Five hymns to Shenoute

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The following text has been extracted for translation into English from Sinuthii Archimandritae Vita et Opera Omnia Sinuthii III ed. Johannes Leipoldt (1908), published in the CSCO series (Scriptores Coptici Second Series Vol. 4). On pp. 10-11 of that volume there is a description of the manuscripts that contain the hymns. The texts themselves are published on pp. 226ff.

Hymns One and Two are in a manuscript in the Imperial Library of St Petersburg. Oscar von Lemm made a copy of the texts and sent it to Leipoldt, with the comment that the Ms. was largely a hymnology.

Hymn Three is also in manuscript belonging to the library of the Imperial Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg, and Leipoldt also used a copy of it sent to him by Lemm, with a note by Lemm about the contents of the Ms. According to Lemm this Ms. had formerly belonged to the St Stephen's Coptic Monastery Church at Rome\(^1\), to which it had been presented by 'Dr. Nessin Abu'l Bishara al Naqāsh, the Egyptian', whence it made its way to Russia.

Hymns Four and Five, also in St Petersburg, are the former property of St Stephen's at Rome. Lemm describes the manuscript as badly written. There are also two other manuscripts with these hymns, Codex Golenischeffianus (Golenischeff was an Egyptologist) and one in the British Museum.

The name of the saint is written in three ways: Coptic, Greek and Arabic. I have used 'Shenoute' for the first two and 'Shenouda' for the third. In addition to the praise of Shenoute, the hymns also contain a prayer for good agricultural conditions.

\(^1\)There is a church of this name in The Vatican City, originally built on a temple of Vesta by Pope Leo I in the 5th cent. It can be described as both Coptic and Ethiopian.
Hymn One

The Arabic text above the hymn say that it is a chant in the Batos mode, to be chanted on the 7th of Epip (=14 July, the day of Shenoute's death).

The terms Adam and Batos (Watos) refer to the days of the Theotokia.

Adam is the first word of the Monday Theotokia. The Adam days are Sunday, Monday and Tuesday.

Batos ('bush') is the first word of the Thursday Theotokia. Shorter versions of the Arabic text appear also in the Hymn titles.

1
Keep us, O Christ our God
Through the intercession of the patron
Maria, the Mother of Christ Our God,
And Abba Shenoute, archimandrite.

2
Glory is fitting for you,
The miracle of the Apostles,
And they celebrate for him,
That is Shenoute.

3
Moreover, the great Shenoute,
The priest, the archimandrite,
Spoke with the King, Christ,
Like Moses the lawgiver.
4
David the king and just one, said:
The just one comes forth from the house of the Lord
Like the cedar tree,²
That is Shenoute.

5
If the man of truth is
Remembered forever,
Truly you, a just man,
Have come to eternal life.

6
Your ascetic practices are many,
Great Shenoute,
With your zeal for your chastity,
Wonder of God the Logos.

7
Behold, we celebrate for you
With psalms and hymns,
Crying out: Hail to you,
Great Shenoute.

8
Rejoice today, lands of Egypt
And peoples of the faithful,

² Ps. 92,3
On the feast of the helmsman,
Saint Shenoute.

9
Jesus Christ the Demiurge
Has told you of the mystery
In the final times,
Great one in his struggle.

10
The Lord chose the saint
From his childhood well,
Saint Shenoute,
The wonder of the angels

11
It is all orthodox people
Who dance\(^3\) for the great father,
The chosen one, the spirit-bearer,
The ascete, Abba Shenoute.

12
Let us gather, my beloved,
And praise the ascete,
The priest of God, Shenoute,
The chosen one, the archimandrite

13
Have mercy on us and hear us.
Save us from persecutions.
Remove your anger from us

\(^3\) At first sight, 'dancing' in this context seems a little incongruous, but it may be an allusion to Ps. 149,3
Because of Saint, Shenoute.

14
O blessed one, our Lord Christ
And your good Father
And Holy Paraclete Spirit
And Saint Shenoute.

15
A great thing is the honour of the saint,
The specially chosen ascete,
The one who sits with Christ the King,
Abba Shenoute, the archimandrite.

16
The saint Shenoute,
The priest of God on high
Who is in his ...⁴
Of Heaven with a grieving heart

17
Rejoice, be joyful, monks
Who are in a monastery
Of our father,
The saint Abba Shenoute

18
Look and listen to us,
Our good saviour,
Remove your anger from us
For the sake of the great Shenoute

⁴ The two Greek words that suggest themselves here are: δρυμός and ὄστεῖος, meaning 'thicket' and 'pretty, charming'. The same image occurs in Hymn 4 stanza 16. The only Biblical passage that comes to mind is Gen.22,13, where the thicket (and the ram caught in it) might have appeared 'charming' or 'attractive' to Abraham, but I have no idea how the following line might be related to it.
19
We beg you about the priests.
The waters and their sowings and crops
And their rainwaters, bless them
For the sake of the saint Shenoute.

20
Son of God, protect these, the fathers
And the deacon brothers.
Save them, our Lord, because of the fear
And oppression of this world.

21
Lord God, God our helper.
Raise the trumpet (τάν) of Christians
Through the prayers of the Mother of God
And the great man of truth, Shenoute

22
Hail to you, Virgin
Mary, the Mother of the Lord.
Hail, great Mother of God,
Abba Shenoute, who are archimandrite

23
Every soul, give me relief
In the dwelling place of the Virgin
And Abraham Isaac and Jacob

5 This conceit occurs in Hymn 4 stanza 20. Is it a ref. to 1 Cor. 15,52?
6 το: this is probably the rel. ετο. Also in Hymn 4 stanza 22.
And the great man of truth, Shenoute

24

Our Lord, Jesus Christ,
And his Virgin Mother,
Remember the least one,
And the ...? and your faithful.  When (we chant)  

\footnote{As it is written the word makes no sense. It may have something to do with \textit{tanxoi} 'keep alive, save', but a major change to the present form would be necessary to produce meaning.}

\footnote{Lemm has supplied the text here on the basis of \textit{Theotokia cax}}
Hymn Two
Chant: Adam. For Saint Shenouda, chanted on 7th of Epip

1
I have begged you, my Lord,
Forgive me, Good One,
For the sake of the Mother of God,
Saint Shenoute

2
Help us, Christ,
Christ, our God,
For the sake of your Lady Mother,
And the man of truth, Shenoute

3
For he is on high
Among the saints,
The one belonging to the Father on high,
Saint Shenoute.

4
For David is in our midst
With the just
To honour the great one,
Saint Shenoute.

5
Have mercy on us,
Our Lord Christ
For the sake of your Mother Mary,
Again with wisdom too.
6
Gently he rose
Higher than the monks,
For he took his seat
And conversed with the Lord.

7
Assemble, people
Who love God Jesus Christ
And let us honour properly
Saint Shenoute.

8
Jesus the lover of men
Has chosen a just man
From his childhood,
Saint Shenoute

9
You are well come to us
Today, just one,
The great one in his struggles
Saint Shenoute

10
People of the faithful
Lead beautiful processions for
The perfect man,
Saint Shenoute

9 The adjective μακανος means 'God-loving' and here is followed by 'Jesus Christ' in a way that suggests apposition.

10 One would normally expect an article of some sort here.

11 The Greek word ἐγγυς has a parallel in the Arabic concept of pl. ده.
Let us all gather,
Christians,
And celebrate in the name of
Saint Shenoute

Our fathers, the monks,
Celebrate you properly,
Spirit-bearing father
Saint Shenoute

You are very high
In the middle of heaven
Higher than all the saints,
Saint Shenoute

Your honour is great,
Ascete,
Archimandrite
Saint Shenoute

Your name is full of wisdom.
Holy one,
In the dispensation
Saint Shenoute

Rejoice, faithful,
In the name of Jesus Christ
And the just one,
Saint Shenoute

17
Look and listen to us
About the waters and crops
And the sowings too:
May they increase well.\(^\text{12}\)

18
We beg you. Have mercy on us,
Good one,
For the sake of your Mother and the name of
Saint Shenoute

19
Son of God, our God,
Save your people
From fear
And the plotting of pagans.\(^\text{13}\)

20
Philanthropic
And good God,
Forgive me my sins\(^\text{14}\)
For the sake of Shenoute

21
Saint Shenoute
Hail, Virgin,
The Mother of Jesus Christ.
Hail, the just

\(^{12}\) This and 19 are the only stanzas that do not end with the Saint's name.
\(^{13}\) For the negative meaning of this word cf. \textit{CD} 616a
\(^{14}\) Text: 'our sins'.
Saint Shenoute

22
Souls of our fathers,
Give them rest
For the sake of the one who gave birth to God,
Saint Shenoute

23
Our Lord, remember
Your worthy servant
And forgive him his sins\(^{15}\)
For the sake of Saint Shenoute

\(^{15}\) Text: 'our sins'. 
Hymn Three
For Saint Shenouda

1
For truly in truth\(^{16}\)
The pride of the monastery\(^{17}\) of Atripe
For the sake of your prayers of truth
And your great struggles,

2
Our father Abba Shenoute,
The beloved of Christ.
The chariot of Israel\(^{18}\)
And revered prophet.

3
He rejoiced\(^{19}\) with you, namely God,
Jesus Christ the Lord
And he gave you salvation,
Archimandrite

4
Pr(ay to the Lord for us)\(^{20}\)
My lord father, ascete
Abba Shenoute, the archimandrite,
(That he may forgive us our sins).

\(^{16}\) An example of Copto-Greek, two words with essentially the same meaning.
\(^{17}\) There are several words that indicate a monastery: the lit. meaning of this one is 'mountain', referring to the desert or Ar. جبل.
\(^{18}\) 2 Kg. 2,12. One of the expressions used by Elisha when he saw that Elijah had been taken up to heaven in the chariot of fire.'
\(^{19}\) The imperative form as it stands is not possible. In l. 3 the pronoun 'him' makes little sense.
\(^{20}\) (...): text supplied by Lemm
Hymn Four

Batos mode.

1
Truly it has appeared for us today,
Your memory, you the ascete
And companion of Christ, the king of glory
Abba Shenoute until the end.

2
Everyone of the faithful
And the children of the Church,
Rejoice for you, just one,
Abba Shenoute, with songs.

3
You are greatly on high
In the midst of the athletes,
And your life is full of glory,
Abba Shenoute until the end.

4
David the King in psalms:
The man of truth has come forth in the house of the Lord
And he will increase well
In the commands of the Lord.

5
Which is Shenoute,

__________
21 In addition to the information provided in earlier hymns Shenouda is also described also as ريس المنوحدين 'head of the monks'.
22 The writer here uses the Greek συντελεία and elsewhere the Coptic خوک. 
23 A paraphrase of Ps. 92,12ff.
24 This phrase is presumably meant to explain the reference to the Psalms in the previous stanza.
The just, the archimandrite,
For you have spoken with Christ
Like Moses the lawgiver.

6
The great miracles are numerous
Those which he performed with our prayers
Before the sons of men,
With the power of Christ Emmanuel.

7
Behold the sick, he cured them
And the blind saw
And the dead he raised them
And the demons he cast them out.

8
Yours is the power and the glory,
Good Saviour.
We pray. Forgive us because of the prayers of
Shenoute the priest of Christ.

9
Jesus Christ, the son of God
Chose the just one,
Our holy father Abba Shenoute,
The glory of the monks.

10
Christ-loving Constantine
Saw the glory of the monks
Especially of the just one,

25 Lemm points out that the otherwise incomprehensible ζεος is probably to be read as ύζεω
26 Clearly an anachronism. Shenoute died in the middle of the 5th cent.
Shenoute the presbyter.

11
Speak the glory, ascetes
And our monastic fathers,
On the feast of the archimandrite,
Saint Shenoute.

12
Give us, Lord, a share
And a portion with the just one,
The great Abba Shenoute,
The perfect man of God.

13
You are a great one among the ascetes,
The wonder of the angels,
Abba Shenoute the archimandrite,
Truly the prophet.

14
You are on high in the midst of the synod
Of the orthodox fathers
Holy father Shenoute,
According to the word of our father Cyril.

15
For your honour is great,
Father Shenoute,
Forgive us, Lord, because of his prayers.
Give us our end as Christians.
16
Saint Shenoute,
The priest of God on high,
Who is in the ---
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17
Watch over us and scatter
The enemies of the Church.
Grind them down and humiliate them
For the sake of Shenoute to the end.

18
Bless us with your blessing
In matters that concern us: rivers,
Sowings and rains
And crops. Bless us.

19
We beg you, our Lord Christ,
For the sake of the priests and deacons.
Save us for the sake of Shenoute
From the snares of the demons.

20
See also our fathers the monks
And the rest of the Christians.
Strengthen them, our Lord Christ,
For the sake of Shenoute.

21
Lord God, our helper,
Raise the trumpet of Christians

27 For this phrase used cf. Hymn 1 stanza 16.
Through the intercession of the Virgin
And the chosen one, Saint Shenoute.

22
Hail, Mother of God,
Mary the Mother of the Lord.
Hail, victorious spirit,
Shenoute, who are archimandrite.

23
Every orthodox soul,
Give rest to them\(^{28}\) and the just
Through the presbyters
And the saints, great Shenoute.

24
Good saviour,
For the sake of your Mother, Shenoute,
Remember, Lord, your servant Gabriel the deacon
In your kingdom with the just.
When we chant.

\(^{28}\) Text reads **NON**, which makes no sense.
Hymn Five
Chant. Adam

1
Come, faithful,
And let us eagerly give glory to Christ
And honour to
Saint Shenoute

2
Discard from your hearts
Deceit and envy
For the sake of the blessed
Saint Shenoute.

3
For he hated all the glory
Of this world
He loved the king of glory
Saint Shenoute.

4
David is in our midst
Today, the hymnodist,
For the sake of our father, the great
Saint Shenoute.

5
He is increasing and growing
The man of truth, the just one,
The one of the great miracle

29 Read <αν>ιεστεπνων
Saint Shenoute.

6
All seven orders\(^{30}\)
Give glory to Christ,
Honouring at all times
Saint Shenoute.

7
Sweetly and truly
He is on high because of his life
That was good in Christ
Saint Shenoute

8
Rejoice in the Lord.
Christians,
On this feast of the just one,
Saint Shenoute

9
Jesus Christ out God
And his angels are
Today in our midst,
Saint Shenoute

10
And again our holy fathers
The apostles
Have thus joined,
Saint Shenoute.

\(^{30}\) Ref. to orders of angels or archangels?
Let us all gather,
The orthodox,
And celebrate in the name of
Saint Shenoute.

The orthodox kings
Lead their procession well
For our just father
Saint Shenoute

You are truly on high
In the midst of the gatherings,
God-bearer
Saint Shenoute

Glory to you, God, save us
From temptations
And from fear
Saint Shenoute

Our God, scatter
Our enemies, Christ,
And grind them down,
Saint Shenoute

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31 If this has the same meaning as elsewhere in the text, it can only refer to a stately chorus of some sort.
32 Read: 

21
17
Watch over us, Christ
Until the end of Christians
For the sake of the just one
Saint Shenoute

18
Bless the rivers,
The sowings and the crops
Because of the prayers of
Saint Shenoute

19
We pray for the sake of the priests
And the just
For the sake of your Mother and our Lord,
Saint Shenoute

20
Behold also the monks
And out lay fathers.
Save them for the sake of the Virgin
And Saint Shenoute

21
God, raise the trumpet
Of the Christians
For the sake of Our Lady
And Saint Shenoute
Hail, Mother of God  
Mary the Virgin,  
Hail, just one,  
Saint Shenoute

Souls, give them rest  
In Paradise  
For the sake of your Mother the Queen  
And Saint Shenoute

Our Lord, remember  
Your servant Gabriel  
And the rest of the faithful  
For the sake of Saint Shenoute

So, if we gather etc.