

GÁBOR TAKÁCS

EGYPTIAN *sb3* "STAR", *sb3* "TO TEACH",  
THEIR ORIGIN AND RELATED QUESTIONS

in honorem Wessetzky Vilmos

In this brief contribution I would like to examine the possible Egyptian and Afrasian correspondences of these two important words, touching some other problems relevant to this theme.

1. Eg. *sb3* "star" has been compared for a long time to the derivatives of PS *\*šb* "to burn" > "to shine", cf. Ar. *šāba* "to light, kindle", *šbb* and *šb'* "glänzen", Akk. *šbb* "glühen, funkeln", *šabb* "leuchtend, hell", Aram. *šwb* "brennen", *šēbībā* "Flamme", perhaps Ar. *šihāb* "bright, flame, meteor, star" (Ember 1930, 7.ša26; Vergote 1945, 128; Calice 1936, 388.š; Cohen 1947, 259.š). PS *\*šb* "to burn, to shine" has also a derivative complemented initially (not compared in the above mentioned works), namely Ar. *nšb* "to burst out (of fire), to burn" (Zaborski 1971, 86, 222.š). This group of Sem. roots (possibly together with Eg. *sb3*) seems to be of Afrasian origin, cf. West Chadic *\*šab-* "to burn, kindle (fire)" < PAA *\*šVb* "heat, burning" (Stolbova 1987, 195).

Ember and Cohen treat Ar. *šihāb-* as if it contained an infixal -h- between the two basic consonants, however, one would guess what kind of relation it may have to PS *\*lhb* "flammen, brüler" (Akk. *la'b-* "Flamme", Hebr. *lahab* "Flamme", Ar. *lhb* "lodernd, flammen", Eth. *lhb* "id.") ~ Eg. *rhbw* "Feuer, Glut" (a loan from West Sem.?, it is attested only from LP onwards) ~ (?) Cush. Bedawye *luw* "brüler, allumer" (with the loss of the presumed -H-?) (cf. Calice 1936, 239.š; Vergote 1945, 137; Cohen 1947, 434.š). It is accepted that *\*š-* can function as complement in the 1st position of Sem. verbal roots (Moscatti 1947, 127), though it's possible that the alternation of *\*š-* ~ *\*l-* is of phonetic character. Nevertheless, Conti (1980, 50) accepts connection of PS *\*lhb* to PS *\*nbl* "to flame" (< *\*bl*), postulating metathesis (*\*lhb* < *\*bhl*) and infixation of -h- just like it is presumed in Ar. *šihāb-*. This explanation seems rather questionable and unconvincing.

The supposed connection of Eg. *sb3* ~ PS *\*šb* < PAA *\*šVb* calls our attention to a phonetic problem. According to the phonological system reconstructed for PAA recently, PAA *\*š* leaves reflexes *š-* and *-s* in Eg. (but not *s-*) together with Sem. *\*š* (Majzel' 1983, 114—116;

D'jakonov et al. 1987, 24—25; Militarjov 1983, 99), though some other cases can also be found for Eg. *s-* ~ PS \*š- < PAA \*š-, cf. Eg. *sr* "nobleman" ~ PS \*šarr- "chief" (Diakonoff 1970, 472), Eg. *sp.t* "lip" ~ PS \*šap-at- "lip" (D'jakonov 1965, 40; Fronzaroli 1964, 255), Eg. *smhj* "links" (NE, Wb IV 140; antonym for *jmn* "right", FD 21) ~ PS \*ša'm-al- "left" (antonym for \*jamin- "right", Fronzaroli 1965b, 258). Bomhard (1988, 60) reconstructs a more realistic (from this point of view) correspondence PAA \*ĉ (at him \*t 𐎢) > PS \*ĉ ~ Eg. š, s.

2. Ward (1978, 31—34), however, rejecting the well-known etymology of Eg. *sb3* "star" ~ PS \*šb (he mentions "Semitic šwb/šbb" instead!), suggests a completely different solution: he traces it back to Eg. \*b3 I "to tremble, flutter". Thus *sb3* originally designated the trembling shine of the stars. Ward considers \*b3 I "to tremble, flutter" a dialectal variant of Eg. \*p3 ~ PS \*pr "to flee, escape" — but this kind of explanation of *sb3* "star" appears to be highly dubious and weak for semantic considerations. In many cases the word "star" can be connected with verbal roots meaning "to burn" or "to shine" etc. (not only in AA languages), cf. PS \*kab-kab- "star" ~ Akk. *kbb* "to burn" (Fronzaroli 1965a, 138); Eg. *3h3h.w* "stars" (Pyr., FD 5) ~ *3h.t* "horizon" (Pyr., FD 5), *3h.w* "sunlight" (MK, FD 5), *3h.t* "flame" (MK, FD 5), possibly *h.t* "fire" (OK, FD 182) < \*3h "to burn, shine"; PIE \*Has-t<sup>her</sup>- "star" (nomen agentis) < PIE \*Has- "to burn, glow" (Eichner 1978, 161—162, note 76; Penney 1988, 365; Bomhard 1986; Gamkrelidze-Ivanov 1984, 875, note 1).

3. The latter parallel's presumed connection to PS \*C<sup>attar</sup>- "the deified star (obožestvľjonnaja zvezda), the planet Venus" (Illič-Svityč 1964, 6—7; Gamkrelidze-Ivanov 1984, 686, 875—876 inter alia) constitutes an interesting problem, some details of which are worth being examined here. As it is well-known, Diakonoff (1985, 122—123) has raised several objections against this hypothesis: beside semantic considerations (according to which the basic meaning of PS \*C<sup>attar</sup>- was "god, goddess" and the association with the planet Venus is secondary) he mentions phonetic difficulties as well. He suggests that this Common Semitic term (dating back as early as the VI—IVth millennia B. C.) was pronounced \*C<sup>ačtr</sup>- at that time rather than \*C<sup>attar</sup>-. Gamkrelidze and Ivanov (1985, 176) in their response to D'jakonov call this "hypercriticism". Indeed, the validity of both objections can be questioned in this case. As to the basic meaning, Fronzaroli (1965b, 248) also emphasizes the astral character of this Common Semitic term for "deity" (contrary to \*il-, which, possibly, comes from the "mature, aged, respected" character of the deity, cf. Eg. *j3wj* "to be aged", *j3w* "adoration", *j3j* "to adore, Hodge 1971, 1983), mentioning parallels of divine names originating from designations of concrete phenomena (PS \*šamš-, \*uarih-). What's more, Dolgopolsky (1977, 4; 1989, 6) reconstructs the development of the basic meaning in

the form of "morning/evening star, Venus" > "a god(dess) associated with the planet Venus" > "several theonyms". As to the phonetic difficulties, on the other hand, taking into view some other data concerning the phonetic correspondences in PIE ~ PS and other loans, Dolgopolsky (1977, 3—4) has already shown that in this late period of Common Semitic (and after its split) the phonemes \*t (< PAA \*ĉ), \*t (< PAA \*ĉ) were rather fricatives than affricates in medial and final position, cf. PS \*hitu- "arrow" > PIE \*Hisu-/o/- "arrow" (Sanskrit *isu-*, Greek *ios* Irish *io-*, cf. also Dolgopolsky 1989, 7); PS \*talg- "snow" > Eg. *srq* "snow" etc. If we accept the relatedness of PIE \*Has-t<sup>her</sup>- and PS \*C<sup>attar</sup>-, the main question is the direction of borrowing. Fronzaroli (1965b, 248) notes that the etymology of PS \*C<sup>attar</sup>- uncertain. Obviously, this kind of root-structure (C<sub>1</sub>VC<sub>2</sub>C<sub>3</sub>VC<sub>4</sub>-) is absolutely not characteristic for Semitic, and this even in itself would be enough to suppose an external origin. Another explanation for this strange structure would be word-compounding. Diakonoff (1985, 122—123) himself believes that \*C<sup>ač</sup>- and \*-tr- may be two juxtaposed termines, though he did not explain their meaning in the PS (or PAA) lexical stock, and \*C<sup>ač</sup>- and \*-tr- are still unexplained according to him even at the present moment (D'jakonov 1993, 2). This fact indicates that D'jakonov doesn't accept the interesting suggestion of Illič-Svityč (1964, 6 note 20) for the explanation of the second element \*-tar- on Afrasian grounds. He compares it to Berb. *itri* "star", Tuareg *ta-tri-t* (f) "morning star, Venus" ~ Cush. Bedawye *terig* "moon" ~ Chadic Ngizim *tira*, Bolewa *tere*, Wandala *tre* Musgu *tra* "moon" (cf. also Greenberg 1963, 59—60 who reconstructs the basic meaning "moon") < PAA(?) \*tVr "celestial body". This theory (which wasn't developed further by Illič-Svityč, however) also strengthens the proposal concerning the original semantics of \*C<sup>attar</sup>- offered by Gamkrelidze, Ivanov, Fronzaroli, Illič-Svityč and Dolgopolsky. Nevertheless, there can be found no explanation for the first element \*C<sup>at</sup>- within Afrasian, and it may be added that in the Semitic branch of AA language family compounding of different biconsonantal roots is a rather rare phenomenon (Diakonoff 1988, 51). Illič-Svityč and Dolgopolsky, however, are treating PIE \*Has-t<sup>her</sup>- as a loan from (!) PS. Bomhard (1986), suggesting the internal (IE) etymology of \*Has-t<sup>her</sup>- (in his interpretation \*Hs-tér-) — what has already been proposed before him by Eichner (1978, 161—162, note 76) and Gamkrelidze-Ivanov (1984, 875, note 1) —, leaves the question open about the relation of the PIE and PS terms. Though Illič-Svityč's internal etymology of PS \*-tar- on AA material cannot be rejected, it seems more realistic to assume the inner etymology of \*Has-t<sup>her</sup>- on PIE material (where both \*Has- and \*-t<sup>her</sup>- can be satisfactorily explained) and the direction of borrowing from PIE into PS as presumed already by Gamkrelidze and Ivanov (1984, 875—876). It's not the only case of PIE > PS cultural lexical relations in which the

internal analysis of the PIE counterpart within PIE lexicon can decide the direction of borrowing, cf. the case of PIE *\*uoi-no-* *\*uei-no-* "wine" > PS *\*uain-* "wine, grape" (the PIE term originates from Common Indo-European *\*uei-/\*ui-* "drehen, biegen", Pokorny 1959, 1121; Gamkrelidze-Ivanov 1984, 649; Illič-Svityč 1964, 8, note 26, however, considers this only folk-etymology; Dolgopolsky 1989, 9 has also rejected this etymology, claiming PS *\*uain-* to be the source of borrowing); PIE *\*k<sup>h</sup>r-n-* "horn" / < PIE *\*k<sup>h</sup>ēr-* "head, top of the head" / > PS *\*karn-* "horn" (Gamkrelidze-Ivanov 1984, 876) etc.

4. Turning back to Eg. *sb3* "star", beside its probable AA equivalents (PS *\*šb*, West Chadic *\*šab-*, PAA *\*šVb*) this word can be explained within Egyptian as well. As far as I know, no suggestion has been made to connect it with Eg. *\*sb* "to burn" > "to shine" and its derivatives, cf. *3sb* "fierce" (NK, FD 5), *3sb* "brennen" (BD, Wb I 20, 18), *3sb.t* "Bezeichnung einer Göttin" (with flame-determinative, Pyr., Wb I 20, 19), *3sbj.w* "flames" (BD, FD 5), *nsbj.t* "the name of the 5th hour of the day" (with flame determinative, Gr., Wb II 334, 17), *nsbw* "a noun" (with flame determinative, NK, Wb II 334, 18), *nsb.t* "ein Gebäck" (XX., Wb II 334, 15). A good parallel for Eg. forms prefixed with *n-* / *\*n-sb* / is Ar. *nšb* "to burst out (of fire), burn" < PS *\*šb*, and for Eg. *sb3* one can cite Ar. *šb* "glänzen" from the same root (see above). The variant of *nsbj.t* "the name of the 5th hour of the day", *nsr.t* "id." (LP, Wb II 336, 7) calls our attention to a characteristic feature of Late Eg. lexics, namely forming of secondary biconsonantal roots by contamination. In our case, comparing only *nsbj.t* and *nsr.t*, a seeming common biconsonantal *\*ns-* would emerge, but taking into view also the earlier attested relatives of *nsr.t* it becomes clear at once that *nsbj.t* and *nsr.t* originally had nothing in common with each other having originated in distinct biconsonantal roots (with a prefix *n-*), cf. for the latter form Eg. *\*sr/\*sj* "to burn" > *nsr* "flame" (Pyr., FD 140), *nsr* "to burn" (Pyr., Wb II 335, 4—10), *nsrj* "to flame" (Med., FD 140), *n-sr-sr* "name of a mythical island where the Sun-god was born" (actually "the burning island", with flame-determinative, MK, Wb II 336, 8), *n-sj-sj* "id." (Pyr., Wb II 336, 8), *sr-f* "to be warm, hot" (Pyr., FD 236; Wb IV 195), *sr-f* "Wärme" (MK, Wb IV 196). The structure *n-1212* is of biconsonantal origin in the overwhelming majority of cases (cf. Conti 1980; Ward 1972). In *sr-f* the third consonant is presumably a complement, cf. PS *\*šr-p* "to burn", *\*šr-k* "to be red", *\*šar-k-* "dawn, sunrise" ~ Cush. *\*šVr/r/-* "red" (D'jakonov 1975, 124; Dolgopol'skij 1973, 207; Bomhard 1984, 226; Bomhard 1981, 426). The correspondence of Eg. *\*sr* ~ PS *\*šr-p*, *\*šr-k*, *\*šar-k-* ~ Cush. *\*šVr/r/-* is a further case of the phonetic correspondence between Eg. *s-* ~ PS *\*š-* < PAA *\*š-*.

5. The Common Afrasian origin of Eg. *sb3* "to teach" (OK, Wb IV 83—84), a homophon of *sb3* "star", though it is an important word in Eg. culture, has not yet been shown, and its explanation even within

Eg. is not satisfactory. Ward (1978, 63) has already rejected its connection to *swb3* "to open, reveal" (and thus to Eg. *\*b3* II "to break earth, open"), denying also its causative character (with *s-*), he considers a rare form, namely *sb3* "to steer (a boat)" (hence *sb3* "steering", *sb3j* "tillerman", not in Wb, nor FD) to be the source of *sb3* "to teach", what is even less convincing and satisfactory than a derivation from Eg. *\*b3* II "to break earth, open". It seems that a better solution of this problem can be found after examining the history of some Sem. and Cush. roots for "to learn", "to explain" etc. (< PAA *\*bV'Vr* "to explain", Dolgopol'skij 1967, 279) which seem to have originated in the Common Afrasian root *\*bVl/\*bVr* "to shine" > "to look, see", as it has been presumed by Takács (1993; for the reconstruction of this Common Afrasian proto-form cf. also Bomhard 1984, 199—200):

Sem.: PS *\*blg* "to shine", PS *\*blbc* "to gleam, glitter", PS *\*brk* "to shine, be bright, to lighten", PS *\*barāk-* "lightning", PS *\*brr* "to be or become clear or bright, to purify, to clean", PS *\*bVrr-* "cleaned (of grain, among other things)", PS *\*barr-* "open area, field", perhaps PS *\*bhr* "to shine, glitter", Akk. *brh* "strahlen" ~ Syr. *'etbarrah* "leuchten" (< PS *\*brh?*), PS *\*brc* "to sparkle, twinkle etc." (Akk. *brš* "aufleuchten", Eth. *iabāraša* "funkeln"), PS *\*brh* "to light up, to be light", Akk. *barû/\*brī/* "sehen, schauen", Akk. *bāru/\*būr/* "in Erscheinung treten, auftauchen, Bestand haben", Hebr. *bē'ēr* "deutlich machen" (< PS *\*b'r* "to explain"), Ar. *\*br* "to explain, to clarify (a problem)",

Eg.: *\*br/\*bl* "to shine" > "to look, see" > *b3q* "hell, klar sein" (Pyr., Wb I 424—425), *b3q.t* "Bezeichnung für Aegypten" (Gr., Wb I 425, 18; actually "the bright land", cf. Ember 1913, 114), *b3q* "jem. erblicken" (LP, Wb I 426, 1), *brq* "glitzern" (NE, Wb I 466, 7; borrowed from West Sem. *\*brk*), *brg* "leuchten, glänzen" (NE, Wb I 466, 13; borrowed from West Sem. *\*blg*), *b3h* "Bezeichnung des Ostgebirges, wo die Sonne aufgeht" (BD, Wb I 422, 9; actually "the shining mountain"?), "Land im Westen von Aegypten" (OK, Wb I 422, 8), *b3h* "aufgehen (von der Sonne), hell glänzen (von der Milch)" (LP and Gr., Wb I 423, 1—2), *b3q* "moringa-oil" (MK, Wb I 424; FD 78; actually "the bright, shining, clear oil", cf. Ember 1913, 114), *br.wj* "eyes" (Gr., Wb I 465, 5), *br* "sehen, erblicken" (Gr., Wb I 465, 6) *bnr* "ball of eye" (*\*bVl*, NE, Horus and Seth 10, 4; Černý 1976, 22), possibly *bnr* "das Aussen" (*\*bVl*, NK, Wb I 461; borrowed from Common Sem. *\*barr-* "open area, field"?), Coptic (S) *Bal* "eye", Dem. *bl* "eye", Coptic (S, A) *ebṛēce* (f) "Blitz" (< NE *brq* < West Sem. *\*brk*), *br n jnr* "field of stone" = "necropolis" (NE, *br* is borrowed from West Sem. *\*barr-* "open space, field", a derivative of PS *\*brr* "to be pure, clean, free", cf. Ward 1977, 279),

Cush.: Cush. *\*m-brk* "lightning", East Cush. *\*bark-/\*birk-* "lightning", South Cush. *\*birik-* "lightning", Cush. *\*bVl/IV/g/g/-* "to flash (of lightning)" > Sam *\*bilig-* "to flash (of lightning)", Bilin *bilič y* "to

flash (of lightning)", Kemant *bilič y* "to flash, glitter", Cush. \**bVr/r/-* "morning" > East Cush. \**H-br* "early morning, dawn", Afar *'aburi*, Saho *abori*, Galla *aboro* "early morning", Cush. \*/*m/-bVl/-* "day" (cf. Eg. *hrw* "day" ~ Ar. *whr* "leuchten", Hebr. and Aram. *nhr* "leuchten", Ar. *nahr-* "day", Calice 1936, 69.8, see also Diakonoff 1988, 47), Cush. \**bVr-* "outside area" (cf. PS \**barr-* and Eg. *bnr* "das Aussen"), Cush. \**bVr/r/-* "to be dry (of weather)" > "sunny, unclouded weather, to become clear (of sky)", Cush. \**bar-* "to teach" (actually "to make clear") > Afar *bar-* "to learn", Somali *bar-* "to teach", Galla *bar-* "to learn",

Chadic: (?) Hausa *wàlk'ijā* (\**w-brk*?) (f) "lightning", Buduma *bàrmèl* "thunder, lightning", Musgu *bara* "to flash, to glitter", *abera* "thunder, lightning", Chadic \*/*m/-bVl/-* "bright, shining". Hodge 1981, 374 proposes PAA \**#mb-* for this form, following Greenberg's 1958, 1965 theory, though no such phoneme has been distinguished recently in PAA phonological reconstructions, Bomhard 1988; Diakonoff 1984; D'jakonov et al. 1987; Diakonoff 1988, 34—41; D'jakonov-Porhomovskij 1979, 79—81; Bomhard 1989, 38—39; Bomhard 1984, 133—174; Illič-Svityč's interpretation seems to fit better, according to which *m-* is a prefixal element < \**n/-*, Logone haw *aməlaḡi* "to lighten", Batta Garua *baratḡe* "lightning", Chadic \**bVr-* and \**bVr/-bVr-* "morning". (See Aistleitner 1963, 59—60; Bomhard 1981, 400—402; Dolgopol'skij 1967, 279; AHW 105—109; Illič-Svityč 1971, 174, 260; D'jakonov 1985, 126—127; Bomhard 1984, 199—200; Takács 1993; Bomhard 1977, 65; Dolgopol'skij 1966, 50, 55; Calice 1936, 32.8; Dolgopolsky 1983, 123; Fronzaroli 1965b, 140; Ember 1913, 114; Greenberg 1963, 59; Hodge 1976, 13; Hodge 1981, 374; Illič-Svityč 1966, 19, 28; Orjol-Stolbova 1988, 80; Vergote 1945, 130; Dolgopol'skij 1973, 194, 254, 202, 204—205, 40.)

The derivation of roots "to explain, teach etc." (lit. "to make clear") from the primary sense "to shine" of PAA \**bVl/\*bVr* and their connection to the secondary "to look, see" has already been proposed by me (1993, 2—3). Bomhard (1977, 65) has already tried to connect Akk. *barû/\*brī* "sehen, schauen" to PS \**brr* "to shine, be clear, free etc.", though their connection is possible on biconsonantal level only. It seems very probable that PAA \**bVl/\*bVr* "to shine" has developed from the more ancient (from semantic point of view) Common Afrasian root for "to burn, be hot, to flame" reconstructed in the form \**bl* (Stolbova 1987, 156), to which a variant \**br* may be added even on PAA level (Illič-Svityč 1971, 190 reconstructs Hs \**br* "to be boiling"):

Sem.: PS \**nbl*, \**n-bl-bl* "to flame", PS \**nabl-* "flame", PS \**na-bVl-bVl-* "flame" (Eth. derivatives of n1212 structure are not necessarily borrowings from Cush, as supposed by Dolgopol'skij 1973, 198, since this root-structure is fair common in Eth. itself).

Eg.: *nbj* "brennen" (Pyr., FD 130), *nbj* "flame" (Pyr., FD 130), *n-bj-bj* "to be hot, ardere, bruciare" (Med., FD 130; Conti 1980, 50),

*nbj.t* "the Flaming One (of uraeus-goddess)" (MK, FD 130), *snb/\*s-n-bj*, caus./ "verbrennen" (Gr., Wb IV 161, 4), *brbr* "kochen" (NE, Wb I 466, 1; borrowed from Cush.?) > Copt. (B) *BEPBEP*, (S) *BPB̄P̄* "aufwallen, siedeln, sprudeln (vom Wasser), lodern (von Feuer)" (Coptic (S) *BEEBE*, (B) *BEBI* "hervorsprudeln, ergiessen, aufwallen", however, is not related as proposed by Illič-Svityč 1971, 190 from a deduced \**b3b3*, since it comes from Pyr. *b<sup>c</sup>b<sup>c</sup>* "to drink, bathe in liquid", cf. Westendorf 1977, 20; Ward 1977, 274—278),

Berb.: Mzab, Wargla, Ġebel-Nefusa *abər* "to be boiling" (< \**H-br*),

Cush.: Cush. \**bVl/l/-* and \**bVlVl/-* "to be hot" > "to be burning, boiling to flame", its prefixated form is \**m-bVl/-* "id.", Cush. \**bVl/l-bVl/-* "to burn, brennen", perhaps Bilin *bēlk-* "to be boiling", Galla *bulug-* "to be warm" (both with a velar complement?),

Chadic: West Chadic \**b/H/l-* "verbrennen", Chadic \**m-bVl/-* "verbrennen", Chadic \**m-bVl/l-bVl/-* "verbrennen".

(See Dolgopol'skij 1973, 198; Stolbova 1987, 156; Dolgopol'skij 1966, 51; Illič-Svityč 1966, 19; Illič-Svityč 1971, 190; Conti 1980, 50—51; Westendorf 1977, 26.)

A homorganic PAA root, namely \**mVI/\*mVr* "to shine" (hence "to look, see") is possibly also related (cf. Takács 1993):

Sem.: \**mr* "to look, see",

Eg.: \**ml* > *m33* "to look, see" (OK, FD 100), *mr.t* "(divine) eye" (BD, Wb II 107), *m33.tj* "the two eyes" (LP, Wb II 11), *m3rw* "viewing-place (in sun-cult)" (XVIII., FD 103), *m3nw* "the Western Mountain" (BD, Wb II 29), perhaps \**m3* "to know, recognize" (NE, Wb I 184), *m3.w* "rays of light" (NK, FD 103),

Berb.: \**H-ml* > Tuareg *aməl* "to show", Kabyle *məl* "to show",

Cush.: Central Cush. \**H-mr* "to shine", hence "morning, tomorrow" (Illič-Svityč thinks East Cush. \**H-br* "early morning, dawn" also belongs here), Cush. \**mVlIV<sup>c</sup>* "to look" (hence the secondary "to think, guess, observe"),

Chadic: (?) West Chadic Ngamo *moi* "to see" (-i < \**r* as in Eg.?). (See Cohen 1947, 9.8; Dolgopol'skij 1973, 180; Illič-Svityč 1971, 260.)

The existence of presumably related roots with homorganic consonants on PAA level has not yet been subject of serious investigation, however, it seems to have been fair characteristic even in the building of Common AA lexics (naturally, not the same way as, say, in Sem.), cf. PAA \**sik<sup>2</sup>a* "to hoe, hack up the earth" ~ \**sukai* "to sow" ~ \**sV kai* "abandoned field, stubble" (Militarjov 1989, 130—131) or PAA \**cV k<sup>2</sup>* "sharp stake, pale" ~ \**šak<sup>2</sup>/ij/* "curved knife, horn" ~ \**čV k<sup>2</sup>* "edge (of knife etc.), sharp thing" (Militarjov 1983, 100—101).

As to the explanation of Eg. *sb3* "to teach", two alternative solutions can be offered in the light of the above mentioned parallels: a/ Eg. *sb3* together with *sb3* "star" comes from Eg. \**sb* "to burn, shine" ~ PS \**šb* "to burn, shine" < PAA \**šVb* "heat, burning", then the meaning "

teach" (act. "to make clear"?) would derive from the well attested sense "to shine", cf. Ar. *šbb* and *šb'* "glänzen", Akk. *šabb-* "leuchtend, hell"; or *b/ sb3* "to teach" may also originate in Eg. *\*br/\*bl* "to shine, to look, see" ~ PS *\*b'r* "to explain" ~ Cush. *\*bar-* "to teach" < PAA *\*bVl/\*bVr* "to shine" (hence "to look, see" and "to explain"), in this case the semantic shift of *sb3* would be the same as in the first one. The latter possibility, however, seems a little bit weaker for morphological considerations. Following this way *s-* should be considered the causative prefix, though the causativity of *sb3* (whatever simplex *\*b3* would it have) has already been rejected by Ward (1978, 31) convincingly, on the simple reason that as a causative it would have a fem. infinitive instead of a masc. So, it may be suggested that *sb3* "to teach" probably comes from Common Afroasian *\*šVb* with the same consonant structure as that of *sb3* "star".

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#### Abbreviations:

|       |                            |      |                           |
|-------|----------------------------|------|---------------------------|
| A     | Ahmimic dialect of Coptic  | NE   | New Egyptian              |
| AA    | Afrasian                   | NK   | New Kingdom               |
| Akk.  | Akkadian                   | OK   | Old Kingdom               |
| Ar.   | Arabic                     | PAA  | Proto-Afrasian            |
| Aram. | Arameic                    | PIE  | Proto-Indo-European       |
| B     | Bohairic dialect of Coptic | PS   | Proto-Semitic             |
| BD    | Book of the Dead           | Pyr. | Pyramid Texts             |
| Berb. | Berber/o-Libyan/           | S    | Sahidic dialect of Coptic |
| Copt. | Coptic                     | Sem. | Semitic                   |
| Cush. | Cushitic                   | SH   | Semito-Hamitic            |
| Dem.  | Demotic                    | Syr. | Syrian                    |
| Eg.   | Egyptian                   |      |                           |
| Eth.  | Ethiopian                  |      |                           |
| fem.  | feminine                   |      |                           |
| Gr.   | Greek                      |      |                           |
| Hebr. | Hebrew                     |      |                           |
| IE    | Indo-European              |      |                           |
| LP    | Late Period                |      |                           |
| masc. | masculine                  |      |                           |
| Med.  | Medical Texts              |      |                           |
| MK    | Middle Kingdom             |      |                           |

GÁBOR TAKÁCS

#### THE AFRASIAN ORIGIN OF EGYPTIAN nbw "GOLD"

Eg. nbw (\*nābaw > Coptic Sahidic NOYB) "gold" (OK, Wb II 237—239; FD 129) is evidently a derivative from the verb nbj "to melt metal" (OK, FD 129; Wb II 236, 6—7) as already noted by Osing (1976, 214) etc. This word was probably borrowed into Nubian: Fiadik'k'a, Mahassi nab "Gold", cf. also Eg. nbj "brennen" > Nub. Kunūzi, Dongolāwi nib "braten" (Abel 1933—1934, 303, 305). The Eg. word nbj. t "Perlenkollier, Brustschmuck" (OK, Vycichl 1958, 394, no. 51) seems not to have etymological connection to nbw "gold" if one accepts the former's proposed comparison with Ar. lubb-at- "der obere Teil der Brust", labab-, pl. 'albāb-, talbīb-, "ein Kragen, der die obere Brust bedeckt", Eg. Ar. libbe "Kollier, Brustschmuck" (Vycichl), which ultimately originate in PAA \*libw- "heart" > N. Om. \*ulw- "belly" etc. (see Blažek 1989, 7, no. 11; Blažek 1992, 136—137).

Unfortunately, so far no reliable etymology has been offered for Eg. nbw "gold" and nbj "to melt metal" in the Afrasian lexical stock. However, it seems that some typological parallels can yield a solution: in several cases designations of various metals originate in verbal roots with the basic sense "to burn", cf. Akk. \*wēriy- "copper" ~ PS \*r, var. \*wr "to burn, kindle": Ar. wry "to kindle, set fire", ry "to burn", rr "to set fire", ir(r)-at- "fire", Tigre 'arwa "to flame, blaze", Hebr. ry "to burn", ūr "fire, flame", Akk. ūr- "fire, flame", Phoen. r "fire, flame", Ug. 'ar "fire, flame"; PS \*awr- "light", \*nawir- "luminoso" (prefixation by n-) ~ Eg. jr. t "flame" (Gr., Wb I 114, 20), rwj "flame" (NE, Wb II 508, 1), w3j (< \*wrj) "to roast (?) grain" (Med., FD 52), wr. t "flame" (Gr., Wb I 332, 7) ~ E. Cu. Boni \*war- "to dry in the sun" ~ N. Om. Malo ware "warm" ~ W. Ch. Dera wuri "to roast" ~ C. Ch. Pidlimdi vara "to burn" (Vartanov 1983, 85; Belova 1993, 54; Blažek 1991, 366; Zaborski 1971, 54, 5. §; Fronzaroli 1965, 138); or