

2021

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### Recommended Citation

Khalil, Ahmed Taleb Abdeldayem (2021) "ANTIMETABOLE:FORMS AND RHETORICAL FUNCTIONS IN SAHIDIC COPTIC TEXTS," *Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists*: Vol. 6: Iss. 2, Article 7. Available at: <https://digitalcommons.aaru.edu.jo/jguaa/vol6/iss2/7>

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# ANTIMETABOLE: FORMS AND RHETORICAL FUNCTIONS IN SAHIDIC COPTIC TEXTS

By

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## ABSTRACT

Fathers tackled their aphorisms using multiple rhetorical methods. Perhaps this is due to the ability of such rhetorical devices to simplify the idea in a way that attracts the listener's and the reader's attention. Antimetabole is one of those figures of speech that are noted occasionally in Coptic. This article aims to present a linguistic study of the types of this figure of speech in Coptic literary texts, especially the Sahidic texts which were written between the 4th and the 7th centuries AD. In addition, it investigates the rhetorical purposes which motivated the scribes to use this rhetorical device in their texts.

**KEYWORDS:** Antimetabole, Aphorisms, Rhetoric, Rhetorical devices, Coptic literary texts, Sahidic texts, Scribes.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Antimetabole is a Greek term<sup>1</sup> that means «the repetition of words in successive clauses, in reverse grammatical order»<sup>2</sup>. Despite the similarities between it and the rhetorical term chiasmus, antimetabole has structural features that differ from those of chiasmus<sup>3</sup>.

It is worth noting that this figure of speech was well-known in ancient Egyptian language<sup>4</sup> as well as in Arabic, in which it was known as «*al-ʿaks wa al-tabdīl*»<sup>5</sup> and its meaning is «mentioning an idea involving two terms and then switching the two terms in a quasi-paradox»<sup>6</sup>.

I have noticed that two forms of this rhetorical device in Coptic are somewhat close to those of Arabic, where linguists have classified its forms into three<sup>7</sup>. This is probably because of the Semitic linguistic approximation between the ancient Egyptian language and Arabic<sup>8</sup>. This paper presents a linguistic study of the types of antimetabole in Coptic literary texts, especially the Sahidic texts which were written between the 4th and the 7th centuries AD. In addition, it investigates the rhetorical purposes which motivated the scribes to use them.

## II. ANTIMETABOLE BETWEEN TWO PARTS OF A SENTENCE/CLAUSE/PHRASE

This type occurs between two parts of a sentence/clause/phrase, where the two parts come in a specific order and then they are repeated in a successive sentence/clause/phrase but in a transposed order. This type is somewhat similar to the first type of antimetabole in Arabic<sup>9</sup>:

E.g.: Ibn Sehl said: «*لا خير في السرف ولا سرف في الخير*»  
«There is no benefit in waste and no waste in charity.»

In such example, the two parts of the first sentence are the word *خير* «benefit/charity» and the word *السرف* «waste», they were written in reverse order in the second sentence<sup>10</sup>.

As for Coptic, I have noticed that it is possible to divide these two parts [TABLE 1] into three kinds:

<sup>1</sup> MUHAMMED 2010: 2.

<sup>2</sup> CUDDON 2013: 42.

<sup>3</sup> For more details, see MUHAMMED 2010: 4; there is an indication that chiasmus is one of the rhetorical devices that Apa Rufus of Shotep used in his homilies, see SHERIDAN 2018: 215.

<sup>4</sup> For examples, see WAZĪRY 2017: 3, 20-22.

<sup>5</sup> See FĪWD 2015: 169.

<sup>6</sup> HEINRICHS 1998: 657.

<sup>7</sup> See FĪWD 2015: 169-170.

<sup>8</sup> See ALLEN 2013: 1.

<sup>9</sup> See FĪWD 2015: 169.

<sup>10</sup> See FĪWD 2015: 169; this example was translated into English by MUHAMMED 2010: 9.

## 1. The Two Parts of the Sentence/Clause/Phrase are Nouns:

(A) Apa John bishop of Al-Ashmounin (*Encomium on St. Antony*):

ΠΩΗΡΕ ΝῆΙΟΤΕ ΔΥΩ ΠΕΙΩΤ ΝῆΩΗΡΕ, εἰς τὴν πατρὶν πενεῖωττε ΔΥΩ ΠΕΝΠΑΠΟΣΠΕ ΖΙΟΥΣΟΠ

*Child of the fathers and father of children, you are at one and the same time our father and our grandfather*<sup>11</sup>.

Apa John is one of the writers who utilized this trope in his scripts where it appeared in his praise of St. Antony when he said (ΠΩΗΡΕ ΝῆΙΟΤΕ) and (ΠΕΙΩΤ ΝῆΩΗΡΕ), namely he used the singular noun (ΠΩΗΡΕ) as a possessed noun in the first possessive noun phrase<sup>12</sup> and as a possessor noun (the plural form ΝῆΩΗΡΕ) in the second phrase. As for the plural noun (ΝῆΙΟΤΕ), it was used as a possessor noun in the first phrase and as a possessed noun (the singular form ΠΕΙΩΤ) in the second phrase. It is clear in the following sentences that the scribe explained the meaning of this switch that occurred between the first and the second phrases. This leads me to believe that this type of antimetabole may be used to make the listeners/readers aware of the close faith relationship between them and the saint.

(B) St. Shenute Contra Origenistas (*I Am Amazed*):

ΔΥΩ ΝΤΟΣ ΡΩ ΠΕ ΠΡΩΜΕ ΕΒΟΛ ΧΕ ΜΝ ΡΩΜΕ ΔΧΗ ΨΥΧΗ ΔΥΩ ΜΜΝ ΨΥΧΗ ΔΧΗ ΡΩΜΕ . ΤΕΨΥΧΗ ΓΑΡ ΔΥΩ ΠΣΩΜΑ ΕΩΔΥΩΩΠΕ ΖΗ ΘΗ ΜΝ ΝΕΥΕΡΗΥ .

And the soul too is the person. For there is no *person* without *soul* and no *soul* without *person*. For the soul and the body exist in the womb together<sup>13</sup>.

Father Shenute talks about those who said that the soul sinned before its coming to the body. Notable, he used this rhetorical device between two parts of two existential sentences: the first sentence was negated using ΜΝ while the second one was negated using this parallel variant ΜΜΝ<sup>14</sup>. In addition, the noun (ΡΩΜΕ) appeared as a subject while the Greek noun ΨΥΧΗ (ψυχή)<sup>15</sup> was utilized as a predicate in the first sentence and on the contrary the noun (ΨΥΧΗ) appeared as a subject and the noun (ΡΩΜΕ) was used as a predicate in the latter sentence. I think perhaps St. Shenute used this trope to confirm the association between the soul and the body and to express his disagreement with those who said the soul sinned before its dwelling in the body.

(C) Apa Theodosius, Archbishop of Alexandria (*Encomium on Saint Michael the Archangel*):

Μαρῆ πωτ ἡσα ταγαπη · ὦ ναμερατε · χε ταγαπη · οὐ εβολ ρῆ πνουτε τε · ΔΥΩ πνουτε πε ταγαπη ·

<sup>11</sup> This encomium was translated into French by GARITTE 1943: 346-347; into Italy by ORLANDI 1981: 262; into English by VIVIAN, ATHANASSAKIS & GREER 2003: 32; and into Arabic by MU'AWWAD 2013: 368.

<sup>12</sup> For the possessive noun phrase, see REINTGES 2004: 92-96.

<sup>13</sup> This sermon was translated into Italy by ORLANDI 1985: 28-29; into English by FOAT 1996: 119; and into Arabic by MU'AWWAD 2009: 127.

<sup>14</sup> For the existential sentence, see SHISHA-HALEVY 1988: 64-65; REINTGES 2004: 396-400.

<sup>15</sup> FÖRSTER 2002: 896-897.

Let us follow after love, O my beloved, for love is from God, and God is Love<sup>16</sup>.

Apa Theodosius, in the festival of St. Michael, said this excerpt while talking about the importance of good deeds. He probably used the vocative style<sup>17</sup> to draw his listeners/readers' attention to the need for love. Apa Theodosius, however, employed the rhetorical device to support the expression of his idea; the Greek noun ἄγαπη (ἀγάπη)<sup>18</sup> was used as a subject in the first nominal sentence<sup>19</sup> and as a predicate in the second sentence. As for the noun (ΠΝΟΥΤΕ), it was utilized as a predicate in the first sentence and as a subject in the latter. I think the usage of this rhetorical device herein helped to emphasize the importance of the virtue of love, especially because it is an attribute of God.

## 2. The Two Parts of the Sentence/Clause/Phrase are a Pronoun and a Noun:

(A) Apa Besa (*Reproofs and Monastic Rules*):

ΤΕΝΟΥ ΔΕ ΕΑΝΟΥΝ̄ΠΝΟΥΤΕ · Ν̄ΡΟΥ ΔΕ ΕΑΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΟΥΩΝ̄.

But now we have known God and, what is more, God has known us<sup>20</sup>.

While the writer talks about the sweetness of faith among the brothers after they were far from it. He used antimetabole between two parts of two circumstantial past tense<sup>21</sup> sentences, namely between the first person plural pronoun (Ν) and the noun (ΠΝΟΥΤΕ) in each. The pronominal subject (Ν) in the first sentence was used as an object in the second one. On the other hand, the object (ΠΝΟΥΤΕ) in the first sentence was utilized as a subject in the second one. I believe that this rhetorical device might have been used between the two parts of the two sentences to express the close mutual relationship between God and those faithful brothers.

(B) John the elder (*The life of bishop Pisentius*):

Ν̄ΤΑΥΠΩΤ ΔΕ ΑΝ Ν̄Α ΠΤΑΙΟ · ΑΛΛΑ ΝΤΑ ΠΤΑΙΟ · ΠΩΤ Ν̄ΩΥ.

Now it was not he who ran in pursuit of the honour, but it was the honour which ran in pursuit of him<sup>22</sup>.

This excerpt was said after Apa Pisentius became a bishop and because of his passion for meditation when he knew his choice for the episcopal throne, he escaped and disappeared completely and the clergymen kept looking for him until they found him. Apparently, the writer was interested in clarifying the meaning using rhetoric, so he used the verb ΠΩΤ in a metaphorical form. Antimetabole, moreover, occurred in these two relativised Perfect<sup>23</sup> clauses between the third person singular pronoun (Υ) and the noun (ΠΤΑΙΟ); he used the pronoun (Υ) as a subject of the first clause and conversely it

<sup>16</sup> This text was translated into English by BUDGE 1915: 407, 940.

<sup>17</sup> For the vocatives, see REINTGES 2004: 63.

<sup>18</sup> FÖRSTER 2002: 3-5.

<sup>19</sup> For the tripartite nominal sentence, see REINTGES 2004: 182-192.

<sup>20</sup> This letter was translated into English by KUHN 1956: 34 (text), 32 (translation); and into Arabic by MU'AWWAD 2018, 81 and footnote 41 (see GAL 4: 9).

<sup>21</sup> For the circumstantial past tense, see LAYTON 2007: 135.

<sup>22</sup> This text was translated into English by BUDGE 1913: 92, 280.

<sup>23</sup> For the relativised Perfect clause, see REINTGES 2004: 416-417.

became the object of the second clause. Meanwhile, he made the noun (πταίο) as an object of the first clause while it was utilized as a subject of the second clause. This trope might be used to reflect how the humility of St. Pistentius is great.

### 3. The Two Parts of the Sentence/Clause are a Noun and a Verb:

(A) Apa Paul of Tamma (*Opus sine titulo*):

ΕΚΖΜΟΟΣ ΖΝ ΤΕΚΡΙ ΜΠΕΡΚΑ ΠΕΚΖΗΤ ΕΧΙΣΕ ΝΤΟΟΤΚ ΟΥΔΕ ΜΠΕΡΧΑΣΤΚ ΖΜ ΠΩΟΧΝΕ ΜΠΕΚΖΗΤ

While you are sitting in your cell, do not let your heart be haughty and do not be haughty to counsel your heart<sup>24</sup>.

This advice is one of the numerous pieces of advice that Father Paul gave to a monk. It seems evident that he cautioned him from arrogance whether in himself or in his heart. The writer used the negative imperative ΜΠΕΡ- in both sentences<sup>25</sup>, the current type of this rhetorical device occurs between the noun ΠΕΚΖΗΤ and the verb ΧΙΣΕ (as well as its pronominal form ΧΑΣΤΕ)<sup>26</sup> which they appear in this order in the first sentence, while in reverse in the latter sentence. So, Apa Paul probably used this trope to emphasize the importance of keeping the heart from the vice of arrogance as well as to avoid neglecting the advice of the heart.

(B) Isaac bishop of Antinoe (*Encomium on St. Colluthus*):

ΑΝΟΚ ΖΩ ΑΝΓ ΟΥΩΗΡΕ ΩΗΜ †Ε||ΜΠΩΔ ΝΘΒΒΙΟΙ | ΝΖΟΥΟ ΝΤΕΙΣΕ | ΜΗΠΩΣ ΝΤΑΧΙΣΕ | ΝΖΗΤ ΖΜ ΠΚΑΙΡΟΣ ΝΘΒΒΙΟ ΤΑ|ΘΒΒΙΟ ΖΩΩΩ | ΖΜ ΠΚΑΙΡΟΣ Μ||ΠΧΙΣΕ

I am obliged to humiliate myself so exceedingly, lest I become arrogant when it is time to be humble and humble when it is time to be exalted<sup>27</sup>.

This excerpt was said by St. Colluthus during his dialogue with his parents concerning his asceticism because he did not eat, drink, nor wear. It is noticeable that antimetabole appears between two parts of two conjunctive clauses<sup>28</sup>, namely, (ΧΙΣΕ ΝΖΗΤ) which is used as a verb in the first clause while it comes as a possessor noun (ΠΑΧΙΣΕ) at the end of the second clause. On the other hand, (ΘΒΒΙΟ) is utilized as a possessor noun in the first clause whilst as a verb (ΘΒΒΙΟ) in the latter clause. This shift between the two parts of two clauses might be used to express his keenness on the virtue of humility and the avoidance of arrogance all the time.

<sup>24</sup> This text was translated into Italy by ORLANDI 1988: 118-119.

<sup>25</sup> For the negative imperative, see LAYTON 2000: §368; REINTGES 2004: 360.

<sup>26</sup> For ΧΙΣΕ, see CRUM 1939: 788b-790a.

<sup>27</sup> This encomium was translated into English by THOMPSON 1993: 1: 54, 2: 42.

<sup>28</sup> For the conjunctive, see LAYTON 2000: §351; REINTGES 2004: 295-297.

### III. ANTIMETABOLE AFTER A VERB IN A SENTENCE/CLAUSE

This type only appears between two words positioned directly after a verb in a sentence/clause, where the two words come in a specific order and then they are repeated in a consecutive sentence/clause but in a transposed order. This kind is relatively different from its equivalent in Arabic<sup>29</sup>:

E.g.: El-Hassan said: «بِع دنيك بأخرتك تـربحها جميعا، ولا تبيع أخرتك بدنيك فتخسرهما جميعا»  
«If you **sell your present life** for **your hereafter**, you will win them both. If you **sell your hereafter** for **your present life**, you will lose them both.»

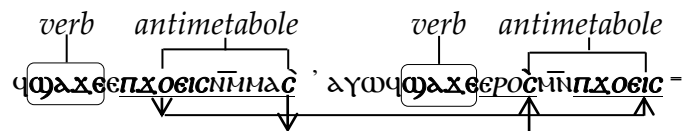
In the first sentence, the two words «دنيك «your present life» and «أخرتك «your hereafter» are positioned after the verb بع «sell», they became in a transposed order in the second sentence<sup>30</sup>.

As for Coptic, I have noticed that this type can be classified into [TABLE 2] three forms:

#### 1. The Verb is followed by a Noun and a Pronoun:

(A) St. Shenute (*Discourse in the Presence of Eraklammon*):

ⲥⲉⲛⲙⲁⲛⲉⲒⲟⲛⲛⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ̀ⲛⲁⲗⲗⲟⲛⲁⲗⲉⲁⲥⲙⲁⲗⲁⲥⲙⲁⲧⲱⲛ̀ⲁⲗⲓⲛⲧⲉⲩⲁⲣⲏⲗⲁⲧⲉⲩⲁⲛ̀ⲛ̀



The church is also signified, especially in the Song of Songs. From its beginning to its end it is **speaking** about *the Lord* and *her*, and it is **speaking** about *her* and *the Lord*<sup>31</sup>.

This excerpt was said while Apa Shenute was speaking about Christ and the reference to him in all the books of the Bible as well as the church and its reference in the Book of the Song of Songs. The rhetoric appears twice; in using the Sahidic verb ⲩⲱⲁⲗⲉ<sup>32</sup> which was used metaphorically and also between the noun (ⲡⲓⲭⲟⲉⲓⲥ) and the third person singular suffix pronoun (ⲥ) that are linked by this verb ⲩⲱⲁⲗⲉ in both first present tense sentences<sup>33</sup>. In the first verbal sentence, he put the noun (ⲡⲓⲭⲟⲉⲓⲥ) before the pronoun ⲥ in (ⲛⲙⲙⲁⲥ̀); however, he subsequently inverted the latter: he began with the pronoun ⲥ in (ⲉⲣⲟⲥ̀) then the noun (ⲡⲓⲭⲟⲉⲓⲥ). Perhaps the author resorted to using this trope to emphasize the spiritual relationship that binds them together.

(B) Apa Pisenhius (*Discourse on St. Onnophrius*):

Ⲓⲙⲓⲡⲁⲓ ⲧⲉⲓⲧⲛⲁⲩⲱⲩⲡⲉ ⲉⲓⲧⲉⲧⲛⲧⲛⲧⲱⲛ ⲉⲡⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲥ Ⲓⲓⲧⲛⲡⲓⲧⲃⲟ ⲛⲧⲉⲧⲛⲥⲁⲣⲓ ⲙⲛⲛⲉⲧⲛⲒⲏⲧ ⲉⲧⲧⲃⲃⲏⲩ - ⲉⲧⲉⲛⲁⲓⲡⲉ ⲉⲧⲣⲉⲡⲣⲟⲟⲩⲧ Ⲓⲁⲣⲉⲗ ⲉⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲉⲩⲥⲓⲙⲉ ⲁⲗⲱ ⲉⲧⲣⲉⲧⲉⲥⲓⲙⲉ Ⲓⲱⲱⲥ ⲉⲡⲉⲥⲣⲟⲟⲩⲧ

<sup>29</sup> See FīWD 2015: 169.

<sup>30</sup> This example was translated into English by MUHAMMED 2010: 8, 9.

<sup>31</sup> This text was translated into French by CHASSINAT 1911, 147; into English by FOAT 1993: 128; and into Arabic by MU‘AWWAD 2009, 260.

<sup>32</sup> CRUM 1939: 612b-613a.

<sup>33</sup> For the first present tense, see REINTGES 2004: 258-262.

In this way, through the purity of your flesh and your purified hearts, you will come to resemble the righteous one. That is to say, let *the husband* watch over *his wife*, and let *the wife* do likewise for *her husband*<sup>34</sup>.

While Apa Pisenhius urged the necessity of purity for men and women, he only mentioned the Sahidic verb **ⲉⲗⲡⲉⲗ**<sup>35</sup> in the first sentence while it disappeared in the second one. It is remarkable that the subject of the first sentence differs from that of the second sentence; however, the rhetorical device seems through the positions of the pronouns and the nouns which are attached to the verb **ⲉⲗⲡⲉⲗ** in both sentences: the third person singular suffix pronoun **ⲩ** in (*ⲉⲣⲟⲩ*) comes first then the noun (*ⲧⲉⲩⲥⲓⲙⲉ*) in the first sentence while in the second one he made the third person singular suffix pronoun **ⲥ** in (*ⲉⲗⲟⲩ*) comes first then the noun (*ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲗⲟⲟⲩⲧ*). Consequently, antimetabole might be used to emphasize their mutual role in preserving purity towards one another.

## 2. The Verb is followed by Two Nouns:

(A) Apa Besa (*To an erring monk*):

ⲛ ⲉⲛⲉⲙⲡⲓⲕⲉⲡⲓⲕⲁⲕⲉ ⲛⲟⲩⲟⲩⲉⲓⲛ, ⲁⲗⲟ ⲡⲟⲩⲟⲩⲉⲓⲛ ⲛⲓⲕⲁⲕⲉ · ⲛ ⲉⲛⲉⲙⲡⲉⲡⲉⲧⲥⲁⲟⲩ ⲉⲗⲟⲥ ⲛⲛⲁⲉⲣⲁⲕ · ⲁⲗⲟ  
ⲛⲧⲉⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲗⲃ ⲥⲁⲟⲩ · ⲛⲉⲕⲛⲁⲧⲟⲗⲙⲁ ⲛⲧⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲥ ⲉⲧⲣⲉⲕⲃⲟⲕ ⲉⲣⲉⲛⲙⲁ ⲉⲡⲡⲟⲩⲭⲟⲟⲩⲕ · ⲛ ⲕⲛⲁⲣⲓⲡⲃⲟⲗ  
ⲛⲓⲡⲙⲁ ⲉⲡⲡⲓⲕⲟⲩⲛⲉ ·

Or if you had not **counted** *darkness* for *light* and *light* for *darkness*, or if bitter had not been sweet in your opinion and sweet bitter, would you have been so greatly daring as to go whither you were not sent, or would you have gone out from here without asking<sup>36</sup>?

This question was said by Apa Besa while admonishing an erring monk. Apa Besa used two types of antimetabole here: the first one is between the two words *ⲡⲟⲩⲟⲩⲉⲓⲛ* and *ⲡⲓⲕⲁⲕⲉ* while the second is between the two words *ⲥⲁⲟⲩ* and *ⲉⲗⲟⲥ*. Indeed, the first case is what concerns us here whereas the latter one represents the first type of antimetabole discussed above. Notable, the writer, in the first negative past tense sentence<sup>37</sup>, employs the Coptic verb **ⲉⲡ**<sup>38</sup> while it disappears in the second one. The two nouns (*ⲡⲓⲕⲁⲕⲉ*) and (*ⲟⲩⲟⲩⲉⲓⲛ*) appear in this order in the first sentence, while in reverse in the second one. He probably meant from using this shift to make the recipient/reader realize that the addressee could not distinguish between the light (the truth) and the dark (the vain) and that both of them became one thing for him.

## 3. The Verb is followed by Two Pronouns:

(A) Apa Basil, Bishop of Pemjē, (*A homily on the Virtues of St. Longinus*):

ⲕⲛⲁⲭⲓⲧⲟⲩ ⲉⲓⲗⲟⲩⲛ ⲉⲛⲉⲩⲥⲕⲏⲛⲏ ⲛⲛⲉⲓⲡⲟⲩⲣⲁⲛⲓⲟⲛ ⲛⲩⲙⲏⲧⲟⲛ | ⲙⲙⲟⲩ ⲉⲣⲣⲁⲓ ⲉⲭⲟⲟⲩ ⲁⲗⲟ | ⲛⲧⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲗⲟⲩ  
ⲛⲥⲉⲙⲏⲧⲟ(ⲛ) | ⲙⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲣⲣⲁⲓ ⲉⲭⲟⲟⲩ

<sup>34</sup> This text was translated into French by CRUM 1915-1917: 45, 59; into English by VIVIAN 2009: 176-177 and footnote 24 (see EPH 5:33); and into Arabic by MU'AWWAD 2016: 213.

<sup>35</sup> CRUM 1939: 707b-708a.

<sup>36</sup> This letter was translated into English by KUHN 1956, 24 (text), 23 (translation); and into Arabic by MU'AWWAD 2018, 69.

<sup>37</sup> For the negative past tense, see LAYTON 2000: § 334.

<sup>38</sup> CRUM 1939: 526a.



He will take them into his heavenly dwelling-places and he will be **satisfied** with them and they in turn will be **satisfied** with him<sup>39</sup>.

Apa Basil wanted to express the fate of the righteous. Although he employed the same Coptic verb **ἴτον**<sup>40</sup> in both preterit clauses<sup>41</sup>, the subject is different. He began his speech talking about God utilizing the third person singular pronoun **ϣ** in (**μμοϣ**) after the verb while talking about the righteous using the third person plural pronoun **οϣ** in (**εχωοϣ**). Then he switched his speech talking first about the righteous using the third person plural pronoun **οϣ** in (**μμοοϣ**) and about God using the third person singular pronoun **ϣ** in (**εχωϣ**). Perhaps this shift between the pronouns to make the listeners and the readers realize the satisfaction which will be between God and the righteous.

(B) St. Shenute Contra Origenistas (*I Am Amazed*):

ΤΑΙ ΤΕ ΘΕ ΜΠΩΜΩΕ ΝΝΕΤΕΙΡΕ ΜΜΟϣ ΝΣΕΣΟΟϣΝ ΔΝ ΔΕ ΠΣΑΤΑΝΔΣ ΠΕΤ**ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙ** ΜΜΟΟϣ ΝΖΗΤϣ ΔϣΩ Εϣ**ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙ** ΜΜΟϣ ΝΖΗΤΟϣ. ΔϣΩ ΟϣΜΕ ΔΝ ΠΕ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΙΤΜ ΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΜΜΕ.

This is the way of the service of those who do it not knowing that it is Satan who **works** them in it and it is in them that he works it. And it is not a truth from out of the hand of God<sup>42</sup>.

St. Shenute criticized the statue of unemployed slaves and heretics and how Satan affects them? It seems that antimetabole was employed to clarify this meaning in the current relative clauses<sup>43</sup>. This hardly appears when he made the Greek verb **ενεργει** (**ἐνεργέω**)<sup>44</sup> attached by the suffix pronouns; in the first relative clause the third person plural pronoun **οϣ** in (**μμοοϣ**) followed by the third person singular pronoun **ϣ** in (**νζητϣ**). However, in the second one, each pronoun replaced the other; namely, the third person singular pronoun **ϣ** in (**μμοϣ**) precedes the third person plural pronoun **οϣ** in (**νζητοϣ**). The alternation between the places of pronouns in both sentences clarifies that Satan's machinations succeeded in strengthening the close relationship between heretics and bad thought, so that each of them became complementary to the other.

<sup>39</sup> This homily was translated into English by DEPUYDT 1994: 281, 290.

<sup>40</sup> CRUM 1939: 193b.

<sup>41</sup> For preterit, see LAYTON 2000: §§ 434-443.

<sup>42</sup> This sermon was translated into Italy by ORLANDI 1985: 56-57; into English by FOAT 1996: 135; and into Arabic by MU'AWWAD 2009: 151.

<sup>43</sup> For the use of these two forms of the relative clause, see REINTGES 2004: 418, 435-436.

<sup>44</sup> FÖRSTER 2002: 260.

#### IV. ANTIMETABOLE BETWEEN TWO WORDS IN TWO CONSECUTIVE SENTENCES/CLAUSES

This form occurs between two words that are identical in type; they come in a specific order in two consecutive sentences/clauses, and then they are repeated in two other consecutive sentences/clauses but in a transposed order. It is possible to divide these words [TABLE 3] into two kinds:

##### 1. Antimetabole between Two Nouns:

(A) The instructions of St. Pachomius, the Archimandrite:

First past sentence	First circumstantial clause	Second past sentence	Second circumstantial clause
⏟		⏟	
⏟		⏟	
⏟		⏟	

ἀ $\bar{\nu}$ κ $\bar{\nu}$ ο $\bar{\nu}$ ι̅ λ $\bar{\omicron}$  ε $\bar{\gamma}$ ς $\bar{\omega}$ τ $\bar{\mu}$   $\bar{\nu}$ ς $\bar{\alpha}$   $\bar{\nu}$ ν $\bar{\nu}$ ο $\bar{\varsigma}$ , ἀ $\bar{\nu}$ ν $\bar{\nu}$ ο $\bar{\varsigma}$  κ $\bar{\alpha}$ τ $\bar{\omicron}$ ο $\bar{\sigma}$ τ $\bar{\omicron}$ γ ε $\bar{\beta}$ ο $\bar{\lambda}$  ε $\bar{\gamma}$ ψ $\bar{\iota}$ ρ $\bar{\omicron}$ ο $\bar{\upsilon}$ γ $\bar{\omega}$  ρ $\bar{\alpha}$   $\bar{\nu}$ κ $\bar{\nu}$ ο $\bar{\nu}$ ι̅, ἀ $\bar{\nu}$ ο $\bar{\gamma}$  $\bar{\alpha}$  π $\bar{\omicron}$ γ $\bar{\alpha}$  μ $\bar{\omicron}$ ο $\bar{\omicron}$ υ $\bar{\epsilon}$   
 (A) (B) (A) (B)  
 ρ $\bar{\nu}$ ν $\bar{\nu}$ ε $\bar{\psi}$ ο $\bar{\upsilon}$ γ $\bar{\omega}$   $\bar{\nu}$ ς $\bar{\eta}$ τ·

*The juniors* no longer obey *the elders*; *the elders* no longer care for *the juniors*, and everyone goes along according to his own whims<sup>45</sup>.

This excerpt was said while St. Pachomius was speaking with a monk about the influence of arrogance on the juniors and the elders. He made the noun (*νκ $\bar{\nu}$ ο $\bar{\nu}$ ι̅*) as a subject in the first past tense sentence<sup>46</sup> whilst as a prepositional object in the second circumstantial clause<sup>47</sup>. In contrast, the noun (*ν $\bar{\nu}$ ν $\bar{\nu}$ ο $\bar{\varsigma}$* ) came as a prepositional object in the first circumstantial clause but as a subject in the second past sentence. In other words, the two nouns were mutually repeated among the sentences. That is a worthy reason for drawing the attention of the audience/reader in order to know that this arrogance is a vice and it has a mutual negative effect on both the elders and the novices.

(B) Apa Paul of Tamma (*Opus sine titulo*):

ε $\bar{\kappa}$ ρ $\bar{\mu}$ ο $\bar{\omicron}$ ς ρ $\bar{\nu}$  τ $\bar{\epsilon}$ κ $\bar{\rho}$ ι μ $\bar{\rho}$ ω $\bar{\omega}$ π $\bar{\epsilon}$  ε $\bar{\kappa}$ σ $\bar{\omicron}$ ρ $\bar{\mu}$  ε $\bar{\beta}$ ο $\bar{\lambda}$ : η $\bar{\nu}$ φ $\bar{\epsilon}$  η $\bar{\mu}$ ο $\bar{\kappa}$  || χ $\bar{\epsilon}$  ε $\bar{\kappa}$ ρ $\bar{\mu}$ ο $\bar{\omicron}$ ς η $\bar{\alpha}$ ω η $\bar{\rho}$ ε μ $\bar{\rho}$ ρ[ε]ρ $\bar{\theta}$  ε $\bar{\theta}$   
 η $\bar{\nu}$ ι $\bar{\tau}$ β $\bar{\nu}$ η $\bar{\eta}$  ε $\bar{\tau}$ χ $\bar{\omega}$ ρ $\bar{\mu}$  η $\bar{\varsigma}$  $\bar{\alpha}$  π $\bar{\rho}$ ω $\bar{\mu}$ ε ἀ $\bar{\lambda}$ λ $\bar{\alpha}$  ἀ $\bar{\rho}$ ι π $\bar{\rho}$ ω $\bar{\mu}$ ε η $\bar{\tau}$ ο $\bar{\upsilon}$  ε $\bar{\tau}$ χ $\bar{\omega}$ ρ[ε]η $\bar{\eta}$  η $\bar{\varsigma}$  $\bar{\alpha}$  π $\bar{\tau}$ β $\bar{\nu}$ η $\bar{\eta}$ :

Sitting in your cell do not be relaxed: pay attention to how you sit, and do not be like *the beasts* that lead *the man*, but like *the man* who leads *the beast*<sup>48</sup>.

In his advice to a monk, Father Paul warns him from laziness and urges him to be vigilant to the thoughts, namely, he used the imperative in its affirmative and negative forms<sup>49</sup>. It is noticeable that the plural noun *νι $\bar{\tau}$ β $\bar{\nu}$ η $\bar{\eta}$*  and its singular form *πι $\bar{\tau}$ β $\bar{\nu}$ η $\bar{\eta}$*  were used metaphorically to express the thoughts. Moreover, the writer used antimetabole between the nouns *τ $\bar{\beta}$ ν $\bar{\eta}$*  and *ρ $\bar{\omega}$ μ $\bar{\epsilon}$* ; he made the plural noun (*νι $\bar{\tau}$ β $\bar{\nu}$ η $\bar{\eta}$* ) as the antecedent of the first relative clause while in a singular form (*πι $\bar{\tau}$ β $\bar{\nu}$ η $\bar{\eta}$* ) at the end of the second

<sup>45</sup> These instructions were translated into English by BUDGE 1913: 169, 376; into French by LEFORT 1956: 1: 19, 2: 20; into English too by VEILLEUX 1982: 36; and into Arabic by MU'AWWAD 2013, 119.

<sup>46</sup> For the past tense, see LAYTON 2000: § 334.

<sup>47</sup> For its use as a completive circumstantial, see LAYTON 2000: § 426.

<sup>48</sup> This text was translated into Italy by ORLANDI 1988: 116-117.

<sup>49</sup> For the imperative (affirmative and negative), see LAYTON 2000: §§ 366, 368; REINTGES 2004: 316-317, 360.

relative clause<sup>50</sup>. On the other hand, the noun (*πρωμε*) was utilized at the end of the first relative clause whilst it was used as the antecedent of the second relative clause. In general, the usage of the noun τβνη, either for plural or for singular form, as well as antimetabole helped clarify that whenever a person is idle, he becomes distracted between many ideas but whenever the person is vigilance, he only focuses on one idea and one action.

(C) Patriarch Jean, the third, in *his response to Theodoros's questions*:

ϸτβετμντ̄ακεραιος δε μπεβροομπε . Δσολομον χροσ χεογνογωην νωαγμογτε ερογ χεζωη . ετεπετον̄επε νωαενεζ . Πωην δε ετμμαγ ογ̄νογμνηωε νροβ μπεκωτε . αλλα μμ̄νωβom μμοογ εζωη ερογν ερογ . ϸβολ χερωαντεγραιβες πωωνε επειηβτ̄ . ωαγπωωνε επεμντ̄ . ϸσωανπωωνε επεμντ̄ ωαγπωωνε επιηβτ̄ . Ογ̄νογμνηωε νβροομπε ρ̄μ̄κωτε μπωην ετ̄μμαγ . εγωοοπ ρατεγραιβες ετβεθεοτε ν̄ν̄ροβ . ϸτβεπᾱι ρω ερενεροβ κωτε επωην ετβεχεκακ ερωανογβροομ<πε> ερσαμβολ μπωην νσεογ̄om̄ .

Regarding the simplicity of the dove. Salomon said: 'there is a tree called Zōē, that is to say the one who lives eternally. Around this tree there is a crowd of serpents, but they cannot approach it because if its shadow passes to *the east*, they go to *the west* and if (the shadow) goes to *the west*, they go to *the east*. There is a crowd of doves around this tree, dwelling in its shadow for fear of serpents. Therefore also the serpents revolve around the tree so that, if a dove goes away from the tree, they devour it<sup>51</sup>.

Thereafter Pop Jean explained the meaning of that excerpt and he advised the believer to stay always in the shadow of the tree of life (i.e. Jesus Christ) lest the demons (i.e. serpents) approach. As for the doves, he meant the Christians. Antimetabole occurred between two nouns *πειηβτ̄* and *πεμντ̄* in the two conditional sentences<sup>52</sup>; he placed the noun (*πειηβτ̄*) in the protasis clause of the first conditional sentence and in the apodosis clause of the second sentence. As for the noun (*πεμντ̄*), it was utilized in the apodosis clause of the first conditional sentence while it came in the protasis clause of the second conditional sentence. Although the scribe used many figures of speech in this excerpt, antimetabole was used here to signify the association of the demon's lurking to the shadow wherever it comes.

## 2. Antimetabole between Two Verbs:

(A) Apa Daniel said in *Apophthegmata partum*:

ν̄ρωσον πωμα ϰογω τεϰγχη ρωωσ ωασεββε αγω ν̄ρωσον πωμα εββε τεϰγχη ϰογω .

The more the body *flourishes*, *the weaker* the soul becomes; and *the weaker* the body becomes, the more the soul *flourishes*<sup>53</sup>.

Apa Daniel wanted to express the effect of bodily desires on the soul. He used the conditional sentences<sup>54</sup> in order to simplify the meaning of the idea for the recipient. In

<sup>50</sup> For the constructions of these two relative clauses, see SHISHA-HALEVY 1988: 123-125, 127.

<sup>51</sup> This text was translated into French by VAN LANTSCHOOT 1957: 52 (text), 254 (translation).

<sup>52</sup> For the conditional sentences, see SHISHA-HALEVY 1988: 148-149; LAYTON 2000: §§ 346, 494.

<sup>53</sup> This saying was translated into French by CHAINE 1960: 12, 94; and into English by HARTLEY 1969: 49.

<sup>54</sup> For the use of the conditional marker ν̄ρωσον, see REINTGES 2004: 491.

addition, he made the two Coptic verbs ⲥⲟⲩⲱ and ⲥⲃⲃⲉ<sup>55</sup> replace each other. The verb (*ⲥⲟⲩⲱ*) in the protasis clause of the first conditional sentence became in the apodosis clause of the second one. On the other hand, the verb (*ⲥⲃⲃⲉ*) was used in the apodosis clause of the first conditional sentence and it became in the protasis clause of the second conditional sentence. Perhaps this shift was used to make everyone realize that he who supports the desires of his body; his spiritual desires will be weak and vice versa<sup>56</sup>.

(B) Apa Paphnutius (*The life of Abba Aaron*):

ⲉⲛ̅ ⲡⲉⲗⲟⲟⲩ · ⲉⲧ̅ ⲛ̅ⲙⲁⲮ · ⲉⲧ̅ ⲉⲢⲛⲁⲟⲩⲱⲙ · ⲉⲛⲉ | ⲙⲉⲢⲉⲘ ⲙⲟⲩ · ⲛⲉⲛⲧⲩ̅ · ⲁⲮⲱ ⲡⲉⲗⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲧ̅ ⲉⲢⲛⲁⲉⲘ ⲙⲟⲩ · ⲉⲛⲉⲙⲉⲢⲟⲩⲱⲙ.

On the day he *ate*, he would *drink* no water; and the day he *drank* water, he would not *eat*<sup>57</sup>.

Apa Paphnutius was talking about Apa Aaron and his monastic life and his daily system of food and drink. Antimetabole, particularly, was used to describe St. Aaron's condition, where he made the two Coptic verbs ⲟⲩⲱⲙ and ⲉⲥ-<sup>58</sup> replace each other: the verb (*ⲟⲩⲱⲙ*) appears in the first relative clause (ⲡⲉⲗⲟⲟⲩ · ⲉⲧ̅ⲛ̅ⲙⲁⲮ · ⲉⲧ̅ ⲉⲢⲛⲁⲟⲩⲱⲙ)<sup>59</sup> and in the second negative habitual past tense sentence (ⲛⲉⲙⲉⲢⲟⲩⲱⲙ)<sup>60</sup>. Likewise, the verb (*ⲉⲥ*) comes in the first negative habitual past tense sentence (ⲛⲉ | ⲙⲉⲢⲉⲘ ⲙⲟⲩ) and in the second relative clause (ⲡⲉⲗⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲧ̅ ⲉⲢⲛⲁⲉⲘ ⲙⲟⲩ). I think this switch between these two actions might be used to express the saint's attachment to the virtue of asceticism and to his regular daily diet.

(C) Apa Dioscorus of Alexandria (*A panegyric on Macarius bishop of Tkôw*):

ⲡⲉⲭⲉⲁⲡⲁ ⲃⲛⲥⲁ ⲛ̅ⲡⲁⲉⲱⲧ · ⲭⲉⲁⲣⲱⲩⲟⲩⲁ ⲉⲛ̅ⲡⲉⲓⲛⲁⲮ · ⲛ̅ ⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲁⲗⲁⲛⲗ ⲛ̅ⲧⲁⲧⲕⲱⲣⲧ · ⲛ̅ ⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲁⲗⲁⲛⲗ ⲧⲁⲩⲱⲛⲗ:  
ⲡⲉⲭⲉⲡⲁⲉⲱⲧ ⲭⲉⲛ̅ⲙⲟⲛ · ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲙⲁⲣⲉⲛ ⲩⲱⲛⲗ ⲉⲓⲟⲩⲥⲟⲡ · ⲛⲧⲉⲡⲕⲱⲣⲧ ⲉⲓ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲉⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲡⲉ ⲛ̅ⲩⲁⲛⲉⲗⲁⲓⲥⲕⲉ  
ⲙⲡⲉⲓⲣⲡⲉ:

Father Besa said to my father: 'Do one of these two things. Either *pray*, and I will *set the fire*. Or *set the fire* and I will *pray*.' My father said: 'No. Rather, let us pray together, and the fire will come down from heaven and consume this temple'<sup>61</sup>.

While Apa Dioscorus was talking about the dialogue which was between Apa Besa and Apa Macarius (when the first came to the temple to save the latter and the monks from the hands of pagans), he used repetition for a rhetorical purpose. He made the verb (*ⲩⲱⲛⲗ*) in the conjunctive<sup>62</sup> (ⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲁⲗⲁⲛⲗ) comes before the verb (*ⲧⲁⲩⲱⲛⲗ*) in the conjunctive (ⲛ̅ⲧⲁⲧⲕⲱⲣⲧ); however, in the second clauses, he repeated these two verbs in reverse. It is worth noting that the use of this rhetorical device made the

<sup>55</sup> CRUM 1939: 475, 805.

<sup>56</sup> For the interpretation of this saying, see HARTLEY 1969: 49, №. 54, footnote 2.

<sup>57</sup> BUDGE translated it: «On the day whereon he ate bread he | drank no water, and the day whereon he drank water he ate no bread», see BUDGE 1915, 475, 990; and the life was translated into English too by VIVIAN 1996: 116.

<sup>58</sup> CRUM 1939: 478a, 318a.

<sup>59</sup> For this syntax of the relative clause, see REINTGES 2004: 423.

<sup>60</sup> For the negative habitual tense, see REINTGES 2004: 348-351.

<sup>61</sup> This text was translated into English by JOHNSON 1980: 35 (text), 27 (translation).

<sup>62</sup> For the conjunctive, see footnote 28 above.

listeners/readers know that St. Besa needs to do the two actions at the same time. In other words, through faith and the good deed (i.e. the prayer), they will eliminate paganism by burning the temple.

## V. CONCLUSION

Antimetabole is one of the figures of speech that appear from time to time in the texts. To identify the forms and the rhetorical purposes of using this device, this article investigates the structures of antimetabole in Coptic literary texts, particularly the Sahidic texts which were written between the 4th and the 7th centuries AD. Consequently, this study classifies the structures of this trope into three types: the first is between two parts of a sentence/clause/phrase (three forms), the second appears after a verb in a sentence/clause (three forms), and the latter is between two words in two consecutive sentences/clauses (two forms). As for the rhetorical functions, this figure of speech was employed either to emphasize an issue or to clarify an idea.

Based on the examples discussed above, it is noted also that there are some similarities between the first and second types and their counterparts in Arabic. Perhaps this is due to the rapprochement between the ancient Egyptian language and Arabic.

## HOW TO CITE

Khalil, A., « Antimetabole: Forms and Rhetorical Functions in Sahidic Coptic Texts », *Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists*, vol. 6/2, 2021. Doi: 10.21608/jguaa2.2021.68183.1052.  
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TABLES

ANTIMETABOLE	TYPES OF THE TWO PARTS
Two parts of a sentence/clause/ phrase.	Two nouns
	A pronoun and a noun
	A noun and a verb

[TABLE 1]: The First Type of Antimetabole  
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ANTIMETABOLE	TYPES OF THE TWO WORDS
Two words after a verb in a sentence/clause.	A noun and a pronoun
	Two nouns
	Two pronouns

[TABLE 2]: The Second Type of Antimetabole  
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ANTIMETABOLE	TYPES OF THE TWO WORDS
Two words in two consecutive sentences/clauses.	Two nouns
	Two verbs

[TABLE 3]: The Third Type of Antimetabole  
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## العكس والتبديل

### أشكاله وأغراضه البلاغية في النصوص القبطية الصعيدية

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#### الملخص

عالج الآباء حكمهم وأقوالهم المأثورة بالعديد من الأساليب البلاغية، وربما كان هذا نتيجة لما تتميز به هذه الأساليب من خصائص ساعدت على تقديم الفكرة بطريقة مبسطة تجذب انتباه السامعين والقراء. ويعد أسلوب العكس والتبديل واحد من تلك الأساليب البلاغية التي لوحظت من حين لآخر في اللغة القبطية. ويهدف هذا البحث إلى تقديم دراسة لغوية لأنواع هذا الأسلوب في النصوص الأدبية القبطية، وبشكل خاص تلك النصوص الصعيدية التي كتبت في الفترة ما بين القرنين الرابع والسابع الميلادى. بالإضافة إلى إنه يبحث أيضاً عن الأغراض البلاغية التي دفعت الكتابة إلى استخدام هذا الأسلوب البلاغي في كتاباتهم.

**الكلمات الدالة:** العكس والتبديل، أقوال مأثورة، البلاغة، الأساليب البلاغية، النصوص الأدبية القبطية، النصوص الصعيدية، الكتابة