* IV, 524, 8-11). It is impossible to contradict this latter identification, for *šrt* is a word occurring only in the texts of Graeco-Roman period; the nature of its final *t* is obscure, but if it were meant to be the feminine ending the identification would be, of course, impossible. There is, however, a much older word  *hrd* (*Wb.* III, 331, 2), which occurs twice in Wenamūn⁽⁶⁾ and is a cloth (*hbs*) made of «good Upper Egyptian» material. This escaped Macadam⁽⁷⁾ when he was considering several examples of a word which must be the same. In Ethiopian hieroglyphic stelae from Kawa we find :

Stela no. III, l. 2 (Taharka) :      (pl. 5 and 6);

l. 9 :    (*loc. cit.*);

Stela no. VI, l. 5 (Taharka) :     (pl. 11 and 12);

Stela no. IX, l. 59 (Aman-Nēte-yerike) :    (pl. 19 and 24);

l. 69 :     (*loc. cit.*).


⁽¹⁾ See BRUYÈRE, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh* (1929), pp. 20-2 and fig. 2.

⁽²⁾ Published by BRUYÈRE, *loc. cit.*, p. 21-2. Not mentioned by Bruyère is the libation bowl Brit. Mus. [465], *A Guide to the Egyptian Galleries (Sculpture)*, p. 181, no. 651.

⁽³⁾ *Hierogl.-dem. Wörterbuch*, 1132.

⁽⁴⁾ See ERICHSEN, *Dem. Glossar*, 367, for the word. Other examples are Dem. mag. Pap. 6, 13; Petubastis 7, 12 (also of «byssus»), twice

in Apis Ritual (v. BERGMANN, *Hieratische und hieratisch-demotische Texte*, pl. XIV, 1).

⁽⁵⁾ ERICHSEN, *Dem. Glossar*, 367. LEXA, *Grammaire démotique*, p. 87, no. 16, quotes as its hieroglyphic ancestor a word  *š*; this is unknown to *Wb.* and I am unable to find where it is drawn from.

⁽⁶⁾ 2, 40 and 42.

⁽⁷⁾ MACADAM, *Kawa I*, p. 9, n. 7.

In the first and last example the material of which *hrd* was made is stated to be *pzk* and *šsr-nsu* ⁽¹⁾, in the rest the material is not given. Thus whenever the material of the *hrd* is indicated ⁽²⁾ it is of fine quality and both in Wenamūn and the Kawa stelae the word might well have designated a veil as *ⲱⲟⲣⲧ* sometimes does.

It is hardly necessary to mention that the phonetic correspondence between *hrd* and *ⲱⲟⲣⲧ* is perfect; the final *ⲛ* of Wenamūn and *ⲛ* of Kawa stelae nos. III and VI cannot represent anything else than a *t* since the passage of *d* into *t* had long ago taken place ⁽³⁾.

5. S. *ⲱⲃⲉ*-, *ⲉⲃ*-, component of a place-name (618 b) = *ⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ*, *sg*, «hill (?)».

Only one place-name containing this element is known in Coptic : *ⲛ(ⲉ)ⲱⲃⲉ-ⲛⲟⲗⲉ* or *ⲛⲉⲥⲟⲛⲟⲗⲉ*, «the *ⲱⲃⲉ* (or *ⲉⲃ*) of Pohe». *ⲛⲟⲗⲉ* itself derives from *ⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ*, *pz ihy*, «the camp»; which Pohe, however, is meant here is impossible to say for two localities of this name are known, and several others with a differentiating genitive following ⁽⁴⁾. But *ⲱⲃⲉ*- or *ⲉⲃ*- is clearly the same word as *ⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ* (with variants), *sg*, contained in the name of no less than seven (possibly eight) places in Pap. Wilbour. In discussing these Gardiner has suggested ⁽⁵⁾ that the word *sg* is identical with *ⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ*, *sg*, previously known from Pap. Anastasi V, 19, 7 in the expression «*sg*r





⁽¹⁾ It is not necessary to assume, as Macadam does, that *hrd* in these two cases is a measure in which various garments are measured. In III, 2, *pzk* is the material and refers to the following four words (*hrd*, *šndt*, *rwd*, *mhṯ*) which all designate garments; IX, 59 is simply «8 *hrd*-garments (made) of byssus» and not «8 *hrd*-measures of byssus».



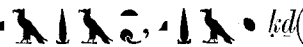
⁽²⁾ Among Demotic examples I Kham. and Apis Ritual mention *šs-nsu* as the material of *hrṯ*.




















⁽³⁾ Probably before M. K. according to SETHE, ZÄS 50 [1912], 97.

⁽⁴⁾ See GAUTHIER, *Dict. géogr.* I, p. 100-102.

⁽⁵⁾ *The Wilbour Papyrus II, Commentary*, p. 35. The eight places are listed by FAULKNER, *The Wilbour Papyrus IV*, 88; one or two can be added from GAUTHIER, *Dict. géogr.* V, 67-68. Incidentally, *Pz-sg-nr* «The *sg* of *nr*-tree» is the correct name (we are evidently in the Heracleopolite nome which had the *nr*-tree as its ensign), misinterpreted as «The *sg* of *nr*-fish» under Shoshenk I (GAUTHIER, *l. c.*). The genitival *n* has been omitted before the following *nr*.

besides , Late Egyptian  , *tbw* (*Wb.* V, p. 363, 11 f.), another expression, namely *hmww-tbwy*, lit. «shoe-craftsman», attested in the Plural in a Cairo XIXth Dyn. hieratic ostracon ⁽¹⁾: . This would be in Coptic S. **ϩⲁⲙ-ⲧⲟⲟϣϵ*, B. **ϩⲁⲙ-ϩⲱⲟϣϣϣ*, which could be shortened into S. *ϩⲁⲙ*, B. *ϩⲱⲙ*, lit. «craftsman» when there was no danger of misunderstanding as to which kind of craftsman was meant.

10. S.A.F.  : B. , «hand» (839 b) =  *kd(t)*, «hand».

The Demotic ancestor of  was identified by Brugsch as long ago as 1855 ⁽²⁾; it is the feminine word  *gyd* or  *kyd* occurring five times in the Dem. Magical Papyrus ⁽³⁾ and elsewhere ⁽⁴⁾. As far as earlier periods are concerned Spiegelberg was able to adduce ⁽⁵⁾ a , *gd*, quoted to him by Steindorff in the (feminine?) proper name , *ndm-gd*, «one with tender hand» of a New Kingdom stela ⁽⁶⁾. The authors of the *Wb.* did not admit this word *gd*, presumably because they felt some doubt as to its real existence. Its authenticity, however, should not be doubted, for the expression  «your two hands» of the Pap. Louvre 3129, 50 is translated into Late Egyptian as    *kd 2t* by Pap. Brit. Mus. 10252 ⁽⁷⁾. These papyri are as late as the second half of the IVth century B. C., but the bridge to the N. K. example of the Leipzig stela is supplied again by a divine decree, Pap. Turin Cat. 1984, vo. 20-21, to which I. E. S. Edwards drew my attention. There the deities promise          «We will make healthy her right hand and her left hand». In the enumeration of the parts of body *kd* is placed between *drt*, «hand», and *k3p* «hollow of the hand», it was therefore in the XXIIInd Dynasty not quite synonymous with *drt* as the meaning of  might lead us to believe.

⁽¹⁾ Cat. 25581, verso 3-4; see CERNÝ, *Ostraca hiératiques* (CGC), 52* and pl. XLII.


⁽²⁾ *Grammaire démotique*, p. 28, § 56, and p. 73, § 159.

⁽³⁾ See GRIFFITH-THOMPSON, *Demotic Magical Papyrus III*, p. [85], no. 905.

⁽⁴⁾ E. g. SPIEGELBERG, *ZÄS* 53 [1917], 123,

n. 5; ERICHSEN, *Dem. Glossar*, 595.

⁽⁵⁾ *Kopt. Handwörterbuch*, 282, n. 12.

⁽⁶⁾ Leipzig, no. 122; see RANKE, *Die äg. Personennamen I*, 215, 20, who prints .

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⁽⁷⁾ SCHOTT, *Urk.* VI, p. 83. 6.

POSTSCRIPT

S. Sauneron kindly draws my attention to the following passage of the paper *L'Égypte et le Vocabulaire de Balzac et de Th. Gautier*, read by G. Lefebvre in the Académie des Inscriptions at the session of 16th November 1945⁽¹⁾ :

« C'est également dans Champollion que Gautier a trouvé le terme bizarre «amschir», qui revient six fois au cours du roman, particulièrement dans ces deux passages : «Des prêtres, se retournant à intervalles égaux, allongeaient vers lui leurs amschirs après avoir jeté de l'encens sur les charbons allumés dans la petite coupe de bronze..., et marchaient respectueusement à reculons pendant que la fumée odorante et bleue montait aux narines du triomphateur» (p. 107). Et plus loin, Pharaon s'écrie : «Lorsque je passe sur mon char d'or ou dans ma litière..., les prêtres m'encensent avec la fumée des amschirs» (p. 207). Ce terme est donc synonyme d'encensoir. Et c'est en effet la définition qu'en donne Champollion dans la *Notice*⁽²⁾ (p. 69). »

The etymology which Lefebvre offers for *amschir* is ingenious but can hardly be upheld. It is quite clear that Champollion's *amschir* is Coptic ⲙⲥⲓⲣ (n° 3 above). Crum's dictionary knows the word only from Kircher and this probably was also Champollion's source. If the word designated a censer, and consequently an object made of metal, it could not, of course, be a direct descendant of *mhyr*, which is a basket, but that both ⲙⲥⲓⲣ and *mhyr* are derived from the name of the month remains — I believe — indubitable.

⁽¹⁾ *CRAIBL* 1945, 565.

⁽²⁾ *Notice descriptive des monuments égyptiens du Musée Charles X* (Paris, 1827) is meant.