I. Introduction

Even though the genetic relationship of Egyptian and the Semitic is solidly established, the specifics of the relationship are very imperfectly understood, and therefore hotly debated. The problem is especially difficult because the Egyptian language itself is very imperfectly understood, as are also many of the ancient Semitic languages. Ideally we would like to be able to write a comparative grammar of Semitic and Egyptian in the style of Andrew Sihler's *New Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin* (Oxford University Press, 1995). Sihler does not merely compare Greek and Latin; he traces their developments from their common parent language, the reconstructed Proto-Indo-European. Unfortunately, this is impossible to do for Semitic and Egyptian, as scholars have been unable to discover much about what Proto-Afro-Asiatic, the ancestor of Semitic and Egyptian, may have been like. In fact, it may not even be possible to reconstruct PAA as scholars have reconstructed PIE, for a variety of reasons. The vast majority of AA languages are attested only since the modern era, and many branches of the family are still too poorly known. It is also likely that the AA languages have been diverging far longer than the IE languages, so that much more evidence for the structure of the parent language has been lost.

In analyzing the relationship of Egyptian and Semitic, the standards of the comparative method must be followed. If this standard is not upheld, and we allow ourselves to be satisfied with irregular sound correspondences, we will allow too great a probability for the occur-

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1 An earlier form of this paper was included in Rubin (1999), a work which also included study of comparative Egypto-Semitic phonology. Many thanks to Professor Don Ringe for his immeasurable amount of help with the original work. All mistakes and opinions are naturally mine alone. I would also like to express my gratitude to Gábor Takács for inviting me to include my work in this volume.
rence of chance resemblances; see Hock (1986) and Hoenigswald (1960). For a statistical discussion of the amount of similarity between different languages that can be expected to have arisen by chance, see Nichols (1996) and Ringe (1999).

The starting point for comparison of two languages (or language families) should be in the realm of morphology. Morphological correspondences are also the first place to begin looking for regular phonological correspondences. In addition, the comparison of Egyptian and Semitic morphology is necessarily the launching point for any reconstruction of Afro-Asiatic morphology, as these two branches are the only ones attested in antiquity. It seems that a general outline of Egypto-Semitic comparative morphology is lacking; such a study would be a useful base for further investigation. The present work will attempt to do just that. I will not include AA material outside of Egyptian and Semitic, as that is beyond the scope of this paper. It may not be possible to fully understand all of the facts without looking outside of Semitic and Egyptian, but for the present work we must accept the limitations of analyzing the Egyptian and Semitic data alone.

II. Morphology

An exhaustive treatment of the comparative morphology of Egyptian and Semitic is beyond the scope of a paper of this size, as is any attempt to reconstruct Proto-Afro-Asiatic forms. Instead, I will outline the major morphological correspondences between the two language families in order to show that they are indeed related.

A full analysis of all the Egyptian forms would involve an attempt to reconstruct pre-Egyptian forms by internal reconstruction. That, too, is beyond the scope of this paper, and I do not believe it is necessary for the present purposes. The comparison presented here, using attested Egyptian forms, will demonstrate beyond doubt that many parts of the Semitic and Egyptian morphological systems correspond, pointing to an unquestionable genetic relationship. I wish to emphasize that by correspondences in morphological structure, I am referring to correspondences between actual morphemes, not typological features. As is well known, only the former can advance proof of a linguistic relationship. The probability that two languages will resemble each other typologically is simply too high.