

The Harms of Misreporting on Egypt's Christians

May 8, 2012

Author: Cornelis Hulsman

Published by: Arab-West Report



The Center for Intercultural Dialogue and Translations
El Maadi • Cairo, Egypt • +20 2 235998087 • info@cidtegypt.com

Contents

Introduction	3
I. The voice of Qufādah	5
II. Understanding tensions through context	6
III. Freedom of conviction or religion	7
IV. Scandalous reporting.....	11
V. Europe should not allow Egypt to drown.....	13

Introduction

The Commission of the Bishop's Conferences of the European Community ([COMECE](#)) in Brussels invited me to present on the position of Christians in Egypt on May 9 in Brussels, Belgium. My presentation is part of a seminar on "Christians in the Arab World: One year after the Arab Spring," organized by COMECE in cooperation with the EPP (European People's Party—the Christian democrats in the European Parliament) and the ECR (European Conservatives and Reformists Group).

The invitation followed the interview of Father Joe Vella-Gauci titled, "[Elections in Egypt: what outcome to expect?](#)", November 2011.

The organizers of the May 9 seminar invited [Aid to the Church in Need](#) (Kirche in Not), [Open Doors International](#), and [Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life](#) to submit their respective reports and analysis along with witnesses from Syria, Lebanon, Jerusalem, and Egypt. I have been selected by COMECE to be the representative from Egypt, based on my 35 years of experience in Egypt, both in development and in reporting about Muslim-Christian relations. COMECE writes: "This seminar will help us to understand the extent of which the 'Arab Spring' is meeting the demands for more liberal values such as democracy and human rights."

I am not very fond of most reporting from Aid to the Church in Need and Open Doors International as they tend to select issues and publish them out of context. It is true that Christians in Egypt fear the Islamization of their country, but it is wrong to place the responsibility for the many ills Egypt is facing primarily on Muslims and Islam. The focus should be on discourse rather than culpability. The reality is that Egypt is a very religious country, evidenced by the result of democratic elections where Islamists received three quarters of the vote for Parliament. Unlike their radical counterparts, there are many Islamists who are willing to engage in dialogue. Dialogue does not mean not asking difficult questions. Dialogue is also not a symptom of naiveté, as Islamophobes would have their audience believe, but rather it is a critical element of survival. Christians in Egypt have a numerical minority of a mere 5 to 7 percent making it impossible to survive in isolation, resisting engagement with their fellow countrymen.

We should mobilize both Muslims and Christians to cooperate in the pursuance of common goals for the good of both parties. Polarizing does the opposite—that is, it drives a wedge between Muslims and Christians. The accusation that Muslims persecute Christians or even the accusation that Islamists persecute Christians is a destructive generalization and an obstacle on the path towards increased collaboration between Muslims and Christians.

My argument is that one must view tensions in Egypt in a much wider context: a period of transition and insecurity for all Egyptians; thugs create havoc because security is largely absent and civil authorities are struggling to implement law and order. People in the West are often only exposed to depictions of violence in Egypt. To counter that image, I have created a [PowerPoint](#) which presents a different side of

Egypt. It should be noted that this presentation is intended to illustrate that Egypt is multi-faceted—not simply violent or peaceful.

My text may thus be read as a critique on the reporting of Aid to the Church in Need and Open Doors International. I would like to challenge them and anyone else to select any particular issue in their reporting and then conduct a proper investigation in Egypt. They should then compare between their initial reporting and the facts found on the ground. An investigative report will, without fail, reveal a much more complex story than they have reported on a particular issue.

It is sad to see a beautiful country like Egypt deteriorate to this extent. No one knows where Egypt is headed in the coming months. I hope and pray that law, order, and prosperity will return to Egypt.

The following is my text as presented in Brussels on May 9.

I was asked to present you with the greetings from Coptic Orthodox Priest Father Yu’annis and Salafi Shaykh Hamdī ‘Abd al-Fatāh from the village of Qufādah in al-Minya governorate. I traveled there a few days ago with a German journalist and a Danish student to speak about Muslim-Christian relations and Christian migration from the area. When Father Yu’annis heard that I would give this presentation for you, he informed his entire congregation about this on Sunday April 29, praying that the voice of Qufādah would be heard.

I. The voice of Qufādah

Qufādah is a small village with a few thousand inhabitants, around 15 percent Christian and 85 percent Muslim. The village head is, however, Christian. Father Yu’annis has been campaigning for Salafī Shaykh Hamdī ‘Abd al-Fatāh, a member of the Salafī al-Nūr party, during the last elections. If you choose to inform yourself only through the media or activist groups that claim that Christians in Egypt are persecuted, you would not even know that such relationships exist. The reality is, however, much more complicated than we are led to believe.

There is violence in Egypt—more against Christians than against Muslims. The police are largely absent, laws are often not applied and both Muslims and Christians do as they like. The situation for Christians is difficult—not just for Christians, but for most Egyptians. The Revolution—others call it a revolt, against President Mubārak has led to a tremendous economic decline, affecting millions.ⁱ It has also paralyzed the state. The rule of law was already weak before the Revolution and has worsened after the Revolution. Christians feel this, as do Muslims. Christians in Egypt are scared and many would leave if they could. I do not blame them, but if they continue on this course it will be disastrous for the Christian community, which will gradually disappear.ⁱⁱ

Christians fear the Islamists, who have won over 75 percent of the seats in the last parliamentary elections—the most transparent since the Revolution of 1952. The success of Islamists shows what was already known: Egypt is a very religious country. The Christian fear stems from decades of autocratic Egyptian regimes pitting Islamists against Christians. A good number of radical Islamists have played into the card of the regime through inflammatory statements and violence against Christians but liberal Muslims are guilty of this as well. Neither the Christian nor the Muslim community is monolithic. The majority of Islamists in Egypt are non-violent, but those who have been a party to violence against Christians certainly contributed to increased Christian anxieties.

Father Yu’annis does not fear Islamists. He is also not planning to leave his village. He was born in Qufādah and knew the village Shaykhs as children. The personal relations between he and the village Shaykhs allow him to achieve things for his community and to solve local conflicts that occur.

Local conflicts, he said, are often solved through the *urfi* (customary) reconciliation meetings organized by Shaykh Hamdī. These meetings have become the most effective form of adjudicating disputes in the absence of a competent court system. Judges are overloaded, procedures are tiresome, and costs for lawyers can be steep. Previously we have encountered Christians complaining about the lack of justice in such *urfi* reconciliation meetings. This is of course possible as the conduct of the meetings is dependent on the person who is chairing them.

Most local conflicts tend to be over land, water, buildings, and young women. A Christian girl in a village cannot dress more modern because it will lead to comments from conservative Muslims. These criticisms are then directed to her parents, which can lead to conflicts. In other cases, Muslim men also could propose marriage to Christian women, which Christian parents and the church do not want. Christian men who propose to Muslim women are always at risk as this is not accepted in Muslim society. Though this has never occurred in Qufādah, it has occurred in other parts of Egypt yielding disastrous consequences such as the church burnings of Sūl, 'Atfīh and Imbābah, Cairo.ⁱⁱⁱ

II. Understanding tensions through context

I first came to Egypt in 1976. My wife is Egyptian and I have investigated many hundreds of reported human rights violations throughout the years. I want to make very clear that I do not like most of this reporting because it tends to be ideologically-based and extremely partisan. Ideological reporting is the effort to search only for the facts that support one's own beliefs or agenda instead of first establishing what empirical facts are known, hearing all involved parties, and investigating the reported conflict and its context. Conclusions should be then be developed carefully rather than reporting stories based on one source only, neglecting those voices who present conflicting facts or opinions.

Reports about human rights violations usually present stories without informing the public about the context. I will therefore give you some of the context that one must consider when investigating reported tensions:

- 1) Egypt is a relation-based society. It is thanks to good relations between Muslim and Christian leaders in Qufādah that Father Yu'annis is able to achieve so much. Christians who are living in a mental ghetto, however, who primarily develop friendships with fellow Christians or liberal Muslims, do have it harder and thus also would tend to be partisan and more negative in presenting conflicts. Good relations, though not the only solution, certainly help.
- 2) Non-Muslims who are negative about Muslims or Islam in general and presenting stories out of context are generally also the ones who do not build friendships (i.e. relations) with Muslims.
- 3) Egypt is a very religious country. This applies to both Muslims and Christians. Religion is very emotionally charged and can easily be (mis)used to rouse large numbers of people. Religion can serve as both a positive as well as a negative force. Muslims and Christian expect their religious beliefs to be respected. Not doing so can result in highly emotional, negative responses.

- 4) Egypt is community-oriented, unlike the individualistic society we find in Europe. Thus no one can act alone. His/her family or community will always play a role in whatever decisions are made. Personal decisions can have consequences for the community and the people are very aware of this.
- 5) Egypt has an honor and shame culture; honor should be protected and shame avoided. Leaving one's religion is a shame on their family and their religious community. The effort to reduce the shame is to blame the other. In Egypt no one ever makes a mistake. The mistakes are always committed by "others"; preserving one's honor is more important than speaking the truth. And thus Open Doors went terribly wrong when they presented Ingy's conversion to Islam several years ago as a kidnapping. Her brother had made this claim in order to protect the honor of the family, but the stories from others around the family, including her father and a lawyer's confessions, were different. It was not a kidnapping!^{iv}
- 6) Egypt is a class-oriented society. Class differences matter much more than religious differences. The gap between the rich and poor is shamefully large.
- 7) Egypt is a country where around 80 percent of the population lives close to or under the minimum subsistence level. In this section of the population you find the illiterate and the poorly educated.
- 8) Egypt is over populated. 85 million people are living on a piece of land the size of Belgium or The Netherlands as that is the surface area of the Nile valley and Delta. A friend of mine spoke of the "pressure-cooker model"—put a lot of people together in a very limited area in poor circumstances and tension and conflicts abound.
- 9) Egypt has been mismanaged for years. Corruption has become rampant, aided by the lack of transparency and checks and balances in the system. Such mismanagement includes Egypt being insufficiently prepared for impending water shortages, which, together with severe economic problems will create more pressure on an already strained Egyptian population.^v
- 10) Egypt has not always been plagued by sectarian tensions. This has developed during the presidency of Sadat and has continued until today. Older-generation Christians and Muslims like to refer to former days when religious tensions were much less prevalent.

These are elements that should be taken into consideration when reporting. If it is not done, then one should be more cautious in making statements. Those who are living far away from the areas of tensions and conflict usually have the most to say about what is happening in Egypt. No one should add to existing tensions in Egypt, already plagued by pressures, but this is exactly what misreporting does.

III. Freedom of conviction or religion

Did you know that, generally speaking, Muslims are genuinely convinced that Muslim societies provide religious freedom? Europeans usually disagree. This difference is related to different understandings of the concept of freedom.

Freedom is usually related to: freedom of worship, freedom of church building, the state guaranteeing equal treatment of peoples of all beliefs, freedom to propagate one's religion, freedom to change one's religion, and freedom not to believe.

a. Freedom of worship

Christians can worship as they choose. They were in fact more free than Muslims because churches could be open all day while most mosques, prior to the Revolution, could only be open during prayer times.

b. Freedom to build churches

Church building can be a source of conflict. Human rights organizations report when conflicts around church building happen, neglecting when churches are being built without issue. Did you know that tens of new churches were built or expanded after the Revolution? Sure, new mosques and houses have also been built. This happened due to an absent government.^{vi} It should be reported that Christians are also taking advantage of this vacuum. Human rights organizations also do not report church building after a conflict has occurred. Tens of churches were built or expanded after such conflicts but this was neglected in reporting. Most reporting also omits the role of good relations between responsible government and Muslim and Church representatives as a prime factor in whether a church building project was conducted with or without difficulty. The Mubārak government is to be blamed for the absence of just church-building law for such a long time.

After many drafts and several years of discussions involving Pope Shenouda, Members of Parliament, the Shūrā Council, and the Azhar, the Azhar and the Coptic Orthodox Church have agreed to a draft church-building law in late October 2011.^{vii} This a major step forward, as it is now a draft that is also supported by Egypt's most important Muslim institution. The government position on this agreement is not clear (neither had it been on previous drafts). If the Sharaf government had stayed in office would it have sent the law to the SCAF for approval? We do not know. In any case, violence in the middle of November 2011 and the shift in leadership from Sharaf to Ganzouri put the law on hold. The Cabinet never sent it to the SCAF for approval. Then, on January 23, 2012, the People's Assembly assumed legislative powers and from that point on, any law has required the approval of Parliament. All focus is now on the presidential elections and no development is expected until a new president has assumed office. I certainly hope for a just law that, if enforced, could put an end to years of squabbling and tensions over church building.

c. Equal treatment of all citizens by the state

The stories about discrimination and unequal treatment are very numerous, yet not all are true. The state recognizes Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. If you are Bahā'ī, Mormon, or belong to any other religious conviction, then you are certainly the subject of discrimination. The state is only one of several

culprits here; Muslim and Christian religious leaders have also advocated against giving non-Muslims and non-Christians more rights, seeing this as a protection of their own community.

Are Christians discriminated against in government positions? There are no Christians in the highest security circles, but there are Christian ministers, army, and police generals as well as Christians in other positions of authority throughout society. Here, the discussion about Christian statistics plays a role.

Activists and numerous human rights documents claim the Christian population to be at 10 to 20 percent. Proportionally then, the number of Christians in top positions is apparently too few. But research of French demographer, Dr. Philippe Fargues and other scholars show the proportion of Christians as more likely hovering around 5 to 6 percent of population.^{viii ix} The Coptic Orthodox Church in particular disagrees, but thus far has not been willing to show researchers how they have come to their number. The transparency with the Egyptian government is also subpar. Statistics on numbers of Christians have been published between 1894 and 1996 on the governorate-level, but statistics on the smallest administrative units have not been published. As of 2006, the Egyptian census no longer includes a question of religious affiliation, but this is no longer needed either since the introduction of electronic registration of ID cards. Those figures are not published and are only known inside the Ministry of Interior. As Dr. Fargues explained, numbers are only trustworthy if parties allow independent researchers to verify them. The habit of linking numbers to claims of discrimination or even persecution is detrimental. Christians and non-Christians should, in my opinion, focus more on procedures that would preclude discrimination as much as possible.

Conservative, and in particular Salafi Muslims, want the public domain to be Muslim. This makes it difficult for Christians to add Christian symbols to the public spaces in heterogeneous areas. Only in areas that are entirely Christian is it possible to display Christian symbols in public areas unchallenged.

Many conservative Islamists do not want Christians to violate Islamic teaching and thus they are able to respond harshly to Christian men making advances at Muslim women. Christians are also often forced by social circumstances to be more conservatively dressed than they would like.

d. Freedom of propagating one's religion

Approaching Muslims with the purpose to preach Christianity or any other religion could result in severe backlashes. Propagation is not possible in public, but it is possible, however, in Christian bookstores. No one will ask for the religion of the customer entering the bookstore.

e. Freedom to change one's religion

For centuries Christians have been free to convert to Islam, but not the reverse. Each Egyptian has their religion marked on their identity card and it is possible to change this from Christian to Muslim, but it is not possible to change this from Muslim to Christian or any other religion. That has consequences if one

wants to marry^x or any Muslim who converted to Christianity and wants to send his children to school is forced, because of his Muslim ID, to allow the school to send his children to Muslim religious classes.

f. Persecution

In 2001, Missio in Germany invited me to make a presentation titled, “Persecuted Christians?”^{xii} I presented a paper and concluded this is not the case with the exception of people leaving Islam. In the past 11 years I have conducted further research and maintain the same conclusion. Persecution is systematic and organized; something we do not see in Egypt with the exception of non-recognized religions in Egypt (Bahā’īs, Mormons, and others) and with the exception of converts or apostates from Islam.

Still, discrimination certainly occurs. It varies depending on circumstances and social class, but no one should deny that discrimination exists. Discrimination does not happen only on the basis of religion—it is based on social class and family affiliation as well. It is the role of the state to promote education and enact laws and regulations to counter this as much as possible. Egypt falls short here.

Father Yu’annis of Qufādah , on several occasions and including my last visit^{xiii} was also very adamant that tensions in Egypt usually are initiated by Christians, either through stupidity or inciting behaviors. The problem is with the absent state and Muslims being led by emotions and taking matters into their own hands with disastrous consequences, often resulting in the excessive violence we have seen in many instances. That is why honest and fair local mediators such as Salafī Shaykh Hamdī ‘Abd al-Fatāh are so important.

Shaykh Hamdī ‘Abd al-Fatāh is no exception. This photo shows Muslims providing water all day long to Christians who were mourning for the death of Pope Shenouda.^{xiii}



Juergen Stryak provided us with other photos from the internet that show Muslim solidarity with Christians in Egypt.^{xiv} Should we then still dare to blame Muslims in general for violence against Christians or claiming they are not “true” Muslims? Shame on those claiming such nonsense!

IV. Scandalous reporting

Exaggerations and inflammatory reporting are endemic. Reporters tend to interview people after an incident has occurred when emotions are still high. People want to be heard and thus embellish stories. Others want to leave Egypt for any price and do not hesitate to exaggerate and claim persecution. I have investigated such claims. This does not mean that all people screaming in the hope this will bring them refugee status are claiming nonsense, but it means one should be continuously cautious with all claims being made.

One can understand reasons of exaggerations and inflammatory reporting, but good reporters should continuously search for empirical facts and context and not use provocative statements. This makes a story more dramatic, attracts a wider audience, and helps with fundraising that primarily benefits the organizations concerned. People working with several organizations told me explicitly they make more money this way and with this money, they claim, they can better help Christians in Islamic countries. Nothing is further from the truth.

This type of reporting is in line with Islamophobic ideologues.^{xv} How incredible that those who claim that almost every incident is a consequence of Muslim persecution are linked to organizations with strong anti-Muslim rhetoric? Isn't it remarkable that many are staunchly pro-Israel? Let me make it clear that I am not opposed to the state of Israel, but I do see stalwart supporters of the state of Israel who see the entire Islamic world as their enemy and thus almost any violence against Christians *must* be explained as Muslim-Christian violence.

I was recently with a Missio delegation visiting Coptic Catholic Bishop Kyrillos of Assiut^{xvi} who explained how such stories are creating additional tensions between Muslims and Christians. Instead assisting local Christians and Muslims to find solutions they blow things up which adds to creating anger among Muslims who wonder what these organizations in the West are doing.

Exaggerations are sometimes also produced by Christian human rights activists in Egypt. In September, 2011 Coptic human rights lawyer, Nājīb Jabrā'īl claimed that since the Revolution some 100,000 Christians have left Egypt.^{xvii} The Coptic weekly, *Watanī* has investigated this and based on the information various Copts gave me I can only conclude that Nājīb Jabrā'īl made up the number.^{xviii} Christians have certainly emigrated and of course many want to emigrate, but citing the number 100,000 was a substantial exaggeration. But the story flew. Several (electronic) media and blogs picked this up, providing little to no space for those criticizing Nājīb Jabrā'īl.^{xix} Why would they? Isn't it true

that the audience of these media sources want this story as a confirmation of how difficult it is for Christians in Egypt? It is definitely hard for Christians in Egypt, but not the way it was presented by Nājīb Jabrā'īl.

Dr. Hans Jansen, professor of Islam, is often cited as an authority on Muslim-Christian relations in Egypt, but the man has not been to Egypt for at least 15 years and he makes claims that he cannot possibly substantiate. That includes his claims about church building in Egypt, in addition to those claims about Islamic teaching, whereby he is providing references to extremist texts, but then claims this is true Islam. Conversely, discussions among Muslim scholars show a great variety of opinions, which are lacking in Jansen's presentations.^{xx xxi} Claiming that radical texts are true Islam is of course in line with extremists' assertions as well, but I cannot possibly imagine he would want to support those. However, several of his writings do just that.

We have documented several examples whereby misreporting has actually contributed to more violence, thus becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. The burning of a church under construction in the village of al-Mārīnāb is a case in point. Christians in the village are small in number, but in order to preserve the community, the Coptic Orthodox Church wanted to give them a modest yet proper church. Permits for church building are hard to obtain and thus Christians have been tampering with documents in order to circumvent the issue. This is not unusual in Egypt. Certain Muslims in the village were opposed to the building of this church and complained to the governor of Aswan, who did nothing, which irritated the complainants. They then decided to take matters into their own hands and set fire to the church under construction. Local Copts filmed this and placed it on YouTube that same afternoon.^{xxii}
xxiii

Local media and websites took action immediately, reporting that again a church was burned. This prompted Copts in Cairo respond, already incensed due to prior church burnings in 'Atfīh and Imbābah (also more complicated than reported) and general economic decline and hardship. Demonstrations led by some fiery priests were organized, resulting on October 9 to the internationally reported clash between demonstrators and the army, which resulted in 27 deaths.^{xxiv} Here, virtually every event has been misreported also. There was chaos, there were thugs aiming at disrupting the demonstration, and there was deliberate and inflammatory misreporting from Egyptian TV.

In an interview with German eyewitness, Jurgen Stryak one sees that there may well have been organized violence to teach demonstrators that demonstrations will bring them nothing.^{xxv} Not long after, the same message was delivered when the police countered demonstrators on Muhammad Mahmūd Street near the Ministry of Interior, where several demonstrators were killed.^{xxvi} The issue of al-Mārīnāb and Maspero drew international attention. Because of the serious consequences, the dispute in al-Mārīnāb had the priest brought hurriedly to court and sentenced to three months imprisonment. Was this justice? No, the vigilant Muslim gang was not tried.

We have investigated this in detail on our website. The conclusions are that misreporting does aggravate tensions. The state and its institutions are weak. Many offenses of Egyptian law are not addressed, but

they rather few are selectively addressed. There is also a lack of transparency, which makes it possible for all parties, not only the state, to manipulate information. Lack of transparency is one of the characteristics of a weak state and thus the institutions of the state must be strengthened.

Previously, I mentioned problems with ideological reporting versus empirical reporting. Those engaged in ideological reporting avoid discussions and investigating other information and arguments. There appears to be no interest in discovering the truth, but rather in fostering an anti-Islamic ideological agenda. It is done cleverly. Publications and websites cite each other. This creates an echo, making the public believe the positions presented are widely accepted and that there is no doubt. When someone presents other facts and data, these are neglected—not mentioned in their publications and on their websites and if they have to respond they place you outside the group. They are the “true defenders of human rights” and others are not willing to make an effort to determine the validity of other information. The ideologues shout loudest and attract the most attention. Take Bat Ye’or claiming that Muslim migration to Europe is nothing else but a large jihad to make Europe Muslim, or take Jos van Noord falsely claiming in the largest Dutch daily newspaper, *De Telegraaf* that a boycott of tourism to Egypt is needed to put pressure on Egypt to help Christians. If we do not boycott Egypt then, in his words, we have no conscience. Van Noord does not seem to comprehend that tourism in Egypt has suffered tremendously since the January 25th Revolution to the detriment of tens of thousands of Christians and Muslims who relied on tourism for their livelihood. Does he want to kill what remains of tourism in Egypt? How irresponsible.^{xxvii}

European officials are, according to this philosophy, of course, the great traitors. The manifest of Breivik is an example of this. It is full of references to other Islamophobes. These Islamophobes appear to be well-funded. Europe is allowing the debate be dominated by these Islamophobes. Do not do this.

Please visit our website, www.arabwestreport.info, for numerous examples of misreporting of human rights advocates on Muslim-Christian tensions in Egypt.

V. Europe should not allow Egypt to drown

The head of a German NGO in Cairo told me that the economic problems of Egypt by comparison dwarf those of Greece. If Egypt should go bankrupt, prices would rise and millions would take to the streets in demonstrations that would far outweigh those that toppled Hosnī Mubārak. This could escalate into violence targeted against Christians. It could increase pressure to migrate. It would strengthen the anti-Islamic rhetoric in Europe. Do not let the situation come to this!

If the European Parliament really wants to contribute positively to Muslim-Christian relations in Egypt, it should support serious, objective research into what is happening in Egypt. It should actively oppose inflammatory reporting, for example by supporting a good media watch system. Freedom to offend and distort is nothing else but cutting off forms of communication.

Europe should also encourage dialogue with all parties in society, including Islamists. They happen to have received the votes of millions and thus cannot be treated as if they do not exist. Dialogue should be fair whereby critical questions should not be avoided.

The basic needs of any human being are food, housing, and security. Egypt is experiencing great economic hardship. Help increase the state's capacity so that it can help its citizens to make a living, ensure that the rule of law is applied and transparency promoted, and allow its citizens to live in peace and security. A more effective state will bring back tourism to Egypt and will advance economic relations between Europe and Egypt, which could benefit both parties.

I hope to see Europe provide assistance where it really matters!

-
- ⁱ Cornelis Hulsman. "Religious and Cultural developments in Arab and European Countries and their impact on politics," *Arab-West Report*, 15 Apr 2011. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2011/week-15/45-religious-and-cultural-developments-arab-and-european-countries-and-their>.
- ⁱⁱ Cornelis Hulsman. "Christian Activists' Contributions to Christian Migration from Egypt," *Mélanges*. Vol. 28. 2010: pp. 569-592. Editions Peeters, Louvain-Paris.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Cornelis Hulsman. "The history of tensions in Sūl, 'Āṭfih," *Arab-West Report*, 1 Nov 2011. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2011/week-44/27-history-tensions-sul-atfih>.
- ^{iv} Cornelis Hulsman, Usamah W. al-Ahwani, Sawsan Jabrah and Nirmin Fawzi. "Was converted girl kidnapped?," *Arab-West Report*, 20 Nov 2004. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2004/week-28/21-was-converted-girl-kidnapped>.
- ^v See for example these comments on a blog of *Salamamoussa*, 1 May 2012. URL: <http://salamamoussa.com/2012/05/01/future-thirst/>.
- ^{vi} Cornelis Hulsman and Jenna Ferrecchia. "Post-Revolutionary Construction in Egypt," *Arab-West Report*, 22 Mar 2012. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2012/week-12/68-post-revolutionary-construction-egypt>.
- ^{vii} April 30, 2012
- ^{viii} Cornelis Hulsman. "Interview with Dr. Philippe Fargues about Coptic Statistics," 20 Dec 2008. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2008/week-52/17-interview-dr-philippe-fargues-about-coptic-statistics>.
- ^{ix} Other scholars include the Jesuit fathers Ducruet and Martin. I will expand on this in a forthcoming paper to be published by MIDEO.
- ^x A Muslim woman who converted to Christianity cannot marry a Christian man as long as her ID remains Muslim.
- ^{xi} Cornelis Hulsman. "A case study of Egypt," in "Persecuted Christians? Documentation of an International Conference," Missio, Autumn 2002. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2002/week-50/30-persecuted-christians-documentation-international-conference>.
- ^{xii} April 28 and 29, 2012.
- ^{xiii} Aziz Abu Sarah, "Can Muslims and Christians get along in Egypt?," *+972 Magazine*, 22 Mar 2012. Photo. URL: <http://972mag.com/can-muslims-and-christians-get-along-in-egypt/38902/>.
- ^{xiv} Cornelis Hulsman. "Eyewitness: Maspero," *Arab-West Report*, 26, Mar 2012. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2012/week-13/24-eyewitness-maspero>.
- ^{xv} See Cornelis Hulsman and Jenna Ferrecchia. "Review of Elizabeth Kendal's 'Egypt: The Gross Insecurity of the Dhimmī'," *Arab-West Report*, 9 Feb 2012. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2012/week-7/62-review-elizabeth-kendals-egypt-gross-insecurity-dhimmi>.
- ^{xvi} March 18 and 19, 2012.
- ^{xvii} Nājīb Jabrā'īl. "EUHRO: Message of warning for military council and Egypt's government," 25 Sept 2011. The full text of the press release was placed in *Arab-West Report*. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2011/week-39/41-euhro-message-warning-military-council-and-egypts-government>.
- ^{xviii} Cornelis Hulsman. "Christian leader: No fear for Islamist landslide in Egypt," *Arab-West Report*, 1 Jan 2012. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2012/week-1/22-christian-leader-no-fear-islamist-landslide-egypt>.
- ^{xix} A study of AWR intern Jaco Stoop is forthcoming about this subject.
- ^{xx} Cornelis Hulsman. "Does the Shari'a prohibit building churches?," *Arab-West Report*, 4 Nov 2011. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2011/week-44/39-does-sharia-prohibit-building-churches>.
- ^{xxi} Cornelis Hulsman. "Is 'no compulsion in religion' abrogated?," *Arab-West Report*, 31 Dec 2008. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2008/week-49/5-no-compulsion-religion-abrogated>. See also Jayson Casper, Giving Nuance to Jansen's "Religious Roots of Muslim Violence," *Arab-West Report*, 20 Feb 2012. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2012/week-8/38-giving-nuance-jansens-religious-roots-muslim-violence>.
- ^{xxii} Lamīs Yahyá. "What Happened in Mārīnāb Village?," *Arab-West Report*, 12 Oct 2011. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/what-happened-marinab-village>.
- ^{xxiii} I was with Lamīs Yahyá in Mārīnāb on October 1, 2012 only hours after the film about the fire of September 30 had been on YouToube. I was also in the demonstrations at Maspero on October 8. Lamīs Yahyá and Jayson Casper were in the area close to Maspero when the outburst of violence happened.
- ^{xxiv} Jayson Casper, "Analyzing Video Evidence from Maspero: Bloody Confrontations following the Coptic Protest of October 9, 2011", *Arab-West Report*, 26 Oct 2011.

^{xxv} Cornelis Hulsman. "Eyewitness: Maspero," *Arab-West Report*, 26 Mar 2012. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2012/week-13/24-eyewitness-maspero>.

^{xxvi} Cornelis Hulsman. "Rā'id al-Sharqāwī about demonstrations and manipulations prior and after the November 30/December 1 elections," *Arab-West Report*," 10 Dec 2011. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2011/week-49/37-raid-al-sharqawi-about-demonstrations-and-manipulations-prior-and-after>.

^{xxvii} Cornelis Hulsman. "Why Boycotting Tourism to Egypt Doesn't Help Christians," *Arab-West Report*, 17 Apr 2012. URL: <http://www.arabwestreport.info/year-2012/week-16/27-why-boycotting-tourism-egypt-doesnt-help-christians>.