

## Connotation of Some Words in Story of Adultery in Westcar Papyrus

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### Abstract

This thesis presumes that some words in the tale of adultery from Westcar Papyrus have connotation that express symbolic idea besides their direct meaning in the context. For example the unfaithful wife of priest Ubainer sent *hbsw* “clothes” to the commoner. The word *hbsw* with letter *t* forming *hbswt* means “wife” and “concubine”. Therefore sending the clothes might symbolize idea of the wife who offered herself as a paramour to the commoner. Word *hr-m-ht* “after” was used in sentences that followed the immoral meeting of the adulterers. The first part *hr* in word *hr-m-ht* means “to fall” indicates idea of the commoner who fell in the sin of committing adultery with a married woman. Word *špt* “pavilion” comprised sign of fence used to surround houses to keep intruders away. Probably this refers to idea of the wife who removed obstacles to let the commoner reach her easily. The word *msh n mnḥ* “crocodile of wax” expressed the feelings of the priest Ubainer and his desire to revenge. The wife received brutal punishment of being burnt in *šdw* “field” and this was due to the equation between a married woman and fertile agricultural land.

**Key Words:** Adultery - Connotations - Words - Symbolic Ideas.

### Introduction

The second story in Westcar Papyrus was narrated by Prince *Khaefre* to his father king *Khufu* about a priest named *Ubainer* whose wife had committed adultery with a commoner. For the synopsis, during absence of *Ubainer* who was accompanying king *Nebka*, his wife sent her maid-servant to give the commoner chest of clothes. The commoner came to the wife and they spent their times together in *Ubainer*'s pavilion. At night the commoner used to take bath in the lake garden after leaving the pavilion until he was seen by the house supervisor who went to tell *Ubainer*. *Ubainer* used his magical ability to fashion crocodile of wax and he ordered the house supervisor to throw it in the lake after the commoner. After fulfilling *Ubainer*'s order the wax crocodile was transformed into a real one and it captured the commoner for seven days in the lake depth. When *Ubainer* returned with king *Nebka*, he summoned the crocodile which released the commoner. Then *Ubainer* told the king about what the commoner had done with his wife. Consequently King *Nebka* ordered the crocodile to seize the commoner and

commanded to take the unfaithful wife to a field where she was burnt and her corpse was thrown in the river <sup>1</sup>.

Among the interesting opinions concerning this marvelous story, the brutal methods of punishing the adulterers intended to destroy them completely in the afterlife <sup>2</sup>; although the deceived husband in his honor was having right to take revenge but the death penalty was only executed by the king as occurred in the story <sup>3</sup>; the crocodile deprived the commoner from obtaining breath and detained him for seven days in the lake depth without eating him was because of its nature represented in drowning victims and preserving them as food <sup>4</sup>; literarily, there are words-play between *msh* “crocodile”, *mnḥ* “wax” and *mḥ* “seize” which are related with the commoner annihilation <sup>5</sup>; the wife’s corpse was thrown in the river to be captured by the crocodile as happened to her lover <sup>6</sup>; *Ubainer* was considered as having power over life when he caused the crocodile let loose the commoner and the crocodile itself was association with resurrection <sup>7</sup> and according to an interpretation *Ubainer* was equated with the Twelfth Dynasty King *Snusert* when he annihilated his enemies <sup>8</sup> because the story in Westcar Papyrus was suggested to display historical characters in symbolic way <sup>9</sup>.

It is noticed that the author did not use direct words like  *nk* “to copulate” <sup>10</sup> and  *sd3m* “to lay with” <sup>11</sup> to express the act of committing adultery between *Ubainer*’s wife and the commoner which is only understood through the context. Beside, the brutal punishments against the unfaithful wife and the commoner were not actually executed in real life <sup>12</sup>. Therefore this study presumes that the author had used some

<sup>1</sup> W.K. Simpson, *The Literature of Ancient Egypt. An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies and Poetry*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2003, p. 14-16.

<sup>2</sup> T.D.J. Zandee, *Death as an Enemy. According to Ancient Egyptian Conceptions*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1960, p. 14-15 and 139; C. Eyre, “Fate, Crocodile and the Judgment of the Dead: Some Mythological Allusions in Egyptian Literature”, in *SÄK* 4, 1976, p. 113; L.H. Lesko, “Women and Priests in Two Egyptian Stories”, in J. Magness and S. Gitin (eds.), *Hesed ve-emet. Studies in Honor of Ernest S. Frerichs*, Brown University, 1998, p. 218 and J. Walsh, “Sexual Morality in Ancient Egyptian Literature”, in *VEXILLUM the Undergraduate Journal of Classical and Medieval Studies* 2, 2012, p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> Eyre, “Fate, Crocodile and the Judgment of the Dead”, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Eyre, “Fate, Crocodile and the Judgment”, p. 106 and footnotes 26 and 27 in p. 106 and T. F. Canhão, *Textos da Literatura Egípcia do Império Médio. Textos hiroglíficos, transliterações e traduções comentadas*, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2014, p. 71.

<sup>5</sup> A.I. McDonald, *Animal Metaphor in the Egyptian Determinative System- Three Case Studies*, Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Oxford, Trinity, 2002, p. 467.

<sup>6</sup> Eyre, “Fate, Crocodile and the Judgment”, p. 113.

<sup>7</sup> C.J. Eyre, “Yet again the Wax Crocodile: P. Westcar 3, 12ff” in *JEA* 78, 1992, p. 280-281.

<sup>8</sup> H. Jennie, “Der Papyrus Westcar” in *SÄK* 25, 1998, p. 120.

<sup>9</sup> H. Goedicke, “Thoughts about the Papyrus Westcar” in *ZÄS* 120, 1993, p. 24 and Jennie, “Der Papyrus Westcar”, p. 115.

<sup>10</sup> *Wb* 2, 345.3-10, C.J. Eyre, “Crime and Adultery in Ancient Egypt”, in *JEA* 70, 1984, p. 93 and R.O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egypt*, Griffith Institute. Ashmolean Museum. Oxford, 1991, p. 141.

<sup>11</sup> *Wb* 4, 380.1 and Faulkner, *Concise Dictionary*, p. 258.

<sup>12</sup> D. Lorton, “Treatment of the Criminals in Ancient Egypt through the New Kingdom”, in *JESHO* 20, 1977, p. 15; Eyre, “Crime and Adultery”, p. 94 and 98; A. Leahy, “Death by Fire in Ancient Egypt”, in *JESHO*, 27 no. 2, 1984, p. 199; C.G. Brown, *Dancing for Hathor Women. Women in Ancient Egypt*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010, p. 43; N. Shupak, “Female Imagery in Proverbs 1-9 in the Light of Egyptian Sources”, in *Vetus Testamentum* 61, 2011, p. 315 footnote 15 and A. Delpa, “Women in Ancient Egyptian



“clothes” carried symbolic idea about the wife of *Ubainer* who offered herself as a paramour to the commoner.

II. The word *hbs* with determinative of a seating man  means “veiled priest”<sup>21</sup>. It is believed that the wife had taken the clothes from wardrobe of her husband the priest *Ubainer*<sup>22</sup>. Probably the wife wanted from the commoner to wear the priestly costume of her husband with a veil covering his face so no one from the house-servants would recognize his real identity when he comes to the house of *Ubainer* with the maid-servant.

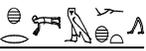
## II. Word *w3yt* “maid-servant”.

The <sup>23</sup> *w3yt* “maid-servant”<sup>24</sup> was the mean of communication between the wife and the commoner. She delivered the clothes to the commoner<sup>25</sup> and most probably she revealed the wife’ desire to have his company. Then the commoner came to the house with the maid-servant.

Looking to the phonogram of first part of word maid-servant represented in *w3*  it separately means “to open”<sup>26</sup>. This might have relation with role of maid-servant as the one who enabled the commoner enter *Ubainer*’s house to meet the wife.

## III. Word *hr-m-ht* “after”

When the commoner came to the wife in the house of *Ubainer* a sentence stated:-

 <sup>27</sup>

*hr-m-ht hrww sw3(w) hr nn*<sup>28</sup>

“**After** days had passed after this”<sup>29</sup>

The same word *hr-m-ht* was used in another two sentences when the commoner leaved the pavilion after spending his sinful moments with the wife to take his bath in the lake garden:

 <sup>30</sup>

*hr-m-ht mšrw hprw iwt pw ir.n.f*<sup>31</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Wb 3, 66.21.

<sup>22</sup> Lesko, “Women and Priests”, p. 218.

<sup>23</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 24.

<sup>24</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 24.

<sup>25</sup> Blackman, *Kheops and the Magicians*, p. 1, line 9:1,22.

<sup>26</sup> Wb 1, 290.1-291.7.

<sup>27</sup> Blackman, *Kheops and the Magicians*, p. 2, line 1:2,3 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 26.

<sup>28</sup> Bagnato, *Westcar Papyrus*, p. 25 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 27.

<sup>29</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 27.

<sup>30</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 26.

<sup>31</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 26.

“After it had become evening, he came out ”<sup>32</sup>

The word *hr-m-ht* includes sign of a man in position of falling <sup>33</sup> and its first part *hr* itself means “to fall”<sup>34</sup>. Putting into consideration the word “after” was also inscribed as <sup>35</sup> without sign of a falling man and as *m-ht*  without *hr*.

Thus *hr* expresses concept of the author who wanted to present symbolic idea of the commoner had fallen in act of committing adultery with a married woman which was a great sin in ancient Egypt. This was clearly shown in chapter 125 from Book of Coming Forth by the Day when the deceased confirmed that he did not make sexual relation with married woman<sup>36</sup>. In addition, *Ptah-hotep* in his instructions advised men to avoid having sexual relation with married women<sup>37</sup>.

From another point sign of the falling man was used as determinative in word  *ꜥq3* “to drown”<sup>38</sup>. These might also refer to the terrible fate that awaits the commoner represented in being taken by the crocodile into the lake depth as happened in the story<sup>39</sup>.

#### IV. Word *šspt* “pavilion”.

*Ubainer*'s wife fulfilled request of the commoner to spend their enjoyable times in the <sup>40</sup> *šspt*<sup>41</sup> “pavilion” of *Ubainer*<sup>42</sup>. Indeed *Ubainer* was supposed to spend his private times with his wife inside this pavilion. According to an opinion the word *šspt* has allusion with the affair between the wife and the commoner because it was derived from the verb *šsp* “to receive” and “to take” that also refers to making sexual relation<sup>43</sup>.

As clearly shown, the word *šspt* includes fence sign <sup>44</sup> and determination of a house plan <sup>45</sup>. These illustrates fence which surrounds house to keep privacy of its inhabitants and to secure them from the introducers. Thus the word *šspt* might refer in indirect way to idea of the unfaithful wife who surrendered to her lustful desires that led her to remove

<sup>32</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 27.

<sup>33</sup> J.P.Allen, *Middle Egyptian. An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 426, sign A.15.

<sup>34</sup> *Wb* 3, 319-321.5.

<sup>35</sup> *Wb* 3, 346.2.

<sup>36</sup> Eyre, “Crime and Adultery”, p. 95 and footnote 25 in p. 95 and Shupak, “Female Imagery in Proverbs”, p. 315 footnote 14 and J.H. Johnson, “Sex and Marriage in Ancient Egypt”, in N. Grimal, A. Kamal and C. May-Sheikoleslami (eds.), *Hommages à Fayza Haikal, BdE* 138, 2003, p. 150 and Teyssseire, *The Portrayal of Women*, p. 86 and footnote 248.

<sup>37</sup> Eyre, “Crime and Adultery”, p. 97 and footnote 43 in p. 97.

<sup>38</sup> *Wb* 1, 235.

<sup>39</sup> Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, p. 15 and 16.

<sup>40</sup> Blackman, *Kheops and the Magicians*, p. 2, lines 1-2;2,3-2,4 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, 2017, p. 26.

<sup>41</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 27.

<sup>42</sup> Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, p. 15.

<sup>43</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 89 no. 12.

<sup>44</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, p. 440, sign O42.

<sup>45</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, p. 439, sign O1.

all obstacles before the commoner and to permit him reach her in the private place of her husband.

#### V. Words *swri* “drinking” and *nds* “commoner”.

The word  *swri* “drinking” was used in a sentence to portray the indecent behavior of *Ubainer*’s wife with the commoner inside the pavilion <sup>46</sup>:



*wrš.n.s hr swri hnꜥ p3 nds* <sup>48</sup>

“ She spent the day there drinking with the commoner ” <sup>49</sup>

It seems interesting to hint certain contradiction in the previous sentence between the words  *swri* “drinking” and  *nds* “commoner”. The word *swri* “drinking” includes fork-tailed sparrow  <sup>50</sup> which was used as phonogram for *wr* that means “ great ” <sup>51</sup>. On the other hand, the word *nds* “commoner” has determinative of sparrow with rounded tail  that indicates “ small ” and “ bad ” <sup>52</sup>.

Thus the two words *swri* and *nds* might lead to think that the wife through drinking with the commoner had promoted his position through giving him irresistible chance to enjoy the luxurious life of her husband *Ubainer*. This hypothesis can indicated through the word *swri* through dividing first three letters *swr* into *s*-causative and word *wr* “ great ”. Both the *s* and *wr* forming *swr* means “ to increase ” and “ to make great ” <sup>53</sup>.

#### VI. Word *hmst* “sit”

The wife of *Ubainer* ordered the garden supervisor to prepare the pavilion for her staying:



*sspd tw t3 šspt ntt m p3 š mk.wi ii.kwi r hmst im.s* <sup>55</sup>

“Let the pavilion that is in the garden be prepared since I am coming to sit in it ” <sup>56</sup>.

<sup>46</sup> Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, p. 15.

<sup>47</sup> Blackman, *Kheops and the Magicians*, p. 2, lines 6-7:2,9-2,10 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 26.

<sup>48</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 27.

<sup>49</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 27.

<sup>50</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, p. 434, sign G36.

<sup>51</sup> *Wb* 1, 328.14- 329-18.

<sup>52</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, p. 434, sign G37 and p. 5.

<sup>53</sup> *Wb* 4,70.2-23.

<sup>54</sup> Blackman, *Kheops and the Magicians*, p. 3, lines 7-8:3,7-3,8 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 28.

<sup>55</sup> Bagnato, *Westcar Papyrus*, p. 25 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 29.

<sup>56</sup> Bagnato, *Westcar Papyrus*, p. 27 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 29.

The word *hmst* might have certain allusion with the wife's irresistible desire to have sexual relation with the commoner inside the pavilion. This is because word *hms* with determinative of male sexual organ  means "phallus"<sup>57</sup>.

## VII. Words *msh* "crocodile" and *mnh* "wax".

When the priest *Ubainer* knew about what the commoner had done with his wife, he became angry<sup>58</sup> and used his magical abilities to fashion  *msh* *n(y)* *mnh*<sup>60</sup> "crocodile of wax". The crocodile incarnated terror<sup>61</sup> and it was the punisher against sinners<sup>62</sup>. For the wax was thought to have magical power for being associated with the Sun god Re<sup>63</sup>. The wax was also symbol of total extermination because of being used by the ancient Egyptian magicians to make figures to destroy the enemies because of its elasticity<sup>64</sup>.

It seems interesting from dramatic view to assume that both words *msh* "crocodile" and *mnh* "wax" have certain connotations with feelings of *Ubainer* in moment of knowing what the commoner had committed with his wife.

Starting with word *msh* "crocodile", perhaps it reflected the outrage of *Ubainer* because this animal was closely connected with rage<sup>65</sup> and its image  was used as determinative in word  *3d* "to become angry"<sup>67</sup>. Associating the crocodile with angry feelings is witnessed in the "Tale of Blinding the Truth" when the frustrated son threatened to summon the crocodile against his mother in the presence of her family because she caused his blinded father to work as a doorkeeper and denied his fatherhood<sup>68</sup>.

For the wax, its letters *mnh* with knife determinative<sup>69</sup>  means "to slay"<sup>70</sup>. This might refer to *Ubainer's* internal desire to slaughter the commoner who copulated with his wife. According to this assumption, *Ubainer* can be equated with *Anubis* in tale of the "Two Brothers" when he became angry like a southern panther and took sharp knife to

<sup>57</sup> Wb 3, 99.8.

<sup>58</sup> Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 32 no. 31.

<sup>59</sup> Blackman, *Kheops and the Magicians*, p. 2, line 6:3,5.

<sup>60</sup> Bagnato, *Westcar Papyrus*, p. 25 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, 2017, p. 31.

<sup>61</sup> P. Vernus and J. Yoyotte, *Bestiaire des pharaons*, Paris, 2005, p. 51.

<sup>62</sup> Eyre, "Fate, Crocodile and the Judgment", p. 112-113.

<sup>63</sup> R.H. Wilkinson, *Symbols and Magic in Egyptian Art*, Thames and Hudson, 1999, p. 93 and M.J. Raven, "Wax in Egyptian Magic and Symbolism", in *OMRO* 64, 1983, p. 30.

<sup>64</sup> Eyre, "Fate, Crocodile and the Judgment", p. 108; R. Fu "Wachs" in *LÄ* 6, 1986, col. 1090 and Raven, "Wax in Egyptian Magic and Symbolism", p. 8.

<sup>65</sup> I. Köhler, "Rage Like an Egyptian: The Conceptualization of Anger", in M. Horn, J. Kramer and D. Soliman (eds.), *Current Research in Egyptology 2020*, Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Symposium, Leiden University, Oxford, 2011, p. 90 and 91-93.

<sup>66</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, p. 435 sign I.3.

<sup>67</sup> Wb 1, 24.12-17 and S. Aufrère, "Dans les marécages et sur les buttes Le crocodile du Nil, la peur, le destin et le châtement dans l'Égypte ancienne" in *ENIM* 4, 2011, p.56.

<sup>68</sup> Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, p. 106.

<sup>69</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, 2010, p. 455 sign T30.

<sup>70</sup> Wb 2, 84.2.

kill his brother *Bata* because he sexually assaulted his wife as she claimed <sup>71</sup>. This reaction suits the writing of Diodorus about emasculating the man who made sexual relation with a married woman <sup>72</sup>.

## VII. Word *mh* “seize”.

The wax crocodile after being thrown in the garden lake, it was transformed into a real monster to snatch the commoner:



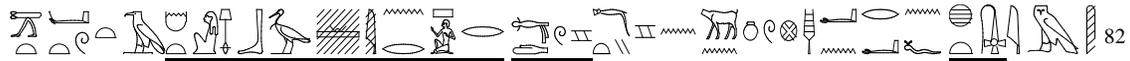
*mh.n.f m p3 nds* <sup>74</sup>

“ It seized the commoner ” <sup>75</sup>.

The verb *mh* “seize” suits the common saying “ Retribution of the work type ”. This idea can be figure through the other negative aspect of the crocodile as symbol of greediness <sup>76</sup> for its image was used as determinative in words with meaning of gluttony like  *fr* <sup>77</sup>,  *hnti* <sup>78</sup> and  *skn* <sup>79</sup>. The obscene behaviors of the commoner made him like a crocodile because he had usurped the life of *Ubainer* through copulating with his wife, enjoying his luxurious times inside his pavilion and moreover he habitually took bath in the garden lake while receiving the service of the maid-servant <sup>80</sup>. Therefore the verb *mh* represented the perfect revenge of *Ubainer* because as the commoner pleurably enjoyed sinful moments with *Ubainer*'s wife he reached extreme stage of fear and panic when he was captured by the crocodile for seven day symbol of completeness <sup>81</sup> until the return of *Ubainer* with king *Nebka*.

## VIII. Words *hmt* “ Wife ” and *šdw* “ Field ”.

King *Nebka* ordered to take the wife of *Ubainer* to a “field” in order to burn her as stated in the following sentence:-



<sup>71</sup> Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, p. 84.

<sup>72</sup> Eyre, “ Crime and Adultery ”, p. 96.

<sup>73</sup> Blackman, *Kheops and the Magicians*, p. 3, line 13:3,14 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 30.

<sup>74</sup> Bagnato, *Westcar Papyrus*, p. 25 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, 2017, p. 31.

<sup>75</sup> Bagnato, *Westcar Papyrus*, p. 27 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, 2017, p. 31.

<sup>76</sup> Vernus, *Bestiaire des pharaons*, p. 51.

عبد الباسط رياض محمد، "رمزية التمساح وعلاقتها بالأخلاق في الفكر المصري القديم" في كتاب المؤتمر الدولي الحادي والعشرين للإتحاد العام للآثار بين العرب: دراسات في آثار الوطن العربي، ٢٠١٨، ص. ١٤٢.

<sup>77</sup> Wb 1, 182.13

<sup>78</sup> Wb 3, 121.12-13; Faulkner, *Concise Dictionary*, p. 173

<sup>79</sup> Wb 4, 318.9-10; Faulkner, *Concise Dictionary*, p.251.

<sup>80</sup> Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, p. 15.

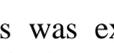
<sup>81</sup> Wilkinson, *Symbols and Magic*, p. 146 and Canhão, *Textos da Literatura Egípcia do Império Médio*, p. 142 footnote 35.

<sup>82</sup> Blackman, *Kheops and the Magicians*, p. 4, lines 14-15: 4,8-4,10 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 34.

*it.tw t3 hmt Wb3-inr r šdw mḥti n ḥnw ḥḥ.n rdi.n.f ht im.s* <sup>83</sup>

“ the **wife of Ubainer** is taken away to the northern **field** of the residence and he (=the king) set **fire** in her ” <sup>84</sup>.

There might be an inquiry about the reason of burning the wife in a field. The answer can be explained through the allusion of words  *hmt* “wife” and  *šdw* field according to the author’s concept.

The word *hmt* “wife” includes the vulva image  <sup>85</sup> and with determinative of cow’s uterus  <sup>86</sup> it means “womb” <sup>87</sup>. This might lead to symbolically regard the “ wife of *Ubainer* ” as the vessel which was supposed to receive the semen of her husband to become pregnant. This was expressed in the wife’s title  *hmt t3y* “married woman” <sup>88</sup> which included vulva image in *hmt* and male organ with fluid followed by a man in *t3y*. In addition both instructions of *Hordjedef* from the Old Kingdom and *Ani* from the New Kingdom recommend to take woman as wife to give a child <sup>89</sup>.

Concerning the word *šdw* “field”, remarkably with determinative of meat piece  <sup>90</sup> it gives meaning of “vulva” <sup>91</sup>. These might lead to make equation between the married woman and the fertile land. According to this, the commoner in his copulation with *Ubainer*’s wife and putting his semen inside her womb is like a peasant who implants his agricultural land with seeds. This hypothesis can be indicated in the following aspects:-

- (a) The verb  *sd3m* with determinative of penis with liquid  <sup>92</sup> had been used with two meanings represented in “ to make land fertile” <sup>93</sup> and “ to lie with a woman ” <sup>94</sup>.
- (b) The verb  *t3m* “to fertilize an agricultural land” ends with determinative of penis with the liquid <sup>95</sup>.
- (c) A text described the wife as fertile land in the Maxims of *Ptah-hotep* <sup>96</sup>. Also in an Amarna letter, prince of Byblos identified his field which is not ploughed with an unmarried woman <sup>97</sup>.

<sup>83</sup> Bagnato, *Westcar Papyrus*, p. 26 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, 2017, p. 35.

<sup>84</sup> Bagnato, *Westcar Papyrus*, p. 28; Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, p. 16 and Parys, *Papyrus Westcar*, p. 35 and p. 99 no. 45.

<sup>85</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, p. 430 sign D280a.

<sup>86</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, p. 432 sign F45.

<sup>87</sup> *Wb* 3, 76.1-3.

<sup>88</sup> *Wb* 3, 77.16.

<sup>89</sup> A. Delpa, “Women in Ancient Egyptian Wisdom Literature”, in L.J. Archer and S. Fischler (eds.), *Women in Ancient Societies. An Illusion in the Night*, London – New York, 1994, p. 31 and p. 43 and Johnson, “ Sex and Marriage ”, p. 149.

<sup>90</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, p. 433 sign F51.

<sup>91</sup> *Wb* 4, 566.14.

<sup>92</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, p. 430, sign D 53.

<sup>93</sup> *Wb* 4, 380.2.

<sup>94</sup> *Wb* 4, 381.1.

<sup>95</sup> *Wb* 4, 357.7.

(d) Hymn no. 90 in Leiden Papyrus I 350 stated that the wife of the god is like fertile land<sup>98</sup>.

(e) In tale of the Two Brothers, the word *prt* “seed” is written as  with determinative of penis<sup>99</sup> although it was usually written as <sup>100</sup> with determinative of grains<sup>101</sup>.

(f) The word  *mi* “seed”<sup>102</sup> has determination of penis with liquid.

(g) An inscription in the Cairo Museum mentioned the justification of a man who assured that he never touched a wife of a man and never plundered his field<sup>103</sup>.

According to the previous aspects, it seems reasonable to realize that the field where the burning punishment was executed has symbolic allusion of regarding the fornicated wife as an agricultural land which was decayed because of being filled with rotten seeds.

### Conclusions:

The story of adulterers might be considered a unique literary work for the author used words with connotations to present symbolic ideas to the readers' minds about the act of committing adultery instead of using direct sentences. This literary method was because the story was narrated in the royal court by prince *Khaefre* to his father king *Khufu*. So the sentences should be decent because it is not reasonable to hear the kings using impolite and obscene language. As a result the following words might be believed to carry symbolic ideas and connotations beside their direct meanings in the context:-

A- Act of sending *hbsw* “clothes” to the commoner is a symbolic invitation from the wife to have a love affair with the commoner.

B- The word *wb3* “to open” in the name of the *wb3yt* “maid-servant” referred to her role acting as point of connection between the wife and the commoner and she made path or opened way for the commoner to reach the wife.

C- The word *hr* “to fall” in first part of *hr-m-ht* “after” incarnated idea of the commoner who became a fallen man because he committed adultery with the married woman instead of directly stating that he copulated her which is considered immoral

<sup>96</sup> L.H. Lesko., “The Perception of Women in Pharaonic Egyptian Wisdom Literature”, in L. H. Leseko (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian and Mediterranean Studies. In memory of W. A. Ward*, Department of Egyptology, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, 1998, p. 166 and 171; Delpa, “Women in Ancient Egyptian Wisdom Literature”, p. 32; Shupak, “Female Imagery in Proverbs”, p. 320; Johnson, “Sex and Marriage”, p. 149; Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, p. 46; Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, p. 139 and M. Pehal, *Interpreting Ancient Egyptian Narratives. A structural Analysis of the Tale of the Two Brothers, The Anat Myth, The Osirian Cycle and the Astarte Papyrus*, Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Arts, 2010, p. 105.

<sup>97</sup> Shupak, “Female Imagery in Proverbs”, p. 321 footnote 42.

<sup>98</sup> Pehal, *Analysis of the Tale of the Two Brothers*, p. 104.

<sup>99</sup> C.E. Moldenke, *A Fairy Tale of Ancient Egypt. The D'Orbiney Papyrus in Hieratic Characters in the British Museum. The Hieratic Text, the Hieroglyphic Transcription, a Translation, Notes and a Glossary*, The Elsinore Press, Watchung, N.J., 1896, p. 69 line 19 and . 70 line 23.

<sup>100</sup> *Wb* 1, 530. 9 and 531.4.

<sup>101</sup> Allen, *Middle Egyptian*, p. 437, sign M 33.

<sup>102</sup> *Wb* 2, 36. 4-5.

<sup>103</sup> Shupak, “Female Imagery in Proverbs”, p. 321 footnote 42.

sentence said by a prince to a king. This idea is also fulfilled through the word *hmst* “sitting” for it expressed the insatiable wife who surrendered to her sexual desire and to enjoy the sinful moments with the commoner.

D- The fence sign in word *šspt* “pavilion” indirectly referred to the unfaithful wife who betrayed her husband and dishonored him through allowing her lover to reach her easily. This might suit the common concept about the unfaithful wife who would deceive her husband even if he imprisoned her behind fortified door. On the other hand the noble woman with grand ethics is the one who preserve honor of her husband during his absence.

E- The words *swri* “to drink” which described behavior of wife with the *nds* “commoner” might have carried idea of the wife who gave the commoner the chance to live as great man who enjoys the luxurious life.

F- The author used title of *hmt n Wb3-inr* “wife” of *Ubainer*” without mentioning her names because he wanted to refer to her main role as the vessel which received the semen of her husband to become pregnant. Thus the author would evoke the hatred feelings of the readers towards her because of betraying the husband with stranger.

G- Although the *msh n mnh* “crocodile of wax” gives the story a legendary aspect but they expressed the exact angry feelings of *Ubainer* who wanted to take revenge from the commoner through the word. The word *msh* “crocodile carried two contradicting connotations; firstly it expressed the rage of *Ubainer* and secondly it incarnated the greediness of the commoner who replaced position of *Ubainer* in his house with his wife.

H- The word *mḥ* “seize” represented the perfect method of punishing the commoner for his relation with the married wife. As he embraced the wife he would suffer forever for being captured by the crocodile.

I- Punishing the wife by burning her in the *šdw* “field” which also means “womb” presented the exact regard of the ancient Egyptians society towards the wife as fertile land. This is because the fertile land represented main source of life in agricultural society. So the act of burning the wife was because she had received semen of strange man. It seems interesting to mention that the term violate is used to refer to the act of raping woman and usurping agricultural land.

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### ملخص البحث

دلالة بعض الكلمات فى قصة الزنا فى برديّة وستكار

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يتناول البحث دلالة بعض الكلمات فى قصة الزنا بين زوجة الكاهن وبا-انر ورجل من العامة ببرديّة وستكار والأفكار الرمزية التى تقدمها لمخيلة القارئ. فعلى سبيل المثال كلمة "حبسو" (ملايس) التى أرسلتها الزوجة للرجل تعمل دلالة رمزية فى إنها تقدم نفسها له، المقطع الاول "خر" من كلمة "خرم-خت" (بعد) تعنى السقوط وهى تشير بأسلوب غير مباشر إلى سقوط الرجل فى خطيئة ييغضها المجتمع المصرى وهى ارتكاب الزنا مع امرأة متزوجة، كلمة "شسب" (المنزل الصيفى) يوجد بها شكل سور وتلك تحمل إشارة ضمنية إلى الزوجة التى أزالنت الحواجز أمام عشيقها ليصل إليها بكل سهولة، كلمة "حمست" (تجلس) تحمل دلالة مخفية عن رغبة الزوجة فى إقامة علاقة جسدية مع العشيق، كلمتى "مسح-ن-منح" (التمساح الشمع) يعكس مشاعر غضب الكاهن وبا-انر عندما علم بأمر علاقة الرجل مع زوجته ورغبته فى الإنتقام، كلمة "مح" (يخطف) تشير إلى العقاب المستحق الذى ناله الرجل من قبل التمساح وكلمة "شدو" وتعنى (الحقل) الذى شهد حرق الزوجة يشير رمزياً إلى النظر إلى المرأة الزوجية مثل الأرض الزراعية والعلاقة الزوجية تتشابه مع الفلاح الذى يغرس الحبوب فى التربة الزراعية لذلك تم حرق الزوجة لأنها فسدت مثل الأرض التى تم غرس نطفة رجل غريب بها.