SAHIDIC. Sahidic (siglum *S*) is a major Coptic dialect, earlier known as Upper Egyptian, Theban, or the southern dialect; the term "Sahidic," used by Athanasius of Qūṣ, was adopted by Stern (1880). In twentieth-century Coptology, *S* has been the main dialect of study and research—indeed Coptic *par excellence*, today totally supplanting BOHAIRIC in this respect (compare, for instance, its precedence in Crum, 1939, to that of Bohairic in Stern, 1880). This

process, virtually complete by 1915 (cf. Erman, 1915, pp. 180f.), may be said to have been initiated by Steindorff's grammar of 1894; yet note early statements favoring Sahidic as "older," "richer," and "purer" (Stern, 1880, p. 1; Sethe, in Kahle, 1954, p. 202), and "magis regularis atque ad analogiam exacta" (Peyron, 1841, p. xix), the earliest observation of its relatively innovating, leveling nature. Indeed, the reputation of S as "old," or at least "older" than Bohairic, is due rather to its early documentation and its chronological precedence over Bohairic, which replaced it as the Coptic koine, than to typological fact.

Still the prestige of Sahidic is certainly justified by its rich literature, both original and translated, scriptural and nonscriptural (homiletic, patristic, monastic, Gnostic, magical, poetic), religious and nonreligious (epistolary, documentary, legal, medical). Sahidic was probably the first Coptic dialect into which the Scriptures were translated, apparently in the third century; by the fourth, the translation was completed. Almost all original Coptic literature was written in Sahidic (see ANTONY OF EGYPT, SAINT; PACHOMIUS, SAINT; SHENUTE, SAINT). By the ninth century, S had become the official dialect of the Coptic church, but as early as the fourth century, perhaps even earlier, it was a common Pan-Egyptian written literary dialect, spread at least from Heliopolis to Aswan. In subsequent centuries, it completely replaced the minor dialects (A, L, M) as a colloquial idiom. By the time of the ARAB CONQUEST OF EGYPT, S was the sole literary dialect beside northern Bohairic. From the ninth century onward, S gradually receded before Bohairic, a process much accelerated from the eleventh century on.

Sahidic occupies "a position apart from all other dialects" (Polotsky, 1970, p. 560) in that, first, it is "neutral" (Worrell, 1934, p. 73; Kahle, 1954, p. 241) or, better, most leveled, dialectologically speaking; it is the dialect most difficult to characterize distinctively, a "mean" dialect, the one with the fewest exclusive traits and the most isoglosses shared with others. Second, it raises (1) the diachronic, nondescriptive question of its local origin and "proper domain" (the statement by Athanasius of Qūṣ that Sahidic is "the dialect of Miṣr" is not helpful here) and (2) the synchronic question of its integration in the overall dialectological scheme. Question 1 is controversial: Worrell (1934, pp. 68ff.) considered its initial range to have been Oxyrhynchus and the lower valley (his "region IV" or perhaps an area even more northerly); Vergote (1973b, Vol. 1a, pp. 2f.) and Kasser (1980a, pp. 103ff.) suggested it spread

southward from around Saqqara-Memphis (perhaps Worrell's "region II"); Polotsky (1970, p. 561) considered Thebes as a possible point of origin. Rather extreme appear Kahle's thesis (1954, pp. 256ff.) tentatively identifying its point of origin in Alexandria, and Schenke's denying Sahidic any original local basis, considering it to be a koine type of idiom born out of contacts, interaction, and leveling of local dialects (1981, pp. 349ff.); Vergote's conception seems to be the most plausible.

In any case, the characterization, still encountered, of Sahidic as "artificial" to a degree is descriptively irrelevant. It is true that standard literary Sahidic is largely "a gift" of the translation of the Bible (and in this sense many literary languages are "artificial") and that Sahidic probably owes its drastic expansion to the progressive suppression of distinctive phenomena. What specific traits Sahidic has, it shares most usually with Akhmimic and Subakhmimic in contrast to Bohairic and Fayyumic. ("Middle Egyptian" really occupies a roughly middle position between the two dialect clusters.) This is, however, no more than an impression and may be proved erroneous by a precise investigation.

Although standard, or "pure," Sahidic is more of a construct, an idealized average, a research *point de repère* than linguistic reality, some varieties of the dialect approach it more closely than others (see below); Sahidic is a *Mischdialekt*, an aggregation of linguistic habits only imperfectly and variously standardized (cf. Mink, 1978, pp. 91ff.; his statement that "die Annahme von Dialekten ist . . . sprachwissenschaftlich ein Konstrukt" is especially cogent when applied to Sahidic). However, extreme cases of "tainting" (e.g., by Fayyumic, Bohairic, Subakhmimic) must be specially treated. The dialect P, documented in the Papyrus Bodmer VI text of Proverbs published by Kasser (1960), is held by Vergote (1973a, p. 57) and Kasser (1980a, pp. 62ff.) to be a "protodialect of Sahidic," with non-Sahidic (Theban or Subakhmimic) traits; according to Nagel (1965), it represents early Theban.

1. Standard Sahidic

1.1 Phonology, Morphophonology, and Orthography. As a rule, S agrees with Bohairic in points of vocalism, while sharing its consonantism with A–L —according to Kasser, in a way reflecting an evolutive scale (see Vergote, 1973b, sec. 60 p. 58, and Kasser, 1981, sec. 25, for lists of "isophones").

1.1.1. Sahidic has no aspirate phonemes: ⲑ, ⲫ, and ⲭ are (in native words) monogram graphemes repre-

senting a combination of two phonemes. (They may have a different standing in the system of Greek-origin phonology.)

1.1.2. Sahidic has only one unvoiced laryngeal spirant (ϩ /h/).

1.1.3. ϫ and ϭ represent distinct phonemes (velopalatal or palatalized stop and alveolar affricate, respectively, ϫє and ϭє, as in ϫⲱ, say, and ϭⲱ, remain).

1.1.4. Sahidic has at least one laryngeal stop phoneme (/X/ = Vergote's and Kasser's /'/), synchronically suprasegmental: "(proneness to) vocalic reduplication." Its distribution is complex (see Satzinger, 1979), with the allophones "zero" (e.g., nonsyllabic /X/ in the final position and pausal junctive: ⲙⲉ, truth) and ⲁ (syllabic, pretonic /X/: ⲧⲁⲙⲟ, inform). In *P*, the laryngeal stop has its own sporadic grapheme (⊥).

1.1.5. In Sahidic there is no progressive sibilant assimilation to /s/ (ⲥⲁⲁⲛϣ, make live, nourish), but progressive sibilant assimilation to /c/ does take place (ϣⲁϫⲉ, speak).

1.1.6. Sonorants (/b/, /l/, /m/, /n/, and /r/) closing the tone syllable are graphically "reduplicated," occurring in two neighboring syllables as syllabic and nonsyllabic (onset): ϩⲃ̄ⲃⲉ, plow; ϩⲗ̄ⲗⲟ, old; ⲥⲏ̄ⲙⲉ, report; ⲕⲛ̄ⲛⲉ, be fat; ⲃⲣ̄ⲣⲉ, new.

1.1.7. The Sahidic vowel in the unstressed syllable (after Polotsky, 1933) is outlined in Table 1.

1.1.8. Stressed ⲁ represents the allophone of /o/ before /h/ and /X/ (ⲙ̄ⲕⲁϩ, be pained; ⲧⲃⲁ, ten thousand). In similar prelaryngeal environments, є represents /a/ (ⲥⲉⲉⲡⲉ, be left over; ϩⲉ, way).

1.1.9. Orthography (see in exhaustive detail Kasser, 1980a). Diagrams: ⲉⲓ, ⲟⲩ. Monograms: ⲑ, ⲫ, ϫ, ⳉ, ψ. ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ, God, is not included among the *nomina sacra* abbreviations. The superlinear stroke occurs above one or more nonvocalic elements, signaling their syllabic phonological status (not their phonetic value or manner of actualization; see Polotsky, 1957a, pp. 221ff., 1971, pp. 227ff.). Proclitic prosodic: relative weakness is fully reflected in the standard orthography; see 1.3.7.

1.2 Morphology (Systemic and Nonsystemic) and Word Formation.

1.2.1. A superficial vocalic *e*-merger of the four converters (є- circ., є- second present, ⲛє- preterite, єⲧ(є)- relative) is characteristic of Sahidic; of these, the first two are actually homonymous. The relative and second perfect forms are not homonymous in the best standard orthography (ⲉⲛⲧ-ⲁ- versus ⲛ̄ⲧ-ⲁ-, respectively); the second perfect may be further circumstantially converted (ⲉ-ⲛ̄ⲧ-ⲁ-; Polotsky, 1957a, pp. 232ff., 1971, p. 232, 1960, sec. 11 obs., e.g., Mt. 20:28 and Eccl. 19:15).

1.2.2. The Sahidic future tense is the extended bipartite ϯⲛⲁⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄; the so-called third future (ⲉϥⲉ-/ⲛ̄ⲛⲉϥ-) is a mode rather than a tense (cf. Polotsky, 1950, pp. 34ff., 1971, pp. 219ff.) and has very limited convertibility (only circ. of the negative base: Polotsky, 1957a, p. 233, 1971, p. 233, 1960, pp. 400, 401, 1971, pp. 246ff.). ⲧⲉⲣⲁ- is a special second-person singular feminine future form.

1.2.3. The *S* conjunctive presuffixal base consists of a nasal (ⲛ̄) and no dental, except for the first-person singular (ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ-, ⲛⲧⲁ-). The conjunctive is in *S* a conjugation form apart, standing midway between the tripartite and bipartite patterns, with ⲛ̄- (prenominally ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ-) marking the modifier status of a nexus of (pro)noun and infinitive; morphologically, this special status is manifested in the pronominal elements, which are (with a single exception in the

TABLE 1.

FINAL SONORANT	PRETONIC — NO SONORANT, INITIAL SONORANT	POSTTONIC — AFTER CLOSED STRESS SYLLABLE		POSTTONIC — AFTER OPEN STRESS SYLLABLE	
		INITIAL SONORANT	NO SONORANT, FINAL SONORANT	INITIAL OR FINAL SONORANT	NO SONORANT
Ø	є	є	Ø	Ø	Ø
ϣⲣ̄ϣⲱⲣϥ	ⲥⲉⲛⲥⲱⲡϥ	ⲥⲟⲧⲙⲉϥ	ⲥⲟⲧⲡϥ	ⲥⲱⲗⲡ̄	ⲥⲱⲧⲡ̄
	ⲟⲩⲉϭⲟⲩⲱϭϥ	ⲙⲟⲕⲙⲉⲕ (var. Ø)	ϣⲟⲣϣ̄ϥ	ⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄	
		ϩⲟⲧⲃϥ		(var. є)	

first singular) identical with the bipartite actor pronouns (prefix pronouns).

1.2.4. ⲧⲁⲣⲉϥⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄, the causative or "future" conjunctive, a specific postimperative, postinterrogative form with a first singular causation or guarantee seme (Polotsky, 1944, pp. 1ff., 1971, pp. 106ff.), is a typically Sahidic form. The causative infinitive is used as a noncausative "that" form after several prepositions (but less usually after others).

1.2.5. Sahidic employs a specific "temporal" clause conjugation, tripartite pattern form (ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲣⲉϥ(ⲧⲙ̄)ⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄) distinct from the second and relative perfect forms.

1.2.6. The negatived conditional conjugation form has in Sahidic two variants (alternants), namely ⲉϥϣⲁⲛⲧⲙ̄ⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ and ⲉϥⲧⲙ̄ⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄.

1.2.7. A special prenominal allomorph of all converters and some tripartite conjugation bases is characterized by the ending -ⲣⲉ.

1.2.8. Verbs of Greek origin occur in Sahidic in a zero-stem form (usually identical with the Greek imperative) and are directly incorporated in the conjugation and generally grammatical forms without the intermediation of an auxiliary: ⲁϥⲡⲓⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ, ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲛⲉⲣⲅⲉⲓ, ⲍⲟⲙⲟⲗⲟⲅⲉⲓ (imperative/infinitive).

1.2.9. The verb ⲧ̄, give, has in S two imperatives, ⲧ̄ and ⲙⲁ (Polotsky, 1950, pp. 76ff., 1971, pp. 211ff.).

1.2.10. Pronominals: Sahidic has a ternary determination category—definite, indefinite, and zero ({ⲛ}, {ⲟⲩ·}, ∅-) determinators, expanded by noun lexemes. The proclitic form of the demonstrative ⲡⲏ, namely ⲡⲓ-, has (wherever distinct from ⲡⲉⲓ-, the proclitic allomorph of ⲡⲁⲓ̈) affective and specially designative value (Polotsky, 1957a, pp. 229ff., 1971, pp. 231ff.).

1.2.11. Numbers are expressed as a rule by number words, not letters (e.g., Acts 23:23).

1.2.12. The first-person singular suffix-pronoun ·ⲓ has the allomorphs ·ⲁ· (ⲛ̄ⲛ-ⲁ-, ⲧⲣ-ⲁ-) and ·ⲧ (as object of infinitives following a consonant or /X/ or prepositions in similar environments). The second-person singular feminine suffix-pronoun consists of the allomorphs -∅-/-ⲣⲉ after conjugation bases -∅-/-ⲉ-/-ⲧⲉ as object of infinitives. The second-person plural suffix-pronoun consists of the allomorphs -ⲧⲛ̄- and -ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄-. The third-person plural suffix-pronoun is nonsyllabic after ⲛ̄ⲛⲉ-, ⲧⲣⲉ-, ⲡⲉ- (possessive article). A special objective pronoun-paradigm is characterized by the third-person plural term -ⲥⲉ/-ⲥⲟⲩ. (This paradigm occurs mostly after another pronoun, e.g., as pronominal object of the possession verboid ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥ.)

1.2.13. ϭⲓⲛ- forms in Sahidic lexical (nongrammatical) action nouns.

1.3 Syntagmatics and Prosody.

1.3.1. Focalization patterns: The second tense focalizes in Sahidic not only adverbials but also actor and object (pro)nouns, and may even be autofocal, that is, with the verb lexeme or predicative adverb itself the information focus (see Polotsky, 1944, pp. 51ff., 1971, pp. 155ff., 1960 sec. 32 obs., 1971, pp. 408ff., as in Lk. 20:13, ⲉⲓⲛⲁⲣ ⲟⲩ, "What shall I do?"; Sir. 5:4, ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲟⲩ ϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛⲁⲓ̈, "What has happened to me?"; Acts 12:15, ⲉⲣⲉⲗⲟⲃⲉ, "Thou art mad"; Ps. 67:28, ⲉϥⲛ̄ⲙⲁⲩ, "Ibi est"). The cleft sentence with (pro)nominal focus (*vedette*; Polotsky, 1962) has the form "(pro)noun-ⲡⲉⲧ- (etc.)," with the *glose* marker ⲛ̄- tending to be invariable, and omissible only after a personal-pronoun focus (Polotsky, 1962, p. 420, 1971, p. 421).

1.3.2. Nominal syntagmatics: The nominal expansion of a noun syntagm is effected by ⲛ̄-/ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ- regulated by the determination of the nuclear noun and/or other expansions thereof, apparently with no lexical considerations involved.

1.3.3. -ⲙⲛ̄- is limited to coordinating non-zero-determinated nouns; the range of ⲁⲩⲱ is accordingly extended. (Zero-determinated nouns are coordinated by means of -ϩⲓ-.)

1.3.4. After converters, an indefinite or zero-determinated actor noun does not necessarily condition a ⲟⲩⲛ̄-/ⲙⲛ̄- allotagm of the bipartite pattern (Polotsky, 1960, sec. 21 and 35).

1.3.5. Final clauses are expressed by the conjunctions ⲭⲉ, ⲭⲉⲕⲁ(ⲗ)ⲥ followed by future III or the second future (circ. negative future III following ⲭⲉⲕⲁⲁⲥ; Polotsky, 1957a, p. 233, 1971, p. 233) and not by means of the conjunctive (which does, however, resume ⲭⲉⲕⲁⲁⲥ after an interposition; Lefort, 1948). The S conjuctive occurs after a limited number of conjunctions (the consecutive ϩⲱⲥⲧⲉ and ⲙⲏⲡⲱⲥ [ⲙⲏⲡⲟⲧⲉ], both of Greek origin) and does not usually function as a "that" form or expand impersonal verb predications (Stern, 1880, p. 275, sec. 445).

1.3.6. The possession-predicating ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥ and ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥ have in Sahidic verboid status—that is, partake of all syntactic properties of verbal predications (conjugation forms): the *possessum* may be expressed pronominally as an object adjacent of the pronominal possessor (Acts 3:6, ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲓϥ, "that which I have"; see ibid., sec. 316).

1.3.7. Prosody: Prosodic proclitic weakness is consistently reflected in the standard S orthography (see Erman, 1915: ⲟⲩⲛ̄-/ⲙⲛ̄-; ⲁⲛⲧ-/ⲛ̄ⲧⲕ̄ . . . ; ⲡⲉⲓ̈-; ⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲧϥ̄-; ⲥ̄ⲧ-; etc.). The relative converter joins in Sahidic in close juncture with the converted conju-

gation form (e.g., Lk. 12:5). Vowel reduplication occurs sporadically in monosyllabic, final-laryngeal words before an enclitic (ⲟⲩⲙⲉⲉ ⲡⲉ; Polotsky, 1957a, p. 231, 1971, p. 232, 1957b, pp. 348ff., 1971, pp. 390ff.).

1.4 Lexicon. As a rule, Sahidic shares lexical isoglosses at least with Akhmimic and/or Lycopolitan (or Subakhmimic), such as ⲃⲱⲱⲣⲉ, push, protrude. (This, however, may be refuted by further, more sophisticated investigation.) Lexemes not occurring in Bohairic seem relatively more common than exclusive *S* + *B* ones (e.g., ϣⲱⲱⲥⲉ, wound; ⲃⲱⲕ, go; ⲧⲱⲕ, throw; ⳅⲱⲛ, approach; ⲡⲱⲱⲛⲉ, turn; ⲕⲱⲙϣ̄, sneer; ⲟⲩⲱϣⲃ̄, answer; ⳅⲱⲱϥ (particle), on the other hand; ⲭⲟⲟⲩ·ⲧ̄ⲛⲛⲟⲟⲩ, send). Relatively few conjunctions of Greek origin are found in Sahidic.

2. Varieties of Sahidic

2.1 Classical, or Scriptural, Sahidic. As a rule, classical Sahidic conforms to the standard described above. However, more-precise scanning is called for in this case, differentiating between the Old and New Testaments, between various parts thereof, and even between the various manuscripts. Sahidic boasts more early (fourth or fifth century) manuscript sources than any other dialect of Coptic, and in this corpus many idiosyncrasies are observable, which may be subsumed together under the heading of "early Sahidic." The grouping of manuscripts in this category is helpful: the British Library Deuteronomy-Jonah and Psalms (Budge, 1898, 1912); the Bodmer Papyri, complemented by Chester Beatty and University of Mississippi fragments (Kasser, 1961, 1962, 1964, 1965) with linguistic introductions (note the forms ⲛ̄ⲗⲉ, ⲛ̄ⲅⲁⲣ; ⲛⲙ̄-, with; the rarity of the preterite relative prefix ⲉⲣ-, Dt. 4:42; total assimilation of nasals to sonorants; omission of nasals, etc.); the Turin Wisdoms (de Lagarde, 1883); the Berlin Psalter (Rahlfs, 1901); and recently the Palau Ribes Gospels (Quecke 1972, 1977; note the idiosyncrasies pointed out in the editor's extraordinary introductions: ⲛⲙ̄-, ⲙⲁϥ- (negative aorist), ⲧⲏⲛⲟⲩ second-person plural object, variation of ⲉⲧⲉ- ~ ⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉ-, ⲧⲉϥ- ~ ⲧⲣⲉϥ, sporadic omission of adverbial ⲛ̄- (ⲧⲉⲩⲛⲟⲩ, ⲥⲁ, ⲟⲩⲱⲧ), even some special lexemes). See in general Kahle's (1954, p. 233) discussion of this kind of manuscript; "Old Coptic" similarly presents mainly Sahidic traits (ibid., pp. 242ff., 252ff.).

2.2 "Gnostic" Sahidic. One must distinguish here between the Gnostic texts with no special dialecto-

logical problem (the Pistis Sophia, the Bruce Codex, some of the Nag Hammadi tractates) and such Nag Hammadi tractates as exhibit non-Sahidic traits. The former group conforms by and large to the early-Sahidic type, with some idiosyncrasies (total nasal assimilation, ⲉⲡ- relative prefix, ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲣⲉϥ- for the classic ⲧⲁⲣⲉϥ-, ⲗ-future ⲥⲟⲩⲱⲛ-, ⳅⲉⲱⲥ ϣⲁ(ⲛⲧⲉ·) [PS 178f., 313]), perhaps a more pronounced tendency to resume a converter/conjugation base after a nominal extraposition (PS 31, 173, 275f., 320). A profile of the Nag Hammadi idiom(s) or idiolect(s) will eventually be achieved on the basis of a series of monographs (cf. Nagel, 1969; Layton, 1973, 1974). The Nag Hammadi grammatical systems, which vary from one text to another, often seem inconsistent even in one and the same text. One encounters tractates written by a "speaker of some form of dialect A²" (Layton, 1974, p. 379, Codex II). Certain texts (notably in codices III, V, and especially VII, tractates 2, 3, and 5) reveal Bohairic or "Middle Egyptian" (morpho-)syntactic traits, e.g., open juncture of the relative converter (III, 42.5f.), interrogative pronouns before basic tenses (VII, 103.3f.), the conjunctive a "that" form (VII, 80.13, 99.29f.), the relative compatible with indefinite determinators (ⳅⲉⲛ-ⲉⲑⲟⲟⲩ, VII, 85. 11f.), relative conversion of the future III (III, 114.2f.), and, most striking, a four-term determination category with consequences for the expansion of the noun syntagm (ⲡⲓ- ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ-). Codices II and V reflect early Sahidic with non-Sahidic traits, mostly Akhmimoid (*A*, *L*, and, in the case of Codex V, Middle Egyptian as well). Note the following ⲗ-coloring in varying ratios: *A* forms of lexemes and morphs (ⳅⲙⲁⲥⲧ, ⲕⲱⲉ, ⲭⲉⲕⲁⲥⲉ, ⲧⲱⲱⲛ, ⲭⲟⲩ); lexical Akhmimicisms (e.g., ⳅⲣ̄ⲧⲉ, fear; ⲗⲁⲃⲉ, cease [also Pistis Sophia]; ⲧⲁⳍⲟ, make, create); ⲙⲛ̄- ~ ⲙ̄ⲡⳅ̄- (negative imper.); ⲣ̄ ~ Ø- with Greek loan-verbs; ⲛ- ~ ⲛⲉ- for the definite article before a consonant cluster; ⲛⲉ- (possessive article second singular feminine), ⲡⲟⲩ-, ⲧⲣⲟⲩ- (third plural); the perfects ⲗⳍⲗ-, ⲗⳍ″, ⲉⲧⲁⳍ-, ⳅⲁϥ-.

2.3 Nonliterary, Postclassical, and Late Sahidic. These terms, often confused (if only by implication), demand clear definition. On the one hand, there are late literary texts, especially hagiographical, martyrological, and liturgical, but also popular literature and poetry (Drescher, 1947; Till, 1935–1936; Erman, 1897; Junker, 1908; etc.), mostly posterior to the Arab conquest. This corpus has to be carefully distinguished from the extremely important one, of high standardization, of postclassical literary Sahidic of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries (note espe-

cially Pachomius' writings and, above everything, the linguistic usage in Shenute's works, considered by the present writer at least as significant for the description of Sahidic grammar as is the scriptural idiom).

On the other hand, there is the immense body of nonliterary sources of late documentation, largely overlapping the late-*S* corpus in its grammatical norm. This category includes letters (private, formal, official), documents (receipts, contracts and agreements, demands, testaments), magical and medical recipes and spells (see, e.g., Chassinat, 1921), and so on. This corpus has had very scant attention hitherto (see Crum, 1926, Vol. 1, chap. 10; Kahle, 1954, chap. 8), and grammatical investigation of this area is still a future goal—perhaps the greatest challenge before Coptic linguistics today.

The overpowering impression conveyed by these texts, apart from their sheer numbers (major collections have been found at Thebes, al-Ashmūnayn, Wādī Sarjah, Dayr al-Bala'izah, Armant, and Aphrodito), is their bewildering variety and degrees of deviation from the classical standard; but therein lies their value. The letters (eighth–eleventh centuries in all catalogic collections, e.g., the British Library and the John Rylands Library ones, by Crum; Berlin, by Satzinger; Vienna, by Krall and Till) and documentary legal texts (again, in most collections) are to a large extent characterized by formulas. The poetic (tenth–eleventh centuries), magical (seventh–tenth centuries; Kropp, 1930–1931; Stegemann, 1934), and liturgical (see Quecke, 1970, pp. 350–89, M 574, a ninth-century manuscript) all to a lesser or greater extent exhibit non-Sahidic characteristics (Akhmimoid, Fayyumic, Bohairic). Striking are the following traits:

Phonological (if not dialectal) *and orthographic:* Vocalic and (to a lesser extent) consonantal variation is common; note especially the vocalic (є-) treatment of syllabic nasals (ме-, with; єточ, he) and the fluctuations є ~ ⲁ, є ~ н ~ Ø, o ~ ω, ϭ ~ к, ⲃ ~ ч, voiced ~ unvoiced, aspirated ~ unaspirated. Many magical texts show Fayyumicism (stressed ⲁ for o, є for ⲁ, н for є and even Ø, and ⲃ for ч), although some (e.g., Kropp's A and B) are pure standard Sahidic; so on the whole is the Bala'izah collection. Some texts (e.g., Till's Martyrdoms) show a mixture of the *S* superlineation and Bohairic DJINKIM. Observe that incomplete or hesitant standardization must on no account be taken for "misspelling" (cf. Kahle, 1954, p. 254, n. 5; Kahle's lists [chap. 8] constitute an unsurpassed, indeed unparalleled description of the phonologic-orthographic usage of the Theban nonliterary sources).

Morphological. First-person singular ϣⲁⲛⲧⲁ-; second plural ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲉ- (Theban); second singular feminine єⲣ- (converter), ⲁⲣ- (perfect) (Polotsky, 1960, p. 422, obs. 1); ⲛ̄ϣⲁⲩ-, relative aorist, ⲛⲉ- future (*F*); ⲧⲉⲩ- conjunctive (especially Theban, but also elsewhere; also ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲩ-); єⲩⲁ- future, ⲟⲩⲁ- future base, ⲙⲛ̄(ⲧ)- conditional (all Theban); verb lexeme sporadically unreduced before the direct nominal object; verb-lexeme morphology—(Theban) ⲟⲩⲱϣⲉ, ⲙⲟⲩⲛⲉ, ⲧⲓ⳥.

Tempuslehre and syntax. A future-eventual use of ϣⲁⲩ-; a final-"subjunctive" use of the conjunctive (e.g., Martyrdoms 1.8.1, Ryl. 290, 321, also Theb., Kahle, 1954, pp. 160ff.), also in a "that"-form role, as direct object (Martyrdoms 1.5.9), even with past tenses; future final-consecutive use of ⲧⲁⲣⲉⲩⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ (Ryl. 316, Martyrdoms 1.5.29, Epiph. 162.26); ϣⲁⲛⲧⲩ- (also final) and ϫⲉⲕⲁⲁⲥ acquire the value of content-clauses (cf. ἵνα). The second tense is used as a "that" form outside the cleft sentence (BKU 335 ⲁ ⲡⲉⲛⲥⲟⲛ ⲧⲁⲙⲟⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ6ⲛ̄ⲧⲩ, "Our brother has told me that you found him." The circumstantial occurs adnominally, attributive to a definite nucleus (Kropp D 20 ⲡⲛⲟ6 ⲛ̄ⲁⲉⲧⲟⲥ єⲣⲉ ⲛⲉⲩⲧⲛ̄2 ⲡⲟⲣϣ̄ єⲃⲟⲗ, "The great eagle whose wings are spread"); the circumstantial as *glose* in a cleft sentence (Kropp D ⲧⲟⲕ ⲡⲉ єⲕⲧ 2ⲛ̄ ⲡⲁⲡⲟⲧ, "It is you who pour"); the possessive єⲡⲱ⳥ ⲡⲉ (e.g., Ryl. 325, 341), also ⲡⲱ⳥ as an augens of the possessive article ⲡⲉⲩ- (KRU 36 ⲧⲛ̄ⲁⲓⲧⲏⲥⲓⲥ ⲧⲱⲛ ⲛ̄ⲙⲓⲛ ⲛ̄ⲙⲟⲛ). Note such Bohairic-like features as ⲟⲩⲁ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲩ- (Martyrdoms 1.58.1, a generic relative, an indefinite ⲡⲉⲛⲧⲁⲩ-), ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲩⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ (relative/second perfect) used as a temporal clause, ⲛⲓⲙ ⲁⲩ- (Martyrdoms 1.3.7); also ⲡⲥⲁ- ⲛ̄ⲧⲟⲩ (ibid. 1.34.3).

2.4 Sahidic Alloyed with Other Dialects (cf. Crum's *S*ᵃ and *S*ᶠ). This is, in view of the reservations and observations made above, to be understood as an ad hoc text-specific descriptive appellation (IDIOLECT) rather than a clear, definable dialectological phonomenon. The quality and degree of component admixture vary considerably from one case to another, and it is doubtful whether dialectologically meaningful classification and gradation are at all feasible. For instance, the Fayyumicisms peculiar to many *S* manuscripts in the Morgan collection are neither predictable nor uniformly distributed. In "Pseudo-Shenute," M 604 (Kuhn, 1960), the *F* element consists of sporadic grammatical characteristics -ϣⲧⲉⲙ-, negative conditional ⲁⲣⲉϣⲧⲉⲙ-, second singular feminine possessive article ⲡⲉⲣ-, and lexical-phonological

Fayyumicisms: ϭⲱⲡⲧ, ⲟⲩⲛ, what (interrogative). In the unpublished parallel source, B. L. Or. 12689, the vocalism and generally the phonological shape of words is drastically affected.

3. Bibliographical Information

3.1 Major, Comprehensive, or Authoritative Bible Editions. Old Testament: de Lagarde, 1883 (Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus); Ciasca, 1885–1904 (Old Testament fragments, a basic edition); Maspero, 1892–1897 (a complementary edition of Old Testament fragments); Budge, 1898 and 1912 (Psalms, Deuteronomy, Jonah); Rahlfs, 1901 (Psalms); Thompson, 1908 (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus) and 1911 (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Judith, Esther); Worrell, 1931 (Proverbs); Shier, 1942 (Ruth, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, fragments of Genesis, Jeremiah, Baruch); Kasser, 1961, 1962, 1964, and 1965 (the Bodmer manuscripts: Exodus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Epistle of Jeremiah, Baruch). New Testament: Horner, 1911–1924 (authoritative critical edition of the New Testament); Balestri in Ciasca and Balestri, 1885–1904, Vol. 3 (Borgia New Testament fragments); Budge, 1912 (Acts, Revelation); Thompson, 1932 (Acts, Pauline Epistles); Kasser, 1962 (Matthew, Romans); Quecke, 1972, 1977, and 1984 (Mark, Luke, John).

3.2 Grammars and Grammatical Monographs. Stern, 1880 (best grammar yet); Steindorff, 1894, 1904 (reprint 1930), and 1921; Till, 1961 (still the most commonly used, for its convenience rather than for descriptive merit); Plumley, 1948, and Walters, 1972, are rather sketchy. Dialect comparative grammars: Stern 1880; Till, 1961; Chaîne, 1933 (very detailed); Steindorff, 1951; Vergote, 1973b, Vol. 1a. Special studies: Erman, 1897; Levy, 1909; Wilson, 1970; Kickasola, 1975.

3.3 Dictionaries. There is no special Sahidic lexicon, but the Sahidic component of Crum's *Dictionary* (also Spiegelberg and Westendorff's *Handwörterbuch*) is certainly adequate. Wilmet's invaluable *Concordance* (1957–1959) covers the Sahidic New Testament. Many text editions include special glossaries.

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SHENUTEAN IDIOM.

"Shenutean Coptic" is the term applied to the idiom, including the grammatical norm and stylistic-phraseological usage, observable in the corpus of writing by the archimandrite Apa Shenute (334–451), outstanding among Coptic literary sources in that it constitutes the single most extensive homogenous and authentic *testo di lingua* for Sahidic and Coptic in general. This corpus provides the linguist with a precious opportunity to achieve a consistent and complete description of a grammatical system. The other extensive corpus, that of the Scriptures, although somewhat earlier and so enjoying the prestige of a "classical" *état de langue*, has the disadvantage of being translated from the Greek; its native Coptic constituent element can be properly determined only after a complete structural description of the grammatical system of its *Vorlage*, precise knowledge of the quality and degree of its dependence upon this *Vorlage*, and diacritical-contrastive application of an independent, untranslated grammatical system such as that abstractable from Shenute's works. The desirability of such a grammar makes an early analysis of this corpus of paramount importance.

Compilation of the Corpus

Although only slightly more than half of all known or surmised Shenute sources have been edited to date (1982), there is no great difficulty about compiling most of the extant corpus: the task of isolating unattributed Shenute fragments from the host of homiletic and rhetoric-epistolary ones is largely technical. Linguistic (grammatical and stylistic-phraseological) data extractable from the unambiguously Shenutean sources in the three major editions (Amélineau, 1907–1914; Leipoldt and Crum, 1908–1913; Chassinat, 1911) and the many minor ones—mostly in catalogic collections (by Crum, Munier, Pleyte-Boeser, Rossi, Wessely, and Zoega) and occasionally in special publications (e.g., by Guérin, Lefort, Teza, Young, and the present writer), as well as unpublished sources—serve as probes for locating other sources. Identification on the basis of stylistic impression alone, although certainly unavoidable as a practical guide, is not always adequate, especially when the style is untypically pedestrian rather than in the usual powerful, involved vein. The main unedited collections of Sinuthiana are those in Paris and Vienna repositories and in British libraries (Oxford, Cambridge, and Manchester).

Linguistic Characterization

Shenute's dialect is what is conventionally conceived of as high-standard literary Sahidic, albeit with distinct Akhmimoid traces (Shisha-Halevy, 1976a), which are probably due to his native Akmimic background and consist mainly of (morpho)phonologic, morphologic, idiomatic, and lexical features, with more elisive syntactic affinities. (Present-day knowledge of Akhmimic syntax is notoriously inadequate, because of insufficient evidence.) Some of the more striking phenomena in Shenute's grammatical usage are the idiosyncratic use of the conjunctive and of object constructions and the favoring of one of the "mediators" or lexeme premodifiers (ϯ ϩⲟⲩⲉ-, ϯ ⲛ̄ⲕⲉ-, ϣⲣ̄ⲡ (ⲛ̄)-). Note two (of several) distinctive nominal-sentence patterns, namely # ⲟ̸ -ⲡⲉ # (e.g., Leipoldt, 1908–1913, IV, 23.22, ⲛ̄ⲕⲁϩ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧ ⲡⲉ ⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ ⲉⲛⲉⲓϣⲁϫⲉ; Amélineau 1907–1914, I, 228, ϭⲗⲟϭ ⲡⲉ ϫⲟⲟⲩ, ϣⲓⲡⲉ ⲡⲉ ⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ ⲉⲣⲟⲟⲩ) and a hyperbatic construction with a demonstrative subject (Chassinat, 1911, 150.3ff., ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲩϩ ⲛⲉ ⲛⲁⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲩⲥⲱⲗⲡ̄, "These are 'the cords which broke'"); ϫⲉ, used adnominally (ibid., 125.38ff., ⲙ̄ⲙⲛ̄ ϭⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲓⲥ, ⲙ̄ⲙⲛ̄ ϭⲉϩⲉⲗⲡⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ϩⲱⲃ ⲛ̄ⲁⲅⲁⲑⲟⲛ ϫⲉ ⲛ̄ϥϣⲟⲟⲡ ⲛⲁⲥ ⲁⲛ, "There is no faith, there is no hope of goodness that does not belong to it").

As regards the use of the second tenses, one finds numerous distinctive figures and constellations variously combining topicalizations and foci. Striking is the cleft sentence with the circumstantial topic