

but *cpve* is ugly. In the third part, which is in preparation, on Word-Formation, we are promised the treatment of special cruces like δευτεροπρώτω.

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EGYPTIAN, SEMITIC, AND PROTO-SEMITIC.

Short Egyptian Grammar. By PROF. DR GUNTHER ROEDER, Director of the Pelizaeus-Museum, Hildesheim. Translated from the German by the REV. SAMUEL A. B. MERCER, Ph.D. (Munich), D.D., Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament in the Western Theological Seminary, Chicago. (Yale University Press, New Haven: Humphrey Milford, London, 1920.)

CONSIDERING the great historical, literary, and religious interest which attaches to the abundant and well-preserved remains of Egyptian antiquity, it is certainly remarkable that so little has been done to smooth the path of the beginner since the publication of Le Page Renouf's *Elementary Grammar* in 1875. That work had the conspicuous merit of appealing to the general principles of philology; illustrating, as far as was then practicable, the peculiarities of Egyptian phonetics, word-formation, and syntax, by the corresponding features of other languages, both ancient and modern. Unfortunately, few persons are as well qualified as Renouf was for that kind of illustration; and too many people undertake to expound the baffling mysteries of Cuneiform or Egyptian texts without having previously qualified themselves for such work by thorough study of the better known Semitic languages at least—if not also of Chinese (the only other available system of originally pictorial writing), with which our earlier Egyptologist Dr Samuel Birch had a good practical acquaintance.



The Egyptian alphabet being, like the Phoenician, strictly consonantal, it is easy to imagine what difficulties a rigid transcription must present to the eye and mind of the beginner. It is like trying to teach Hebrew without the assistance of the Massoretic vocalization. The latest form of the language, however, the Coptic, is fully vocalized; and some knowledge of the laws of phonetic change enables us to approximate with more or less probability to the ancient sounds. As Erman long ago stated, the Coptic affords the only possibility of understanding the structure of the Egyptian language. It is therefore necessary, even for the beginner, to acquire a knowledge of Coptic (*Eg. Gr.* Breasted's trans. p. 2). See also Budge's excellent remarks and list of examples (*First Steps* pp. 20–22). With the Coptic *noγte* before us, it seems needlessly pedantic to persist in transcribing the old word for








'god' by *ntr* or *ntr* instead of *nûter* or the like, and to burden the memory and strain the sight over uncouth collocations of consonants like *grnpt*, 'pigeon', when Coptic vocalizes Ⲅⲣⲟⲟⲙⲛⲉ and ⲭⲣⲟⲟⲙⲛⲉ (cf. Lat. *columba*), inserting the main vowel after the second radical, and shedding the final letter as usual. (The change of *n* to *m* before the labial *p* hardly calls for remark.) In this respect it would seem better to follow the lead of Maspéro and the French school of Egyptology than that of the super-scientific Germans. After all, it was the Frenchman Champollion who first made out the Egyptian alphabet exactly one hundred years ago. APXH HMICY ΠANTOS.











The author before us agrees with Erman in the statement that Egyptian is a Semitic language, with affinities to some of the barbarous dialects of North Africa. The latter may well show some traces of contact with their more cultured neighbour; but they can hardly be expected to throw much light on the problem of the origin and primitive relations of the immeasurably more important language and writing of ancient Egypt which, as tradition and other facts conspire to indicate, in all probability entered the valley of the Nile from Asia, having started, as it would seem, from the valley of the Euphrates.










No doubt the general phenomena of Egyptian grammar present an unmistakeable likeness to Semitism. To a Hebraist, indeed, they recall so many well-known features of Hebrew and Aramean usage that one cannot but regret that these have not been more fully and systematically noted in introductory manuals such as the present. Apart from the difficulties inherent in the hieroglyphic script, Egyptian (especially in the purely consonantal transcription advocated by Erman and his school) wears to the beginner a look so strange and bewildering, that illustration from a more familiar source, such as O. T. Hebrew and the later Aramean idioms, must always be welcome, as confirming his confidence in his guides and inspiring a conviction that he is dealing with actualities of human speech and not the mere conjectures of philological phantasy.












But not only might a systematic comparison of Semitic do much more for the elucidation of the old Egyptian syntax and forms of speech. The advantage might prove reciprocal, and the vocabulary of the latter might in turn throw valuable light on some of the enigmas of Hebrew lexicography. Take the root שׁעַ ('save', 'salvation', &c.), so weighty a word in Biblical theology. The lexicon, as it happens, rightly compares Ar. وسع *be capacious*, II. *make wide, spacious*, and refers to the syn. Heb. הרחב *make wide, enlarge*. The primary concrete meaning of the root is, however, clearly exhibited in the Egyptian

  *wsh*, 'broad', 'wide', 'to be wide', 'width'. (The

$\dot{h} = \dot{v}$ as in $sfh = שבע$ and other instances. Perhaps  rh , 'know' = III. רעה Syr. 'think'.) The Eg.  ns , 'tongue', Copt. $\Lambda\alpha c$, has preserved the primitive monosyllabic root of לשון , Assy. $lišānu$; and there can be little doubt of the identity of the obscure נֶשֶׁר , 'red', Jer. xxii 14, with the common Eg. $\dot{d}šr$, 'red'. So Eg.  nfr , 'lute' = נבל of the Psalms,  ysr , 'tamarisk' = אֶשֶׁל ,  yrp , Copt. ⲙⲣⲏ , 'wine' = עֵנֵב , 'grapes', and Eg.  $šry$, 'child', Copt. ⲩⲙⲣⲉ , 'son', ⲩⲙⲉⲣⲉ , 'daughter' = Assy. $\dot{s}erru$, 'child', 'small', 'weak'. (Is יהוה akin to  $y'hw$, the (new) moon?)

There is, however, a considerable group of vocables which suggest neither a Semitic nor, so far as we know, an African origin. In all the Semitic languages, for instance, the sound 'ab represents *father*, whereas in Egyptian the word is  (also written  with a curious Determinative, limax?), yt , Copt. $\epsilon\iota\omega\tau$, suggesting an original $yāt$ or $yād$, and reminding us, in any case, of the Sumerian AD, *father*. Nor is this notable example an isolated instance of conformity between Egyptian and the primitive speech of Babylonia (which is also an important element in Semitic). The Eg. $\text{—} s$ (Copt. ca-), *a man*, and  $s\dot{z}$, *a son*, find no congeners in Semitic, though they resemble Sum. ZA and SA-G, *a man* ($amēhu$) and E-SAG, *a son* ($aplū$); Eg.  pt , Copt. ⲡⲉ , *heaven*, recalls the more ancient-looking Sum. BAD, *heaven* ($\dot{s}amū$); Eg.  $kwkw$, Copt. ⲕⲁⲕⲉ , *darkness*, is like Sum. KUKKU, KUKU, *darkness* ($eklitu$); Eg.  $rm-t$, *mankind*, and Copt. ⲣⲱⲙⲉ *a man*, may be compared with Sum. A-RUM, E-RUM, U-RUM, denoting man (or woman) in the sense of slave ($zikaru$, *ardu*, *sinništū*), GEME-ARUM, *maid* (and) *man*, dependents ($kinatūtū$): cf. also E-RIM, *man*, *warrior* ($\dot{s}ābu$). The Sum. GEM, GEME, *female*, *maidservant* ($sinništū$, $ardatu$) is obviously a more primitive sound than Eg.  $hm-t$ (with fem. ending), Copt. ⲕⲟⲩⲙⲉ , *woman*, *wife*; and the same may be said of Sum. GEŠ, *tree*, *wood* ($i\dot{s}ū$) as compared with Eg.  ht and of Sum. GIŠ, *fire* ($i\dot{s}ātū$) as compared with Eg.  ht , and perhaps of GIŠ, GI, *male* ($zikaru$) as compared with Eg.  hy , *husband*. On the other hand, Eg. ht , *house*, Copt. ⲙⲓ = Sum. (G?)EŠ, Ê, *house* ($bītu$), illustrates the progress of phonetic decay from the earlier guttural sound to the Ê of our existing Sumerian

syllabary; while Eg.  *ḥd*, *bright*,  *ḥd*, *become light*, is clearly almost identical with Sum. 𐎶 (the sun) ĜAD, ĜUD, (HAD, HUD), with the same meanings (*ellu*, *namru*, *namāru*). Many other words common to the two languages might be added, e.g.  *dd*, Copt. ⲁⲟ, *say*, *speak* = Sum. DUTTU, DUDU (*dabābu*);  *sm*, *to slaughter* = Sum. ŠUM (*tabāhu*);  *tzw*, *wind* = Sum. TU (*šāru*);  *yr*, Copt. ⲉⲣⲉ, *make*, *do* = Sum. GAR (*šakānu*); Eg.  *wy*, *ship* = Sum. MA (WA); Eg.  *nnw*, *time* (and *wnw-t*, *hour*?) = Sum. EN, INE, ENNA, UNA. And in default of another etymology for Eg.  *ntr*, Copt. ⲡⲟⲩⲧⲉ, *god*, the Sum. NAMTAR (NAWTAR), *fate-decider*, may be worthy of consideration.

People obsessed with the idea of the superior antiquity of Egyptian insist on the pictorial character of the writing; whereas our oldest Babylonian inscriptions are linear, and in many cases the original picture-forms can no longer be determined with certainty. The pictorial stage of Sumerian had, in fact, passed into desuetude long before the period of the earliest known inscriptions (circ. 4000 B.C.). But far more important for determining the question of relative age is the fact that Sumerian never developed an alphabet, such as we find already in use (intermingled with pictorial ideograms) even in the pyramid-texts. Its nearest approach to alphabetic writing was a syllabary, of which every character, as originally a pictogram, could still on occasion be used in its original sense as an independent word-sign. To take an example, if we wish to suggest the sound M in Sumerian phonetic writing, the ideograms  MA,  ME,  MU,  AM,  IM,  UM, are at our disposal (according to the vocalization required); although each of these signs in another context may represent an ideogram or complete word (MA = *mātu*, land, ME = *qālu*, cry, MU = *içu*, tree, AM = *rimu*, wild-ox, IM = *šāru*, wind, UM = *unmu*, mother, besides many other meanings). In Egyptian, on the other hand, we have the 'alphabetic sign'  unknown as an ideogram, which we may perhaps refer to the Sumerian symbol  IM (the wind, figured as a bird). Similarly, Eg.  *y*, supposed to represent a reed-leaf, may be regarded as an attenuated form of the Sumerian  GI, reed (*qanû*), and Eg.  *w* (*û*), may be

referred to the Sumerian 𒂗 ĜU (HU), bird, with the initial aspirate worn away as in other instances (cf. also MÛ in MU-TIN, bird). Further, the Eg. letter 𐎃 h agrees well enough with the Sum. ideogram 𒂗 ĜA, ĜU, or HA, HU, meaning *many* (*ma'dûtu*) and the cipher *ten* (cf. Eg. 𐎃 ha, 𐎃 w, 1000!); and the 'doubtful sign' 𐎃 t may be a relic of Sum. 𐎃 , 𐎃 , UD, UTU, the (rising) sun.

We can sympathize with the difficulties of a translator from a German original; but we must allow ourselves the liberty of suggesting that in a future edition of this really valuable work care should be taken to bring the Vocabulary into closer conformity with the renderings given in the text. The common honorific term *ym3h* is 'respectable' on p. 7, but the Vocab. gives 'reputation'; *šfy-t-k* is 'thy reputation', p. 11, but the Vocab. gives only *šfy-t*, 'appearance', 'might'. At p. 9 *mšdmt* is 'rouge' (!), at p. 15 'paint', but Vocab. 'black paint'. P. 10 has *hmw-t*, 'workshops', Vocab. only *hmw-t*, 'handicraft, art'; p. 21 *pr-t*, 'Spring' ('sprouts'), but Vocab. 'winter'. P. 22 *byk y3h*, 'a useful servant'; Vocab. *y3h*, 'excellent'. But as *y3hw* is 'splendour' (the root-meaning), why not a 'splendid' servant? (*rara avis in terris*). P. 62 *yt*, 'corn', but Vocab. it [sic], 'barley'. Cf. perhaps Heb. בָּרֵךְ , 'wheat'. Omitting other instances of the same kind, we pass to the consideration of one or two cases of defective statement or even faulty grammar. § 27. The order of the words quoted from pl. 7, 4 does not suggest 'a nominal sentence with the verb 'to be' omitted'. The *-t* of *byt*, 'honey', appears to be a radical, not the fem. ending as our author assumes; cf. Copt. ⲉⲃⲣⲱ which is masc. (Cf. also the Chinese *mét*, *mit*, Jap. *hit* from *pit*, Korean *mil*, $\mu\epsilon\lambda\acute{\iota}$, *mel*.) The Predicates may be regarded as finite Verbs: 'Its wine aboundeth, its oil is plenteous'. § 35 *c* should have more examples for clearness sake; and at *e* the interesting phrase *nty-w-ym*, 'the dead' should have been explained (*those who are over there or yonder*). So also § 38 *ymy-w-b3h* 'forefathers' (*they who are in front or before*). The Vocab. strangely assigns to *m-b3h* the sense of 'out' as well as 'before', referring to pl. 23, 10; but, of course, *pr m b3h hr h3wt nt nfr 3* = 'Go out from before the face of the altar of the great god!'. In § 45 *wr nf yrp r mw* (pl. 7, 3) is misrendered 'great to him wine than water = he has more wine than water'. The reference is to a country, not a person; and the sense is that wine is more abundant there than water. (We may perhaps connect the Eg. prep. *r* 'to', 'toward', with the Sum. postposition *ra*, *ru*, *-ir*, 'to', which again may be akin to *RA*, 'to go'.) § 46, speaking of the Numeral Signs, says, 'The phonetic values . . . are partly conjectured only by means of combination'. Does this

mean 'only from compound numerals'? Examples should be given. And surely ḥry-w rnp-t (the five intercalary days) should be translated 'those which are upon (i.e. in addition to) the year', not 'those above (beyond) the year', as our author gives it.

Brevity may be purchased too dearly. § 90 states: 'Both ṣdm-yn-f and ṣdm-k3f as well as ṣdm-ḥr-f often express also a command. Example: ḥ-yṇ ḥm-f, 'his majesty appeared' (30, 9)'. The 'Example', of course, refers to the first part of the paragraph, which states ordinary usage. No instance of a command is given. In § 98 if 'wnm' [wm? wn? Copt. ⲟⲩⲱⲙ *eat*] 'has an active meaning', r3 n tm wnm NN. yn ḥf3w m hryt-ntr must be rendered 'Spell for the non-eating of N. (on the part) of the Serpent in Hades', rather than 'Charm for the *not-to-be-eaten* of N., &c.'

§ 64 is content to dub such phrases as n mrw-t and n-3t-n 'Conjunctions', without a word of explanation. They are cited from pl. 10, 3-5, where the king says: 'I did this for my Father Osiris, *for the greatness of my loving Him* to all gods (i.e. because I loved Him far more than all other gods), And for love of the lasting of my name' (i.e. And because I desired that my name might endure).

The account of the Infinitive, pp. 40 ff, is for the most part a model of clear and simple exposition such as one desiderates in some other instances. But § 111 is too compressed. Almost every statement should have had an example to illustrate the meaning. § 105 *a* 'thy heart will be glad n m33 on account of the sight' (56, 4): rather *at seeing* (Infin.), viz. *the rowers row*, as the sentence goes on in the passage cited. In § 108 insert *n* before m33, and in § 114 read dw3w-w for d3w-w (32. 1). In § 116 the line 21, 8 is šr nb šw3;tyfy ḥr šps pn, 'every officer (not "each living one") who shall pass by this stela'.

In § 126 the periphrastic future yb n ḥmk r ḳbb, 'thy majesty's heart will be glad' (lit. *is to* or *about to become cool*), is not made much more perspicuous by calling it 'an unreal nominal sentence'.

We have nowhere observed any reference to the Asyndeton usual in Egyptian in cases like 'nḥ w3š, 'life *and* happiness' (5, 8) or ḥmw ḥmw, *famuli et famulae* (pl. 26, 6); a construction which is also characteristic of Sumerian but not of Semitic.

After all this, it may seem ungracious to add that misprints are unusually numerous. It is needless to register them here. They are mostly such as the intelligent reader may easily correct for himself. They do not greatly diminish the sterling value of a work which every serious student of the language should possess—a work which is a marvel of compression and comprehensiveness, and which enables us to gauge, with some degree of accuracy, the present position of Egyptian grammatical knowledge.

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