NARRATIVES OF EGYPT AND THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

Literary and Linguistic Approaches

edited by

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RHETORICAL NARRATIVES, TABLEAUX AND SCENARIOS:
WORK-NOTES ON NARRATIVE POETICS IN SHENOUTEAN
SAHIDIC COPTIC1

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the course of an exploratory study of ‘Shenoute’s rhetorical syntax’, a comprehensive investigation of the syntactic poetics of rhetorical complexes (the grammatical high-order signifiers, for which the signified ‘added-value’ is ‘rhetoricity’), I have encountered a textemic set of rhetorical narrative structures which, I believe, provides important new insights on the grammatical nature, texture, and properties of narrative in general.2 In this, a pilot study, I shall offer a brief overview of this set, attempting a cursory formal-and-functional description of the individual textemes, and present representative and selective token documentation (usually not more than a single example for each category; more, sometimes many more are attested).3 Statements made here have no claim to be universally valid, but are meant to describe the Coptic situation. For reasons of space, I have left out most of the secondary literature, whether literary, narratological or linguistic stricto sensu; the types discussed are selective, out of the numerous types in my files: I wish here to draw attention to this rich vein of syntactical and stylistic data, to their variety and intricacy, to offer a provisional typology and observations on distinctive grammatical properties, and perhaps to stimulate debate.

The writings of Shenoute (c. AD 348–c. AD 465) are the most extensive authentic (i.e. untranslated) corpus of Sahidic Coptic and Coptic in general,

1 Hearty thanks are extended to my friend and colleague Eitan Grossman, for a critique of ideas and help in matters of style.
3 Cf. Müller (1954: 259–270) for a typology and distribution of narratives in Coptic homilies, yet without formal characterization.
a corpus which (although always appreciated for its high stylistic, literary, and rhetorical sophistication), has in the last decade of the last century gained in scholarly attention, and is currently being re-edited and retranslated as a joint international project.

1.1. *Rhetoric defined*

I cannot enlarge here on the vexed question of the definition and demarcation of rhetorical *vs.* non-rhetorical *vs.* ‘ordinary’ language. The prevalent definitions of rhetoricity are communicative, listener-targeted, pragmatic and telic (‘meant to have certain effects on the listener, to persuade or dissuade him or her, counteract his/her own opinion’, and similar formulations) and are at best functional, with hardly any formal components or correlatives. Rhetoricity, in a psychologically-oriented speaker’s view, correlates with an affective stance: ‘referring to a mood, attitude, feeling and disposition, as well as degrees of emotional intensity vis-à-vis some focus of concern’.\(^4\) Of course, emotion, a syndrome with many facets (Plantin 2004: 267), is in this context a linguistic phenomenon rather than a psychological one. As such, the manner in which it is decoded and received is at least as important as its encoding. In the specific case of Shenoutean rhetoric, Malinowski’s ethnographic ‘coefficient of weirdness, strangeness and unusualness’, in constant tension and interplay with the ‘coefficient of intelligibility’, suggested for the language of magic,\(^5\) seems apt: the former might, in the case of Shenoute, be replaced by a ‘coefficient of obscurity’. The riddle (*ainigma*), illustrated below as a special, gnomic narrative type, stands as an icon for the entire rhetorical text.\(^6\) Formally, structuredness and tension between components define the rhetorical textemes.

Shenoute’s own attributes as a speaker, in correlation with his ‘passionate and violent nature’, have been commented upon: ‘Shenoute’s literary style mirrors his character. It is highly individualistic and very powerful. Often the speed and passion of his thinking affected the clarity

\(^4\) Ochs *apud* Aijmer (2004); see Havers (1931), Index *sub voce* ‘Affekt’, for a rich and, by now, classic discussion of affective syntax.
\(^6\) See Kallen (1981: 28): ‘Scrambling the rules of normal language, riddles nevertheless allow for communication within a structure that is deviant from regular communicative language but sanctioned as a special form of discourse within the overall verbal repertoire of the community’. Rhetoric is a special ‘form of verbal art’, ‘language use under specially restricted conditions’ (Kallen 1981: 30) and as such would repay study within the context of a general theory of language as well as grammar.
of his expression… His style is a vehicle for conveying his emotions and his strength of character’ (Kuhn 1991: 2131, see also his bibliography, especially Johannes Leipoldt’s (1903) pioneering *Schenute von Atripe*). Passion and rage (Plantin 2004: 266), indignation and astonishment, grief, despair, and depression seem to be Shenoute’s favourite emotional and rhetorical stance. There is no question that Shenoute was a skilful rhetorical craftsman, wielding a range of linguistic firepower that must be studied in detail to be properly appreciated. The variety and sophistication of structure, and the subtlety of his narrative organization, employing numerous rhetorical devices, are certainly impressive.7

1.2. Narrative defined

Many conventional definitions are loose, simplistic or vague,8 and all too often excessively schematic and narrow; or else composite, combining incommensurate and different-order (e.g. pragmatic, communicative and syntactical) components. In the present exposition, I shall apply a broad conception of narrative, definable as a linguistically signified staged representation of reality, which may be either dynamic (‘animated’), with sequentially signifiable action—*narrative* or *tableau*, picture or scene—in which the actual narration is more or less formal, token or signal, or else static (‘frozen’). Usually, dynamic and static segments are combined, with expositive (commenting; see below) ones interpolated. Narrative segments may be enhanced, highlighted or focused, or condensed and abbreviated. Sequentiality of events (not a series of clauses; ‘events’

7 The remarkable sophistication of the narrative forms under discussion here is part and parcel of the *Kunstsprache* aspect of rhetorical Coptic, but is no less related to the orality and even colloquiality of Shenoute’s texts. It is beyond the scope of this paper to substantiate my claim that Shenoute rings the registerial changes as a rhetorical device; forms, constructions, phrases that are demonstrably spoken register abound in his homilies and ‘epistles’. The orality pragmatics, composition and performance of our texts have formal implications; in opposition to ‘ordinary language’, rhetorical texts share rhythmic constraints and prosodic devices in general (e.g. alliterative figures), formulaic language, and so on, with orally delivered poetry (e.g. Homer, see Bakker 1988—or parts of the Bible).

8 Cf. Dahl (1985: 112, defining ‘narrative discourse’); ‘a series of real and fictive events in the order they are supposed to have taken place’; (defining ‘narrative context’); ‘we shall say that a sentence occurs in a narrative context if the temporal point of reference…is determined by the point in time at which the last event related in the preceding context took place’. Consider also Van Dijk’s definition, also begging several questions (*apud* Brinton 1993: 73); ‘Coherent sequences of sentences of a discourse linguistically marked for beginning and/or end, and further defined in terms of some kind of ‘thematic unity’—for instance, in terms of identical participants, time, location or global event or action’: I have italicized the more problematic parts.
understood always as linguistic events, and always susceptible to manipulation by the stager-narrator) is certainly a prime or dominant junctural feature of narrative; both sequencing and internal framing, chunking or blocking are primary factors of staging, regulating the direction and rate of flow of narrative information. Narrative tensing provides a whole palette of representation. In effect, there is no limit to the possible manipulation of reality in its staged linguistic reflection, even up to blurring of the boundary between reality and its rendering.

1.3. Macrostructure: narrative modes

For the basic and broad macro-structuring of the narrative, I prefer ‘Evolution Mode’ and ‘Comment Mode’ (Shisha-Halevy 1997; 1999b; 2008) to the conventional and metaphorical (rather than informative) foreground/background, for several reasons: the implied symmetry (and commensurability) of the binary division; the implication of thematicity for the background; and, practically, the advantage of reserving the latter for true background (stricto sensu) information. However, ‘Evolution’ and ‘Comment’ are asymmetrical modes or constantly open information channels, the factors and operators in a layered narrative, rather than narrative constituents. They are hierarchical and interdependent in the sense that the latter is referential—in fact, often anaphoric, less usually cataphoric—to the former. The Evolution Mode (EM) is internally linked: the Comment Mode (CM), referential to EM, is the Narrator’s Channel: it is non-sequential;
non-concatenating and externally linked. The shift from EM to CM and back, their relative weight or the syntagmatic interplay between them is a major distinctive trait of narrative textemic types. Rhetorical narratives, like dream narratives (cf. Shisha-Halevy 2007: §1.1.3 (e)), may collapse frontiers between Evolution and Comment Modes.

I cannot join the near-consensus that statal or subordinated forms and constructions (including topicalization) are *ipso facto* ‘background’—they are certainly not necessarily CM—as if the foreground is devoid of structuring, and (which is even more difficult to accept) the foreground has no formal status marking. As I see it, the CM comprises all information relating to the EM; the EM comprises all information—events (always linguistic, not ‘real’!) including enhanced or focussed action or states—that constitutes the storyline. It is dynamic and, as regards information structure, cumulative (Brinton 1993: 84–85); the CM is relative to the EM (Givón 1987).

1.4. Sequencing

Sequencing is a signifier for which the signified is sequelling and narrative evolution. This is not just a matter of linkage (cohesion) and retro-dependence of eventing; it implies higher rhematic status of subsequent events in reference to the thematic accumulation of ‘the story so far’. A primary component in the narrative notion, sequencing, is, I believe, overrated, except as basis for staging manipulation: modifying of a basic sequence; disrupting and interrupting it; pausing it (as in a descriptive pause); and slowing it down. This, rather than the iconicity of natural eventing (Orletti 1995; Simone 1995: 160–163) is, I believe, the significance of this basic logical ordering of concatenation links.

12 Thus, ‘When Susan came in, Peter was washing the dishes’ and ‘When Susan came in, Peter washed the dishes’ are both EM, albeit in a different eventing signification and structure.

13 See Couper-Kuhlen (1989: 12–15); Thompson (1987). Another, and to my mind more serious, theoretical problem, is that ‘subordination’ is here simplistically taken for granted: what then about ‘superordination’ or ‘inordination’ (see Hamp 1973)? Is, for instance, the imperfect a ‘main clause’?

1.5. Tensing and narrative time

Temporality is a fascinating aspect of narrative syntax (cf. Genette 1972: 118–121, 228–238), and all the more so in the case of rhetorical narratives. While the matching of ‘story time’ — the hic et nunc, the programmatically-shared present perspective of speaker and audience — and ‘narration time’ is considerable, it is by no means the rule. The temporal interface or rather seam of the narrative and its represented ‘real world’ framework is often abruptly discrepant in the case of rhetorical textemes.15 As for the internal temporality of the narrative, Harald Weinrich’s ‘Tempus hat nichts mit Zeit zu tun’ (2001: 14, cf. 17–18) is especially apt and cogent.16 As will be seen in some detail below, the manipulation of narrative time through metaphorics and combinatorics (Weinrich 2001: 192–223, 228–237) is a prominent rhetorical device.

For the Coptic form most resembling the Greco-Roman Imperfect, viz. (Sahidic) nεqçωτΜ and nεqçωτΜ πε, time location is not a constant part of its meaning nor its fundamental value.17 The preterite (usually known as ‘perfect’) aqçωτΜ, in many narrative types doubtlessly the unmarked EM carrier, by no means marks a narrative as past or historical: it is often an unequivocally-clear ahistorical tense, used much as an ‘epic preterite’ (K. Hamburger: ‘a present esthetically distanced and distancing’), or ‘epic aorist’, or ‘aoriste mythique’ (M. Butor) — it is no doubt the ‘zéro de narration’, often pseudo-temporal or ‘achronie’ (G. Genette) — to convey factivity, or, metaphorically, to connote immediacy or ‘having-already-happened’, or, only apparently paradoxically, to indicate fictivity.18

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15 Cf. C. Metz apud Genette (1972: 77): ‘une séquence deux fois temporelle… il y a le temps de la chose-racontée et le temps du récit (temps du signifié et temps du signifiant). [Cette dualité] nous invite à constater que l’une des fonctions du récit est de monnayer un temps dans un autre temps’.

16 Cf. Weinrich (2001: 81); ‘Wie einfach ist doch die Trias Vergangenheit-Gegenwart-Zukunft, und wie kompliziert wird alles, wenn man versucht, sie mit den Tempus-Strukturen einer gegebenen Sprache in Einklang zu bringen!’

17 The Imperfect (cf. Le Goffic 1995) is ‘incomplete’ in its being essentially a ‘relief’ form, metaphorically either low or high relief, which is ever valued (given its value) by a non-imperfect point of reference (Shisha-Halevy 2007: Chapter 1): this applies to (Boh.) nαq-, enhanced or focussed Evolution Mode, as well as the Comment Mode nαq-πε.

18 Hamburger apud Stanzel (1955: 35). While Greek interference cannot be ruled out in Coptic, it is certainly not the sole factor. In the translations below, I have chosen to render the Coptic ahistorical preterite by the English Present Perfect, despite — and indeed because of — the ‘anti-narrative’ nature of the latter, which is typically interlocutive (indeed, locutive: ‘nynégocentrique’, to use Damourette-Pichon’s term) and non-concatenating. This choice is not arbitrary, for the locutivity of the English form suits well the meta-narrative nature of these rhetorical subtextemes, as a rule announced by metaphrastic means: these narratives are all programmatically ‘told’ by the orator.
It is in Coptic also formally distinct, in its compatibility with the conjunctive, which is incompatible only with the historical preterite. The Coptic aorist \( \text{\textit{javswtm}} \), typically sequelling and even apodotic, is largely an ‘anti-narrative’ tense, yet in generic narratives and tableaux it may stand in opposition to the present as a narrative carrier.\(^{19}\)

As for discourse genericity, so prevalent in rhetorical narrative forms and especially tableaux,\(^{20}\) it appears —like specificity, which it negates, and like nominal genericity (cf. Shisha-Halevy 2007: §3.6)— to be graded as well as diverse.\(^{21}\) The tense form may have a non-specific environment,\(^{22}\) or it may be combined with apparently specific elements; there may be transition from generic to specific (or less generic), and even transition, or coincidence of non-fictive simulation to genericity. What happens when a non-fictive simulation coincides with genericity? Genericity and narration—is there a contradiction or conflict or tension here?\(^{23}\) A narrative is essentially atemporal or ‘pseudo-temporal’, and always temporally autonomous (Genette 1972: 121); temporal and actantial specificity is but a special, and perhaps marked, case.

Regulation of the flow of narrative information is syntagmatically effected also by juncture, by blocking or chunking, which determines narrative texture and sets narrative pace, duration and speed, and —especially significant in rhetorical narratives— rhythm (Genette 1972: 122–143, 183–224; Weinrich 2001: 109–118, 120–126). Narrative stretch—‘slow-motion’—is in Coptic a type of focus, signalled by a tense form.

\(^{19}\) See Weinrich (2001: 280–281); for the narrative use of the Modern Welsh aorist (usually known as ‘present-future’), see Shisha-Halevy (1997).

\(^{20}\) Demotic-Egyptian precedents for generic narratives in rhetorical-didactic context are legion, as are magical and mythical narratives. For the former, consider the so-called maxims of P. Insinger (\textit{Ins.}) or of the \textit{Wisdom of Ankhsheshonqi} (\textit{Ankh.}), which often are no less than the pithy hermeneia of such generic narratives, which are clearly implied or, less usually, embryonic gnomic narratives in themselves (I quote M. Lichtheim’s (1980) translations, with minor modifications): \textit{Ins.} 12/21 ‘One does not discover the heart of a servant as long as his master is not attacked’; \textit{Ankh.} 22/23 ‘Do not drink water from a well and then throw the pitcher into it’; \textit{Ankh.} 10/9-10 ‘If your master is sitting by the river, do not immerse your hand up-river of him’; \textit{Ins.} 35/1 ‘Violence, want, insult and unkindness will never ever cease’. In the \textit{Myth of the Solar Eye}, a philosophic-religious-didactic tractate in narrative form—which is probably among the two or three most important literary Demotic texts—both the frame-story and the exemplary sub-narratives have the preterite \textit{sgmr.f} as main plot carrier.


\(^{23}\) For genericity in a past narrative context, see McKay (1992: 218–220).
Blocking —framing of concatenation and description units— is effected by the interplay of links (signifying cohesion and continuity) and delimiters, boundary or break signals.\textsuperscript{24}

1.6. Focus

Focus is a notoriously difficult and elusive concept, in dialogue or narrative. From narrative peaks (as opposed to narrative plateaux as well as dips) or climax to highlighting or marking for salience, through drawing attention to current or subsequent significance, enhanced or enriched evolution, presentation and highlighting, we are concerned here with a paradigmatic scalar notion, probably a cluster of categories marked and signified by a plethora of formal means, in our type of Coptic: particles, the Focalizing Conversion, Cleft Sentence and presentational patterns, and (rare in Coptic) marked placement (‘word order’; cf. Bakker 1988; Brinton 1993; Shisha-Halevy 1999\textsuperscript{b}). Especially striking and prevalent in Shenoute’s rhetorical narratives is the focussing of clauses and stretches of narrative by the formal device of marking them as ‘rhetorical questions’.\textsuperscript{25}

2. STRIKING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RHETORICAL NARRATIVE SET

All the special rhetorical narrative subtypes presented below are signifiers for high-level signifieds, in the sense that they make sense in, or belong to, special semiotic systems where the semantic reference is made by explicit, formally-marked interpretation (‘\textit{hermeneia’}, specialized exegesis),\textsuperscript{26} which by definition belongs to the repertory of rhetorical devices and has its own formal inventory. That is to say, their rhetoricality is (also)

\textsuperscript{24} Cf. for various languages Bakker (1993: 284–292); Brinton (1993); Longacre (1979); Shisha-Halevy (2003; 2004).

\textsuperscript{25} The ‘rhetorical question’ is a general higher-level focussing device, and, from the informational angle, not interrogative at all; but its use in narrative, to mark a narrative peak, is a very special case. It occurs in Irish, and in Anglo-Irish: consider the following from Sean ÓFaoláin’s ‘The End of the Record’, in \textit{The Stories of Sean ÓFaoláin’s} (1958); ‘…and Father Regan gave wan look at him and he closed his eyes for the last time. With that all the people went on their knees. And they began to pray. If they did, there were three candles at the head of the dead priest. And didn’t the one beside the window light up?… And they went on praying. And the wind and the storm screaming about the house, and they watching the wick of the last candle. And, bit by bit, the way you’d blow up a fire with a bellows, didn’t the candle over the priest’s head light up until the whole room was like broad daylight.’

\textsuperscript{26} Very often the parabolic or similitude narrative itself contains subtle cataphoric anticipation signals, mostly lexical or phraseological, to its \textit{hermeneia}. 
environmental, a formal cotextual feature. These devices (ταί [ον] τε θε 'thus also ...', εἰςῳ μπαί θε 'by which I am saying ...', and so on, following or preceding the narrative itself), are of course the most obvious signals of rhetoricity, with announcements of παράδειγμα, αίνιγμα or παραβολή, metaphrastics ('as the saying goes ...'), meta-narrative, and of course θε in similitude narratives (below). Establishing the precise, exhaustive repertory of narrative exponents of rhetoricality is difficult; the formal distinction between objectivity and subjectivity, between detachment and affectiveness, narrativity and historicality (Ricoeur 1981: 179–181), is a requisite for defining rhetoricality; another, of course, is a non-rhetorical narrative term of reference, rare in Coptic (albeit not in pre-Coptic Egyptian). But apart from that, there are numerous grammatical symptoms of rhetoricity, the most striking and distinctive of which (illustrated in the actual texts below) are listed here; their cumulative occurrence or convergence defines a scale of rhetoricity.

2.1. The sequelling conjunctive, expressing the dénouement in gnomic or protatic narratives (Shisha-Halevy 1986: §7.2.4, §7.2.4.1, §7.2.6; 1995)

2.2. The present and aorist in concatenation

2.3. The preterite αἰκωτμ in various ahistorical ('non-past'), atemporal or pseudo-temporal roles

2.4. Genericity and atemporality / pseudo-temporality expressed by various tenses other than the aorist

2.5. Focussing constructions (Cleft Sentence, Tautological Infinitive, Focalizing Conversion, εἰς-τε...) and particles, especially ρῶ; ‘envelope focussing’ (cf. Shisha-Halevy 1998: §1.1); cataphoric and nexus-focussing ταί τε θε 'thus indeed', 27 and so on. The formal so-called rhetorical question (§2.9.2 above) is a focussing construction.

2.6. Special presentational Nominal Sentence and presentative (εἰς-) opening patterns 28

2.7. Catalogic enumeration of acts or events

27 This feature occurs in Bohairic, especially of the Nitrian variety. Cf. the similar role of nexus-prefixed si in Romance (Old French, si che- in Italian); also is amhlaidh + relative converter in Modern Irish, superficially resembling a cleft sentence (Shisha-Halevy 1998: 217 Observation (2)).

2.8. Merging or neutralization of Evolution Mode and Comment Mode

2.9. Fragmentability of narratives (see below, illustration of narrative fragments)

2.9.1. Inclusion or marking of a narrative in/as protasis (the rhetorical ευχε-, the generic επιμε-, the case-raising ευπομε) or apodosis

2.9.2. Inclusion or marking of a narrative in/as rhetorical question

2.9.3. Relativization of narrative

2.10. Slight or token action: in dynamic tableaux

2.11. Affective signals: deixis (πρι-, -ετμμαγ), deviant or marked placement

2.12. Narrativization: πεξήταν 'said you' (as it were, '*quoth ye')

2.13. Use of external and internal articulators; discourse particles: γάρ, καίγαρ, μεν... (Δε...); ντογ; νωρπ...μννων ('first ... thereafter ...'), and so on

2.14. Distinctive use of negative Evolution Mode events

2.15. Distinctive use of the aorist, and aorist / preterite interface

2.16. Distinctive use of asyndetic preterite concatenation

2.17. Manipulation of sentence-extent and theme / theme ordering


2.19. Episode boundary marked by μννων 'afterwards' and similar

2.20. Multiple topicalization; anticipation (prolepsis)

2.21. Extraposited focalization

2.22. Superordinative αυω

2.23. Metaphrastic and meta-narrative introduction marking

2.24. The so-called 'Temporal' ντερεψεισθα is absent or rare in Shenoutean rhetorical narrative; the linking eventive converb 2μπτερεψεισθα and the 'circumstantial' link α εψεισθα, both typically specifying, also combined; affirmative and negative carrier tenses, in contact in Evolution Mode

2.25. Grammaticalized lexemes: (ε)μονικ 'hardly'; μαλακον, μαλικτα (Shisha-Halevy 1986: 56–58), παλιν όν (introducing narrative peak or key event; Shisha-Halevy 1986: 56), αυω 'moreover', 'what’s more', etc.

29 Also, in a special formal way, in dream narratives: for Pentateuch Bohairic, see Shisha-Halevy, (2007: §1.1.3 9 (e)).

30 Especially common: opening the narrative as if accounting for or answering/anticipating an implicit query.
2.26. Lexical and phraseological features
2.27. The ‘Disiunctio Sinuthiana’ figure (\textit{neiepistoly entancazo}y \textit{h netaiazo}y; Shisha-Halevy 1986: 241) and other ‘classical’ rhetorical figures
2.28. \textit{Hermeneia} inlays (e.g. \textit{ete}…\textit{pe})
2.29. Parentheses
2.30. Complex appositive constructions
2.31. Protatic clauses: The Eventual (\textit{eqw}a\textit{n}:); \textit{eqw}a\textit{pe}-protasis
2.32. Correlative constructions

3. Illustration, Typology and Grammatical Distinction of Narratives

Thematically, seven basic emic types are illustrated and discussed:

(a) Biblical narrative abridged or abbreviated, condensed or modified
(b) Paradigmatic or exemplary allegorical narrative: \textit{par}a\textit{aeigma}, \textit{a}i\textit{nigma}, \textit{par}a\textit{bo}a\textit{h} (e.g. Alewell 1913; Schittko 2003)
(c) Procedural scenario
(d) Natural-history narrative
(e) Mythical and/or mystical narrative
(f) Monastic narrative
(g) Dynamic tableau

Formally, the narratives may be realized either as narrative fragments (3.1) or as full narratives (3.2). The actual realizations of these major hyper-types are as follows.

3.1. Narrative fragments

Narrative fragments (as distinct from \textit{abbreviated narrative}) are building-blocks or contructive elements of the texteme, syntactically-integrated or embedded in various macro-syntactic slots. Often, these are single-event segments, and the \textit{narrative environment is implied by them}, and left to the audience’s or reader’s imagination.

3.1.1. Case-history hypothetical narrative (in protasi): non-generic

I fully agree with Heike Behlmer (1996: 246 n. 399) that the conjunctives here are not adnominal, but neither are they ‘exceptionally independent’, nor is this role that rare. In fact, I see this sequelling role of the form as its core function (perhaps preserved in colloquial idiom), all others being derived from it.

Should we find that it was because she could not handle the work to which she had been assigned that she gave it up, she may rest undisturbed in her former position. But should it be the case that it is through contentiousness and obtuseness that she gave it up and she, for her part, lied before the Lord, saying: ‘It is because I cannot do it that I have given it up’, and some days later or some time later we hear that it was by someone finding fault that she gave it up…

Of interest here is the conjunctive, a sequelling tense not used for ordinary narratives but typical of generic-gnomic or protatic ones. A remarkable instance of the conjunctive expressing the generic dénouement (‘and the (inevitable) outcome is that…’)31 in a rhetorical narrative is De Iudicio (Behlmer 1996) ff. XL ro πια–XLI ro πιγ:

A rich man who lives in beautiful houses, brilliant for their adornment, some in the cities, others in the villages, and he ends up in distress down in Hell.

A rich man who has many different clothes, some for summer, others for winter, and he ends up naked in the Great Frost…(and so on, five cases in all).

Note here also the focussing constructions.

3.1.2. Irrealis-hypothetical single-event scenarios in apodosi, rhetorically presented as the key event, as rhematic and even focussed fact

(a) Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Copte 1301 (Amélineau 1907: 95, of people who steal):

31 I fully agree with Heike Behlmer (1996: 246 n. 399) that the conjunctives here are not adnominal, but neither are they ‘exceptionally independent’, nor is this role that rare. In fact, I see this sequelling role of the form as its core function (perhaps preserved in colloquial idiom), all others being derived from it.
For had they been in other places, town or village, they would have been killed, or it may have been that they were in fact killed.

The elements introducing the narrative segment as an *irrealis* apodosis, (ne-) *eic*-pe... pe, *ewxpe*, still wholly mysterious after a century, must also in some way (perhaps by the presentative component of this amalgam) rhematize or focus the nexus in their clause. In passage (b), the narrative segment is part of a rhetorical question, which concords well with its focused nature.

3.1.3. Abbreviated natural-history case, protasis-to-apodosis: gnomic

Leipoldt (1908: 47):

The sheep is not the wild beasts’, but the shepherd’s. When it dies, it becomes theirs; it turns into food for them, by way of his giving it to them. I am saying this, so that you should not say...

Note here the initial obtaining situation, expressed by Nominal Sentences; the use of the generic protasis *eqwam* and the apodotic aorist; the explicit metaphrastic *hermeneia*. In Shenoute’s natural history narratives, metaphor, symbol, emblem and myth tend to merge to some degree.

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32 Amélineau (1907: 95 n. 4); ‘une tournure non encore signalée’.
3.1.4. Premised Biblical episode, negatively presented as topicalizing (ενεπάντωσαν) protasis (quoting adversary’s statement: ‘if (as they say)…’), with negating apodotic and focal implication

*Shenute contra Origenistas* (Orlandi 1985: §347):

ενεπάντωσαν μοιχαλτήτων ταύτων ταπείνως εστι σοφία συμμετήρισαν πρὸς τὸν πρῶτον εὐαγγέλιον ἐς τὴν τῇ πρώτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἁπατήτης τῆς τοιαύτης.

If (as they say) He was not crucified, then He did not arise on the third day and go up to His holy dwelling-places.

The EM link εαν- identifies this as narrative, which, in turn, is characterized by the negative preterite as rhetorical.

3.1.5. Natural history anecdote, with a Comment Mode segment implying an anthropomorphic narrative

Leipoldt (1908: 48):

μεθανεῖ ἐπιστάμενοι ἐρχόμενοι εἰς τὴν ἑλένην ἐπιστήμην ἐνθέτοις τοῖς προσώποις τῶν Φιλοσόφων ἀποκλίνοντοι ἀπὸ τὸ πρωτότοκον ἀνθρώπον τοῖς πολλοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὸ περὶ τῶν ἀργάδων τῶν συκωτών Ἀργαδῶν.

It may be, that those tiny animals which are in the sycomore-figs, are scattered in the wind as the figs are cut. They had been thinking, before they came out, that they were living in treasuries full of light. Thus they too, the pagans and all heretics: they believe that it is in light that they are living.

Consider the rhetorical affective deixis of οὔτε…εἰή; γὰρ, introducing allegorical narrative, with μεθανεῖ, ‘it may be that…’, and of course the CM form, the core of the (implied, left to be imagined) environmental narrative. The hermeneutical anacoluthon in οὔτε τὸ ἦν, with the augens and rhematic circumstantial, is clearly rhetorical.

3.1.6. Comment Mode fragment, in a narrative with ‘how’, ‘where’, ‘what’ focussed

*Shenute contra Origenistas* (Orlandi 1985: §814):

ευχαριστεῖν δόσιν ἐμοί εἰς τὸ πνεύμα ἡ τοῖς πνευματικῶς τῷ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πλείστην ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ τῷ πνεύματι τῆς εἰς τὸ πνεύμα τῆς ἡμερών τῶν φυλάκων τοῖς πνεύματι τῶν φυλάκων τῆς ἡμερών τῶν φυλάκων τῆς ἡμερών τῶν φυλάκων.
If you can understand how it is that the Father begot the Son, then you can also understand what, before heaven and earth were created, it was that existed, or where He was, God, and how He was situated.

The Comment Mode form ηδι- + πε conveys true background; it has here a construction noteworthy on two counts: ηδι- following ‘Where was he?’; no Focalizing Conversion, the adverbial interrogative focus notwithstanding. The Evolution Mode is here minimal, and indeed has a Focalizing Conversion form.

3.1.7. Biblical episode condensed: relativized abbreviated narrative

Leipoldt (1908: 72):

σεο γαρ ηατθουγ χε-πεπταψχογ ε-του ριο τιεικ ηειωτ αγω
cαωωη ηεοικ δαλι τηρς αγω αγσει αγεμς-ρεβκικο
tαν ον πετςμογ τενογ εγθαξη ηηη ετθοοπ νογον ηηη
etπιετεγε χε-ογλ-δομ μηομ ερ-ζωβ ηηη επθουαγογ

For they are ignorant of the fact that He who blessed five loaves of barley bread and seven loaves of bread and all those people ate and were sated and even filled baskets—that it is He also that now blesses every thing that belongs to anyone, who believes that He can do anything He wishes.

Biblical narratives, mythical or epic, have their own Evolution Mode structure. Here we witness an asyndetic sequence which, unlike non-rhetorical narratives, neutralizes looser or closer linkage: in ordinary narrative, zero links express hyper-eventing (cf. Shisha-Halevy 1997: 65–71).

3.1.8. Biblical episode condensed, embedded as abbreviated narrative in a factitive construction

John Rylands Library, Manchester, No. 70 p. σεο (Crum 1909: 34–35):

πεπταψγρε-πβερωβ μμωγχε κτον ε-γςον παλιο ον εακ-
tον ε-γςερωβ αμψαπε γι-τεθικ ηοε ετεθογ ηοοε

He who caused Moses’ staff to turn into a serpent, and to turn back again (literally ‘it turned’) into a staff, and to be (literally ‘it came to be’) in his hand as it used to be.

Note the linkage contour: ασ-, εακ-, ακ-, with a theme switch in the circumstantial preterite form.
3.1.9. Biblical episode condensed, packaged as rhetorical question

Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, K 924 p. [194] (Young 1993: 33):

And is Raab not a whore? And (yet) she and the spies came to be of one mind, and she understood in what manner they are talking to her; so indeed, she was saved from the destruction of Jericho, she and her father and her mother and all her home, as the Lord God smote those living in it.

Noteworthy here are the introductory Nominal Sentence, not really part of the narrative but its integrating anchor; the cataphoric and focussing ταί τε θε.

3.1.10. Biblical figures listed with their distinctive narrative acts packaged as relative expansion

Cambridge University Library Manuscript Or. 16.1699 A 1–2 (Young 1993: 78–79):

In the olden days, from Man who disobeyed in Paradise, and from the angels who abandoned their origin, and from the water of the flood to the fire that came out of the sky upon the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, and from Pharaoh with his army whom the sea covered, to those whom the earth swallowed...

3.1.11. Rhetorical questions: a collage of reminder hints at famous Biblical episodes (on the theme ‘the significance of clothes’), brought forward as salient and applied as argument

The transcendent symbolism of clothing and clothing acts, invoked by Shenoute again and again, is thus lent scriptural corroboration, endorsement and validation.
3.3 Metaphors in Shenoute’s rhetoric may, as here, merge into symbols and/or emblems; this is striking in the case of Physiologus-type and other animal stories.


Did not Rebecca alight from the camel, take her cloak and wrap herself? What then did Joseph do to his brethren? Did he not give them two robes each, and give Benjamin five different robes?…

Or did the Disciples not spread their clothes over the foal and seat Jesus on them?

Of interest is the asyndetic linkage, the Focalizing Conversion putting all action directed at pieces of clothing in focus.

3.1.12. Medical-procedure routine scenarios, gnomic (‘The Physician’; ‘Treating Snake-Bite’), applied metaphorically33 as a rhetorical question, responding to a non-rhetorical one

(a) Shenute contra Origenistas (Orlandi 1985: §207):

What does the physician do to the person who has a wound? Doesn’t he first cut it with a razor, and afterwards treat him?

Note the adverbial procedural signals (νωρπ…μνγνως…), and the sequelling conjunctive. The aorist, too, is noteworthy, since Shenoute seems to prefer to use it for animal and generally ‘natural’ action (Young 1961): this is certainly a tendency. The focusing of the action (verb lexeme) itself is also indicative.

(b) De Iudicio (Behlmer 1996: 161–162), f. LXXVI ro–vo p. ππε-ππς:

33 Metaphors in Shenoute’s rhetoric may, as here, merge into symbols and/or emblems; this is striking in the case of Physiologus-type and other animal stories.
What then does a person do in case a snake bites him? Does he not sit down at the feet of the one who cuts him with a razor, with others holding him, applying salt and vinegar to them, until all the venom is washed away and he lives. On the other hand, if it is into his eyes that it (the venom) has blown, they apply salt to them until the venom washes away from them. Thus too the person whom the dragon-serpent, the twisted one, Satan has bitten…

See Behlmer (1996: 280 and n. 711). Of special interest here is the expression of the generic occurrence of snake-bite by means of the adnominal Eventual $\textit{éwpe}$-, and not a relative construction (‘the person whom a snake bites’), and the remarkable 3rd-person plural references.34 Note too the complex apposition referring to Satan,35 and the ‘envelope focalization’ following $\textit{éwpe}$ on.

3.1.13. Minimal Comment Mode + Evolution Mode segment in a personal narrative


(of Shenoute’s valuable cloak)

$\textit{my ntai\#onv an ée-nnerwme $\textit{ze eroq npma ntai\#a\#q nt\#htq wantepeo\#e\#i\#w $\textit{wpe nt\#a\#m\#tn xe-o\#y pe\#\#a\#q naq ayw $\textit{f-\#pmpe xe-xe\#n\#rwe\#me bntq gm\#ma et\#\#m\#ay kai\#\#r ne\#\#\#ou\#n pe xe-lie\#i\#me xe\#-\#\#ge eroq er\#\#n\#t\#\#m\#he ne\#\#k\#\#n\#ka e\#\#c\#\#\#t\#\#t ayw [en\#\#\#\#o\#yog...ayw m\#\#\#x\#\#c\#o\#c nai xe\#-\#\#ge eroq...]}$)

(Following a rambling description and history of the cloak and the damaged done to it by moths, and Shenoute’s consequent emotions)

Did I not instruct about it, that no-one should come upon it where I put it, until the time should come, when I shall instruct you what to do with it? And I am surprised that people found it in that place; for they (must) have surely known that I understood that they came upon it hidden among choice and [valuable] objects […] and they did not tell me: ‘we came upon it’…]

34 Not necessarily, I think, referring notionally to ‘wounds’, pace Behlmer n. 712, but as a generic, almost dummy, object of $\textit{f}$; which cannot without some actant expression mean ‘apply’.

35 Behlmer translates ‘Schlangendrache’, for $\textit{ped\#ak\#h n\#o\#q}$, which the plates show to be the text. Also, the actual text has $\textit{pet\#\#e\#me}$, not $\textit{pet\#\#e\#me}$ as printed.

36 The text is continued in the unpublished codex IFAO 2, currently being prepared for publication by Anne Boud’hors (forthcoming), p. $\textit{ze}$.
The remarkable feature in this text is the preterite form *aireime*, a single compound EM narrative event, affirmative + negative, following a minimal CM. The narrative fragment is introduced by *kaigar*. Note, among rhetorical devices, the lexical oppositions and tension between the near-synonymous *ze e-* and *dine* ‘come upon —find’, *cooytn* and *eime* ‘know—understand’.


This is in fact an inter-texteme boundary signal, anchored in Evolution Mode, enabling the inclusion of dialogue in narrative. Here, it alone suffices to imply and evoke a narrative frame, in a sarcastic vein discrediting the claim.

Codex IFAO copte 2, unedited; see Boud’hors (forthcoming), p. ca–cb:

> εώςε-νεθμονε* μμωτν* τρετειρε* νουννστεια* μνογσ-λη* γ ημελετα* μπωας* μπνούτε* μνθσεκβνψε* ντειρε* εντοο* τετειρε* μμονογ* χε-τεθνψε* ζητοο αλλα* τεθνψα* μπνι* μπνούτε* αγ* πεξιη* χε-θην* μνθσαλ* μπνούτε* ντα-τεθνρ-*μπνα* μνπι* μνφο*…

If those who shepherd you make you practise fasting and prayer and meditation on the word of God, and other such things, or else you practise them because you are ashamed before them, nonetheless you despoil God’s house; moreover, ‘We are God’s servants’, you said; in what did you become servants unto Him? …

Shenoute is here (and in the wider cotext of the quoted passage) at his most scathingly sarcastic. Signals of irony are: *eipe noynhcsteia*, etc., with an indefinite object noun, as opposed to *π-νηστεια* ‘fast’; *μνθσεκβνψε* *ντειρε*, ‘and other such things’, probably the choice of *moone* ‘to shepherd’.

3.1.15. Gnomic case history, condensed relativized narrative


> Να* ιηθαδωνοιει* μπωβ* ετροο* νταγ* αγ* μνθσαοιοι* (sic) *σεαρα* ηνογισθωνωσ* χε*-μπνα-λαα* μνοβε*
They who confess to the evil deed they have done and, after a time, deny boastfully, saying ‘We have committed no sin’.

Note the conjunctive as a generic sequential or rather sequelling form.


οὐγνόγιμῳδε ἡν-τταπρο ννρῳμε χε-αγ† νοῳμηρε
νογιῳ εαμοοοτῃ ημ-παῳα ημ†πι ερῳq

There is a saying in the mouth of the people: ‘They gave a child a foal and he killed it by excess of kissing it’.

The main interest of this gnomic narrative —a classical instance of the proverbial story in nuce— is that it not tensed generically but as a para-deigma, with the preterite άq-. Here, as elsewhere, there is a factor of looser external juncture, correlated with a meta-status: this is a narrative in quotes, hence ‘quotable narrative’. Internally, the sequence άq- εαq-represents the unfolding of the gnomic embryonic story.

3.2. Fully-fledged complex narratives, scenarios and tableaux

3.2.1. Dynamic tableau (I): ‘Penury and Charity’

University of Michigan Library 158, 20a (Young 1993: 160–161):

ζενκοογε δε γονοις εγῃωθη ερῳον μπρο μπεγι χεολ
μεκαξ ηντεγιμερικε χε-μηταξ εμορις ητεγιρῳμε
μηνζημη τωρη επρο μπεγι γιρογε η ντοκ κεγαχ
εγαζεοικ ηντοοτοι γ η ντοκ κεχρα ηντε-πςωμα αγῳ "ται τε
δε εωρεντμμα γιτων εγῃ-ζ(lon τντοοτη μπναογε
αγῳ ηντοοτο δηνεμαρ-πεγεεγε

Similarly, others shutting themselves up in their home because of the misery of their destitution, for they have nothing; with hardly even compassionate people knocking on their door evenings or at any other time, bringing loaves of bread or any other bodily necessity. And so indeed, those do accept them, thanking God and those who have remembered them.

Of interest here is the cataphoric (and, I believe, nexus-focussing) ται τε οε; the transition from the present to the sequelling aorist; the typically rhetorical and distinctively Shenoutean (ε)μορις ‘hardly’ (cf. Shisha-Halevy 1986: 249).
3.2.2. Dynamic tableau (II): ‘The Death-Bed’, an extensive, evolving
dramatic tableau

De Iudicio (Behlmer 1996: 8–10), f. IV–V, pp. κε–κη:

The man, being on his bed will not be deprived of bread and water, if he
can swallow them;
He draws a little comfort from the light of day, which he sees;
He looks to the light, and to the lamp at night, if his mind is aright.
His father or mother or brother or sister or friend or maidservant or someone else of those standing around him are ready not to cause him distress, should he ask to move him or to lower him, or to take him out to the cool air, or to pour water over him or to anoint him with oil and anything he may wish to be done to him.

They beg him to take some nourishment, which they have prepared with all their love, in many forms; And he for his part, the sick man, desires to taste of these and of those and also of the fruit, for he wants to live.

While they, those surrounding him, busy themselves doing those things, he, for his part, ponders those other matters:

Death begins to overpower him.
The terror of his evil deeds chastises him.
He is stunned in his mind.
He is stunned in his soul.
He is troubled in his thought.
His spirit wanes in him little by little.
He sees there is no way of turning back henceforth to repent.
The mourning ones call out—in vain:
They for whom he is important entreat him to answer them as he is about to leave them:
His mouth has been disabled so he cannot speak.
He does not look to his brethren. His full storehouses do not concern him.
He sighs for his sins.
He grieves that he did not do good.
The tears gather in his eyes.
He is miserable on account of the look of the face of those he sees having come for him:
it is not simply in this way\textsuperscript{37} that they have come, like people resembling him, who have come to take him before a judge who is not different from him, but it is angels, not resembling him, that have come for him, for it is terrifying and shudder-causing to look at them…

The formal structure of this passage is sophisticated. The clauses, always verbal-rheme first, are, as a rule, short and terse (cf. Havers 1931: 152–153). The middle sentence marks the transition between earthly hopefulness (‘looking to’ in the text), and the stark reality of impending death and dire consequences of sinful living. The almost poetic series of relatively short clauses, isocola or parallelistic, though never quoted, carry Biblical overtones (the didactic books, Job, Ecclesiastes, the New Testament) in sentiment, phrasing and even rhythm. The striking alternation between external and internal communication of the dying man ceases abruptly towards the end, the surrounding world recedes —‘the

\textsuperscript{37} NTEIQ\textsuperscript{26} here cataphoric to NOE.
surrounding family’ turns into ‘the mourning ones’—and he is left alone with his conscience and the certainty and terror of hellfire. Of interest is also the subtle evolution from external description to internal-emotional account, realistic, sensitive and remarkably empathic, through a dramatically accelerating development towards the dénouement; and yet, the action here is slight—token action, no more than enough to keep the picture in motion.38 The tensing is here almost exclusively present, not aorist—the scene is not conceived of as generic, but as ‘synchronous’ and actual, in a recording, photographic way performative, and therefore very vivid.

3.2.3. Metaphorical and symbolic tableau, gnomic; expansion sequel to Biblical motif

Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, K 9298 p. [i] (Young 1993: 131):

In fact, it’s two narrow gates, one being outside the other, the first leading into the second: those who have been done violence to, and entered by the first, their tribulations have ended...

Shenoute’s text is referential to the immediately preceding discussion of the broad and narrow gates (Mt.7:13–14, Luc.13:24). Note the preterite -αρι- in generic-gnomic context.

3.2.4. Evolutive structured double listing of generic acts, the second list thematic to the first

The extensive passage (De Iudicio XVIII ro p. [nr]–XX vo p. nh, Behlmer 1996: 35–40) is a remarkable, rhetorically subtle and effective syntactical device, which I see as essentially narrative. It begins as a series of homolexemic paired or triple 2nd-person preterite clause complexes, with the first clause topical and the second presenting its implication and consequence (arguably, the first is also the higher-level signifier of the second). These complexes alternate between praiseworthy and reprehensible acts. Later, this alternation evolves into a chronicle of

38 Consider Gerber (1885: 459); ‘Die Fabel gibt einen Gedanken Ausdruck durch Darstellung eines Bildes, welches aus Anlass eines einzelnen Vorgangs, den die Anschauung bietet, der also der Wirklichkeit entnommen ist, in uns entsteht’. The picture is important, so much so that the plot is ‘eine bloße Scheinhandlung’ (Gerber 1885: 464). This applies cogently to the dynamic tableau which does not change overall even though its details are in motion.
infamy. Remarkably, again, the action is not marked as generic; the protasis-apodosis interdependence is signalled by mere extraposition within the pairs: this, and the preterite tensing, conveys simultaneity, hyperbolically expressed as overlapping, and indeed virtual merging, as well as a Wechselsatz (balanced nexus construction) equation-like dependency. The preterite is also used in a simulation of factivity; contrast this with the equally protatic 2nd-person-singular preterite (ακ-, μπκ-) in De Iudicio f. XXVII verso p. oh and following, which, however, has ημα-(αν) ‘He will (not)’, or παοεις ημα-(αν) ‘the Lord will (not)’ as apodosis, and has no immediacy or Wechselsatz character. The sequence here is catalogic, not evolutive. For reasons of space, I do not quote here the full text.

You have received the Lord unto yourself —you have brought a blessing on you on earth, all the days of your life, and have prepared for yourself a resting-place in the Kingdom of Heaven for eternity.
You have received unto yourself the evil thought —you have received unto yourself the Demon, to give counsel within you on every uncleanliness and every sin he wants you to commit for him in you.

You have received unto yourself the Enemy —you have brought upon yourself a malediction on earth, all the days of your life, and have prepared a fire for you down in Hell for eternity.

You have fled sin [...] as you repented, and have chosen to do good —you have saved yourself from [...] you have prepared for yourself a resting-place in the Kingdom of Heaven [...] 

You have considered or thought of acts of violence on your beds, to carry them out, as it is written —you have established or assigned for yourself, by your deeds, roads leading down to Hell.

You have grieved, as it is written, on your bed,39 over things you say; you have turned away from the evils you do or you have thought to do —you have turned God’s wrath away from you; you have also quenched the fire you kindled for yourself in Hell.

You have defiled God’s temple with acts of fornication… —you alone have destroyed your soul and your own body on that day down in Hell…

You have ill-treated the poor, you have distressed an orphan, a widow, and a stranger —you have done violence to yourself, unknowingly, and have estranged yourself from God’s mercy on earth now, and have ill-used yourself…

You have deprived a man of his house, a man of his inheritance, or you have seized his servant or his domestic animal…and what you do not wish to be done unto you, you have done unto your neighbour… —you have chosen for yourself what you do not wish to be done unto you, down in Hell...

In her translation Behlmer (1996: 218–220) takes the initial clauses of each set to be interrogative, in the ‘is it the case that …?’ form of interrogation (‘Du hast den Herrn bei dir Empfangen? Du hast einen Segen über dich gebracht …’ and so usually), which is of course also used protatically.

Note that subordinate specificatory scenes and sub-episodes are here delimited and marked by the circumstantial preterite enjaneire, one of the forms of narrative eventing which is typically (but not exclusively) Shenoutean. Of interest is also the superordinating apodotic auw.

Consider a possible analogue in Leipoldt (1908: 112):

enjaneire gar ntna antaie-the ancow mπbol enjaneire de mπna antaie-tmtnabh ancow ntnntathn enjaneirbbon antaio mπtbbm ancow mπxwrm nwanjaneire nπrnhm antaie-πrnhm ancow ntnntxaxe...

39 The ‘on your bed’ topos is pregnant: in Coptic, bed is a ‘place of lying-down (nkotk)’, the verb also having the role of a euphemistic alternant of ‘die’ (suggested by E. Grossman).
Whenever we practise Truth, we have honoured Truth, we have despised Falsehood; whenever we practise Mercy, we have honoured Mercifulness, we have despised Mercilessness; whenever we keep ourselves pure, we have honoured Purity, we have despised Defilement; whenever we practise Peace, we have honoured Peace, we have despised Hostility…

While the possibility of the Conditional, which is extratemporal, having here past reference (‘Whenever we practised Truth …’) cannot be ruled out, I prefer a generic or habitual atemporal reading, in which case the preterite ἀν- would be a ‘narrative apodotic performative’, expressing the implication of the generic protasis; the performativity factor (‘thereby, therewith’) is an effect of the immediacy factor of the juxtaposition with the preterite.

3.2.5. Gnomic procedure-routine scenario (‘The Trapper-Hunter’)

Shenoute Contra Origenistas (Orlandi 1985: §601):

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Often, the trapper encloses those animals he intends to catch and rushes at them forcefully and catches them. But sometimes, he leaves his bait-food in the traps or the snares, until those he is trapping are ensnared. So indeed it is with Satan…

The sequentiality is here strong; the aorist is not merely an exponent of genericity or habit (see also 3.1.12. above), but of procedurality. The focalized aorist is a case of ‘envelope focussing’, typical of the second flank of a correlative complex; correlative constructions are of the more common rhetorical devices used by Shenoute.

3.2.6. Biblical-history interpretatively paraphrased narrative, superimposing the Comment Mode (supplying psychological background) on the Evolution Mode, which is then presented as presupposed (‘known’) information of lesser Communicative Dynamism, or even as thematic

Leipoldt (1913: 26–25):

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Abraham our father wished for children from Sarah, and Sarah wished for children from Abraham—and so indeed, the Lord God gave Abraham a son in his old age, having begotten Isaac from Sarah in her old age; he became for them a beloved son, like a myriad of sons, although he was one … Isaac begged the Lord, wishing for children from Rebecca; and Rebecca, she wished for children from Isaac—and so indeed, the Lord God gave them according to their heart, granting all their wishes…

Note again the cataphoric focussing τα εσε θε, a striking rhetorical device; the circumstantial Nominal Sentence in concessive role.

3.2.7. Paradigmatic exemplum-type narratives,⁴⁰ ahistorical, extratemporal

(a) ‘The Father, Son and Two Daughters’

Leipoldt (1908: 96):

There is a paradeigma I’m going to tell, which I heard from my father, my good father, who founded these communities:

⁴⁰ See Alewell (1913); Gerber (1885: 67, 474–482); Haug (1979: 787 sub voce ‘exemplum’); Schittko (2003); Welter (1927, repr. 1973); Wittchow (2001).
These words refer to people (literally ‘are people’s’) who sell themselves for acts of fornication…'

Of interest is the presentative opening clause (different in Coptic from the introductory existential); phraseology (ρος ηττε); multiple topicalization syntax (and the use of ηεν…αε…); Focalizing Conversion: nexus focussing (ταυς ως γαρ). The text is ahistorical, extra-temporal, fairy-tale-like, and in that sense generic.

(b) Paradigmatic exemplum-type narrative coupled with a static tableau: ‘The Stones and the Three Loads’, a complex parable (παραβολη)

Leipoldt (1908: 27):

ογρωμε πε εκκατ ηωπος ετεψχα αν νουκων ετεν εννοδ εν εογον εν τυον εν ηεν ουγυν ενετηνα αν εντηναν εντηναν

A man was building a place for his use. Many were the stones before him: some large, others small. He saw many that he could not lift. After returning without touching a single one of them, he thought: ‘Isn’t it crazy? Why didn’t I lift the light ones?’…

Three valuable loads were lying on top of each other, of successively lesser weight (literally ‘such as were lesser than each other’)…

Now these two παραβοληι are actually a single one:…

Note the opening presentative constructions, among the most telling features of paradigmatic and similitude narratives: they, like Sahidic cleft patterns, are constructed on the endophoric Nominal Sentence pattern (cf. Shisha-Halevy 1987: 163–167), but have a non-specific initial substantive (theme) and a relative or circumstantial verbal rheme, in a nexus predicated of a pragmatic situational theme {πε}.

3.3. Similitude narratives and tableaux, enframed by νοε (γαρ) ηωγ/ ζενρωμε...ται (ον) τε θε, ‘like/as…thus also…’; generic; often symbolic or emblematic

(a) ‘Man with Lamps’

Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, K 9313 p. o (Young 1993: 147):
Like a man who produces torches at the time he wants, or lamps, to provide light for those in his house, and he also puts them out\(^\text{41}\) at the time he likes.

Thus also God created the sun and the moon and the stars at the time He sees fit, that they may provide light for all that are on earth, and it is at the time He sees fit that He will make them turn, the sun to make it become dark, the moon to make it turn to blood, the stars to cause that they do not shed their light.

This narrative is clearly gnomic. The preterite tense is here either mytho-

eric or, just possibly, historical, a cataphoric reflection of the tenor on the vehicle (unless God’s act of creation is presented as ongoing!).

(b) ‘Stones, Rocks and People’; ‘Soldiers and Adversaries’

Leipoldt (1908: 162–163); University of Michigan Library 158, 17 (Young 1993: 76):

\(^{41}\) Not ‘put forth sight’, as Young translates (1993: 148 n. 701); this must be an over-

sight, for the verb \(\varepsilon\eta\nu\) ‘quench, put out’ is listed in Young’s index for the passage in question.
Like people who have lugged large rocks from up high down on themselves and have broken their own bones and have wasted away the flesh of their own body —thus also anyone who sins before the Lord: we bring down on ourselves great maledictions…and draw down on ourselves all maledictions of the Scriptures.

And like people on whom a rock has fallen, and has struck them down to earth, and others have ventured to roll it away from them, but have, with all their force, dragged it on top of their own selves in their ignorance —thus also boastful and arrogant, sinful people like myself too, teaching others…

And like soldiers who have overcome their adversaries in combat since they had been instructed by others —thus have they overcome their devilish enemies that do battle with them, people receiving instruction at the hands of those who enlighten them through God with the teaching of the Scriptures.

And like soldiers who have fallen under the feet of their adversaries, since they had not been instructed by others —thus they fall under the feet of their satanic enemies who attack them with sin, disobedient people who have not been instructed by others who were educated in the Scriptures…

I find of interest the tension of tensing and person between the two generic sets, namely the narrative itself and the Hermeneia: delocutive preterites (a-q-) in the former, locutive (inclusive! ‘you and us’) present/aorist in the latter. Genericity is elemental in both. As I see it, we have in the narrative part primitive dynamic tableaux, rather than true plots.

3.4. Similitude paradeigma narrative

‘The King’s Control’

Leipoldt (1908: 42):

Like a kingly person who has some servants in a certain country, sending for them on the occasion he will see fit; some, sending for them after many days; others, sending for them after a few days; others, sending
for them in a hurry. Besides, he laid down a law that they who will do his will in that country shall receive honours from him; but they who will cross his word and his will he shall disgrace.

Even so God directs Man according to his will...

Of interest here is the phrase **οὐρωμενόν ἡρρο** ‘a kingly person’ (not **οὐρρο**). Also the broad present, future, preterite temporal palette, with the preterite conveying factivity (the converter **νε-** is wholly absent in rhetorical narratives, except for the imperfect); **μονον** ‘however’, ‘besides’; the proleptic anacoluthon **οὔνομος ξε-**... ξε-: this is especially instructive as to the nature of anacoluthia, for the second **ξε-**, **introducing a rhematic constituent**, is what stands between the construction and rhetorical banality, and, moreover, is the only means of isolating this segment as rhematic.


‘The Unwatered Mound’

Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna K 9315 ro (Young 2003: 243):

(οὐαίνιγμα) οὐταλ νκαζ εξαξοε πε αγῳ εφμοκ2 ετρεπ-
        μοογ βωκ εζραϊ εχωφ ελογα ρζηαq ετηοq αγῳ εξο
eζραϊ ηνητη ηνοπβ εηανογη ξε-ηηνηηκαλη εφουοηq
        εβολ ογαε νκαζ τηροε ετεκωε εροq ογ πετηναααq
        αβρη αγω αβωαε μπετρζωο νηητη αρωμενε εκοηνη
eτηοq.

ται ηωκε τε τεκζε...

A mound of high ground, difficult for water to come up over it, one saw fit to irrigate and sow in it a good seed, so as not to leave it barren, compared to all land surrounding it.42 What will he do? He has dug and stripped away the excess and it has become easy to irrigate—thus you too...

Note the high symbolic character of the action, situation, sequence of events and participants. Of interest here is also the presentative opening construction (here and elsewhere, the absence of the converter **νε-**!).43 The non-rhetorical question, in the future tense, breaking into the narrative (probably a distinctive feature of the *ainigma* form) in answered in

42 I take **εβολ ογαε-** to be the compound preposition **εβολ ογτε-**; the editor translates **ογαε** as ‘and...’, with no really negative environment and use for **εβολ**.

43 The editor’s translation of the introductory construction by ‘Imagine, if you will’ is, I believe, felicitous. Significantly, Young translates the preterites here by an English present tense: ‘he digs and removes the excess earth, and then it becomes easy to water it’.
the latter part of the narrative, which is resumed in the preterite κατατετριχήν. In fact, this unexpected preterite is the main point and the answer of the entire riddle, its rheme.

3.6. Physiologus-type natural history, distinctive and gnomic species-characterization scenario, applied as Similitude

University of Michigan Library 158, 15a–b p. ῥοᾷ, 15d, p. ῥοᾷ (Young 1993: 150, 153):

They also say about another animal, that its perniciousness is as follows: whenever it rushes at the one who wishes to catch him, it swallows him into its mouth and tries to bite off his genitals and thus weaken him, because he was not wary of it or because he underestimated its villany.

Thus also does the thought or the spirit of fornication weaken people, and especially those who say ‘We have resisted it’…

No one is ignorant about the cat, that she watches for a man’s face, to leap upon it that she might destroy his eyes with the claws of her feet.

44 Fantastic-demonic, zoological or mystic animals or ‘beasts’: see Young (1993: 157 n. 726). It is of course possible that Shenoute’s beasts are ‘custom-made’, to serve as incorporation vehicles for his ideas, and thus cataphoric to the tenor, in which case the similitude is merely simulated.

45 Emending εἰροχίντες into εἰροχίνης. Young translates ῥαξομοκρίνειν εἰροχίνης ῥυμήν εἰροχίνης ῥυμήν, ‘swallow him’ into ῥαξομοκρίνεις εἰροχίνης ῥυμήν, ‘swallow him’ into ῥαξομοκρίνεις εἰροχίνης ῥυμήν, ‘swallow him’. ‘Leap’ (the hermeneia has in fact ῥαξομοκρίνεις εἰροχίνης). εἰροχίνης ε- is not attested elsewhere as the object of ῥαξομοκρίνεις. εἰροχίνης ε- is not attested elsewhere as the object of ῥαξομοκρίνεις.

46 A phraseologically focussed, hence rhetorical, alternant of ‘everyone knows …’.
Thus does Satan’s shamelessness destroy the light of instruction in the heart’s eyes…
Likewise, there is another foul animal, in comparison with which the lion, strongest of all wild animals, is good, for he frightens people;\(^47\) that one, however, brings people down to perdition by joking and mockery, so as all the more to persuade the poor people struck by the same means.

The carrier tense in this and similar cases (this is a common narrative in Shenoute’s works) is the aorist, with the conjunctive a sub-link; again, the interface between the aorist and the (negative) preterite is characteristic.

3.7. Tragic natural-mystical drama experienced by Shenoute in a vision, presented (in Shenoute’s emotional perspective) as emblematic dynamic tableaux

(a) ‘The Hapless Victim Falls Prey to Merciless Multiple Predators’

Leipoldt (1908: 209–210):

\[
\text{kēzwōn on e}ππρείωω\ μονκούι\ η\ e}ππογοβω\ ρινΑ\ ερον\ \text{e}π\text{e}\pi\text{e}i\ \text{e}τοοτου\ \text{n}η\text{e}τοογω\ \text{μμ}σω\ \text{e}πον\ \text{e}ριχω\ \text{n}τεγιμη\te\text{e}πογε\text{w}\text{-}βωκ\ \text{η}τοοτου\ \text{μμ}πρ\text{b}ολ\ \text{ςα}ντογο\text{x}ε\text{n}ω\ \\
\text{α}ω\ \text{α}ρ-\text{m}ο\text{i}\text{e}\ \text{x}ε-\text{n}εο\text{y}α\ \text{n}ογ\text{w}τ\ \text{π}ε\text{t}\text{f} \\text{ο}γ\text{y}ν\ \text{α}ω\ \text{μν\c{c}}\text{w}\text{c}\ \text{α}ρ-\text{c}\text{a\v{y}}\ \text{μ}\text{n\c{c}}\text{a-}\text{c}\text{a\v{y}}\ \text{α}ρ-\text{w}\text{o}\text{m}\text{m}\text{t}\ \text{α}ω\ \text{q}\text{t}\text{o}\text{o}\text{y}\ \text{α}ω\ \text{μ}\text{t}\ \text{α}ω\ \text{ω} \ \\
\text{μ}e\ \text{α}ω\ \text{o}\text{m}\text{n}\text{i}μ\text{h}e\ \text{κ}\text{ē}\text{z}\text{w}\text{ō}\text{n}\ \text{e}\text{a}\text{γ}\text{c}\text{w}\text{ο}\text{γ}e\ \text{e}\text{x}\text{a}\text{w}\text{p} \ \text{ςα}\text{n}\text{τ}\text{o}\text{γ}o\text{m}o\text{y}.
\]

Another animal, somewhat luminous or white, I saw falling into the hands of those who eat it alive, trying, in distress, to escape them. It did not break free until they finished it off.
And I was astonished, for it was a single one that attacked it, and then they became two, and, after two, they became three, and four, and ten, and hundred, and a multitude of animals who gathered against it to kill it.

Note that in this remarkable short text, hardly a story, two conjoint narratives are skillfully made to unfold: first, the victim’s; second, in the observant Shenoute’s focalization, and initially in a Comment Mode focussing Cleft Sentence, the instantaneous —and unnatural, not to say mystical— multiplication of the murderous enemies; both narratives converge in the destruction of the helpless victim. Neither the devoured animal nor its destroyers are specified by name; this is a usual, rhetorically significant practice of Shenoute’s, who thus enhances the implicit genericity and intensifies the apocalyptic horror of the scene. The victim,

\(^47\) Young (1993: 158) translates Ξαφρ-γοτε Νηρωμε as ‘he is afraid of people’; I believe, however, that both content (opposition to ‘bring down to Hell by laughter and jest’) and form (ιν., not εβολιν-ιν as object) agree with an active ‘frighten’.
characterized as ‘shining’ and ‘bright’ (hence good and innocent), is helpless against the countless evil devourers. Consider also the subsequent natural-history tableau, ‘Animal in Total Confusion is Brought to a Sorry Pass’, which evolves into a full apocalyptic vision (Leipoldt 1908: 210–211).

Of syntactical interest here is the introductory focalizing (not topicalizing!) extraposition. The preterite here is a true historical tense, as an experienced story established by aïnay, ‘I saw’; hence the converter ne, as a rule absent in the narrative relative-topic Cleft Sentence. Still, there is an implied genericity which is requisite for the mystic symbolism of the action and emblematic status of the participants.

(b) ‘Earthly Creature Unexpectedly Defeats Heavenly Creature’

Leipoldt (1908: 44):

I, sitting on a hill —says he who is telling this— saw an animal hanging in the air, fighting another animal being on land. I rejoiced greatly, for the flying one prevailed over the one that was walking on land; but, in a minute, the animal that was on land turned on the flying one, took hold of it and overpowered it.

The wise will understand that this refers to all double-hearted heretics...

This type of mythical narrative is laconic, emblematic and skeletal. Indeed, it is enigmatic; the opening topos —‘I, sitting on a hill, saw’— confirms it as a visionary narrative. The teller’s participation here is minimal and purely passive, compared with narratives in which it is Shenoute himself who wrestles with the supernatural beings (e.g. Leipoldt 1908: 38–39, cf. 3.8 below). The locutive ‘the one who tells this’, actually ‘I who relate this’, is remarkable and rhetorically effective, displacing the speaker and thereby contributing to the mystic nature of the passage. Both narratives peak in an unexpected turn of events (unexpected at least for the seer), announced by mnnca-.

48 The hill or ‘mountain’ in Egyptian and Coptic (and as a general symbol) is the fringe and limit of civilization, as well as being beyond it; it is the haunt of the inhuman and evil, an interface with, and vantage point for, the Other World.
3.8. Mystical Personal Vision\textsuperscript{49} and Prefiguration Narratives

(a) Shenoute wrestling with the demon

Leipoldt (1908: 38):

\begin{verbatim}
Behold a man taking the form of authority, sent by one greater than himself; he has penetrated into the gates of the monastery (literally 'these places') without leave, with another following him as if he, for his part, was in submission to this one. He caught hold of me as I was passing in the streets of the monastery (literally 'these places'), troubled at heart because of those pestilent persons; he began raising his hand against me, to fight me, with the air of caring for those. I, in turn, attacked him, in order to strangle him with the object he had around his neck (or over his nape), saying these words: 'I am not at all afraid, nor am I perturbed'. I asked him: 'What are you? Why do you hide, and have not shown yourself? If you are a spirit or an angel who has come from God, I myself, I too am His servant; and even if you desist, I won't, until you tell me, if indeed you have been sent, whether it is they that have sinned unto God or it is we that have sinned unto Him..... Otherwise, I will not let you go, but fight you even more'. While I am saying these and other things, he wrestled with me, trying to break free, and I, too, wrestled with him; I prevailed against him (or over
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{49} For the syntax of dream narratives in Scripture Bohairic, see Shisha-Halevy (2007: §1.1.3 (e)).
him), and when he appeared to overthrow me, I knocked him down on the ground and pinned down his chest with my feet, standing and calling out to the brethren I see around me, watching me throughout this entire contest: ‘Catch me that other one!’, for I was considering in my mind that it is impossible for a human being to win against a spirit or an angel of God… and thus, in fact, they both turned immediately out to be demons.

Shenoute’s struggle with the demonic creature, even to the forcible interrogation as to his identity, is clearly modelled on Jacob’s wrestling with the Angel (Gen.32:25–26), a famous case of enigmatic dream-like narrative or narrative fragment, much commented on by narratologists. The theme of Shenoute defending his establishment against disguised satanic and demonic infiltration —indeed, standing between his congregations and the devil— is prominent in his rhetoric, and is the most immediate signifié of the present narrative.

Note the presentative introduction by eic- (eic also introduces the dénouement) to a fully-fledged, past-tense narrated violent mystical experience, in a narrative rich in forms (including λq- as main carrier, neq-, ntereq-, eic-ne…ay-, eq-) and details, descriptive segments, Comment Mode segments. Note also the narrativizing πexe-, which establishes a framework hierarchy and marks the vision as part of an enframing narrative; the cataphoric deixis in nejæxe, without xe- to introduce the direct speech; three focalizations in a row —nexus focussed in exuxe-ntaytnnooyk, contrastive focalization of actants in cleft sentences following; the resulting marked by the presentative eic- in the special construction with the thematic enclitic ne rhematizing or focussing a preterite clause.


Leipoldt (1913: 198–199):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ἀνάχα} & \text{ ἐγώ κοινοτογιαμ} \\
& \text{ἀπτώον} \text{ ἀπαντά} \text{ μνοού} \text{ ἀπομού} \\
& \text{ἔροο} \text{ λεγώθη} \text{ ἐγώ ἐπταγό} \text{ ηρεσώ} \text{ ἡ μπειέων} \text{ ἄν} \\
& \text{με} \text{ ἡ} \text{ σοι} \text{ ω} \text{ δε} \text{ οὐχ} \text{ ἄν} \text{ τήσω} \text{ μνούς} \text{ δε} \text{ ἡ} \text{ χε}-
\end{align*}
\]

Leipoldt (1913: 198–199):
I saw one of the saints. He arose and greeted them; he blessed them. I heard him uttering words I did not understand; some answered those sitting: ‘It’s in the Hebrew language that he is blessing them (or: ‘you’).’ I asked: ‘Who is this?’; they said: ‘This is the Apostle Paul. It is also he that is wont to bless those who come first (or: hasten) to the assembly, who meditate on the Holy Writ.’

I avow to you that I see some, meditating with zeal and grace; I see Him, whose Book it is, conferring a multitude of blessings, and I saw their souls illuminated by the lightnings coming out of God’s words.

It was in the month of Epep that I saw the following thing. I saw a body of water below the firmament, with people up on earth grieving and distressed, for they wished to drink of the water. I saw a man standing upon (the water), shining like the sun, refusing to give them any. He was pointed out to me a number of times, those on land begging, the one on the waters having power over them. I saw the ordinance of the water many times, but have never seen it like this time, in this form.

When we reached the month Mesore, I saw the man releasing the water (literally ‘them’) in small quantities. Then I saw a great hot steam rising after the water; it descended on the people and farm animals. I said to them: ‘What is this fire?’ They said to me: ‘It’s malady and death’.

Some people approached me those days about their farm animals, suggesting that they had probably been bewitched; I said: ‘No, it’s rather God’s hand.’

In this progressive account, the recurrence of nay ‘see’ is significant: it pushes the report forward; it is also meant to lend the story credibility as a truly experienced, in a ‘live’, almost performative kind of reporting. Noteworthy here is also the asyndetic syntax of the carrier αε- (αε is the connector of narrative blocks or chunks).
The aorist recurs in one highlighted paragraph as \( \text{οικαναγ} \) ‘I see’, apparently non-concatenating, a form the function of which here is not clear to me, but seems at any rate to be a marked form of ‘I saw’ (I see a connection with the opening \( \text{τρωμολογει ἥθη} \) ‘I aver / avow to you’). We may glimpse here the role of the locutive aorist, a role well attested in non-literary Coptic, especially legal, magical and similarly ritual textemes, expressing promise, pledging, threat, modally conspicuous by \textit{absolute assurance} (Green 1987: 65–66). Such certainty or assurance as to the truth of the facts may apply in our case. Alternatively, \( \text{ωαι} \) here may be a \textit{zoom-in} signal, introducing detailed, enhanced, as it were a single ‘freezing’ or ‘panning’ shot.\(^{50}\) At any rate, it cannot be generic or habitual, or apodotic-sequelling.

The articulating role of \( \text{μνΗωκε} \) ‘afterwards’ seems to be comparable to that of the episode-initial demonstrative adverbs of the ‘then’ type in many languages.\(^{51}\) The rhetorical ‘envelope’ focussing in \( \text{μεγακ ἐνταγ-ρικ ἐροου} \), expressing a subjective claim discredited by the author, is typically Shenoutean (Shisha-Halevy 1986: 77–79). I find remarkable the pinpointing of the visions to the calendric points of reference, and the resulting expression of temporal developments in the transcendent world.

3.9. \textit{Manners- and character-depicting dynamic similitude tableaux}

Leipoldt (1908: 110):

\begin{verbatim}
malista ainau evaρchw mαnκατης (sic) epeνεργωμαλ
 topp ηρτ ητοοτq edωμαν-ποιει ηκιωq ciωq ηνερχαλωqe
 εηρι πικαρ μαιν οq ωντικεογει ητοοτq
 ainau de on ekeoγ νημιν ετερεμχιqν ηκαογναqε eρ-
 neιπιντιqν ητηq ηγυq ην-κεογε ετερχιq
 τηq δε πε παιειν μπιητ ηνηqηη νπροcq...
\end{verbatim}

What’s more, I saw a magistrate judge whose servants put a palm-leaf\(^{52}\) in his hand: whenever he reduces it to small fragments and crumbles it onto the ground, they put another in his hand.

And I also saw another of this kind, who, when he has looked at an object to do such stupid things with it, they put another in his hand.

This is the characteristic trait of the heart of many lazy ones...

\(^{50}\) Interpretation suggested by E. Grossman.


\(^{52}\) In Coptic, a generic \textit{zero} article here, in a compound verb: ‘palm-leaf-put’.
Noteworthy here is the genericity of the sequenced events interfaced with the ‘historical’ \( \text{ai̱nay} \) ‘I have seen/I saw’. Thus, the aorist \( \text{a[r]a} \) as narrative peak or key event in the first episode corresponds (and stands in tension) to \( \text{a[ro]w a[r]a} \) in the second. \( \text{na[al]in on} \) is a boundary signal, introducing the narrative peak. Note the superordinating (and similarly peak-marking) \( \text{a[ro]w} \).

3.10. Shenoute’s personal narrativized reflections on tension in the monastery

Leipoldt (1908: 147):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a[r]e no[n] etbe-netm\text{m}ay} & \text{ eixoxoc \text{z}n\text{ap}zh \text{z}no\text{ly}zh \text{etra}ou\text{zh} m\text{vaei}\text{et} n\text{e}a-o\text{ym} \text{e}i\text{e}p\text{or}zh \text{ebol ntcu\text{nam}zh} \text{zh} \text{thr} zh\text{z}c-x\text{axe a}[r]w e\text{ei}zh m\text{po}u\text{o}zh m\text{pat}\text{ow} zh\text{c-w}m\text{mo} \\
\text{na[al]in de on} & \text{hei}zh-\text{wo}zh\text{ne} n\text{ai m}\text{a}zh\text{e-n}\text{n}n\text{a}w\text{pe on} \\
\text{nckanaa} \text{lo}zh \text{nn} \text{ai ntei}zh\text{ne} \text{z}m-peike\text{r}zh \text{zh}o\text{y}zh \text{de} \\
\text{nei}zh\text{y}zh\text{w} \text{zh} \text{pe} \text{e} \text{z} \text{ei}zh \text{i nne}\text{c}n\text{h} \text{y} \text{thr}\text{o}zh \text{mp}i\text{c}t\text{oc}zh...
\end{align*}
\]

Often, because of those people, I have said in my heart, painfully, that I should eat my bread apart, separated from the entire congregation, like an enemy, and taking care of my own affairs like a stranger; but then I took counsel with myself, that I should not be a stumbling-stone unto those in this matter too, and, moreover, I did not wish to distress all observant brethren...

Note here the special Shenoutean introductory Cleft Sentence (a distinct rhetorical signal: Shisha-Halevy 1987: 172–175) opening Evolution Mode, \( \text{nei}zh \) for enhanced or zoom-in Evolution Mode, in opposition to \( \text{nei}zh \text{ an pe} \) (psychological information) in Comment Mode. This is a case of highly personal focalization (in the narratological sense of the term). Here again, \( \text{na[al]in on} \), a boundary signal, marks narrative peak or key event.

3.11. Shenoute’s sarcastic version of resentment against him in the monastery

Leipoldt (1908: 144–145):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{...kai gar a[r]p-ve[\text{xo}ez} \text{eic a}p\text{w}zh n\text{to}zh \text{e}i\text{iz} \text{m}\text{mo}zh \text{no}zh\text{nc} \\
\text{zh}c \text{ty}rh\text{no}zh \text{a}y\text{b}kzh \text{e}m\text{a ete}zh\text{na}zh \text{anok de nei}zh \\
\text{m}\text{a[\text{xo}ez} \text{eic an pe etra}p\text{w}zh \text{nto}zh\text{ou} \text{ntexi m}\text{moi no}zh\text{nc} \\
\text{znteym}nta\text{tacw}zh \text{m}\text{ne}y\text{kez}v\text{h}zh \text{ye} \text{thr}\text{o}zh \text{etzo}zh \text{etoe}zh\text{r} \\
\text{m}\text{mo}zh \text{nei-}netm\text{may}
\end{align*}
\]

For they became self-sufficient and escaped me, ill-treating them like a tyrant, and went off wherever they want; I, however, I was not self-sufficient
to escape those who ill-treat me in their disobedience and all their other evil deeds which they do, those persons.

Of interest here is the rhetorically potent contrastive juxtaposition of Evolution Mode preterite and internal-focalization (‘inner-voice’) Comment Mode.

3.12. Prospective enjoined scenario (‘Testamentum Sinuthii’), narrating injunction, prophecy and prediction, laced with autobiographical narrative

Leipoldt (1913: 204–206), selection:

But I hereby enjoin unto them, that they keep my clothes, which I often tore up, finally reducing them into two pieces, grieving greatly, unto death. That is why I enjoin unto the brethren that are of one mind with us, they who live in the days of my death, that they deposit my torn clothes before those who come after us, and anyone who will be attentive at those times and also now to all the words written in that book or those written in these epistles which we have written or which we shall write; and they shall say: ‘What are these torn clothes, and all these written words, and all these maledictions?’ And they shall answer and say: ‘He who watches over the entire land and who passes through the whole world, that is, God, has watched over us also at some time, and has often passed through our congregations…’ And they shall say: ‘At that time, He was exceedingly wroth with us, the Lord, in a great wrath, and turned His face away from us...’

Of interest here is the na- ‘future’ used performatively (‘I hereby enjoin ...’); the Conjunctive, not ‘carrying on’ any specific clause but sequelling the foregoing text as a narrative link. The ‘Optative’ (provisional name)
eνε- is not used as a simple jussive (εγνά- is the usual Shenoutean injunctive), but an elusive blend of prophetic statement, deontic and optative modalities; in our texteme it looks much like a stage-direction mode.

For the ‘directed’ question and answer, with Shenoute’s torn clothing a symbol, emblem and trigger for communal memory and teaching, compare Ex.12:26 and its context; the abundance of ἀγω ‘and’, as well as phraseology (‘And they shall answer and say...’), style and syntax evoke the Biblical echoes of communal recalling: Shenoute’s role as the patient, selfless prophet Moses and his flock’s as recalcitrant Israelites are made entirely clear. ἡ ἑπωγοείω ετμμαγ ἢ ὑ ὁ ὑ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ ὁ
one who is lifting up bring his shoulder out, and the one who is to lift put
his in from time to time, until they reach the place where they mean to bury
him. But not to overdo the replacing.

(Young’s text): as soon as this one came out, that one has (already) put his
shoulder in; as soon as this one put his in, that one has (already) come out.
Yet (always) in the right measure. Do not delay above reason in resting the
bearers…

Note the topicalization by \textit{ετβε}; the parenthetic apposition; the oppo-
sition of the jussive \textit{ενασ} and the ‘obligative’ \textit{εφε}, with \textit{nνε}-
neutralizing them for the negative; the injunctive \textit{ε- (τμ)} + infinitive.

The strict sequentiality within the individual episodes becomes almost
a virtual overlap of actions: the use of the preterites (correlatively, within
the (\textit{nφος}) ‘as soon as’ framework) in this generic context is meta-
phoric and hyperbolic, to convey maximal, if not absolute, simultaneity
of the two acts. In Leipoldt’s version, the Focalizing Preterite (\textit{ηταλ}) is
remarkable. It may be another exponent of the immediacy role (the old
Egyptian and Coptic ‘no sooner … than …’ construction combines a
Focalizing Conversion and a Circumstantial Conversion in nexus: Shisha-
Haley 1986: 94).

and Resurrection}

University of Michigan Library 158, 20g pp. \textit{ελο–εμ} (Young 1993:
164–166; the large letters mark sections in the manuscript text):

\textit{απεοον} \textit{ννοοι} \textit{mnπουτε} \textit{mvννμοισε} \textit{μους} \textit{μπκαρ} \textit{θηρα}
\textit{αγω} \textit{ον} \textit{μπετεμπιστευε} \textit{ερο} \textit{τενοου}
\textit{δωξκακε} \textit{ωσιε} \textit{εκχιπκαρ} \textit{θηρα} \textit{αιν-} \textit{mnπαγ} \textit{nκπο} \textit{ωα-πυτε}
\textit{mnπερου} \textit{ηταγού} \textit{μμοο}
\textit{mnπεπενιοιε} \textit{ρπκε ουαε} \textit{μπουργτηνη} \textit{επιστευε} \textit{ερο}
\textit{αλα} \textit{μπετεμειλλατος} \textit{πυγεμων} \textit{κρηνε} \textit{εκαρ} \textit{εβολ} \textit{αγωω}
\textit{εβολ} \textit{προνο} \textit{εκχω} \textit{μμοο} \textit{ξε-} \textit{τογ} \textit{μμοο} \textit{ςτογ} \textit{μμοο}
\textit{μτον} \textit{δε} \textit{πυγεμων} \textit{απιω} \textit{mnπεβδιξ} \textit{ζν-} \textit{ουμοοου} \textit{εκχω} \textit{μμοο}
\textit{ξε-} \textit{τογαλαβ} \textit{μπενποφ} \textit{μπειλκανος}
\textit{αγωω} \textit{εβολ} \textit{μτοοου} \textit{ξε-} \textit{περσποφ} \textit{ζιχων} \textit{mnπενωιρε} \textit{ετε-
\textit{μποω} \textit{ηε} \textit{τενοου} \textit{ζεκας} \textit{ον} \textit{ερετορθ} \textit{μποουτε} \textit{νααω}
\textit{εξωθυ} \textit{ννμαγ}
\textit{απκαταπεταςα} \textit{μπρπε} \textit{πως} \textit{απξ-} \textit{ζναγ}
\textit{μτοου} \textit{δε} \textit{μπογαιανε}
\textit{απκαρ} \textit{κι} \textit{μπετεγπονηρια} \textit{βαλ} \textit{εβολ}
\textit{αμπετρα} \textit{πως}
\textit{μτοου} \textit{δε} \textit{μπογκτουου} \textit{ζν-} \textit{εγκακια}
The glory of God’s miracles and His wonders filled the entire earth
And even so, you have not believed in Him, even now.  
A darkness descended on the entire earth, from the time of the sixth hour until the ninth, on the day they crucified Him
Your fathers have not been afraid, nor have they repented to believe in Him. But when Pilate the Governor decided to release him, they rather cried out, saying ‘Crucify him! Crucify him!’ And he, the Governor, washed his hands with water, saying: ‘I am innocent of the blood of this righteous one’. They, for their part, cried: ‘His blood is upon us and our children’ —which is you, today, so that the wrath of God may rest upon you and on them
The curtain of the Temple was torn in two
Yet they, for their part, have not perceived
The earth moved
Their wickedness has not dissolved
The rocks split
Yet they, for their part, have not turned back from their evil, for they have hardened ‘their faces into a rock; they did not agree to turn back’, as the Prophet has said.
The dead arose and left their graves
They, for their part, have not distanced themselves from their murderous counsels
He cried out, the Lord, in a great voice, and gave up His spirit unto the hands of the Father
They have neither wept nor felt remorse
But they pierced His side with a spear
In their cruelty, after they saw that He had already died

53 Young’s translation here (‘and thus also (the praise) of him in whom we now trust’), seems to me syntactically impossible, but also improbable in structural terms.
54 Cf. Jer.5:3.
He arose on the third day
They have not marvelled even at this, nor have they changed from their frenzy and their untruth,
But gave much money to the soldiers, telling them: ‘Say: “His disciples came and took him by stealth at night, while we were asleep”’.

The rhetorical sophistication of this highly structured dramatic, step-by-step, abridged, commented and edited version of the Passion is impressive. Alternating Evolution and Comment Mode verses create an elegiac poetic effect of strophe and antistrophe. The negative CM has the effect of a ‘voice-over’ commentary (rather than narrator’s intervention; at the same time, this Narrator-perspective narrative is ‘external’, in tension with the ‘internal’ narrative of the Passion). The whole is informed by the tension between the affirmative ‘historical’ preterite Event Mode and the negative Comment Mode segments (pointing out the monstrous cruelty and impervious obstinacy of the historical Jews, identified with ancestors of Shenoute’s addressees and objects of his invective, namely heretics, pagans and Jews), a tension between the ‘then’ and the ‘now’, which I have tried to convey in the translation by differentiating between the affirmative and negative clauses and rendering the latter, relevant to Shenoute’s here and now, by the present perfect. The Shenoutean episode is not a merely retouched or even paraphrased replica of the Biblical one, but a rearranged, to an extent re-staged one, for event sequencing here does not match the original text. The asyndesis here alternates with Δε- linkage, and is a prime factor in the poetic form. The final verse, ἀλλα ἀνταύ… an adapted quotation (Mt.28:12–3), is marked as narrative peak by the ‘envelope focussing’ of the whole quoted text.

Contrast the following catalogic, yet in a sense sequential, asyndetic account of the Passion.

Leipoldt (1908: 104):

ἀγωνίᾳ γὰρ οὐκ ἐναληστής ἐτενιτάκει τικεώς εὐωκεν ἑξάνομοσι ρεβόλατρι ννεκκαναλαίζε
ἀγώνιᾳ ἀγνεύ-πάσει εἰσον εὐωκεν ἀγνευ-πάέρσο αὐρίονε εροφ αγωνε μμοσ ἀτήκαψ εκαὶ ηγιοναν μπκαζ εκυπερια εὐτάλας εἰσον ριμπερσο ἀγτερ-ογνα μπερ-είπε αὐτες εὐωκεν νοικλομ μνούτε αὐτετ-ηπεγιερτηε μνανεύθα εἰπε ρονυονεμ ννοσ ἀγνονεμ ννοσ ἀπε-πεταρόσ...μηννετ-νεμνταεβες Μνυον ενταύκονον εροφ ἡ ἀνταύαν ναφ δακώνε μνεπεκποιρ νούλογκι

For they bound Him like a bandit because of you; so that you too, when they bind you because of Him, you shall not stumble.
They struck Him, they spat in His face, they covered His face, they hit him, they mocked Him, they showered blows on him, they struck His head with the reed, they slapped His face, they let Him drink vinegar in His thirst, they put a crown of thorns upon His head, they nailed His feet and His hands to the wood, they reviled Him on the Cross … Following all their impieties which they uttered against Him, or did to Him, they pierced His side with a spear.

Here the asyndetic syntax does not express closer and hyper-eventive linkage, as in ordinary narrative. It rather signals catalogic enumeration, with an effect of an almost overpowering dramatic account of inexorable, unrestrained acts too terrible to contemplate; the pronominal agens ‘they’ — impersonal and faceless in contrast to the very personal account in University of Michigan Library 158 — is a link which contributes to the cohesion of the whole avalanche-like burst of violence and hatred. Here too, piercing Jesus’s side is well marked as narrative peak.

REFERENCES


57 In Coptic, ἡ τένταγμαν, which, definite, also means ‘the Cross’, and is here in variation withἱεράτομαν, yet as an alternant selected as more compatible with the nailing context. Here is a nice instance of the rhetorical-structural mechanism of ‘synonymity’.

58 Cf. Havers (1931: 254); ‘enumeratorive Redeweise’


