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978-1-107-02256-0 - Selected Discourses of Shenoute The Great: Community, Theology, and Social Conflict in Late Antique Egypt

David Brakke and Andrew Crislip

Frontmatter

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SELECTED DISCOURSES OF SHENOUTE THE GREAT

Shenoute the Great (ca. 347–465) led one of the largest Christian monastic communities in late antique Egypt and was the greatest native writer of Coptic in history. For approximately eight decades, Shenoute led a federation of three monasteries and emerged as a Christian leader. His public sermons attracted crowds of clergy, monks, and lay people; he advised military and government officials; he worked to ensure that his followers would be faithful to orthodox Christian teaching; and he vigorously and violently opposed paganism and the oppressive treatment of the poor by the rich. This volume presents in translation a selection of his sermons and other orations. These works grant us access to the theology, rhetoric, moral teachings, spirituality, and social agenda of a powerful Christian leader during a period of great religious and social change in the later Roman Empire.

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*Community, Theology, and Social Conflict
in Late Antique Egypt*

Translated with introductions by

DAVID BRAKKE

and

ANDREW CRISLIP



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Frontmatter

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*To Stephen Emmel
and in memory of Barbara Emmel*

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David Brakke and Andrew Crislip

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

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David Brakke and Andrew Crislip

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

<i>List of maps</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>List of figures</i>	x
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
Introduction: Shenoute's life, times, and <i>Discourses</i>	I
PART I HERETICS AND OTHER ENEMIES OF THE CHURCH	27
1 And it happened one day	35
2 As I sat on a mountain	39
3 I am amazed	54
PART II SHENOUTE AS PASTOR AND PREACHER	83
4 I see your eagerness	91
5 Some kinds of people sift dirt and Whoever seeks God will find	106
6 The idolatrous pagans, or, And we will also reveal something else	118
7 And let us also reprove	125
8 I answered	127
9 And after a few days	130
10 See how clearly revealed is the foolishness of pitiless people	132
11 Truly when I think	134
12 A priest will never cease	137
13 When the word says	146

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02256-0 - Selected Discourses of Shenoute The Great: Community, Theology, and Social Conflict in Late Antique Egypt

David Brakke and Andrew Crislip

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii	<i>Contents</i>	
	PART III THE CHRISTIAN'S STRUGGLE WITH SATAN	157
14	In the night	163
15	Because of you too, O prince of evil	166
16	A beloved asked me years ago	174
17	As we began to preach	183
	PART IV THE CONFLICT WITH GESIOS	193
18	Not because a fox barks	201
19	Let our eyes (<i>translated by Stephen Emmel</i>)	206
20	A26	212
21	God says through those who are his	266
22	God is blessed	278
	<i>Bibliography</i>	298
	<i>Index of names</i>	305
	<i>Index of subjects</i>	308
	<i>Index of biblical passages</i>	314

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02256-0 - Selected Discourses of Shenoute The Great: Community, Theology, and
Social Conflict in Late Antique Egypt

David Brakke and Andrew Crislip

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Maps

1 Late ancient Egypt	<i>page</i> xiii
2 The White Monastery Federation	xiv

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02256-0 - Selected Discourses of Shenoute The Great: Community, Theology, and Social Conflict in Late Antique Egypt

David Brakke and Andrew Crislip

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Figures*

- | | | |
|---|--|---------------|
| 1 | Shenoute the Great. Red Monastery Church, north lobe of the triconch apse, sixth century. Photograph courtesy Elizabeth Bolman. Copyright American Research Center in Egypt | <i>page 2</i> |
| 2 | Exterior of the church of Shenoute, east end, looking west toward the valley wall. Copyright Michael Burgoyne | 6 |
| 3 | Ruinous nave of the church of Shenoute (looking northeast), showing the stone pulpit steps (background, between second and third columns) and Coptic Christian visitors. Copyright Michael Burgoyne | 7 |
| 4 | Plan of the church of Shenoute, showing small narthex to the west and large narthex to the south | 9 |
| 5 | Founder's inscription (Greek), on interior (northern) side of lintel above south entrance of the church of Shenoute leading to the larger of two narthexes: "To the eternal memory of the magnificent Count Caesarius, the son of Candidianus, who built (the church)." Copyright Michael Burgoyne | 10 |
| 6 | Tomb of Shenoute near the church of Shenoute; facing east with depiction of Shenoute on north wall. Fifth century. Photograph by Matjaz Kaciknik. Copyright Elizabeth Bolman | 18 |
| 7 | Detail from tomb of Shenoute. Painted inscription (Greek) reads, "[The (holy) tom]b of Abba Shenoute the Archimandrite." Fifth century. Photograph by Matjaz Kaciknik. Copyright Elizabeth Bolman | 19 |

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02256-0 - Selected Discourses of Shenoute The Great: Community, Theology, and Social Conflict in Late Antique Egypt

David Brakke and Andrew Crislip

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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The photographs of the White Monastery Church (Figures 2, 3, and 5) are by Michael Burgoyne, who holds the copyright to them. They are reproduced with permission of the Yale University Church of Shenoute Survey Project, of which Bentley Layton is director.

Elizabeth Bolman provided the images of Shenoute from the Red Monastery Church and Shenoute's tomb. The Red Monastery photograph (cover and Figure 1) appears with permission of the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) and its director, Gerry Scott. The Red Monastery

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David Brakke and Andrew Crislip

Frontmatter

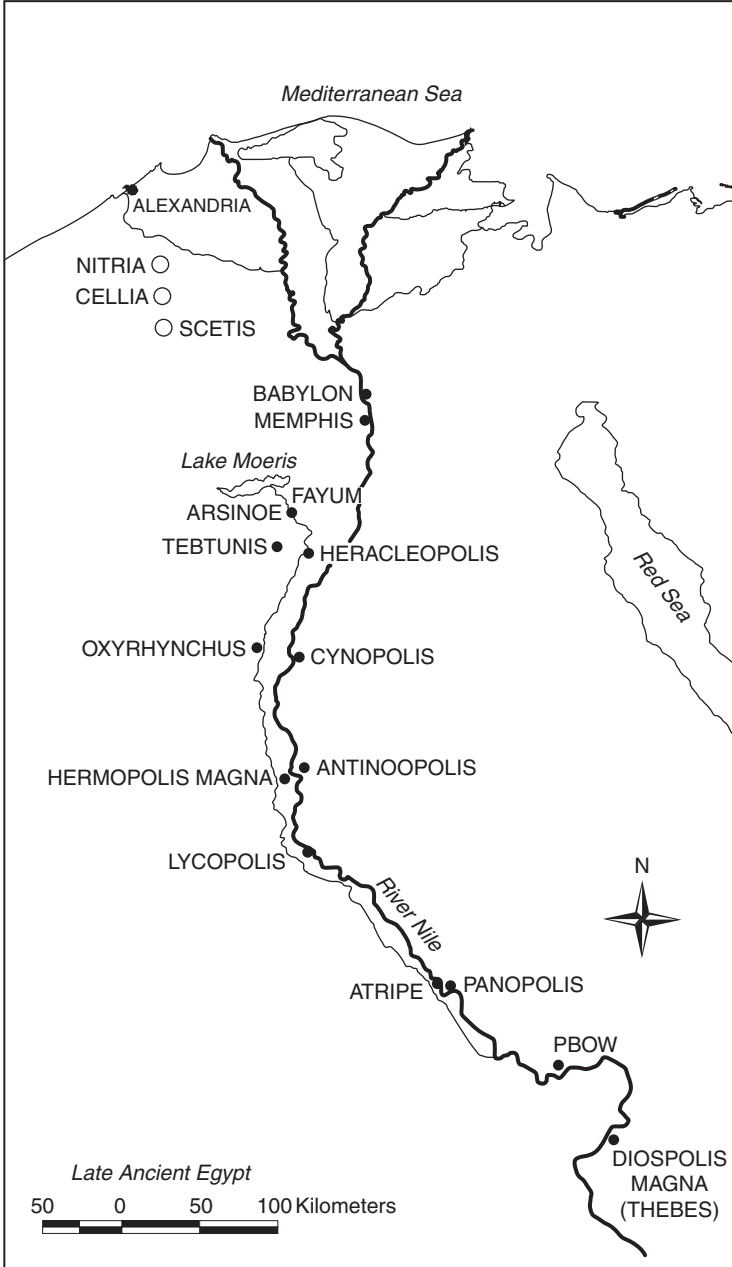
[More information](#)

xii

Acknowledgments

project, under the direction of Bolman, conserved the church's paintings. The United States Agency for International Development provided funding for the project with the support of the American people, and the grant was administered by ARCE. Matjaz Kaciknik photographed the paintings from the White Monastery tomb (Figures 6 and 7). The paintings were conserved with funding from an ARCE Antiquities Endowment Grant, under the auspices of the Yale Monastic Archaeology Project, South, of which Stephen Davis is the executive director and Bolman the director of conservation.

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Map 1 Late ancient Egypt

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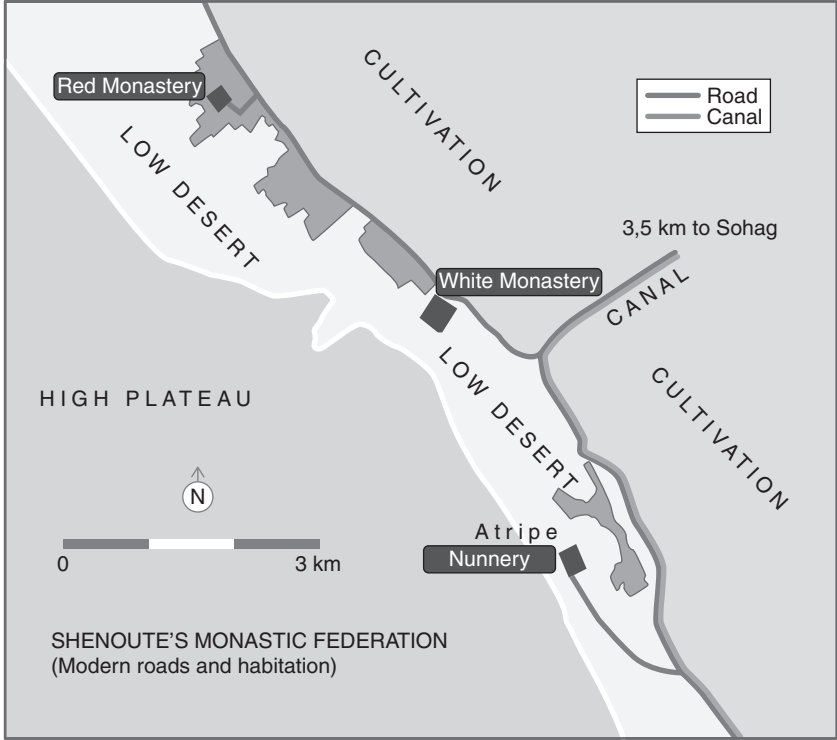
David Brakke and Andrew Crislip

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

Maps



Map 2 The White Monastery Federation